

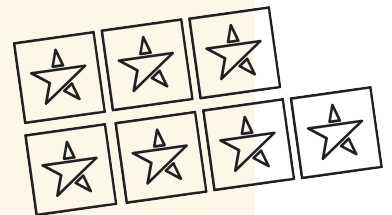


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QS Stars Case Study: Western Caspian University

Western Caspian University (WCU) is a private educational institution in Baku, Azerbaijan. The Opening Declaration of the University, written upon its founding in 1991, proclaimed a threefold mission to uphold freedom, peace and humanity, enhance international mutual understanding, and shape the future of the South Caucasus region. The aim of the university is to create the perfect educational atmosphere, fostering original thinkers and doers with a deep commitment to the welfare of humanity. WCU prides itself in creating a framework for sustained development by preparing students for international programs and projects through which we widen our academic activity base and strengthen our reputation across the world of education.

The University has become a member of several significant institutions since 1991, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the European Development Fund (EDF), the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), The Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN), the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS), and the European Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS). Working at the intersection of business, technology, and design, WCU also plans to promote inclusive leadership in research, education and practice by establishing the Center for Inclusive Leadership.



Why did you choose QS?

WCU strives for excellence in teaching, research and application of knowledge and, therefore, relies immensely on QS Stars' comprehensive criteria that enable us to learn more about our strengths as well as our potential areas for improvement.

What objectives have QS Stars helped you to achieve?

Two things come to mind while thinking of goals achieved: one is internal quality management and improvement, and the other is promotion and marketing. Since quality management is an ongoing process, QS Stars allows us to monitor and track the changes continuously to streamline the process internally. From a marketing standpoint, participating in QS Stars gives WCU more visibility and allows us to attract more prospective students, both national and international, since they already see who we are and where we are in terms of global rankings and ratings.

What are the key benefits of using QS Stars?

Being a driving force for positive changes at WCU, the QS Stars ranking has been used as a tool for benchmarking our institution against other universities. The evaluation of university facilities, teaching quality, program strengths and weaknesses allows us to meet and maintain the international standards.

What challenges have you been able to overcome thanks to QS Stars?

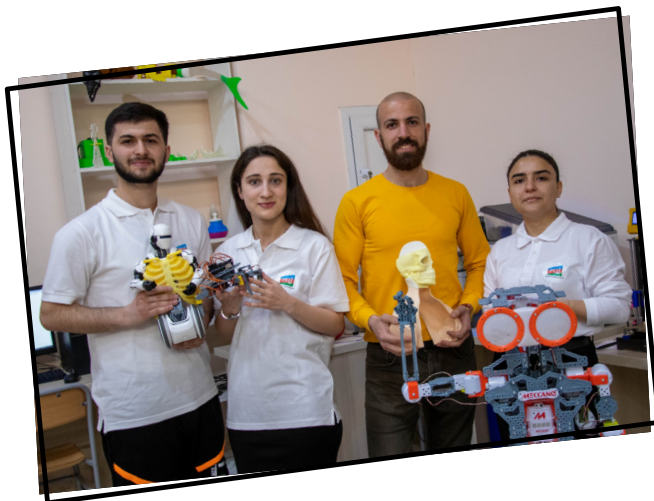
It is worth mentioning here the assistance to WCU provided by the professional staff of QS Stars in terms of data compilation. Always ready to respond to all enquiries related to the collation of raw data, their transformation, and preparation for further analysis, QS Stars' personnel helped us address the difficulties.

QS Stars has also been a great help when it comes to defining the data mentioned in the methodology and when it comes to tracking and maintaining evidence for activities.

What have you learnt from using QS Stars?

The QS Stars rating system opens new horizons for WCU in the field of measuring more concrete figures. By using the rating program, we have learned to identify and collect new indicators and key data sets in order to expand our self-assessment toolbox in the future.

When QS Stars posed a question about the percentage of first generation students at WCU, few universities in Azerbaijan managed to collect this data due to scarce resources at hand. Through these pursuits, we can evaluate ourselves and make our decision-making process more data-driven. Take Internationalisation or Inclusiveness and Social Responsibility, for example. QS Stars methodology taught us to gauge the investments in these areas and track our performance in ways we were initially unaware of.



A stylized signature or logo, possibly representing the university or the QS Stars program.

QS Stars explained

QS Stars is a globally-recognised rating system for higher education institutions. Ratings are achieved through an in-depth assessment across at least eight categories, resulting in an overall rating of 1 to 5+ Stars and a rating of 1 to 5 Stars for each category.

Following the assessment, QS provides a detailed report summarising the results in each category. This allows institutions to recognise their strengths, as well as weaker areas which may require attention and improvement.

The QS Stars package also includes a set of badges with the ratings achieved overall and in each category. Institutions may use these in their own marketing materials to show perspective students their strengths in areas that matter most, such as Teaching and Employability.

GOOD



Teaching



Online Learning



Employability



Inclusiveness



Internationalisation



Social Responsibility



Academic Development



Hospitality & Leisure Management



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