

NUS tops Asia university ranking for second year running

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National University of Singapore graduates at a commencement ceremony. (Photo: Lionel Lin)

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SINGAPORE: The National University of Singapore (NUS) has retained top spot in the latest Times Higher Education Asia University Rankings published on Thursday (Mar 16).

NUS topped the list in 2016 for the first time since the category was introduced in 2013. Singapore's Nanyang Technological University (NTU), however, lost ground. It ranked joint second with China's Peking University in 2016, but fell to fourth in the latest list.

Peking University maintained its second-place ranking and Tsinghua University was ranked third, up two notches from 2016.

The Asia University Rankings use the same indicators as the world rankings, which assesses a university's strength in five areas – teaching, research, citation, industry income and international outlook.

However, it places more importance on industry income and research income, as well as productivity in terms of publications, and less emphasis on reputation elements.

NUS President Professor Tan Chorh Chuan called the university's ranking "a strong recognition of our Asian and global approach to education and research, as well as the importance we place on making a positive impact on the nation and the community around us."

He added: "I am grateful to our outstanding faculty and researchers, and our talented students, for their excellent efforts, and for the strong support of the Singapore government."

Times Higher Education Rankings editor Phil Baty said that NUS ranked top again despite "very tough competition" from China's "Beijing giants" - Peking University and Tsinghua University.

"I predicted several years ago that NUS would reach the top, and the university really has established itself as the role model for the entire continent – demonstrating that with decisive leadership, a truly international approach and with the backing of government prepared to invest in higher education, Asian universities can legitimately challenge the traditional Western elites of the US and the UK," Mr Baty said.

Despite being ranked fourth, NTU Singapore increased its overall score in the Times Higher Education's Asia University Rankings, achieving 74.2 points, up from 72.9 in 2016. It also continued to improve its scores for teaching, citations and international outlook.

NTU President, Professor Bertil Andersson said, "The competition is of course much keener when you are at the top, with many similarly dynamic and ambitious Asian universities putting up a strong fight. Some fluctuations each year are not unexpected when you are in the top league."

- CNA/am