


Towards Ummatic Excellence: **IIUM's Strategic Ranking Initiative**

Office of Strategy and Institutional Change

22nd March 2025



Background: Why is IIUM Pursuing Rankings Now?

- Although IIUM has not actively pursued rankings in recent years, it continues to be assessed based on public data that may not accurately reflect its true performance or strategic focus
- The IIUM Board of Governors has directed the University to actively participate in global ranking initiatives.
- More importantly, **our spirit is Muhasabah** – to **benchmark** ourselves honestly and strive towards **Ihsan**.
- We aim to **avoid complacency** and **continuously improve** to **serve the Ummah** better.



Importance of Engaging in Rankings

- Strengthens **student recruitment** (local and international).
- Enhances **global reputation** and brand visibility.
- Attracts **quality staff** and academic talent.
- Increases opportunities for **research funding**.
- Expands ability for **international collaborations** and strategic partnerships.

Where are we now? QS Rankings

- **QS World University Rankings:**

- 2021: Ranked between 601-650.
- 2022: Ranked between 651-700.
- 2023: Ranked between 651-700.
- 2024: Ranked between 711-720.
- **2025: Ranked between 661-670**

- **Asia:** 133

- **Asian University Rankings – South Eastern Asia:**
30

- **Sustainability Ranking:** 1351-1400

- **Subjects Ranking:**

- *Theology, Divinity & Religious Studies:* 32 (2024); 51-100 (2025)
- *English Language and Literature:* 201-250 (2025)
- *Linguistics:* 251-300 (2025)
- *Accounting and Finance:* 251-300 (2024 & 2025)
- *Law and Legal Studies:* 301-350 (2024 & 2025)
- *Pharmacy Pharmacology:* 251-300 (2004); 351-400 (2025)
- *Economics and Econometrics:* 351-400 (2024 & 2025)

Ranking Initiatives Undertaken



Engagement with previous Person-in-Charge for Rankings.



Direct engagement with Ranking agencies to understand latest methodologies.



Mapping QS KPIs to align with IIUM's strategic thrusts.



Conducted a **perception survey** among IIUM staff.

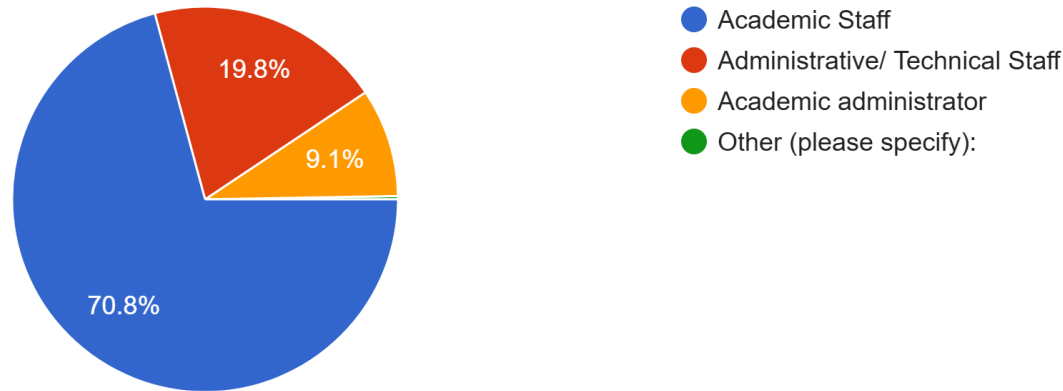


Benchmarking visit to Universiti Malaya (UM) to learn best practices.

IIUM feedback on rankings (i)

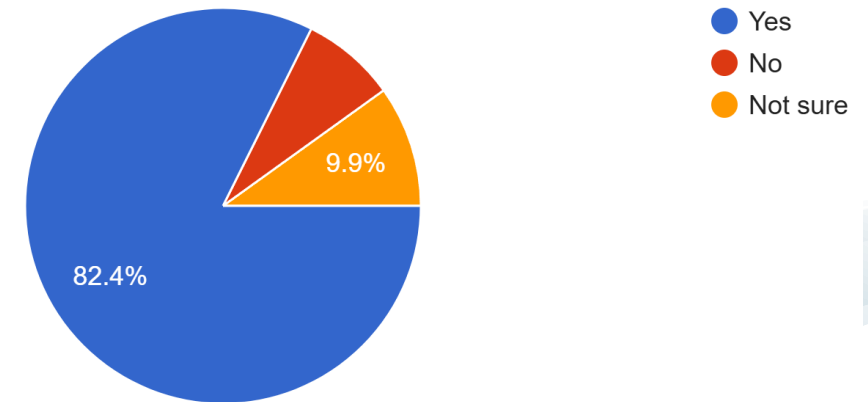
Please indicate your role at IIUM:

363 responses



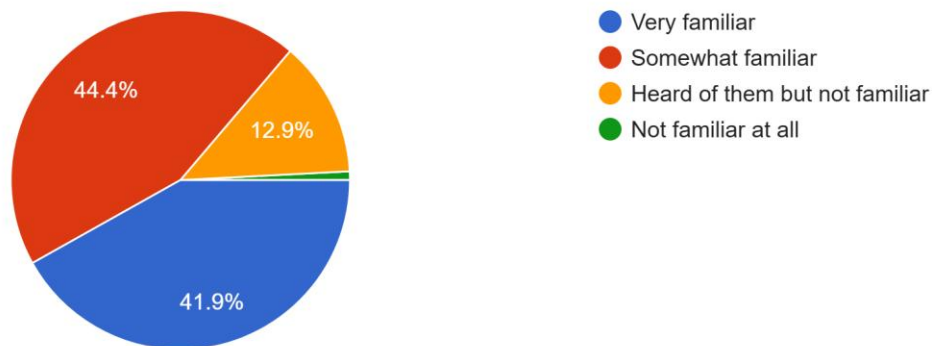
Do you believe international rankings are important for IIUM?

363 responses



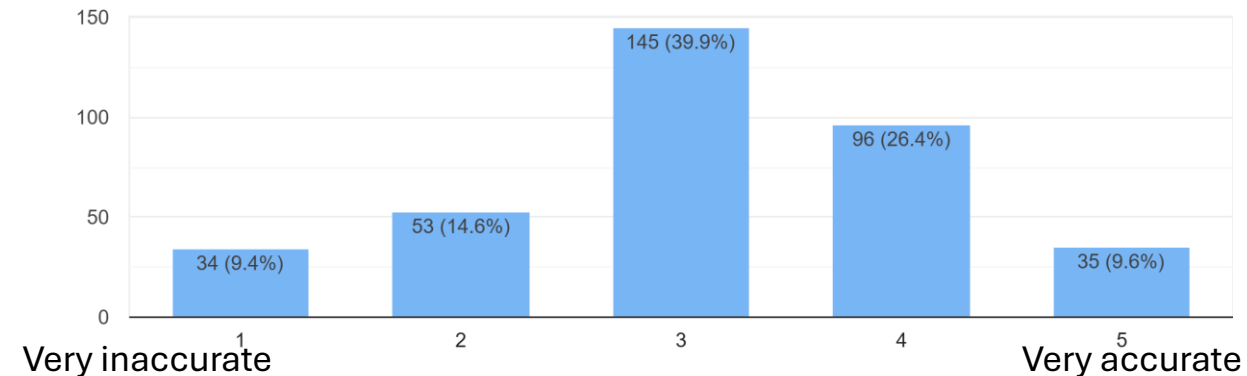
How familiar are you with international university rankings (e.g., QS, Times Higher Education, etc.)?

363 responses



In your opinion, how accurately do current international rankings reflect IIUM's actual performance?

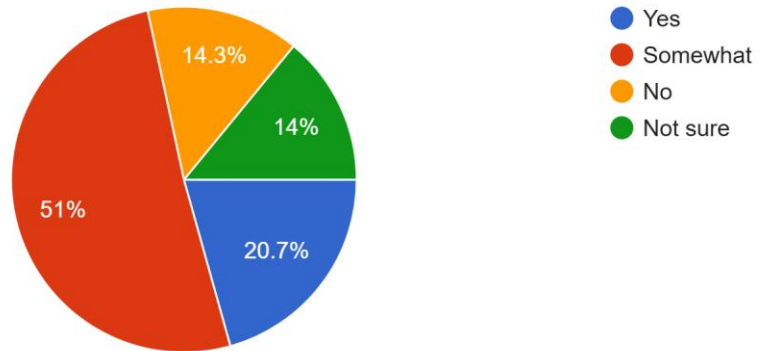
363 responses



IUM feedback on rankings (ii)

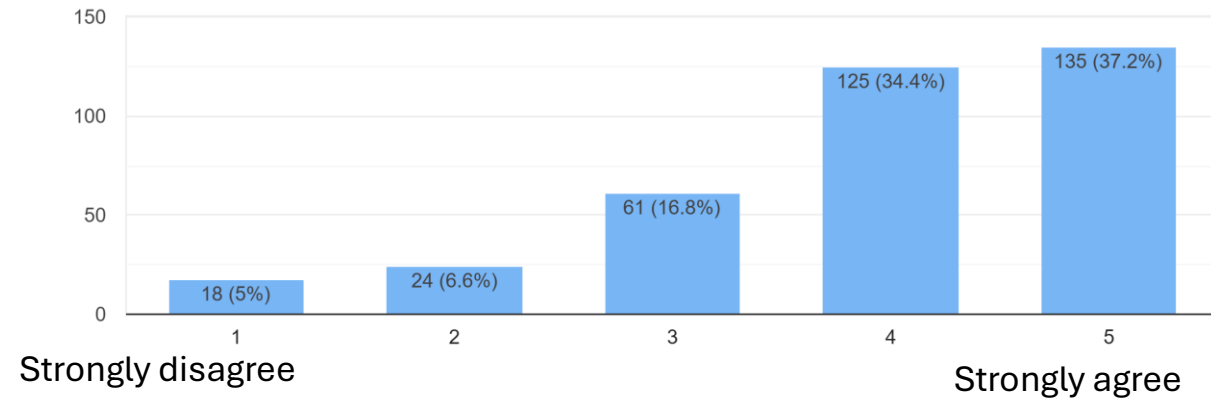
Do you believe your KCDIOM has sufficient awareness of how rankings work and what they require?

363 responses



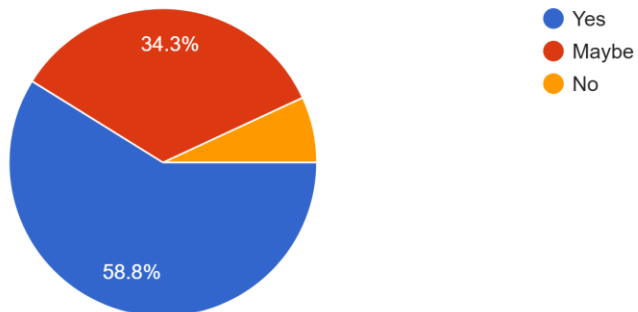
To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "IUM should proactively engage with international university ranking agencies."

363 responses



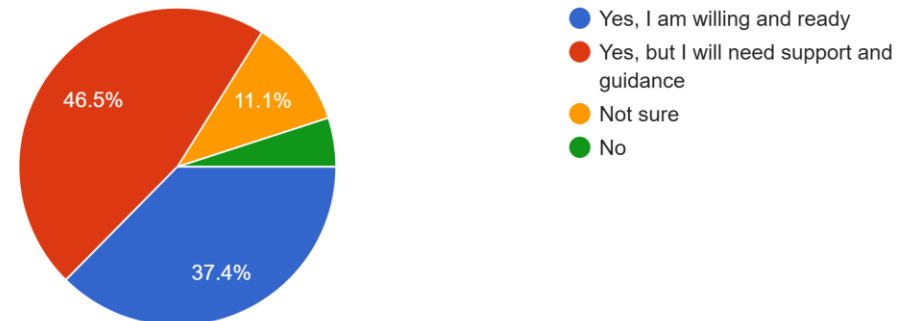
Would you be willing to support or participate in initiatives related to IUM's rankings strategy (e.g., data provision, task force, reporting)?

362 responses



As part of a strategic rankings initiative, are you willing and/or ready to publish in an indexed journal (e.g., Scopus, WoS)?

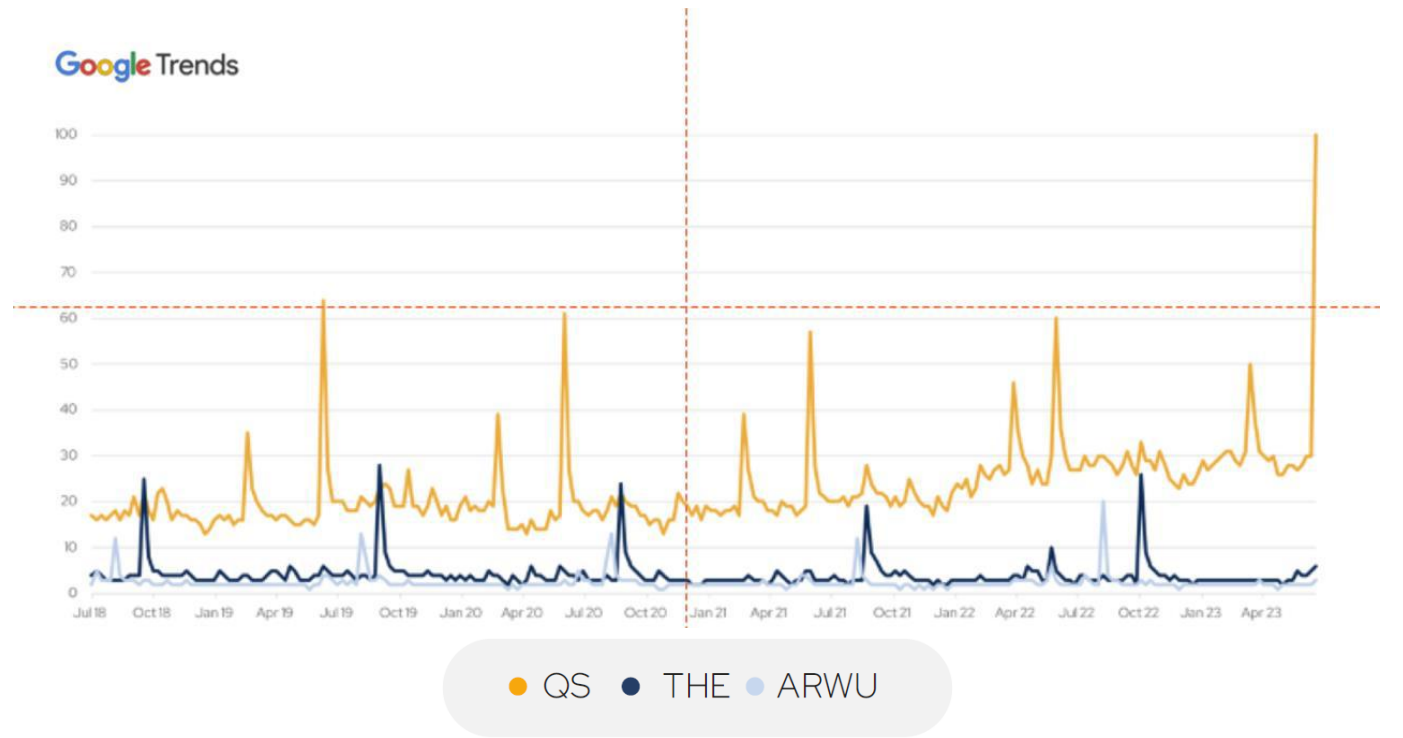
361 responses

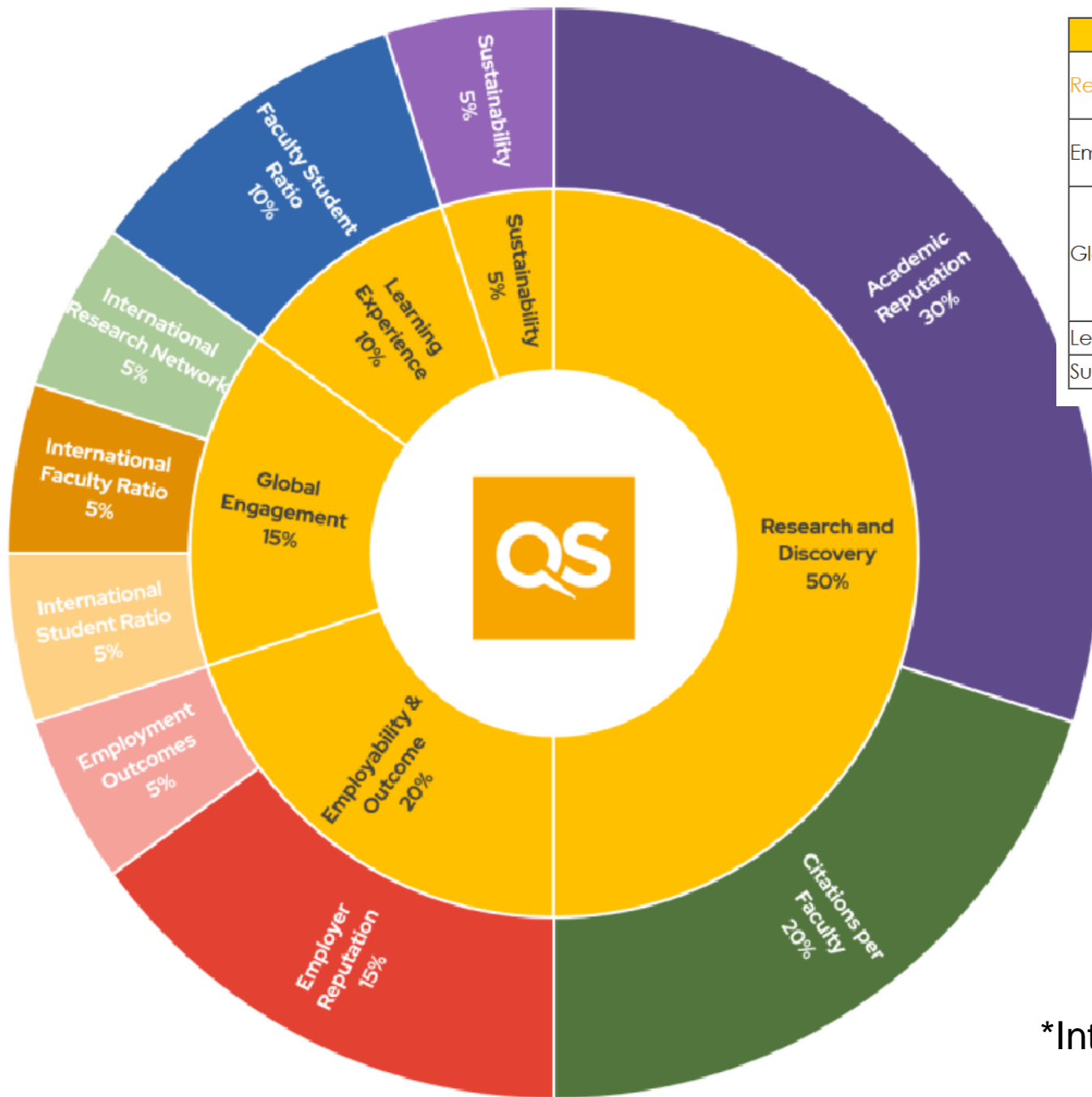


IIUM feedback for This Initiative Thus Far (iii)

- Initial findings indicate **strong support** from the IIUM community.
- Respondents see rankings as a **means for improvement, growth and global positioning**, not as an end in itself.
- Need the **support** and contribution of all stakeholders
- Need to **restrategise** what we are already doing

Current Focus: QS Rankings





Lens	Weighting	Indicator	Weighting
Research and Discovery	50%	Academic Reputation	30%
		Citations per Faculty	20%
Employability and Outcomes	20%	Employer Reputation	15%
		Employment Outcomes	5%
Global Engagement	15%	International Faculty Ratio	5%
		International Research Network	5%
		International Student Diversity	0%
		International Student Ratio	5%
Learning Experience	10%	Faculty Student Ratio	10%
Sustainability	5%	Sustainability	5%

For this 20th edition, QS has significantly evolved the methodology to reflect the shifts in higher education that have occurred over the past two decades, such as the growing importance of sustainability, employability, and research collaborations.

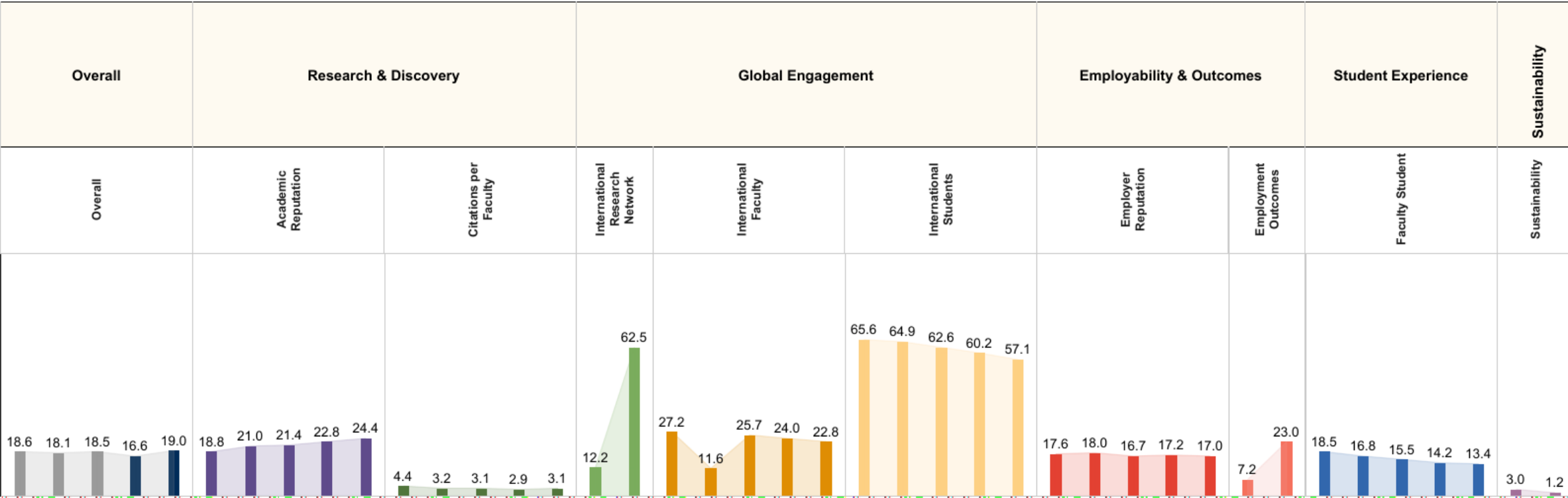
We have introduced three new indicators: Sustainability, employability, and international research collaboration.

*Integrated into overall IIUM strategic plan

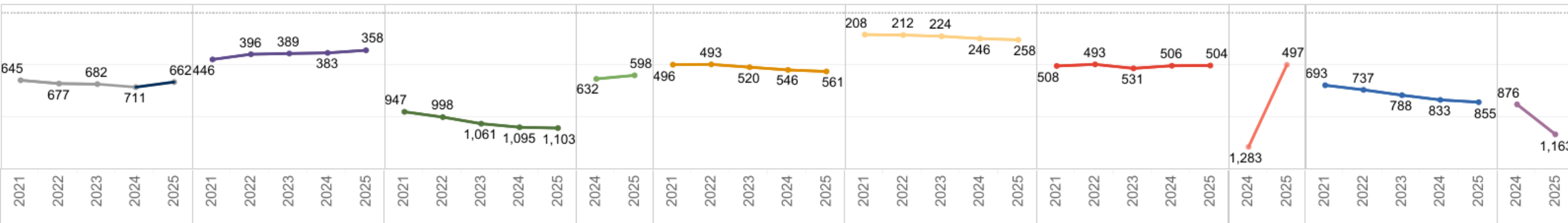
QS World Rankings Performance: 2025



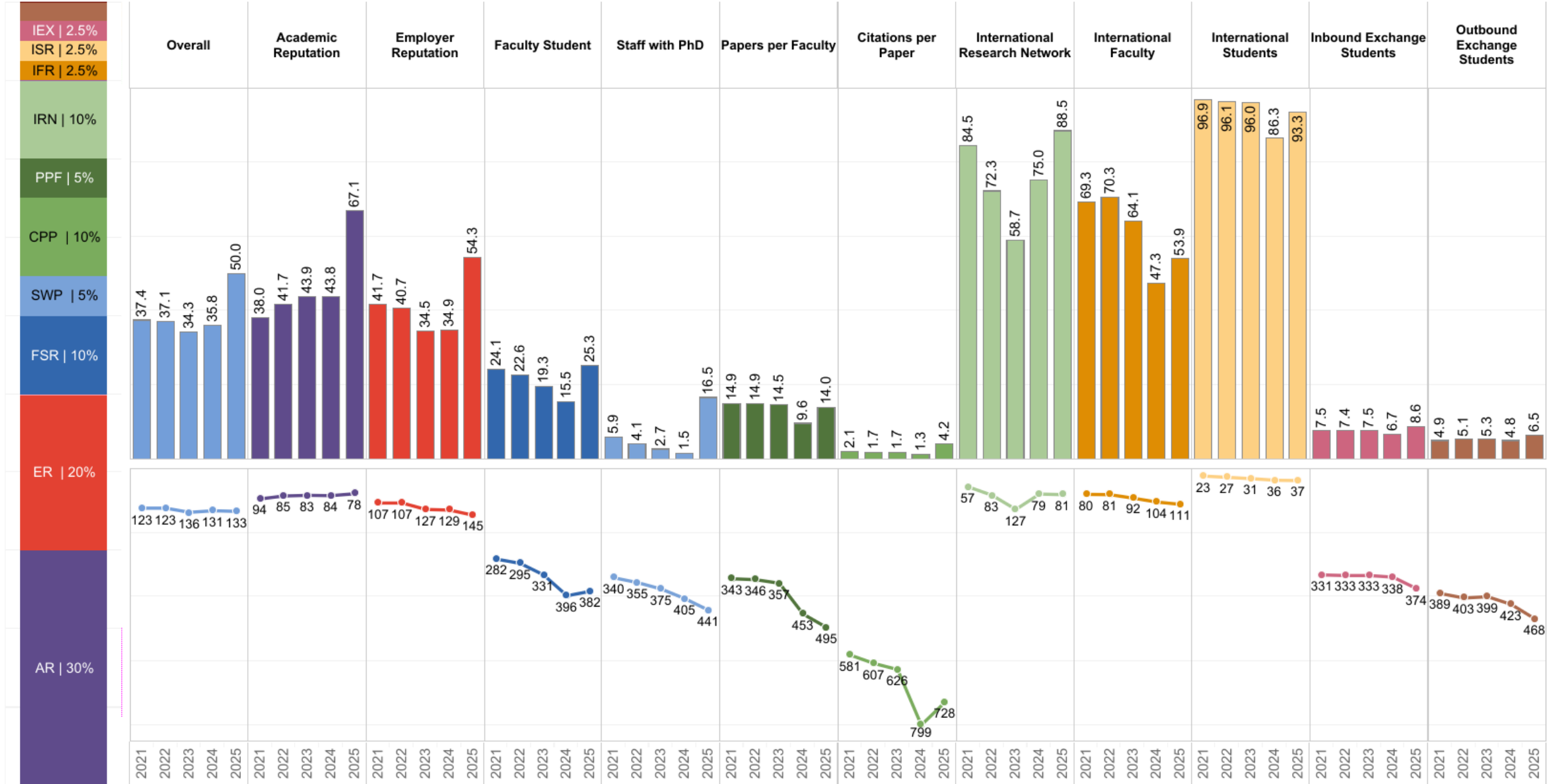
Score



Rank



Overview of Performance in QS World University Rankings by Region



Subject Rankings Indicators

ACADEMIC REPUTATION

The QS World University Rankings by Subject was designed to capture and measure a university's performance across all subject areas.

EMPLOYER REPUTATION

There are a total of 51 Subjects and 5 Broad Subject Areas in this rankings, each assessing institutions based on a combination of 2-5 indicators. The reputational indicators remain the same from the WUR (Data for both indicators is derived from QS Academic and Employer Surveys), but the research indicators differ. They are all based on data derived from Scopus.

CITATIONS PER PAPER

Scopus

Citations per Paper

This measure of impact is used in lieu of the WUR Citations per Faculty indicator to address the impracticality of reliably gathering faculty numbers broken down by discipline for each institution.

H- INDEX

Scopus

H-Index (Hirsch Index or Hirsch Number)

This measure of productivity and impact is effective within a single-discipline subject ranking, where differing research characteristics by discipline are eliminated.

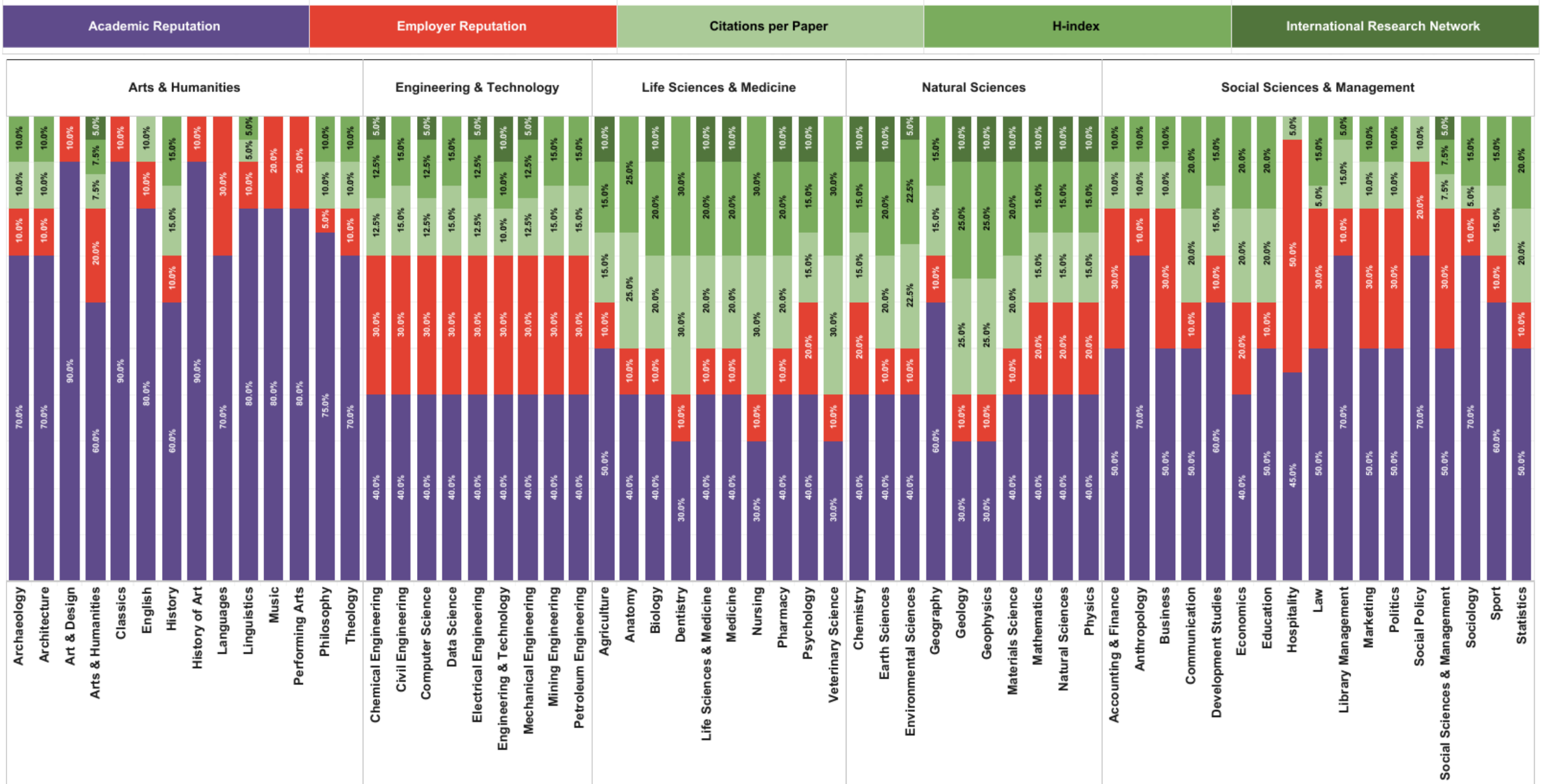
INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH NETWORK

Scopus

International Research Network

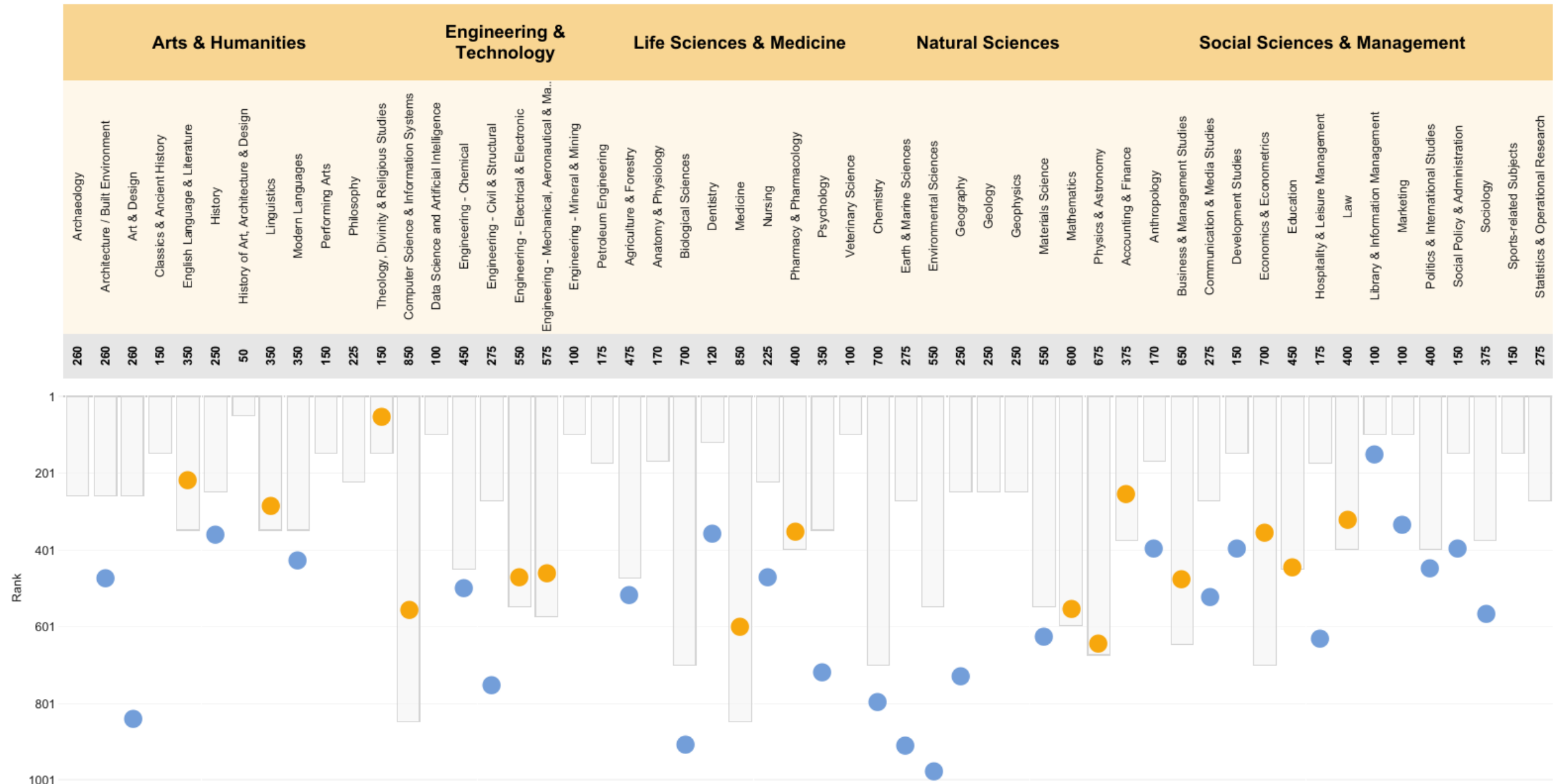
QS International Research Network (IRN) Index is used for the first time in 2022 rankings (in the broad subject areas). It reflects the ability of institutions to diversify the geography of their international research network by establishing sustainable research partnerships with other higher education institutions.

Subject Rankings Methodology: 2025



2025 Performance: Overview

■ Outside Publicly Ranked Range
■ Publicly Ranked



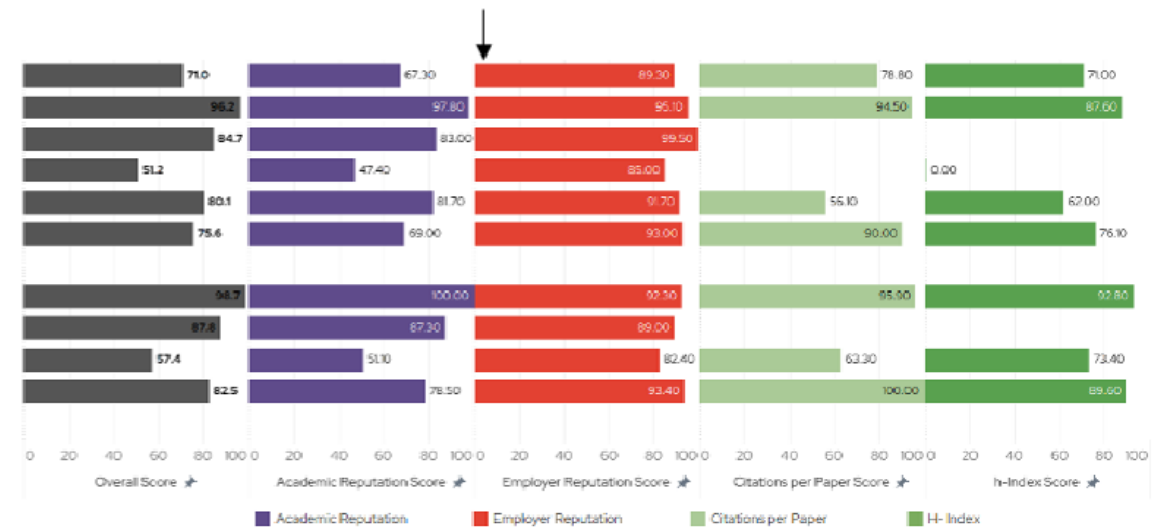
Guide: Subject Rankings

Faculty Area → **MIT: Arts & Humanities**

Subject →

Archaeology	51-100
Architecture / Built Environment	7
Art & Design	5
Classics & Ancient History	
English Language & Literature	29
History	51-100
History of Art, Architecture & Design	
Linguistics	1
Modern Languages	10
Performing Arts	
Philosophy	18
Theology, Divinity & Religious Studies	

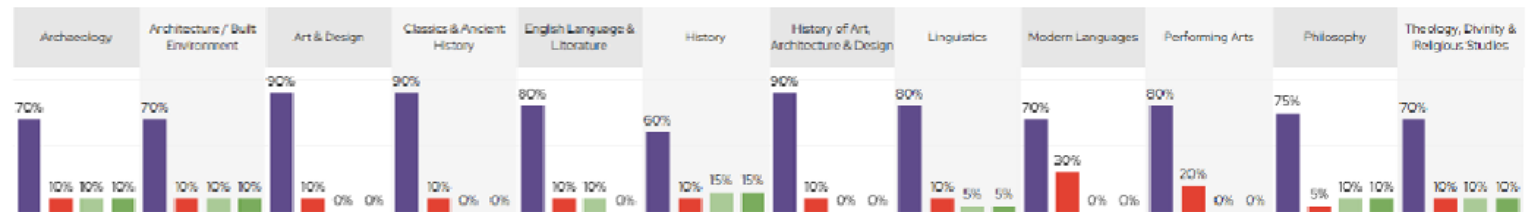
The score that the institution achieved: Overall and in each indicator



Weights of different indicators contributing to the overall assessment in each subject:

- Academic Reputation (AR)
- Employer Reputation (ER)
- Citations per Paper (CPP)
- Hirsch Index (H-Index)
- International Research Network (IRN)

Arts & Humanities: Weights of Indicators in the Methodology

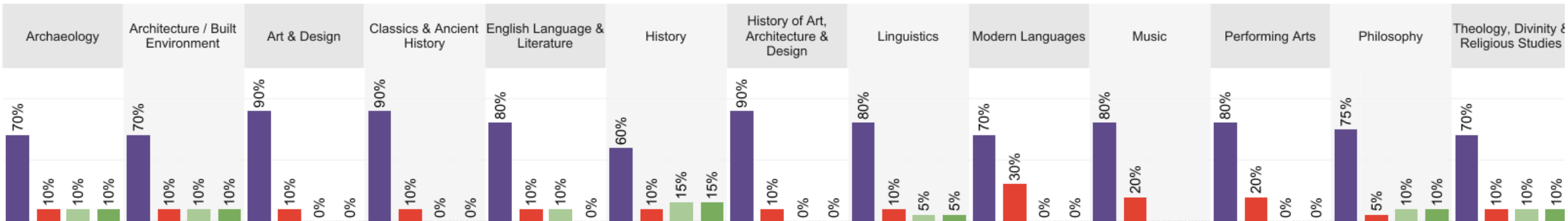


2025 Performance: Art & Humanities

IIUM: Arts & Humanities

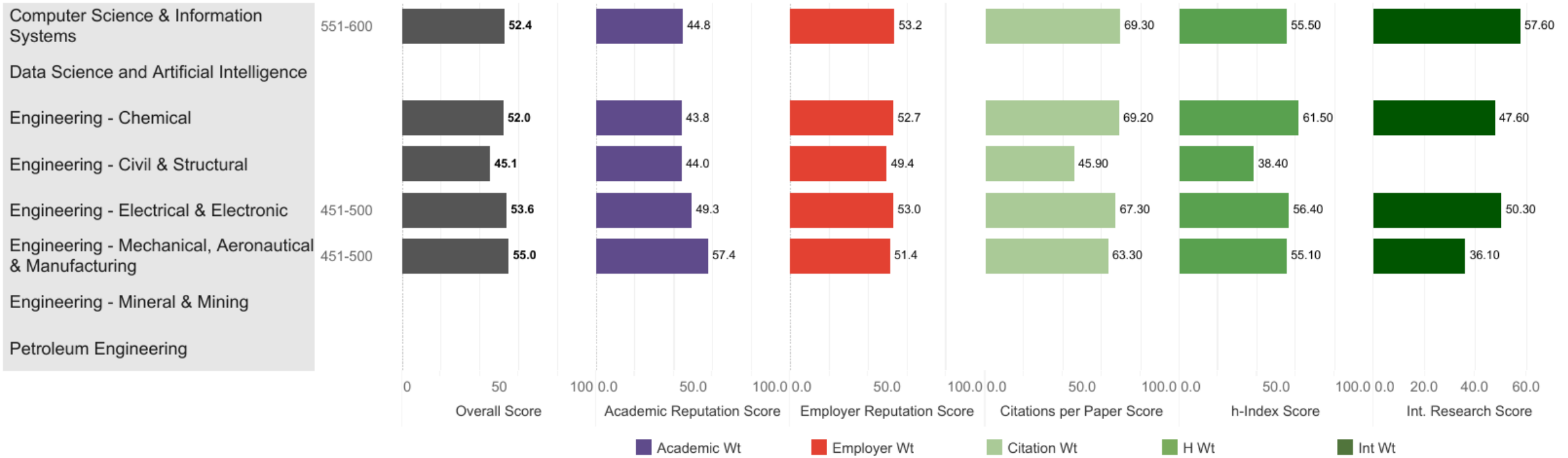


Arts & Humanities: Weights of Indicators in the Methodology

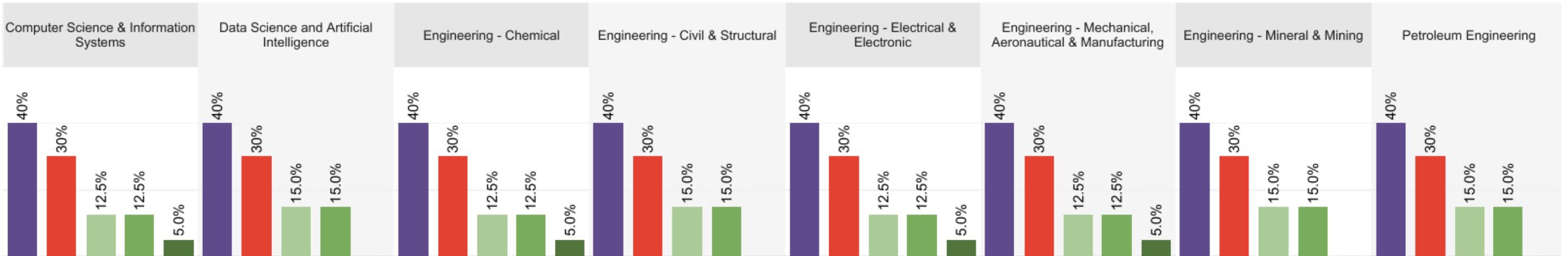


2025 Performance: Engineering & Technology

IIUM: Engineering & Technology



Engineering & Technology: Weights of Indicators in the Methodology

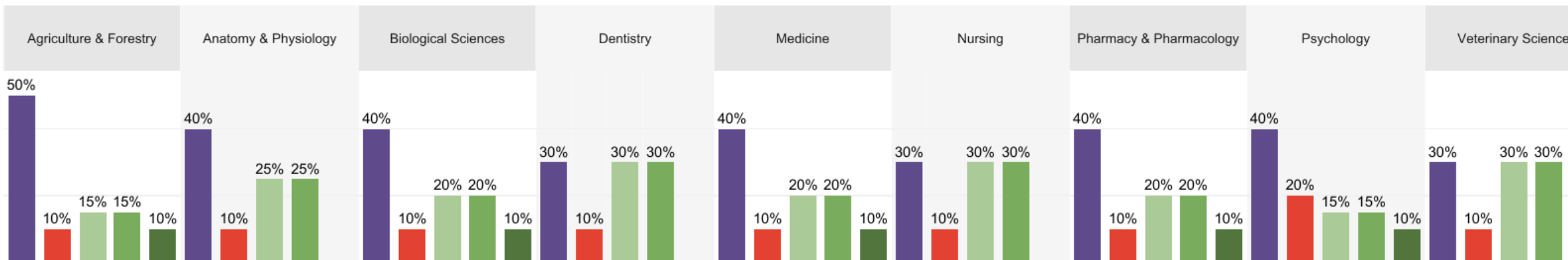


2025 Performance: Life Sciences & Medicine

IIUM: Life Sciences & Medicine



Life Sciences & Medicine: Weights of Indicators in the Methodology

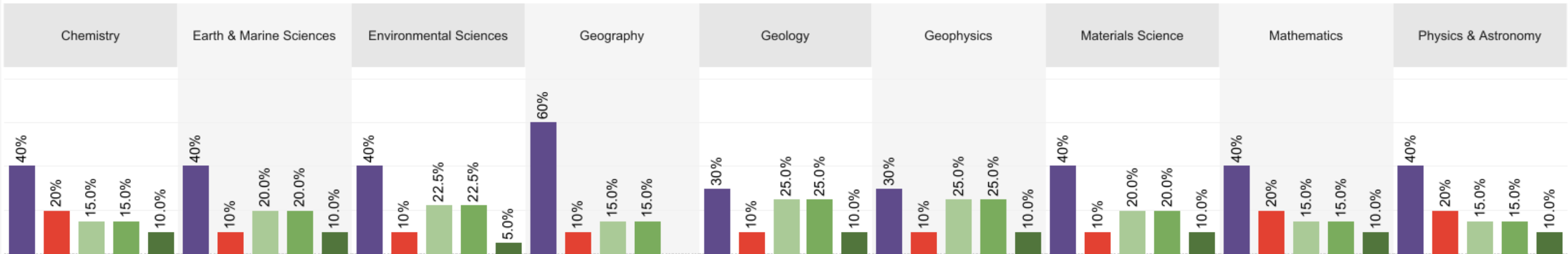


2025 Performance: Natural Sciences

IIUM: Natural Sciences

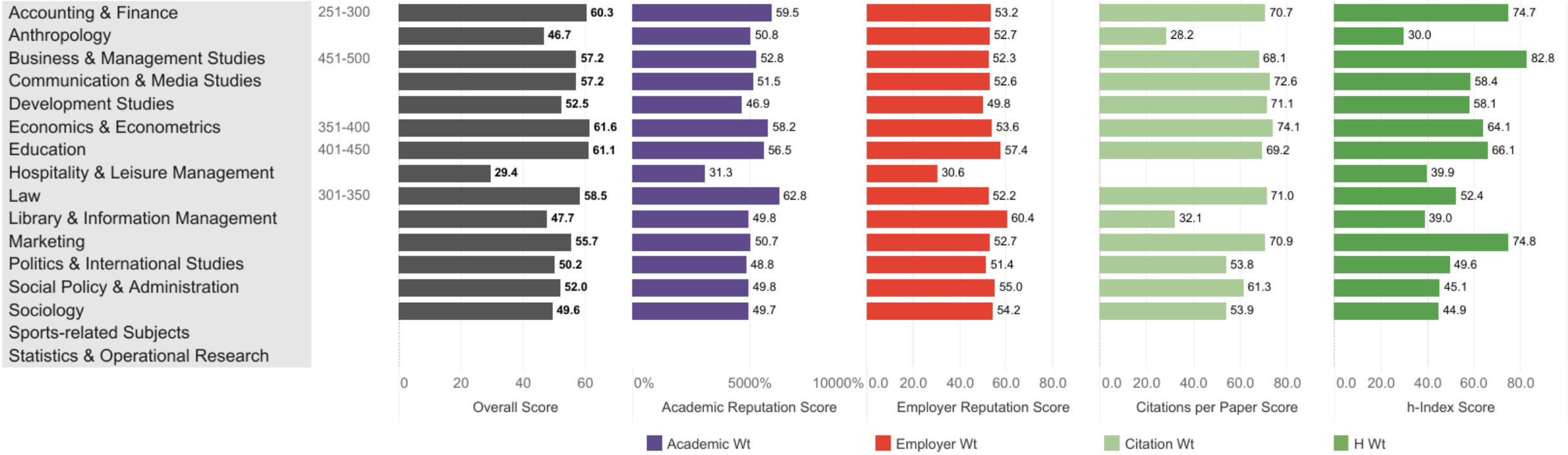


Natural Sciences: Weights of Indicators in the Methodology



2025 Performance: Social Sciences & Management

IIUM: Social Sciences & Management



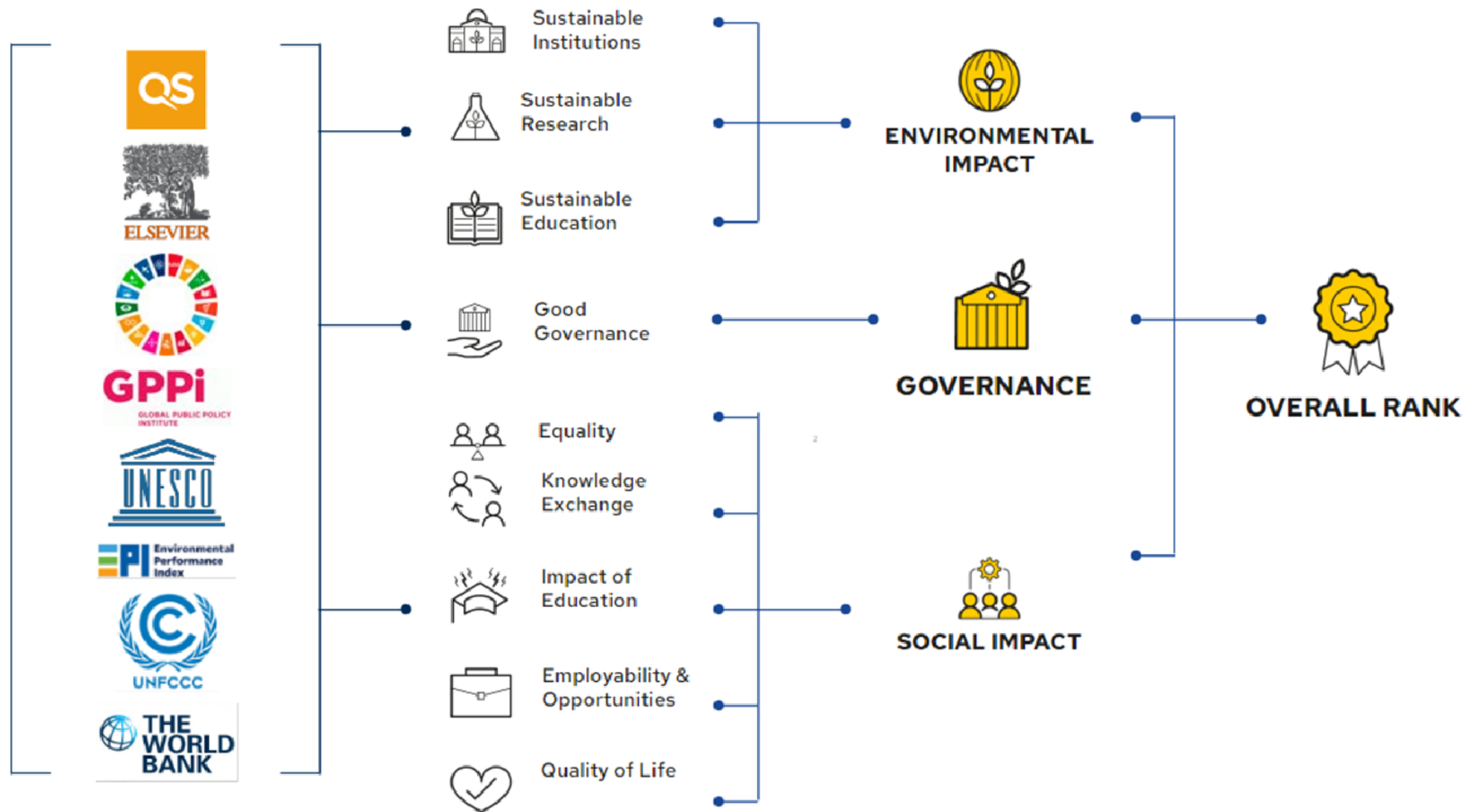
Social Sciences & Management: Weights of Indicators in the Methodology



QS Sustainability Rankings®



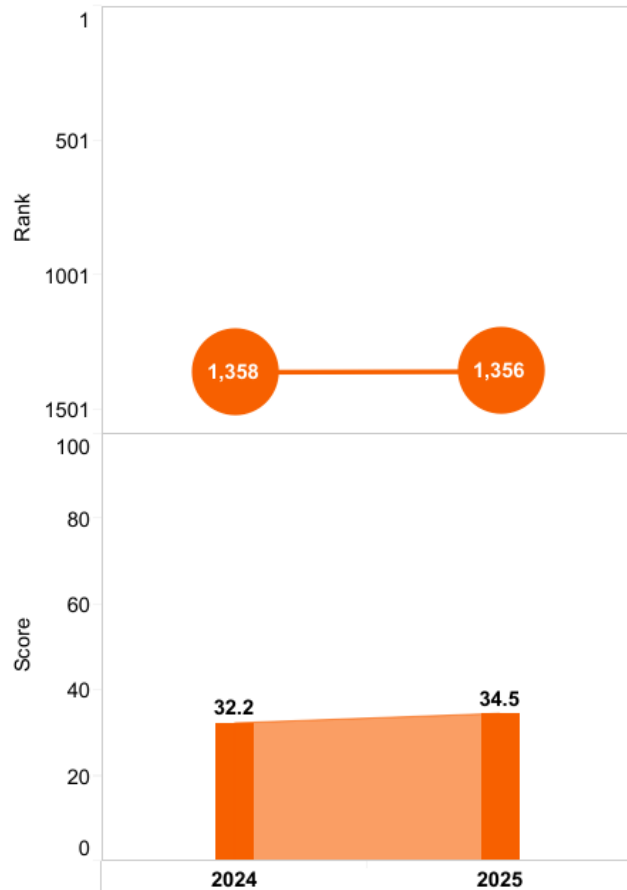
Overall Structure



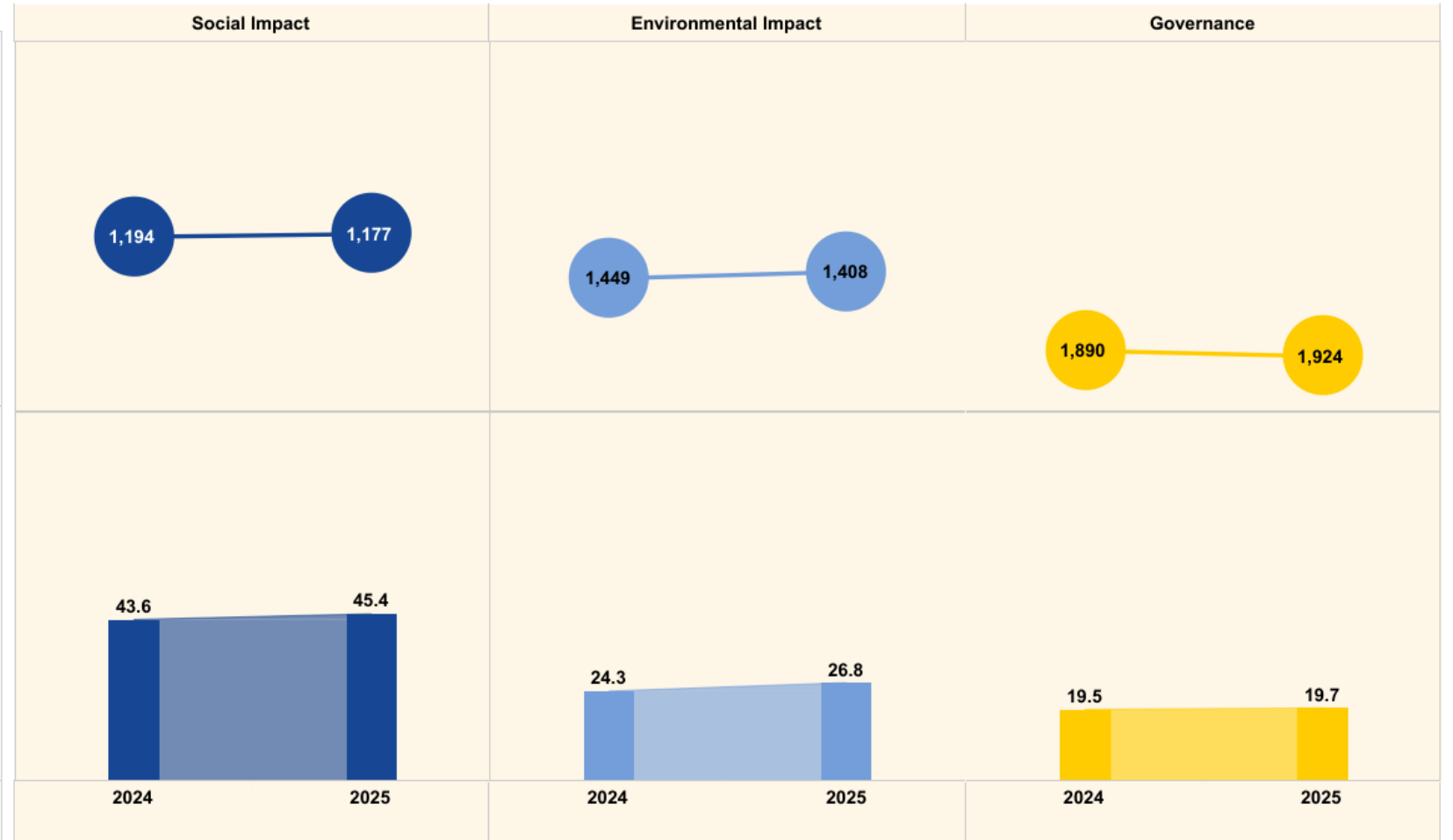
Performance in QS Sustainability Rankings 2025



Overall Ranks and Scores

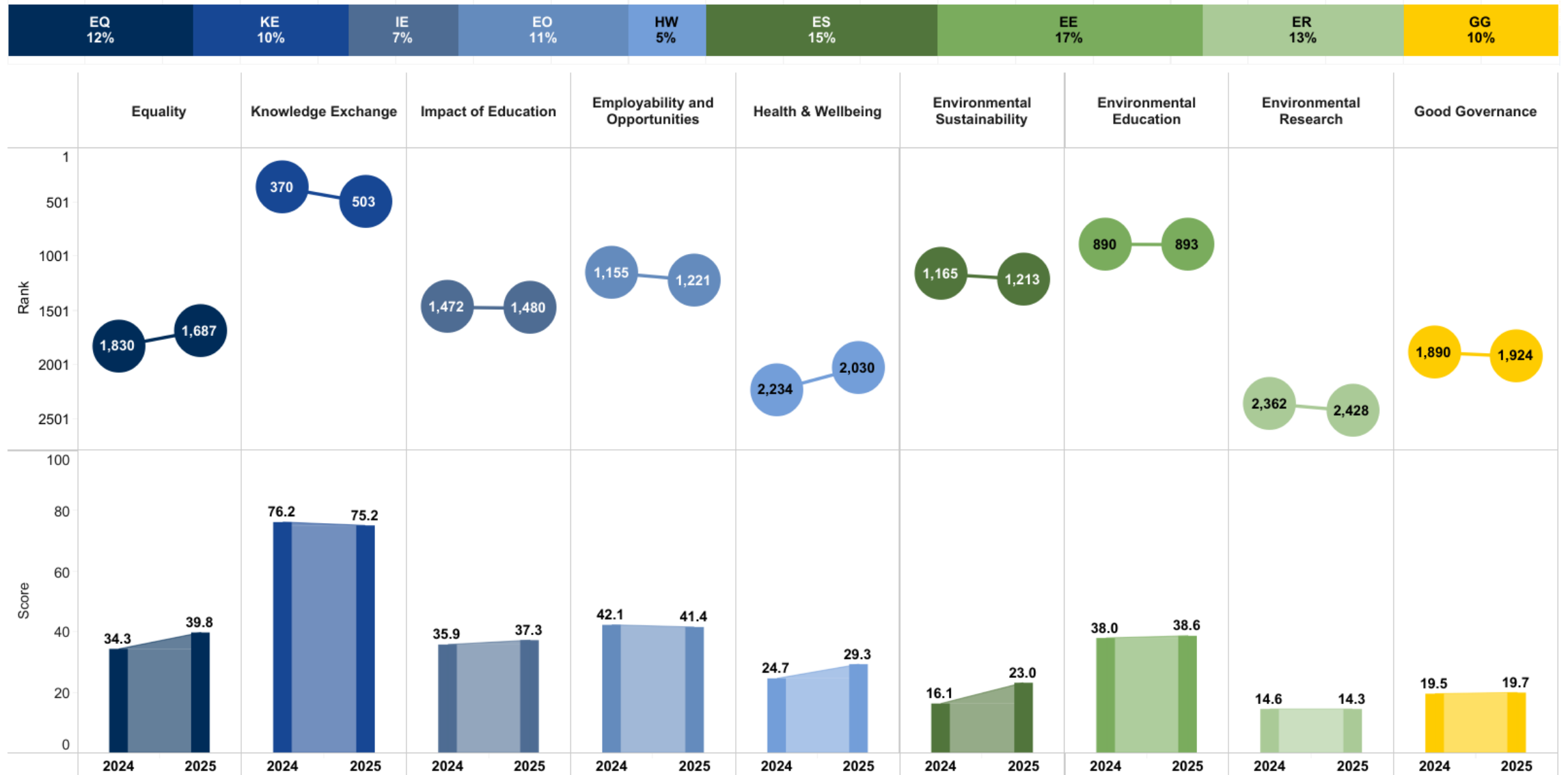


Performance by Indicators



Performance in QS Sustainability Rankings

QS Sustainability Rankings®



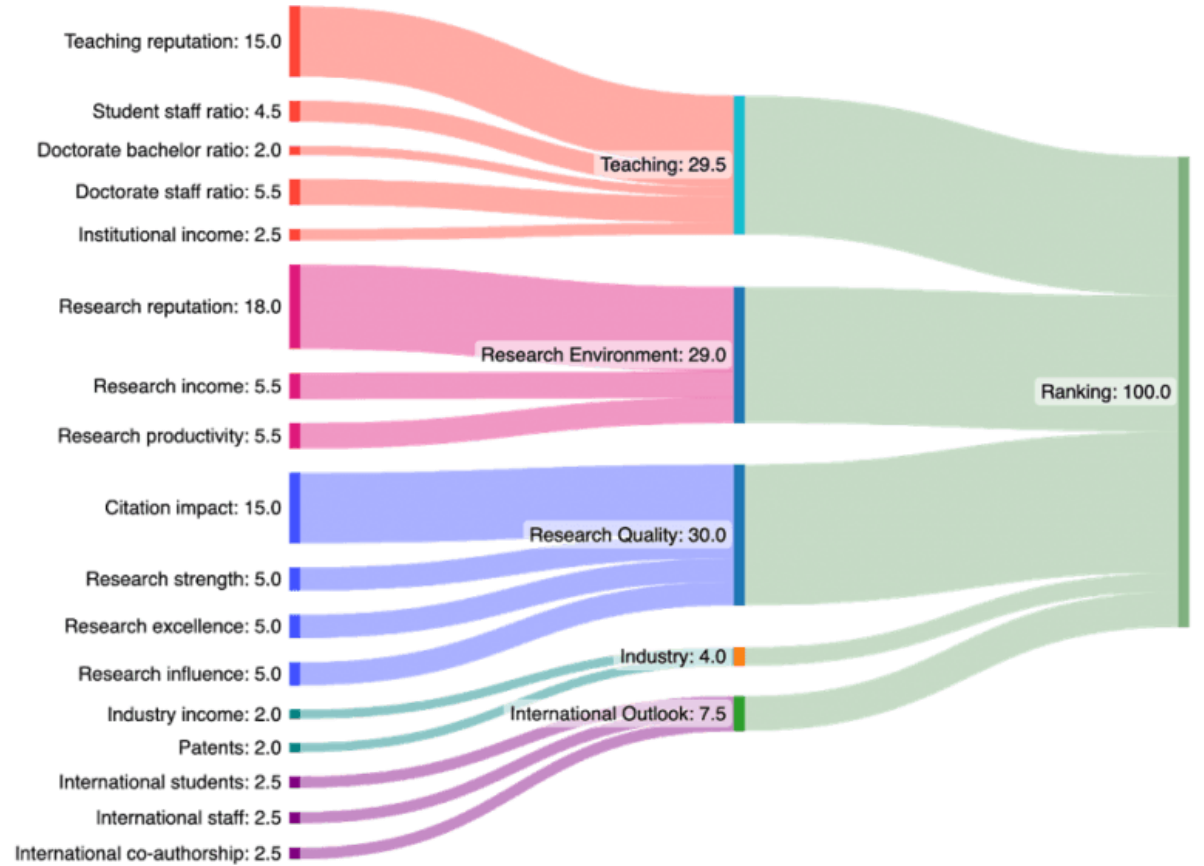
Performance Heatmap: Scores compared to the top in location

	Research & Discovery		Learning Experience
	Academic Reputation	Citations per Faculty	Faculty Student
International Islamic University Malaysia	24.4	3.1	13.4
Universiti Malaya	82.9	29.1	75.7
	Employability & Outcomes		Sustainability
	Employer Reputation	Employment Outcomes	Sustainability
International Islamic University Malaysia	17.0	23.0	1.2
Universiti Malaya	95.1	69.3	83.6
	Global Engagement		
	International Research Network	International Faculty	International Students
International Islamic University Malaysia	62.5	22.8	57.1
Universiti Malaya	91.8	60.2	64.2





THE WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS



- **Impact Rankings** cycle opens in **September 2025**,
- **World University Rankings & Interdisciplinary Science Rankings** open from **January to March 2026**.

Other Rankings?



SHANGHAI
RANKING

(Unranked)

- Since 2009, the ARWU ranking has been published by ShanghaiRanking Consultancy (private organisation)
- Approximately 2,500 universities are ranked but only the top 1,000 published in the final ranking (2022 data)
- Criteria:
 - 1) the number of alumni winning **Nobel Prizes** and Fields Medals (10%)
 - 2) the number of staff winning **Nobel Prizes** and Fields Medals (20%)
 - 3) the number of highly cited researchers selected by Clarivate (20%)
 - 4) the number of papers published in journals of Nature and Science (20%)
 - 5) the number of papers indexed in Science Citation Index Expanded and Social Sciences Citation Index in the WOS (20%)
 - 6) per capita performance of a university (10%)

UniRank™ (Ranked)

- Firstly published in 2005, is a *non-academic* university ranking published twice a year
- Include 13,840 higher education institutions from 200 countries (2023)
- Based on 4 indicators:
 - 1) **Majestic Referring Domains with a minimum Trust Flow (55%)** provides an understanding of the number of quality referring domains, filtering out low-quality/spammy inbound links, each higher education institution's root domain has.
 - 2) **Similarweb Global Rank (35%)** is a website traffic scoring method to determine a website's rank and based on a mix of estimations of a website's monthly unique visitors and monthly pageviews across desktop and mobile web traffic
 - 3) **Moz Domain Authority (5%)** is a search engine ranking score that predicts how likely a website is to rank in search engine result pages and based on dozens of factors; similar to the Google PageRank
 - 4) **Majestic Trust Flow (5%)** is a score developed by Majestic that indicates the perceived trust of a domain based on the quality of backlinks that a domain receives.
- All these indicators tell us how **visible, trusted, and credible** a university's website is **online**. It's less about academic quality and more about digital reputation.

Key Areas we seek to improve and *muhasabah*

- **Academic Reputation (30%):** Active participation in surveys, strengthen external academic networks.
- **Research Publications & Citations (20%):** Focused, high-quality, high-impact, publications.
- **Employer Reputation (20%):** Stronger industry ties, alumni engagement.
- **Employment Outcomes (5%):** Our graduates employability
- **Internationalisation (15%):** More international students and staff members. More strategised international collaboration
- **Learning experience (10%):** Staff to student ratio
- **Sustainability (5%):** We are already doing it, need to strategise and report it.

Expectations from Leadership



Promote **high-quality research output.**
(Publications and citations)



Strengthen **alumni engagement.**
(Reputation)



Enhance **academic and industry networking.**
(internationalisation and strategic research outputs)



Support efforts to **attract international students and faculty.**
(Global engagement)



Embed ranking consciousness in initiatives without losing sight of IIUM's core mission.
(Be strategic on what we do)



Towards Ummatic Excellence

- **This is a shared journey.**
- Rankings are a **tool for improvement**, not a race for vanity. (**Muhasabah** and **Ihsan**)
- Through **teamwork, sincerity, and Ihsan**, IIUM can shine brighter on the global stage.
- Let's work together to realise the full potential of our beloved university.

Thank you