



The world awaits: 2012/13 QS World University Rankings

Description

Governments on four continents will join prospective students and universities themselves in poring over next week's QS World University Rankings.

The rankings, which will be published on September 11, are intended primarily to guide international students, their parents and advisors in their choice of university. This year, there will be 700 institutions to compare on six different measures, with additional faculty-specific rankings to illustrate particular strengths.

But QS rankings are also used by governments from Denmark and Germany to Saudi Arabia, Thailand and Japan to evaluate the standing of their own and other countries' universities. Positions are used in funding allocations, promotional material and even immigration decisions.

The German and Japanese governments have both used QS ranking positions as one of their performance measures in research budgeting. Thailand is one of a growing number of countries to use the rankings to shortlist the universities chosen for additional funding to help them compete internationally.

In the UK, the Browne Report on student fees used QS rankings to illustrate the high standing of the country's universities. A Government-funded advertising campaign coinciding with the Olympic Games in London to promote the UK as a tourist or business destination also quoted the rankings.

Nunzio Quacquarelli, the founder and managing director of QS, said the rankings were the most popular of their type, attracting 20 million readers a year to the www.topuniversities.com website. "Their popularity is a reflection of our unique focus on the interests of parents and students as key stakeholders," he said.

Mr Quacquarelli said the balance of expert opinion and objective data ensured that the rankings were both relevant and up-to-date. QS would continue to demonstrate its commitment to transparency by publishing all the data that went into the rankings on its website and by becoming the first organisation to be audited by IREG, the International Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence.

Maintaining the basic methodology that has been used since 2005, the new rankings will supplement the views of academics and employers with comparative data on research citations and staffing levels. To gauge universities' international orientation, scores will also take account of the proportion of students and faculty from outside the country in which each university is based.

The top 200 positions will be announced early on September 11, while the full institutional and faculty rankings will be released at a special session at the European Association for International Education conference in Dublin that evening.