

AppliedHE

University Rankings Methodology

Guide for Higher Education Professionals

Version 2025-1.1

This document describes the data and methodology for the following AppliedHE rankings:

AppliedHE University Ranking: ASEAN Public 2026
AppliedHE University Ranking: ASEAN Private 2026
AppliedHE University Ranking: ALL-ASIA Public 2026
AppliedHE University Ranking: ALL-ASIA Private 2026

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Introduction

AppliedHE, a Singapore-based education technology company, has been compiling university rankings since 2021. AppliedHE compiles rankings with the aim of providing students, parents and other higher education stakeholders with an independent benchmark for comparing universities.

The development and compilation of all AppliedHE rankings is overseen by the independent AppliedHE Ranking Advisory Board (RAB), which is currently being chaired by City University of Hong Kong Secretary to Council and Court Professor Kevin Downing.

This document provides information about AppliedHE's current rankings, as is stated on the cover. This document is intended for use by professional users working at universities. If you are a student, parent or other stakeholder, please visit [AppliedHE.com](https://www.appliedhe.com) for information about the rankings.

Ranking Scope (Criteria for Inclusion)

Institutions that meet the following criteria can be included in the AppliedHE University Rankings.

Inclusion is based on the institution type and geographic location. Institutions can be included in the ranking on a “reporting”-basis (submitting data and participating in surveys) or “non-reporting”-basis (not submitting data and not participating in surveys).

Institution Type

Depending on the ranking, institutions must participate as one of the following types of institution.

Public University – Institution of higher learning that is accredited as a public college or university under the laws of the country in which it is based, and which awards its own Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees (or Master’s degree if students can start after high school).

Private University – Institution of higher learning that is accredited as a private college or university under the laws of the country in which it is based and which awards its own Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees (or Master’s degree if students can start after high school).

Excluded from the rankings are institutions only offering foreign degrees (e.g. foreign branch campuses), only offering Bachelor’s degrees, or specialized graduate schools, such as business schools that only offer MBAs.

Geographical Scope

Institutions must have their main campus in one of the following countries or territories to be included in the ALL-ASIA rankings. Institutions in starred* countries are also included in the ASEAN ranking tables. Country names are based on those used by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Afghanistan	China	Iran, Islamic Republic of
Armenia	Cyprus	Iraq
Azerbaijan	East Timor	Israel
Bahrain	Egypt	Japan
Bangladesh	Georgia	Jordan
Bhutan	Hong Kong, China	Kazakhstan
Brunei Darussalam*	India	Korea, Democratic
Cambodia*	Indonesia*	People's Republic of

Korea, Republic of	Nepal	Tajikistan
Kuwait	Oman	Thailand*
Kyrgyzstan	Pakistan	Timor-Leste
Lao People's Democratic Republic*	Palestine, State of	Türkiye
Lebanon	Philippines*	Turkmenistan
Macao, China	Qatar	United Arab Emirates
Malaysia*	Saudi Arabia	Uzbekistan
Maldives	Singapore*	Viet Nam*
Mongolia	Sri Lanka	Yemen
Myanmar*	Syria	
	Taiwan, China	

Reporting and Non-Reporting Institutions

In the past, AppliedHE rankings were based on an “opt-in” model, whereby universities volunteer to submit data and run the AppliedHE student survey. Unfortunately, the opt-in model attracted a relatively small number of universities, making the ranking significantly less valuable for both students and participating universities due to the lack of reference data.

The current methodology is a hybrid opt-in model, whereby universities are included in the ranking based on publicly available data or estimations and universities will have the option to submit data as “reporting” institutions to ensure a more accurate result.

Due to the lower reliability of data, estimates or proxies that are exclusively from public sources, “non-reporting” universities are evaluated more conservatively than reporting universities. They may therefore be ranked slightly lower than “reporting” universities.

Institutions that submit partial data are classified as “non-reporting”.

Ranking Data

The rankings are compiled from institutional data, bibliometric data, statistical data, an online student survey, and a peer-nomination survey.

Bibliometric and statistical data are directly collected by AppliedHE. The online student survey and peer-nomination surveys are conducted in cooperation with reporting institutions (see earlier for definition). Institution submitted data is subject to a randomized sample audit by AppliedHE.

Institutional Data

Institutions are evaluated based on the following institutional data points. Institutions submitting data should provide the most recently available information. If this information is 2 or 3 years old, and the institution does not have more recent data, then the older data can be submitted.

Faculty – Total staff who are responsible for academic teaching or both academic teaching and research.

Students – Persons who are pursuing a degree at the university, either on a full-time or part-time basis and who have spent 3 months or more at the university.

International Faculty Ratio – Total faculty (see above) with foreign nationality who spend 3 or more months at the university divided by the total number of faculty.

International Student Ratio – Total students (see above) with foreign nationality who spend 3 or more months at the university divided by the total number of students.

Post-Graduate Employment Rate – Number of graduates who, within 6 months of graduation, are employed, self-employed, or pursuing further study (including preparation for exams) divided by the total number of students who responded to the tracer study.

Post-Graduate Employment Tracer Response Rate – Number of graduates who, within 6 months of graduation, are employed, self-employed, or pursuing further study (including preparation for exams) divided by the total number of graduates.

For 'Post Graduate Employment' indicators, institutions should provide an alumni tracer study as evidence. This can be the same documents submitted to the relevant accreditation

body or government department. The tracer study should be uploaded in full, and can be in the English language or the official language of the accrediting body or government department.

Institutions unable to provide a tracer study, providing a tracer study that AppliedHE deems to be inadequate, or having an extremely low score on their tracer study (e.g. due to low response rates), will be assigned a minimum employability score based on the youth unemployment rate of their country (see Statistical Data, below).

AppliedHE reserves the right to share institutional data with third-parties for the purpose of verification.

Bibliometric Data (Google and Webometrics)

Bibliometric data for the ranking is gathered from three sources: Google News (news.google.com), Google Scholar (scholar.google.com) and Webometrics (webometrics.info). Data is collected directly by AppliedHE.

For **Google News**, the most recently completed 1-year period of news coverage is identified based on the name of the institution in one or more languages.

For **Google Scholar**, the most recently completed 5-year period of publications and citations of researchers with profiles affiliated with the respective institution are collected. Researcher affiliation is identified based on the Google Scholar institution profile, and in the second instance, the university's official e-mail address.

For **Webometrics**, the institution's Excellence/Scholar indicator is used.

Statistical Data

When specific employability data for institutions is unavailable, AppliedHE uses the most recent available national youth unemployment data published by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on its website, ilostat.ilo.org.

Student Survey

To gauge students' perspectives, reporting institutions can run the AppliedHE Student Survey. This is a multilingual online survey which institutions must distribute to their entire student body. The survey is a 'standard' student satisfaction survey that is benchmarked based on major international surveys such as the UK's National Student Survey (NSS).

The minimum response rate for the survey is 40% of the student body or 350 responses, whichever is lower.

A sample of the student survey is available here: <https://appliedhe.org/appliedhe-university-ranking-student-survey-english-demo/>

AppliedHE uses a proprietary algorithm to validate survey responses in order to avoid survey manipulation. AppliedHE reserves the right to exclude institutions from the ranking if student survey responses appear to be unreliable.

Currently, AppliedHE does not allow the use of alternative student satisfaction surveys. However, AppliedHE will share anonymized survey responses with participating universities.

Peer-Nomination Survey

Every reporting institution should nominate between 7-12 public universities and 7-12 private universities within the ALL-ASIA region which they hold in high regard. The liaison of the institution will receive a single invitation to participate in the Peer-Nomination Survey after the student surveys have been completed. Completing the survey is mandatory for reporting universities.

Ranking Calculation

This section outlines how the AppliedHE rankings are calculated using the ranking data stated in the previous section.

To ensure that extreme values of indicators do not have an outsized influence on the ranking results, a log-normalization is applied to the following indicators: Google Scholar citations per paper, citations per faculty, and institutional reputation.

Public Universities

Criteria	Reporting Institutions	Non-Reporting Institutions
Teaching & Learning (40%)	* AppliedHE Student Survey (20%) * Faculty to student ratio	* Lowest student survey scores of reporting universities (20%)

	(20%)	* Faculty to student ratio (20%)
Employability (15%)	6-months post-graduation (self) employment or further study based on institution-submitted report (7.5% per total graduates and 7.5% per total survey respondents) <i>OR</i> discounted national rate (see “Non-Reporting”)	Discounted national youth employment rate based on the youth unemployment rate ; for example, 1.5x 10% youth unemployment rate = 85% employability rate.
Research (15%)	* Google Scholar citations per paper past 5 years (5%), * Google Scholar citations per faculty past 5 years (5%) * Webometrics Excellence/Scholar indicator (5%)	<i>Same as Reporting</i>
Community Engagement (10%)	* Google News reports (5%) * AppliedHE Student Survey (5%)	* Google News reports in 2022 (5%) * <i>Lowest student survey score of reporting universities</i> (5%)
Internationalization (10%)	* International student ratio (5%) * International faculty ratio (5%)	<i>Same as Reporting</i>
Institutional Reputation (10%)	AppliedHE Peer-Nomination Survey (10%)	<i>Same as Reporting</i>

Private Universities

Criteria	Reporting Institutions	Non-Reporting Institutions
Teaching & Learning (40%)	* AppliedHE Student Survey (20%) * Faculty to student ratio (20%)	* Lowest student survey scores of reporting universities (20%) * Faculty to student ratio (20%)

Employability (20%)	6-months post-graduation (self) employment or further study based on institution-submitted report (10% per total graduates and 10% per total survey respondents) <i>OR</i> discounted national rate (see “Non-Reporting”)	Discounted national youth employment rate based on the youth unemployment rate ; for example, 1.5x 10% youth unemployment rate = 85% employability rate.
Research (10%)	* Google Scholar citations per paper past 5 years (5%), * Google Scholar citations per faculty past 5 years (5%)	<i>Same as Reporting</i>
Community Engagement (10%)	* Google News reports (5%) * AppliedHE Student Survey (5%)	* Google News reports in 2022 (5%) * <i>Lowest student survey score of reporting universities (5%)</i>
Internationalization (10%)	* International student ratio (5%) * International faculty ratio (5%)	<i>Same as Reporting</i>
Institutional Reputation (10%)	AppliedHE Peer-Nomination Survey (10%)	<i>Same as Reporting</i>

Submitting Data

Institutions intending to submit data for the rankings should be aware of the data submission timeline. Data submission can be aided by the checklist provided below.

Timeline

Step 1 – Registration of liaison person and institutional data submission. This can be done online via <https://vault.AppliedHE.com> and should be completed before 1 September 2025.

Step 2 – After completing step 1, a link for the Student Survey will be sent via email to the liaison person. This link should be sent out to the entire student body and should achieve a response rate of 40% of the total student body or 350 responses (whichever is lower) before 1 October 2025.

Step 3 – After step 2, the liaison person will receive an invitation to participate in the Peer-Nomination survey around 1 October 2025.

Step 4 – Ranking results are announced in November or December 2025.

Checklist

The following data will be requested as part of the ranking process:

- A. **Institution name** – Please enter the name used by your institution for English-speaking international audiences.
- B. **Location of institution** – Please confirm that your institution is located in one of the participating countries (see above).
- C. **Confirm that your institution qualifies as a “university”** – (a) provides Bachelor- and Master-level courses, (b) awards its own Degrees and Diplomas, and (c) is recognized by the government as a locally accredited public or private institution of higher learning.
- D. **Nominate an official contact person** (liaison) with their name, designation, email address and telephone number.
- E. **Institution logo** (png, gif, jpg, jpeg, maximum size 5 MB) and link to official English-language website.
- F. **Faculty and student body** – Faculty, international faculty, students and international student numbers based on the ranking definitions.
- G. **Graduate outcomes** (employment and further studies after 6 months) with evidence from an official graduate tracer study.

- H. **Name of institution in other languages** than English, so that we can track its online presence
- I. Institution's **official web domain** (used for faculty email)
- J. A link to the institution's official **Google Scholar profile** (if available)

Further Information

If you have further questions about the ranking process, please contact the AppliedHE Ranking Team via support@AppliedHE.org.

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