2022 Times Higher Education World Reputation Rankings

BACKGROUND

Times Higher Education (THE), the publisher of World University Ranking (WUR), also publishes the World Reputation Rankings (RR). These rankings are related but stand as unique ranking releases.

THE's RR is an annual ranking of the world's top universities in overall reputation. The information for this ranking is collected solely by THE, and it is based on the results of THE's annual teaching and research reputation survey. Unlike the QS reputation surveys, THE does not ask universities to submit names for inclusion in their survey. The reputation survey is open during the winter months from November – February and closes prior to THE's WUR data submission in March. In 2022, THE moved the entire survey in-house and received a large increase of voters. An overview of the method used by THE to rank the reputation of universities is as follows:

- In 2022's survey, 29,606 responses were collected across 159 countries.
- Each academic respondent is asked to name up to 15 institutions in the world they regard as best in research in their subject area, and up to 15 institutions they regard as best in teaching within their subject area. Respondents are allowed to choose their own institution.
- Votes are weighted to match proportion of researchers by country using Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) data.
- Finally, to create the overall Reputation Ranking, research and teaching votes are combined using a 2:1 ratio.

Please note, the university that receives the most weighted votes is assigned a score of 100, and each institution's score is then normalized to the top scoring university.

CURRENT STATUS

In the 2022 edition of the Times Higher Education World Reputation Rankings (RR), McMaster ranked 171st globally, an increase of 63 spots compared to 2021 where it ranked 234th. This serves as a bounce back year for McMaster from 2021, where the institution ranked at an all-time low.

With respect to Canadian peers, the University of Toronto (21), the University of British Columbia (40) and McGill University (50) were the only Canadian institutions ranked among the top 100. For reference, a table has been provided, which shows the 2021 and 2022 reputation vote totals for the top seven Canadian institutions. It is worth noting that THE moved its reputation survey in-house and as a result overall votes for all Canadian institutions increased drastically in 2022.

Table 1: 2022 Reputation Rank and Vote Totals, McMaster vs. Canadian Peers

	Overall Rank		Overall Votes		Research Votes		Teaching Votes	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
Toronto	21	21	1227.4	3473.9	731.1	2267.1	496.3	1206.8
UBC	35	40	612.5	1705.0	351.5	1050.9	260.9	654.1
McGill	41	50	529.1	1454.9	278.2	927.2	250.8	527.6
Montreal	132	126-150	178.6	501.8	101.9	308.6	76.7	193.2
Alberta	148	126-150	157.3	505.5	89.8	314.7	67.5	190.8
Waterloo	175	126-150	128.5	605.1	74.4	372.2	54.1	232.9
McMaster	234	171	99.5	423.1	46.7	239.6	52.8	183.6

Note: Total may not add to the sum of individual components due to weighting and rounding of votes.

Overall, McMaster received 423.1 total votes in the 2022 teaching and research reputation survey (239.6 research votes and 183.6 teaching votes). This represents an increase of 323.6 votes from the 2021 value. Table 2 provides a breakdown of McMaster's 2022 reputation votes by subject level, and for comparison, 2021 information. As shown, the total number of votes the University received in 2021 increased by 323.6 (325.23%). Furthermore, McMaster increased votes in all subject areas below, gaining the most votes in Clinical and Health (94.6). The largest percentage gain came in Physical Sciences which saw voting numbers increase by over 1600%.

Table 2: McMaster's Total Reputation Votes by Subject Area, 2021 vs. 2022

	2021	2022	Δ
Total Votes	99.5	423.1	323.6
Arts and Humanities	7.9	16.7	8.8
Business and Economics	1.5	6.9	5.4
Clinical and Health	56.6	151.2	94.6
Computer Science	1.7	11.1	9.4
Education	1.0	12.9	11.9
Engineering and Technology	11.7	61.4	49.7
Law	0	3.4	3.4
Life Sciences	10.7	69.2	58.5
Physical Sciences	3.6	63.8	60.2
Psychology	2.7	10.3	7.6
Social Sciences	2.0	16.2	14.2

Note: Total may not add to the sum of individual components due to weighting and rounding of votes.

WORLD RANKING IMPLICATIONS:

1. McMaster's Performance in the 2023 World University Rankings

THE uses both the teaching and research reputation surveys as metrics in their World University Rankings (WUR) which was released in October 2022. These two metrics are pivotal to an institution's performance in the WUR, as the reputation surveys account for 33% of the total score. Table 3 outlines the teaching and reputation scores for McMaster in 2021/22 and 2022/23 and how the performance in reputation impacted McMaster's overall score in the World University Rankings in the respective year.

Table 3: Reputation Ranking Impact on WUR

	2021/22	2022/23
Teaching Score (WUR)	28.3	24.6
Research Score (WUR)	19.8	20.3
Impact on WUR Score	-1.12	-0.47

In the 2023 WUR, McMaster's reputation scores fell by a combined 0.47 (Table 3). This alone could have resulted in McMaster falling out of the top 100 universities in THE's 2023 WUR. However, since McMaster saw increased performance across the other metric areas, the decrease to its overall score was limited to 0.1 point (resulting in McMaster's fall from 80th to 85th overall).

2. The Impact of THE's Change in Survey Collection

Since THE moved the survey collection in-house in 2022, McMaster's vote total increased by over 325% from 2021. For reference, Harvard, the top scoring institution for reputation saw its vote totals increase from 7,100.1 to 19,793.7 (179%) in 2022. McMaster experienced the second largest increase in Overall voter share and the largest increase in Research Votes among the top 8 Canadian Institutions (Table 4). Additionally, McMaster saw the largest increase in Reputation Rank among its Canadian peers in the 2022 RR. Despite McMaster's increase in votes, its teaching reputation still fell (Table 3). This is due to the reputation score in THE's WUR 2023 comprising of a two-year average of reputation from 2021 and 2022 (recall, that McMaster had a historic low for reputation performance in 2021). Overall, if McMaster continues to see similar progress in the 2023 reputation ranking, the institution could see its reputation score and rank increase in the THE WUR 2024.

Table 4: Change in Votes and Reputation Rank, Canadian Institutions

	Overall Votes	Research Votes	Teaching Votes	Reputation Rank
Toronto	183.03%	210.09%	143.16%	-
UBC	178.37%	198.98%	150.71%	-5
McGill	174.98%	233.29%	110.37%	-9
Montreal	180.96%	202.85%	151.89%	-
Alberta	221.36%	250.45%	182.67%	-
Waterloo	370.89%	400.27%	330.50%	Increase
McMaster	325.23%	413.06%	247.73%	63