



Find your
perfect
university
match

*Frequently
Asked
Questions*

1. What is QS Stars?

QS Stars is a rating system that helps you select the right university based on the things you're interested in. QS Stars provides a detailed look at an institution, enabling you to identify which universities are the best in the specific topics that you care about, like facilities, graduate employability, social responsibility, inclusiveness, and more.

2. Why doesn't every university have a QS Stars rating?

QS Stars is an opt-in service, and universities must pay a fee to take part in a full QS Stars audit. This can be of benefit to any institution, but it is particularly well-suited to those that want to showcase their strengths outside of a ranking.

3. How does QS Stars rate universities?

In a QS Stars audit, universities are evaluated in dozens of indicators across at least eight categories. After the assessment, universities are awarded with an overall Star result which ranges from 0 to 5+ Stars, depending on the number of points achieved through the evaluation. The overall Stars reflects both the strengths and the weaknesses of a university in general, with each category receiving its own Star rating. This will allow you to understand not only how the university performs overall but, importantly, how it performs in the specific areas that interest you.

4. Which are the different rating categories used by QS Stars?

QS Stars is composed of 12 categories, each made up from several indicators, and each university is assessed in eight categories. These categories cover areas that are considered to be key pillars of what makes a world class university, taking into account a number of factors that are often overlooked in university rankings and other assessments. The 12 categories are:

- **Core criteria (Teaching, Employability, Research, and Internationalization)**

Every university undergoing QS Stars is assessed in each of the four core criteria categories. Teaching looks at the faculty-to-student ratio and levels of student satisfaction with teaching, while Employability measures the success of graduates in finding jobs and the university in helping them. Research looks at an institution's commitment to research, while Internationalization shows how international a university is, based on the number and mix of international students and faculty it has, as well as the number and strength of international partnerships with other universities.

- **Learning environment (Facilities and Online/Distance Learning)**

Each university must choose one of the learning environment categories. Facilities evaluates universities based on the quality of its facilities including sports, medical and library facilities, student societies, student accommodation and IT infrastructure. Online/Distance Learning looks at various indicators of a university's online programs such as student services and technology, track record, student faculty engagement, student interaction, and reputation of the university.

- **Advanced criteria (Arts & Culture, Innovation, Social Responsibility, and Inclusiveness)**

Institutions are assessed in at least two of the four advanced criteria categories. Arts & Culture is intended for those universities with a strong commitment to the arts and cultural activities. Innovation measures how universities are driving industry through industry and innovation, particularly in areas such as science and technology, and the links it has with the non-academic world. Social Responsibility looks at how seriously a university takes its obligations to society through volunteer projects, investments in the local community, and environmental awareness. Inclusiveness assesses the accessibility of the university

to students, particularly at scholarships and bursaries, disability access, gender balance and low-income outreach.

- **Specialist criteria (Subject Ranking and Program Strength)**

The specialist criteria categories highlight a university's specialist subject. In Subject Ranking the institution is measured based on its top performance in the QS World University Rankings by Subject, and by how many accreditations the university has in that subject area. In Program Strength the university selects its own specialist degree program and is assessed across a wide variety of indicators, such as the rate of student satisfaction, the student/faculty ratio, and the graduate employment rate for students on the specialist program.

5. What is the difference between a rating and a ranking?

Rankings compare universities to one another and put them in order; in their lists, they often include only the top 100 or top 1000 universities across the globe in general or in a specific subject-area. Universities may be ranked based on their performance in areas such as research, teaching, internationalization, and employability. The list of rankings shows the best universities, from top to bottom, based on the total points they get in the four indicators.

The QS Stars rating system assesses universities on how they perform in several indicators across multiple categories - some of which are considered in the QS World University Rankings but dozens more which are not. Rather than comparing institutions against one another, ratings judge institutions based on how they perform against a set standard. The rating reflects the strengths and weaknesses of a university in each specific area, and the university gets an overall score (Star), as well as a score (Star) in each of the categories that were evaluated.

6. Should I be more concerned with whether a university is ranked or rated?

Each can be helpful. A university that appears in rankings can also be rated, and vice versa, although some universities will only appear in one or the other. A rating system can help students identify those universities which may be a good fit, but which did not appear in the top of the rankings.

If you want to study in the best universities, you can look at rankings and well as overall results of a rating. But if your concern is to find a university that matches your more specific interests, you should concentrate on ratings.

7. How does QS Stars help me find the right university for me?

QS Stars understands that universities are different to one another and therefore need to be assessed on a range of categories that recognize distinct strengths. It also recognizes that each student is looking for something different, and not all universities (even the top ranked) suit every student.

QS Stars helps you understand which universities have performed well against a comprehensive list of indicators, which will allow you to match your interests to the universities that are strong in the topics that matter to you.

8. Where can I find which universities are rated?

You can find a full list of QS Stars rated universities, as well as more information on QS Stars at www.topuniversities.com/qs-stars



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