

NUS and NTU again ranked as top Asian universities based on subjects

Singapore university subjects ranked among top 10 in their fields of study

National University of Singapore	Nanyang Technological University
Architecture / built environment	Chemical engineering
Business and management studies	Chemistry
Chemical engineering	Civil and structural engineering
Chemistry	Communication and media studies
Civil and structural engineering	Computer science and information systems
Computer science and information systems	Data science and artificial intelligence
Data science and artificial intelligence	Education
Development studies	Electrical and electronic engineering
Electrical and electronic engineering	Library and information management
Environmental sciences	Materials science
Geography	
History of art	
Linguistics	
Marketing	
Materials science	
Mathematics	
Mechanical, aeronautical and manufacturing engineering	
Social policy and administration	
Statistics and operational research	

Source: QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS BY SUBJECT 2024 STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

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The National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) have again emerged as the top universities in Asia based on global rankings by subjects.

The 2024 Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings by Subject, released on April 10, had 408 Asian universities among over 1,500 institutions worldwide.

NUS and NTU ranked higher than Chinese, Japanese and Hong Kong universities in terms of the number of top 10 programmes and have done so since at least 2021.

NTU was the country's most represented institution with 45 subject entries, of which 10 were in the world's top 10. These included subjects like communication and media studies, materials science and three engineering disciplines.

NUS had 44 ranked subjects, with 19 in the top 10, including history of art – which placed second behind Britain's Royal College of Art – geography and marketing.

Dr Priya M. Jaradi, course convener for the art history minor at NUS' department of history, said the history of art programme has

“moved away from” standard textbooks and teaching collections.

“The courses are highly original and inclusive... they are recalibrated regularly to respond to the changing landscape of geopolitics, climate and migration, among other issues which have a bearing on art and museums.”

In the 2023 rankings, 14 subjects from NUS and five from NTU made it to the global top 10 lists.

An NTU spokesperson said: “With 32 subjects in the global top 50, NTU's strong showing in the latest QS World University Rankings by Subject is a testimony of NTU's position as a leading global university.

“It reaffirms NTU's commitment to nurture graduates in an academically enriching environment, taught by faculty (members) who are at the forefront of their fields.”

NUS provost Aaron Thean said the 2024 rankings mark the highest number of subject placings in the global top 10 for the university in the past five years.

He said: “It attests to the university's commitment to academic excellence and... dedication to interdisciplinary education, equipping our students for the challenges and opportunities of the future.”

Singapore Management University's business and management

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studies was placed 44th in the rankings.

The rankings are based on an analysis of nearly 16,000 university departments in 104 locations worldwide.

With 64 per cent of its previously ranked entries moving up the table, the Republic had significant improvement in academic reputation.

This reputation, one of the indicators used in the rankings, was drawn from responses by 130,000 academics who listed institutions which they considered to be excellent in research in a given area.

The other indicators included research citations and employer reputation, in which 75,000 employers worldwide were asked to identify institutions they considered excellent for the recruitment

of graduates.

QS senior vice-president Ben Sowter said the 2024 surge in rankings signals a significant recovery for Singapore after a brief stagnation in the previous year.

“Its historic success and most likely its impressive turnaround is largely attributable to a decade-long commitment to strategic investments and planning,” he said.

He added that the Singapore institutions will, however, face challenges of maintaining growth that is sustainable. “As a recognised hub of academic excellence, Singapore also faces heightened competition from regional players, including emerging economies looking to replicate its successful model.”

British universities topped the latest rankings in 16 subjects, with the University of Oxford leading in four. They also boast the world's highest concentration of programmes ranked in the world's top three.

Universities in the US led in 32 subjects in the 2024 rankings. Harvard University was the world's strongest-performing institution, ranking first in 19 disciplines. It was followed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which led in 11 subjects.

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