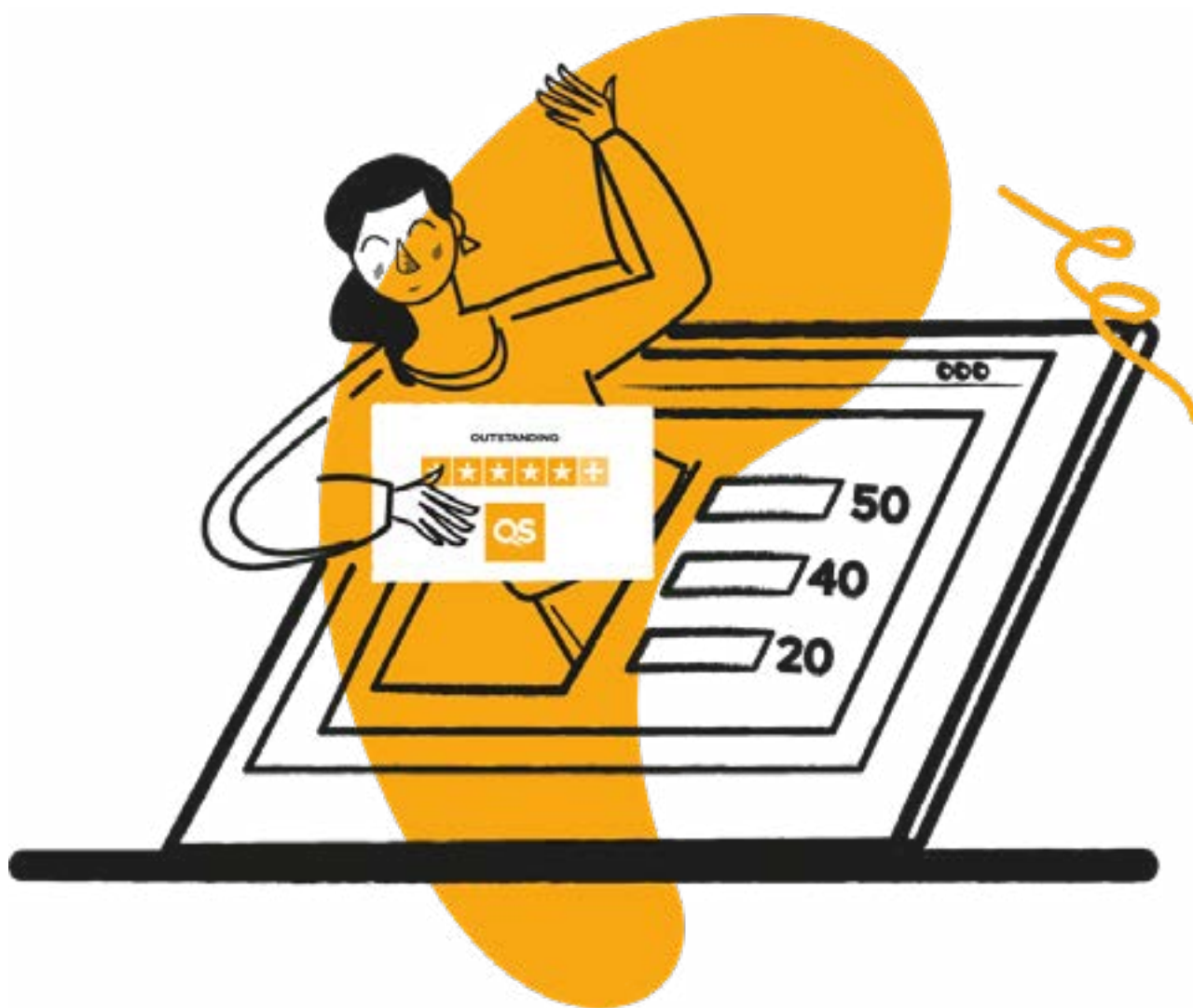


University Methodology



“The University of Technology Sydney (UTS) has been awarded an overall 5 Star rating from QS Stars, which renders the university’s rating as world-class in a broad range of areas, enjoys a high reputation and cutting edge facilities and internationally renowned research and teaching faculties. With a QS 5 Star rating, UTS is able to promote its world-class academic programmes, research, industry engagement and graduate employability to prospective students, alumni, and key university partners.”

Dr. Elvira Fonacier,
Rankings Programme Manager, University of Technology Sydney, Australia

The **QS Stars university rating system** was launched in 2009 as a way to assess institutions more broadly than is possible through rankings alone. With a Stars rating given in eight categories and for the institution’s overall performance, QS Stars allows universities to publicly highlight their areas of strength, and recognise and improve upon areas of weakness. This evidence-based marketing tool provides badges for each rating that the institution may use in its own marketing to help attract students.

Institutions should use the chart below to choose between alternate categories, with Teaching, Employability, and Internationalisation required for all assessments.

Core Criteria

Teaching		Page 7
Employability		Page 8
Internationalisation		Page 9
Research	<u>OR</u>	Academic Development Pages 10-11

Learning Environment

Facilities	<u>OR</u>	Online Pages 14-15
------------	-----------	--------------------













Specialist Criteria

Subject Ranking	<u>OR</u>	Programme Strength Pages 18-19
-----------------	-----------	--------------------------------

Advanced Criteria

<u>Select 2</u>		
Arts & Culture	}	<u>OR</u>
Innovation		
Social Responsibility		
Inclusiveness		
		Environmental Impact Pages 21-27

Thresholds & Prerequisites

Overall	Institutions must have at least:	1000
<p>OUTSTANDING</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Star ratings in all categories and meet all prerequisites needed for 5 Stars 	900
<p>EXCELLENT</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5% international faculty 5% international students 70 points in the Learning Environment category 85 points in the Employability category 150 academic referees OR 3 citations per faculty member* 105 points in the Teaching category^ 	700
<p>VERY GOOD</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1% (OR 25% of the regional average) international students 75 academic referees OR at least 2 citations per faculty member* 85 points in the Teaching category^ 	550
<p>GOOD</p>  		400
<p>MODERATE</p>  		250
<p>SATISFACTORY</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must have the authority to grant valid degree-level programmes in its own name 	100

* If assessed in Research category
 ^ If assessed in Academic Development category

Core Criteria Categories	150
1 Star	15
2 Stars	35
3 Stars	60
4 Stars	85
5 Stars	105

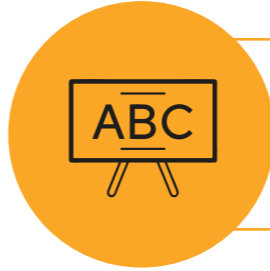
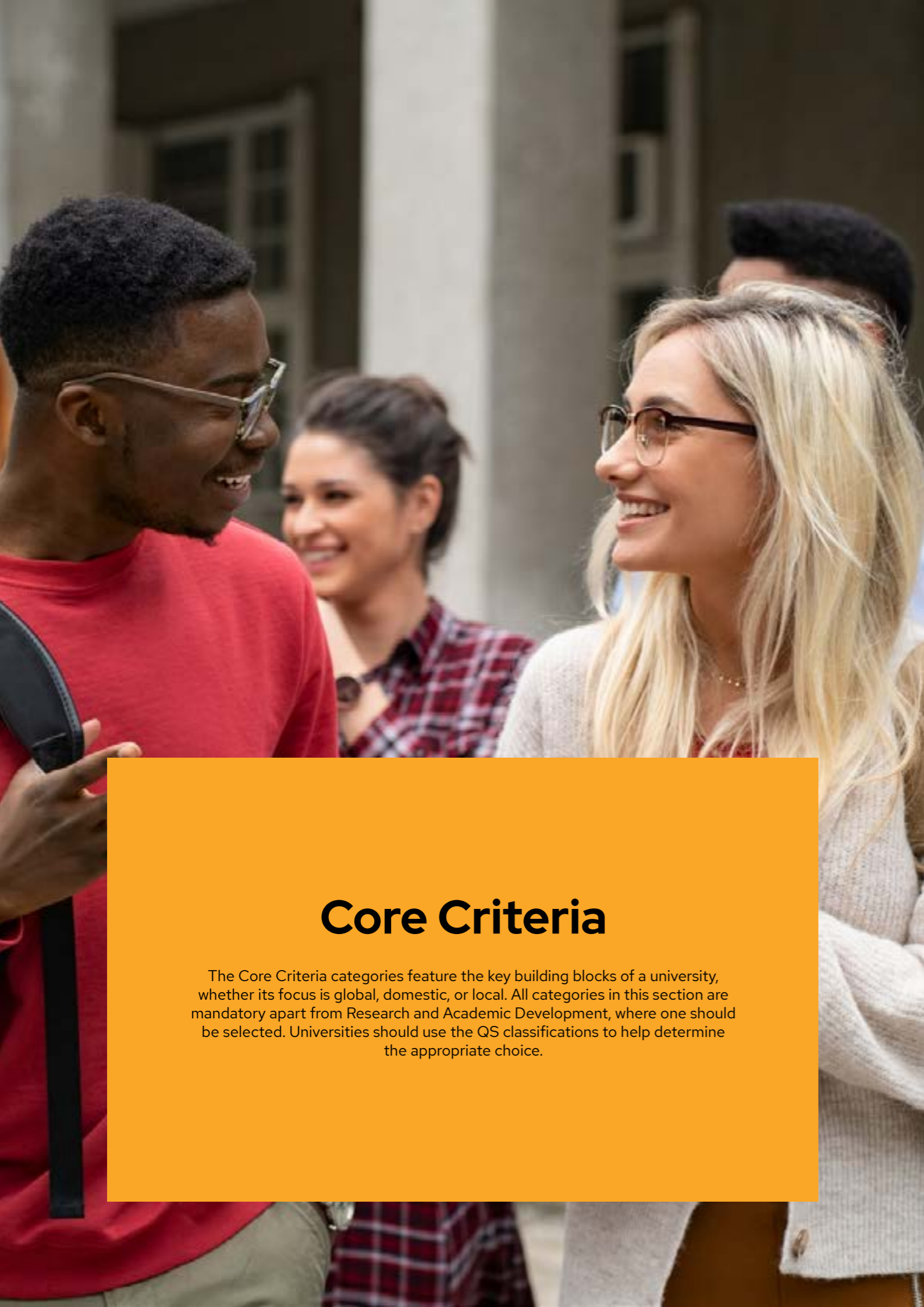
Advanced Criteria Categories	50
1 Star	5
2 Stars	15
3 Stars	20
4 Stars	30
5 Stars	35

Learning Environment Categories	100
1 Star	10
2 Stars	25
3 Stars	40
4 Stars	55
5 Stars	70

Environmental Impact Category	100
1 Star	10
2 Stars	25
3 Stars	40
4 Stars	55
5 Stars	70

Specialist Criteria Categories	200
1 Star	20
2 Stars	50
3 Stars	80
4 Stars	110
5 Stars	140





Teaching

150

Faculty-student ratio

10% faculty-student ratio (1 faculty member per 10 students) scaled down to 2% (1 faculty member per 50 students)

50

Overall student satisfaction

75% student satisfaction scaled down to 50%

OR

Completion

90% of students scaled down to 60% graduate within the expected time for their course

40

Satisfaction with teaching

75% student satisfaction scaled down to 50%

OR

Faculty with PhD

80% scaled down to 60% of faculty with PhD (or equivalent terminal degree)

40

Further study

30% scaled down to 10% of undergraduate students pursuing further study within 12 months of graduation

20

A note about surveys

QS Stars surveys and public national surveys can be accepted, as well as an institution's own survey with the proper evidence. Results are based on a minimum 20% response rate OR 1000 respondents, with points being scaled down for lower response rates. Please speak with a QS representative to take part in the QS Stars student satisfaction or alumni surveys.

Core Criteria

The Core Criteria categories feature the key building blocks of a university, whether its focus is global, domestic, or local. All categories in this section are mandatory apart from Research and Academic Development, where one should be selected. Universities should use the QS classifications to help determine the appropriate choice.



Employability

150

Employer reputation

50 employer nominations received from the most recent QS Global Employer Survey analysis

OR

Campus employer presence *(Maximum 30 points)*

200 distinct companies, OR a number of companies equivalent to 1% of the total FTE student body, attending employability events on campus in 12 months

50

Graduate employment rate

90% scaled down to 50% of graduates employed or started a business within 24 months of graduation

50

Career service support

10 points each with 2 bonus points for 3 or more *(Maximum 50 points)*:

- 10 career advisors scaled down to 2 OR 1 career advisor per 1000 students
- Career interview trainings or CV/cover letter writing support
- At least one on-campus career fair in the last academic year organised by the academic institution
- Career advising sessions available for students
- Online career portal with access to job vacancies or career advisor appointment system

50



Internationalisation

150

International collaborations

50 joint-degree programmes and/or university research collaborations yielding publications in Scopus™ in a recent 5-year period as per the latest QS World University Rankings analysis

50

International faculty

25% international faculty members

20

International students

20% international students

20

International exchange programmes

Inbound & outbound exchange students *(Maximum 20 points each)*

2% inbound/outbound students against total number of students on an international exchange programme lasting 3 months or longer

OR

Short-term exchange programmes *(Maximum 10 points)*

2% outbound students against total number of students on an organised international trip lasting at least 2 weeks and less than 3 months

40

International support centre

1 support centre dedicated to international students with at least 1 FTE staff member

10

International diversity

50 nationalities scaled down to 5 in student body

10



Research

OR



Academic Development

150

Papers per faculty

7 papers per faculty member indexed on Scopus™ in a recent five-year period as per the latest QS World University Rankings analysis

40

Citations per paper

8 citations per paper indexed on Scopus™ in a recent six-year period as per the latest QS World University Rankings analysis

40

Research funds

30% scaled down to 10% of turnover spent by institution on funds for research in the past fiscal year, including all public and private funds

40

Academic reputation

200 nominations received in the latest QS Global Academic Survey analysis

30

Teaching and research assistantships

30% scaled down to 10% of total student body participating in teaching or research assistantships

35

Learning development centre

Learning development centre staffed with 3 scaled down to 1 full time staff

35

Academic advising hours

3:3 academic advising hours to classroom teaching hours per week scaled down to a ratio of 1:3

30

Faculty development programmes

70% scaled down to 30% of total faculty members participating in faculty development programmes

25

Member of university networks

25 points available through a combination of different types of networks:

1. 2 international university networks for full points
2. 4 regional university networks for full points
3. 6 national university networks for full points

25

“QS Stars has [...] illuminated a plethora of activities that we need to review in order to retain our place in the top 100. We found that the exercise of going through the Stars [...] is very useful in helping us to identify gaps in the information we have, and find ways of obtaining it.”

Pamela Moss
Director of Planning, The University of Auckland, New Zealand

Learning Environment

The Learning Environment categories look at the student’s experience within their environment, whether that’s a physical campus or an online learning environment. Institutions will be assessed in either Facilities or Online Learning.



Facilities

OR



Online Learning

100

Sports facilities

4 points for each on-campus facility, OR access to local facilities with an official agreement, with 2 bonus points for 3 or more (Maximum 20 points):

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Swimming pool | 4. Outdoor sports court |
| 2. Indoor or outdoor fitness gym | 5. Outdoor sports field |
| 3. Indoor sports court | |

20

Campus facilities

4 points for each on-campus facility, with 3 bonus points for 3 or more (Maximum 20 points):

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Cafeteria | 4. Support centre for minority groups |
| 2. Bookstore | 5. Religious facilities |
| 3. Social room | |

20

Student accommodation

Maximum points for the same number of rooms available in student residences as first-year students (agreements with local housing facilities can be considered)

20

Library expenditure

\$250 USD scaled down to \$10 invested per student towards total library operating expenditure in a 12-month period

20

Health support services

On-campus medical facility

1 on-campus student medical centre

OR

Off-campus medical facility (Maximum 5 points)

1 local medical centre at which student may register

10

Student clubs and societies

50 scaled down to 10 student clubs and societies, including hobby clubs, educational and religious societies, and sports teams

10

Student-faculty engagement

6 points each with 3 bonus points for 3 or more (Maximum 30 points):

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Scheduled one-to-one conversations OR face to face component such as an opportunity to meet faculty in person, including at regional centres | 2. Live tutoring |
| | 3. Live streaming course video |
| | 4. Pre-recorded course video |
| | 5. Faculty assessment |

30

Student interaction

10 points each:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Online forum OR discussion board | 2. Alumni network |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|

20

Student services and technology

5 points each:

1. Access to online library databases
2. Customised access for users with special needs
3. Online access to career centre / dedicated online career advisor

15

Online outsourcing

5 scaled down to 2 organisations relying on programmes and technologies by academic institution

10

Application per enrolment

5 completed applications per enrolment scaled proportion of the points down to a ratio of 2:1

OR

Faculty-student ratio

10% faculty-student ratio (1 faculty member per 10 students) scaled down to 1% (1 faculty member per 100 students); includes traditional as well as distance learning students and faculty

10

Commitment to online learning

50% scaled down to 15% of degrees available at the university that can be taken entirely through online learning

10

Track record

10 years operating successful online programmes since the first graduating class

5

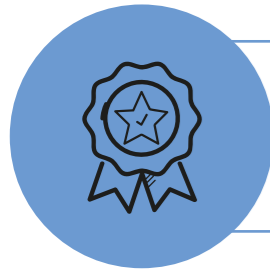
“The United Arab Emirates University applied for the QS Stars system in 2018, and it was an honour to be the first University in UAE to receive the prestigious 5 Stars rating. The overall experience with the QS Stars audit was an eye opening and interesting at the same time. The rating system provided a detailed look at the University from various angles and provided a wide picture of the university’s all-round qualities. It evaluated everything from the teaching and research to employability of graduates, to infrastructure and campus facilities and community engagement. The audit report identified the strength and weaknesses, and can help in reshaping the roadmap for the university’s future.”

Dr. Sulaiman Al Zuhair
Chair, Chemical & Engineering Department, United Arab Emirates University, United Arab Emirates



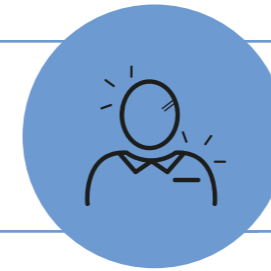
Specialist Criteria

The Specialist Criteria categories take a closer look at an institution’s specialist areas, using subject rankings or programme-specific data to highlight outstanding programmes. Institutions are assessed in one of the two categories.



Subject Ranking

OR



Programme Strength

200

Broad subject area ranking

Highest-scoring out of 5 broad specialist areas based on the most recent QS World University Rankings by Subject

(Maximum points for ranked position 1-50, scaled down to 10 points at position 300)

1. Engineering & Technology
2. Natural Sciences
3. Life Sciences & Medicine
4. Arts & Humanities
5. Social Sciences & Management

OR

Subject Ranking

Highest-scoring discipline based on the most recent QS World University Rankings by Subject or respected alternate global subject rankings

(Maximum points for ranked position 1-20, scaled down to 10 points at position 200)

For a full list of subjects please visit <https://www.topuniversities.com/subject-rankings>

150

Internationally recognised accreditations

AND/
OR

Nationally recognised accreditations

25 points for each international and 10 points for each national accreditation for a specific, named degree programme within the specialist subject or broad subject area *(Maximum 50 points)*

50

All indicators in this category relate specifically to the institution's chosen specialist programme

Graduate employment rate

95% scaled down to 70% of graduates employed or started a business within 24 months of graduation

30

Completion

95% of students scheduled to graduate succeed in doing so on time, scaled down to 65%

20

Student satisfaction

90% student satisfaction with the specialist programme, scaled down to 65%

40

Faculty-student ratio

20% faculty-student ratio (1 faculty member per 5 students) scaled down to 5% (1 faculty member per 20 students)

20

Applications per place

10:1 ratio scaled down to 2:1 of number of completed applications against available places

20

International students

30% scaled down to 10% international students

20

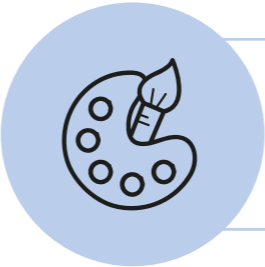
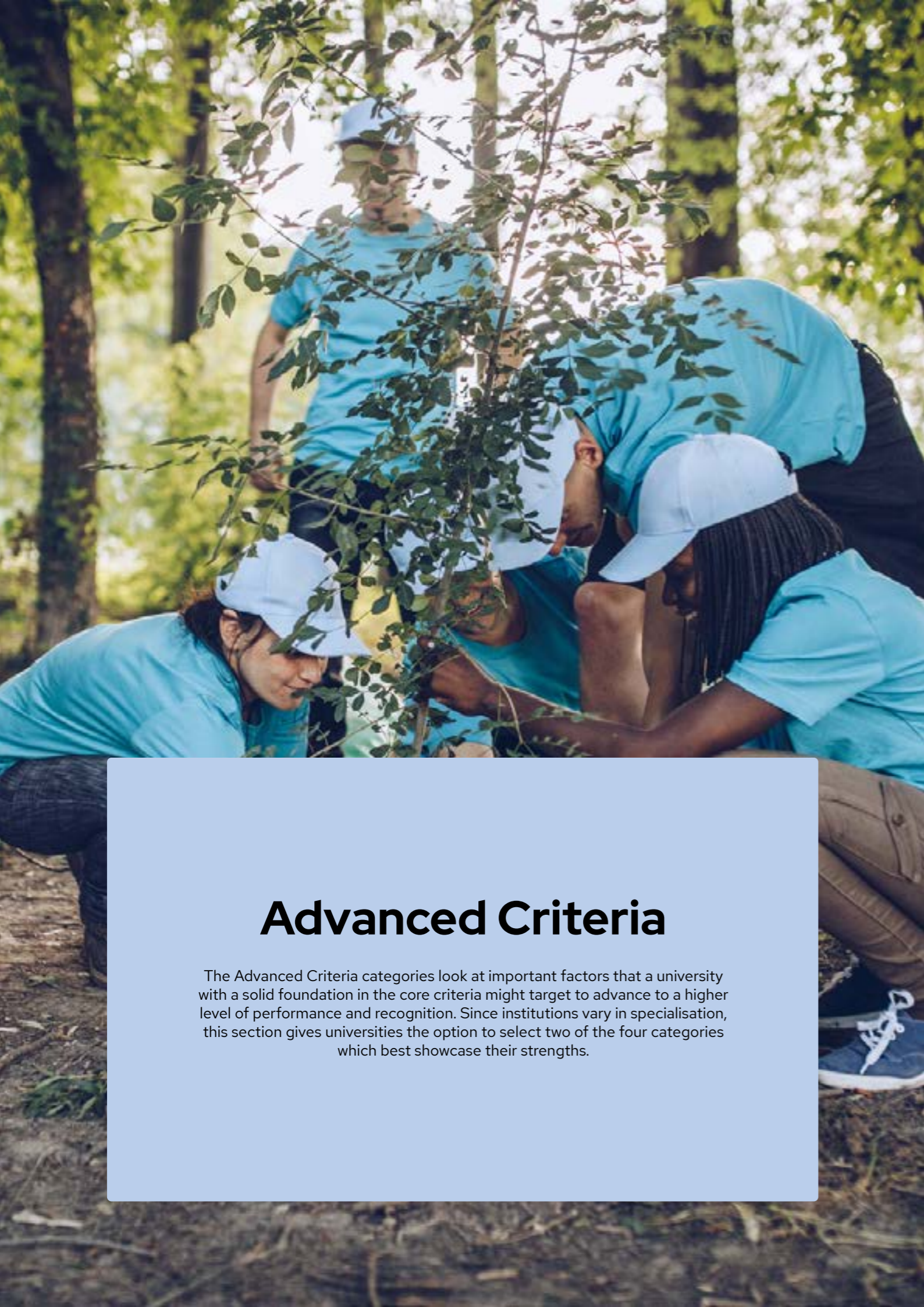
Internationally recognised accreditations

AND/
OR

Nationally recognised accreditations

25 points for each international and 10 points for each national accreditations specifically for the selected degree programme *(Maximum 50 points)*

50



Arts & Culture

50

Arts and culture facilities

2 points each, with 3 additional points for 6 or more from the list, to a maximum 15 points; all facilities must be open to students and faculty but do not have to be open to the public

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Purpose-built museum | 6. Dedicated recording studio OR music practice rooms |
| 2. Purpose-built theater* | 7. Campus radio station, TV studio, OR TV channel |
| 3. Concert hall* | 8. Cinema* |
| 4. Dedicated art studio | 9. Outdoor art space (e.g. sculpture garden) |
| 5. Campus art exhibition programme | |

**Must feature at least 10 performances in 12 months to be considered*

15

Concerts, cultural events, and exhibitions

150 scaled down to 50, OR events numbering 1% to 5% of the student population (i.e. for 600 students, thresholds are 6 to 30 events), on- or off-campus concerts, cultural events, or exhibitions organised by the academic institution over a 12-month period

15

Artistic and cultural accolades

25 scaled down to 5 awards or accolades given in a 12-month period to students, faculty, departments, or the institution as a whole, for publicly accessible works relating to the arts or local/national culture

10

Community art and cultural investment

Contributing 0.5% of turnover OR \$1 million USD to public art projects and to cultural preservation, on or off campus but within the university's own country, over a 12-month period

10

Advanced Criteria

The Advanced Criteria categories look at important factors that a university with a solid foundation in the core criteria might target to advance to a higher level of performance and recognition. Since institutions vary in specialisation, this section gives universities the option to select two of the four categories which best showcase their strengths.



Innovation

50

Patents

20

50 scaled down to 0 unique, active invention patents registered with national or international patent offices (no limitation of time)

Spin-off companies

10

5 spin-off companies established in the last 5 years, still operating and less than 50% owned by the academic institution

Industrial research

10

10 distinct corporations (non-university) yielding publications in Scopus™ in a recent 5-year period as per the latest QS World University Rankings analysis

Incubator

10

Existence of a university-run incubator as evidenced by the incubator's website



Social Responsibility

50

Funds for community investment and charity work

15

1% of turnover OR \$2 million USD contribution in a 12-month period to community projects or charities; this includes funds donated by the institution, as well as money donated and raised by students and faculty

Volunteer hours for community investment and charity work

15

130 scaled down to 0 volunteer hours (i.e. 2.5 scaled down to 0 hours per week over 12 months) for each faculty and student (total FTE) in a 12-month period

Human capital development

10

Students from the university's local region (e.g. province, state)

OR

Graduates employed in the local region (e.g. province, state)

50% scaled down to 30% of students hailing from the university's local region

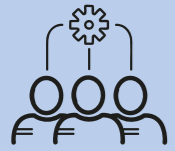
50% scaled down to 30% of graduates employed in the university's local region

Environmental policies

10

2 points each:

1. Sustainability website
2. Energy conservation programme
3. Water conservation programme
4. Recycling programme
5. Transportation policy website



Inclusiveness

50

Scholarships and bursaries

Scholarship funds

2% of turnover spent by institution on funds for scholarships, grants, and bursaries

OR

Students on 50% scholarship

1% of students on scholarships covering at least 50% of fees

15

Disabled access

3 points each:

1. Support services for mental health conditions
2. Built-in accessibility computer systems for visually impaired
3. Sign language interpreter or note-takers for hearing impaired
4. Map identifying wheelchair ramps, disabled toilets and parking access
5. Dedicated academic support for students with learning disabilities

15

Student cohort diversity

Gender balance

50:50 ratio scaled down to 60:40 for either gender

OR

Ethnic diversity

40% scaled down to 10% of study body made up of ethnic minority groups

10

Low-income outreach

Low-income students

15% scaled down to 5% of students identified as low-income

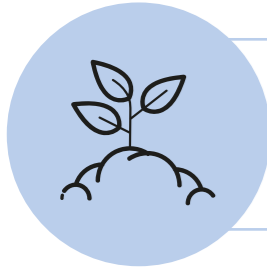
OR

Low-income funds

1% of turnover or \$2 million USD investment to recruit or support low-income students

10





Environmental Impact

100

Operations

Environmental sustainability policies for investment, procurement and funding/donations

4 points each (*maximum 10 points*) for:

1. Sustainable investment policy
2. Sustainable procurement policy
3. Sustainable donations/funding policy

Environmental sustainability/ climate change employees

At least one FTE staff member dedicated to sustainability or climate change

Climate action plan

7 points each for climate action plans cover the following areas (*maximum 20 points*):

1. Operation
2. Education
3. Research

**The institution should have a climate action plan or have created sustainability reporting. This report/plan should include 'SMART' objectives that are Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant and Time-bound.*

Energy and resource consumption

5 points each:

1. Renewable Energy
5 points for 50% of energy coming from renewable sources scaled down to 0%
2. Carbon Footprint
5 points for 1,000 kilograms of CO2 emissions per person (students + faculty) per year with points scaled down to 0 for 4,000 kilograms
3. Water Consumption
5 points for 20 litres per person (students + faculty) per day with points scaled down to 0 for 100 litres

OR

Carbon neutral certification
(40 points)

10

5

20

15

Research

QS SDG Environmental Impact Rating

Gold rating 20 points, Silver rating 15 points, Bronze rating 10 points, Candidate rating 5 points

20

Sustainability Research Centre

At least one research centre dedicated to environmental sustainability

5

Education

Environmental Sustainability Networks

10 points for each international and 5 points for each national network that the university is a member of (*up to a maximum of 10 points*)

10

Public education and outreach

10 public education or outreach activities scaled down to 1

10

Environmental Sustainability Student Organisations

At least one dedicated student organisation focusing on environmental sustainability issues

5

Classifying Academic Institutions

Institutions taking part in QS Stars will either be assessed in the **Research** or **Academic Development** category. The classifications below were inspired by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education in the US. QS uses the following classifications strictly as guidelines and not restrictive measures to classify institutions.

QS research intensive classification guidelines

- Large class size ratio of approximately 1 to 50 FTE faculty to FTE student body or higher
- High ratio of post-graduate and professional courses to undergraduate courses
- High financial support for faculty research
- Faculty spend majority of working hours per week on research rather than teaching
- Faculty spend less time in preparation for formal classroom teaching
- Research and publication productivity are weighed heavily for tenure decisions; teaching functions are not ignored but they receive considerably less weight in tenure decisions
- The career success of the institution is heavily based on faculty research outputs

QS teaching-intensive classification guidelines

- Small class size ratio of approximately 1 to 8 FTE faculty to FTE student body
- High ratio of undergraduate courses to post-graduate and professional courses
- Low financial support for faculty research
- Faculty spend most of their hours per week in formal classroom instructions for undergraduate courses
- Faculty spend fewer working hours per week on research rather than teaching
- Faculty assessed on the student interaction within the classroom and during faculty office hours more than research outputs
- The career success of the institution is heavily based on scholarly creativity in the classroom

The QS classifications take into account three key aspects of each university in order to assign them to the research or teaching intensive track under the QS Stars methodology.

1. Research Intensity

The level of research activity is evaluated based on the number of retrievable documents from Scopus during a recent five-year period.

Research Intensity		Classification
VH	Very High	Research Intensive
H	High	
M	Medium	Teaching Intensive
L	Low	

2. Student Body Size

Based on the (full time equivalent) size of the degree-seeking student body.

Size	Students	Classification
XL	Extra Large	More than 30,000
L	Large	>=12,000
M	Medium	>=5,000
S	Small	Fewer than 5,00

3. Subject Range

This category is based on the institution's provision of programmes in the five broad faculty areas used when ranking universities.



Focus	Faculty Area	Classification
FC	Full Comprehensive	More than 5 faculty areas
CO	Comprehensive	5 faculty areas
FO	Focused	More than 2 faculty areas
SP	Specialist	1 or 2 faculty areas



The QS Stars rating system is an in-depth evaluation that assesses a university on a range of key performance indicators based on established thresholds, using a rating method where an institution is awarded a rating of 1 to 5+ stars.

This audit and the subsequent marketing tools provided are helpful, as an institution looks to target prospective students and partners globally. It is designed to improve an institution's performance and international brand recognition.

Benefits:

-  Provides an overall score as well as ratings in specific categories which can be used to promote your brand on an international scale.
-  Highlights an institution's strengths and fields of expertise that may not be reflected in the rankings.
-  Helps boost recognition and reputation abroad in order to increase international student enrolments and to establish international partnerships.
-  Results are published on TopUniversities.com which receives over 76 million average visitors a year from over 240 countries.



Discover more at
qs.com/qs-stars
topuniversities.com/qs-stars
Contact qsstars@qs.com