

NTU falls to third place on young universities list

Varsity loses No. 2 spot due to lower scores in research environment and industry income

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Nanyang Technological University (NTU), which jumped three rungs to take the No. 2 spot in the world's best young universities ranking last year, has fallen to third place this year.

In the Times Higher Education's latest ranking released last night, Switzerland's Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne retained its top spot on the list of the world's best 200 young universities, followed by Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

Coming in after NTU were two South Korean universities – Pohang University of Science and Technology in fourth place and Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology in fifth.

The list compares universities under 50 years of age based on research, teaching, citations, international outlook and industry income, giving lower weightage to academic reputation to reflect the special features of younger universities.

Mr Phil Baty, editor of the Times ranking, called NTU “a world-class

performer” and noted that despite an improved overall score this year, it scored lower for its research environment and industry income, resulting in it dropping from second place in the table.

But he said the university has a promising future, considering it is just 26 years old, and praised Singapore for introducing powerful policy drives backed with serious funding to produce world-class universities.

He said: “The city-state now spends 2.2 per cent of its GDP (gross domestic product) on research and development, up from 1.8 (per cent) in 2000 – more than China and the UK.”

NTU president Bertil Andersson agreed that regional rivals such as the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology are stepping up the competition, adding that the competing universities have a lot of mutual respect for each other.

Professor Andersson said: “Only seven countries made it into the global top 10 and Singapore is one of them – represented by NTU.

“NTU has consistently earned its place in these and many other rankings in recent years. These latest results reaffirm NTU's globally

acknowledged strengths in teaching, research and working with our international partners and the industry.”

Last September, in a similar ranking by education specialist Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), NTU trumped the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology to secure the top spot for the third year running.

Times Higher Education and QS use different ranking methodologies, but both aim to identify the rising stars of higher education.

Singapore Management University is not included in the rankings because it is considered a specialised university, while the older National University of Singapore – founded in 1906 – does not qualify for this ranking.

Prof Andersson noted that Asia's science and technology-focused universities have continued to dominate the Times Higher Education Under 50 Rankings.

He said: “Asia's young and dynamic science and tech-focused universities are racing with their North American and European counterparts to become research powerhouses of the future.

“With continued investment and support, the future is bright for Asia's up-and-coming universities.”

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The Top 5

1

Ecole
Polytechnique
Federale de
Lausanne,
Switzerland (1)

2

Hong Kong
University of
Science and
Technology (3)

3

Nanyang
Technological
University (2)

4

Pohang University
of Science and
Technology, South
Korea (5)

5

Korea Advanced
Institute of Science
and Technology
(Kaist) (6)

• Ranking in brackets refers to last year's placings.

Source: The Times Higher Education 200 Universities Under 50 Rankings 2017