

Center for World University Rankings 2021 Global University Ranking

SUMMARY

- In 2021, McMaster University ranked 164th globally.
- McMaster University was the second highest ranked university in Ontario, and the sixth highest ranked university in Canada, behind the University of Toronto (24), McGill University (27), the University of British Columbia (UBC) (48), Alberta (81), and Montreal (120).

BACKGROUND

The Center for World University Rankings (CWUR) is headquartered in the United Arab Emirates and is a consulting organization providing insights to governments and universities to improve educational and research outcomes. Since 2012, CWUR has released an annual ranking of the world’s top universities. Institutions do not submit any data to CWUR, as they draw their data from public facing websites. The CWUR Global University Ranking changed its weighting in 2019 to balance the learning and research environment (metrics 4-7 are combined and given one Research Performance rank). The following seven weighted measures are used to assess and rank each university’s quality of education, faculty and research output:

1. Number of alumni who have won major international awards relative to the university’s size (25%).
2. Number of Alumni who are CEOs at the world’s top 2000 public companies relative to the institution’s size (25%).
3. Number of staff who have won major international awards (10%).
4. Total number of research papers (10%).
5. Number of research papers appearing in top-tier journals (10%).
6. Number of research papers appearing in highly-influential journals (10%).
7. Number of highly-cited research papers (10%).

For detailed notes and sources used for metrics please visit:
<https://cwur.org/methodology/preprint.pdf>

CURRENT STATUS

On April 26th, 2021, CWUR released its 2021 ranking of the world’s top universities. In total, 28 Canadian universities were ranked among the world’s top 1,000 institutions. Overall, McMaster ranked 164th globally. This represents a decrease of 4 positions compared to 2020. McMaster was once again the second highest ranked university in Ontario, and the sixth highest ranked university in Canada. From the top 6 Canadian institutions, only Montreal and McMaster dropped in position, while Alberta increased its rank by 20 spots from 2020 (see Table 1).

Table 1: Top 150 Ranked Canadian Universities, 2019 to 2021

	Δ 2020 to 2021		2021 Rank		2020 Rank		2019 Rank	
	World	Canada	World	Canada	World	Canada	World	Canada
Toronto	N/C	N/C	24	1	24	1	24	1
McGill	N/C	N/C	27	2	27	2	30	2
UBC	N/C	N/C	48	3	48	3	52	3
Alberta	20	N/C	81	4	101	4	89	4
Montreal	-7	N/C	120	5	113	5	105	5
McMaster	-4	N/C	164	6	160	6	127	6

N/C = No Change

Table 2: McMaster Ranks and Overall Score, 2020-2021

Metric Category	2021 World Rank	2020 World Rank
1. Quality of Education (25%)	419	418
2. Alumni Employment (25%)	745	743
3. Quality of Faculty (10%)	223	217
4. Research Output (10%)	133	127
5. Quality Publications (10%)		
6. Influential Publications (10%)		
7. Citations (10%)		
Overall Score: 79.6	Overall Score: 79.7	

CONSIDERATIONS

1. McMaster’s world rank once again fell across all metric categories from 2020-2021. However, the largest drop in 2021 was by only 6 positions in both Research Performance (metrics 4-7) and Quality of Faculty. This contrasts last year’s, significantly larger, drops where McMaster’s largest decline was by 265 positions in Quality of Education.
2. The CWUR has a tight cluster of scores. For example, the 1000th ranked institution has a score of 70.2, while the top ranked (Harvard) has a score of 100. This entails that 998 other institutions have their scores distributed between 70.2-100. Therefore, small changes in overall score result in large changes in positional rank.
3. Unlike other university rankings, universities do not submit data for the CWUR. For example, CWUR collects their citation data from 10 years’ worth of Web of Science publications; their list of the world’s top 2000 companies is compiled from Forbes’ list; and major awards and institutional information are taken from major awards and institution webpages.
4. The results of the CWUR GUR are difficult to replicate. CWUR does not provide the information used to determine each university’s score. Institutions only receive their rank by indicator and total score.