

Summary

Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), a company that provides services, analytics, and insight to the global higher education sector, released their inaugural edition of their Sustainability Rankings on October 26, 2022. This ranking was the outcome of consultation with world experts and their Advisory Board, development of a new methodology, and the gathering of pilot data submitted by institutions early in 2022. QS is hoping to provide an understanding of how environmentally and socially conscious a university is. The ranking is another attempt to provide a global performance assessment of universities against the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, similar to what Times Higher Education has been doing with their Impact Rankings the past few years.

This first edition of these rankings included 700 universities from 71 countries. The University of Saskatchewan (USask) ranked 91 in the world in the overall ranking. Nationally, this was 9th within Canada as well as in the U15. Two primary performance categories equally contribute to this overall ranking – Environmental Impact and Social Impact. USask globally ranked 42 in the former category and 265 in the latter one. The full results are as per the following:

Ranking	# Universities Ranked	Global Ranking	Canadian Ranking	U15 Ranking
Sustainability Ranking	700	91	9	9
Environmental Impact	700	42	4	4
Social Impact	700	265	14	13

**Tie with another university*

Ranking Methodology

The QS Sustainability Ranking, its framework and methodology, are all new to the higher education sector. The ranking is built from data from various sources including QS, universities, Elsevier, and global entities such as UNESCO and the World Bank. The initial request for university data came to USask this past winter, where QS requested additional information within a framework of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors, beyond their regular request for data related to their annual World University Rankings submission exercise.

The overall ranking is comprised of rankings in two categories – Environmental Impact and Social Impact. **Each of these categories carries an equal weight (50%) towards the overall Sustainability Ranking.** An institution can also be ranked separately in each of these categories, besides being ranked overall.

Institutional impact in terms of making positive change for people and the planet is measured and assessed across eight indicators or *lenses* in total. Environmental Impact is comprised of three lenses including Sustainable Education, Sustainable Institutions, and Sustainable Research, while Social Impact is built upon 5 lenses including Employment & Opportunities, Equality, Life Quality, Impact of Education, and Knowledge Exchange. Each lens carries its own weight and the full list of lenses, their definitions and their weights, are included in the following table.

Category	Performance Lens	Description	Lens Weight (%)
Environmental Impact		<i>This macro category is comprised of three performance lenses that provide a broad sense of whether an institution is strategizing, researching, and educating with the environment in mind.</i>	
	Sustainable Education	This lens assesses how institutions are educating students to both understand and make a difference to the environment. It combines: academic reputation in Earth and Marine Sciences & Environmental Science; alumni outcomes data on those who go on to drive policy and third-sector work in the environment; presence of environmental research centres and available curriculum on climate related subjects. The data is aggregated to form a final score.	40
	Sustainable Institutions	This lens assesses the institution's strategy and operations towards an environmentally sustainable future. It asks whether or not an Institution has a) committed to environmental impact alleviation and b) demonstrated that commitment. Data from alumni, operations and policies, staff perceptions, and reporting and governance are aggregated to form the final score.	35
	Sustainable Research	This lens assesses the impact of the research being done in areas aligned to specific UN SDG's, giving an indication of the relative research environment and attention being given to these crucial topics. It combines research data on the following SDGs: 7, 11, 12,13,14, and 15. It also brings in national-level data on research spend as a proportion of GDP. The data is aggregated to form a final score.	25
Social Impact		<i>This macro category is comprised of five performance lenses that represent different aspects of an institution's work in ensuring social progress as well as quality education.</i>	
	Employment & Opportunities	This lens assesses the ability of the institution to propel graduates into strong careers, as well as the strength of connections the institution has with employers. Alumni are also surveyed to ask how their institution prepared them for their careers, the impact of research into SDG 8, 9 and 16 is measured, and it is added to national-level statistics on employment. These are aggregated to produce a score.	20
	Equality	This lens assesses the climate of equality at the institution. It aggregates the following data to produce a score: research being done by institutions in SDGs 5 and 10; the operational activities of the institution; student and staff gender ratios; and national-level statistics on equality.	30
	Impact of Education	This lens assesses the education provision and quality of certain subjects at the institution which most closely align with 'society': Education, Politics, Social Policy, Law, Art & Design. It also looks at research into education, and alumni impact in the education sector. National-level statistics on education are also included. These are all aggregated to produce a score.	20
	Knowledge Exchange	This lens assesses how institutions partner in research and with industry to share knowledge and spur educational growth. It has two research collaboration metrics and one research partnership with industry metric. These three metrics are aggregated to produce the score.	20
	Life Quality	This lens assesses the institution's impact on research into areas that affect our health and wellbeing as well as those of other living creatures. It looks at the research impact of SDGs: 1, 2, 3 and 6 and then overlays national-level statistics. These data are aggregated to produce a final score.	10

For more information on the QS Sustainability Ranking methodology, please go to:

<https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/sustainability-rankings/methodology>.

Scores for USask and Performance within Canada

The following table provides more detailed context of the USask performance in comparison to other Canadian schools, including the U15, whom all were ranked in the 2023 rankings:

	Category/Lens Description	Global Ranking		Canada Ranking		U15 Ranking	
		Position	# Ranked	Position	# Ranked	Position	# Ranked
OVERALL	Sustainability Ranking	91	700	9	26	9	15
Category	Environmental Impact	42	700	4	26	4	15
Lens	Sustainable Education	68	700	7	26	7	15
Lens	Sustainable Institutions	22	700	4	26	4	15
Lens	Sustainable Research	197	700	9	26	8	15
Category	Social Impact	265	700	14	26	13	15
Lens	Employment and Opportunities	393*	700	16	26	13	15
Lens	Equality	118*	700	10	26	8	15
Lens	Impact of Education	382	700	20	26	15	15
Lens	Knowledge Exchange	348*	700	15	26	13	15
Lens	Life Quality	192	700	11	26	11	15

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