

Summary

Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), a company that provides services, analytics, and insight to the global higher education sector, released their second edition of their Sustainability Rankings on December 5, 2023. 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 in 2022. QS is hoping to provide an understanding of how environmentally and socially conscious a university is, and this second edition demonstrates the further evolution of that initial release. 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.

This second edition of these rankings included 1,403 universities from 95 countries. ***The University of Saskatchewan (USask) ranked tied for 89 in the world in the overall ranking, an increase of two positions over the initial release year.*** Nationally, this was 12th within Canada as well as in the U15. Three primary performance categories contribute to this overall ranking – Environmental Impact, Social Impact, and Governance. USask’s respective global placements within these three areas included a tie for 47, tie for 194, and tie for 150. The full results are as per the following:

Ranking	# Universities Ranked	Global Ranking	Canadian Ranking	U15 Ranking
Sustainability Ranking	1403	89*	12	12
Environmental Impact	1403	47*	6*	6
Social Impact	1403	194*	17	14
Governance	1403	150*	16	11

*Tie with another university

Ranking Methodology

The QS Sustainability Ranking, its framework and methodology, are all still new to the higher education sector. The ranking is built upon data from various sources including QS, universities, Elsevier, and global entities such as UNESCO and the World Bank.

This year the overall ranking is based on the performance of each university in three categories rather than two. The category of Governance was added to the two existing categories of Environmental Impact and Social Impact. ***In terms of the overall Sustainability Ranking, the two original categories each carry an equal weight (45%), while the new area of Governance carries a 10% weight.*** The two larger areas are each made up of various performance lenses. An institution receives rankings separately in each of these categories (and/or lenses), besides being ranked overall.

Institutional impact in terms of making positive change for people and the planet is measured and assessed across nine indicators or *lenses* in total. Environmental Impact is comprised of three lenses including Environmental Education, Environmental Research, and Environmental Sustainability, while Social Impact is built upon five lenses including Employability and Outcomes, Equality, Health and Wellbeing, Impact of Education, and Knowledge Exchange. Governance consists of a single lens titled Good Governance. 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>	45
	Environmental Education	Assesses both the provision and the impact of an institution’s education in Environmental Sustainability. Aggregates reputation data, alumni data and institutional data on curricular provision.	17
	Environmental Research	Assesses the impact of the research environment at the institution in topics aligned to these specific UN SDGs: 7, 11, 12,13,14 & 15. Aggregates this data with and national spending on R&D.	13
	Environmental Sustainability	Assesses an institution’s strategy and operations towards an environmentally sustainable future. Aggregates institutional data, membership of climate-focused groups, alumni data, and survey data.	15
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>	45
	Employability & Outcomes	Assesses an institution’s efforts in providing employment opportunities, and its reputation and research partnerships with industry. Aggregates research data, survey data, reputation data and national-level statistics.	11
	Equality	Assesses both the effort and impact of an institution’s equality commitment. An aggregation of institutional data, survey data, research data and national-level statistics.	12
	Health & Wellbeing	Assesses an institution’s commitment to improving the health and wellbeing not only of its students, but society more widely. An aggregation of research data, alumni data, institutional data and national-level statistics.	5
	Impact of Education	Assesses the provision of quality education and research, and the impact of that provision. Aggregates research data, reputation data, alumni data and national-level statistics.	7
	Knowledge Exchange	Assesses how institutions partner in research between developed and developing regions to share knowledge and spur educational growth and the positive impact of a university on its local community and wider society. Aggregates research data and survey data.	10
Governance	Good Governance	<i>Assesses whether an institution has strong governance in place, through for example open decision-making, a holistic ethical organisational culture, student representation on university’s governing bodies and financial transparency. Aggregates institutional data, research data, survey data and national-level statistics.</i>	10

For more information on the QS Sustainability Ranking methodology, please go to: [QS 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 2024 rankings:

	Category/Lens Description	Global Ranking		Canada Ranking		U15 Ranking	
		Position	# Ranked	Position	# Ranked	Position	# Ranked
OVERALL	Sustainability Ranking	89*	1403	12	31	12	15
Category	Environmental Impact	47*	1403	6*	31	6	15
Lens	Environmental Education	77*	1403	8	31	8	15
Lens	Environmental Research	87*	1403	10	31	9	15
Lens	Environmental Sustainability	64*	1403	8	31	7	15
Category	Social Impact	194*	1403	17	31	14	15
Lens	Employability & Outcomes	508*	1403	20*	31	15	15
Lens	Equality	101*	1403	8*	31	5*	15
Lens	Health & Wellbeing	141*	1403	14*	31	11*	15
Lens	Impact of Education	191*	1403	18	31	15	15
Lens	Knowledge Exchange	269*	1403	16	31	13	15
Category	Governance – Good Governance	150*	1403	16	31	11	15

*Tie with another university

Further Information

For more information about this ranking or other university rankings, please contact [Assessment and Analytics](#) in the Office of the Provost and VP Academic.