



Transformation of Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Uzbekistan: Trends, Risks, and Opportunities

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INSPIRE QA INNOVATE IMPACT

FUTURE-READY EXCELLENCE



We embrace emerging technologies, AI-driven learning, micro-credentials, and flexible pathways.

INCLUSIVE BY DESIGN

We ensure equal opportunities, student wellbeing, gender equity, and access for vulnerable groups.

GLOBALLY CONNECTED

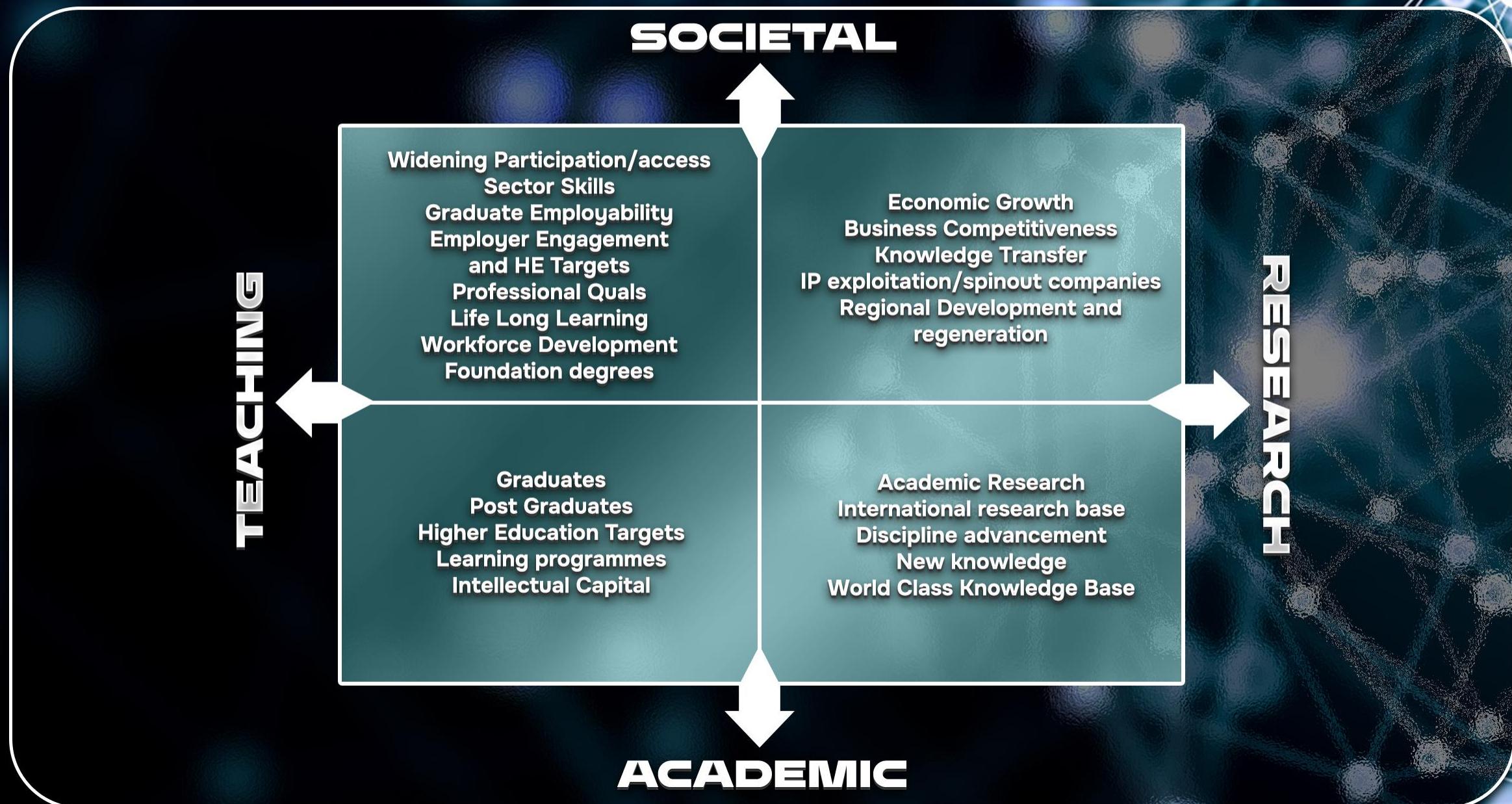


We strengthen global partnerships, mobility, joint degrees, and international QA alignment.





UNDERSTANDING THE MULTI-DIMENSIONAL MISSION OF UNIVERSITIES





WHY QA MATTERS



- Fast expansion
- Employer expectations
- Bologna alignment
- Internationalisation (Erasmus+ projects, ACQUIN/FIBAA reviews, Rankings benchmarking)

STRENGTHS

- Political support
- ESG adoption
- Accreditation reforms
- Autonomy
- Digitalisation





UZBEKISTAN'S HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN NUMBERS

2016 77

72 PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

- PRIVATE

5 INTERNATIONAL

2024 231

124 PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

77 PRIVATE

32 INTERNATIONAL

2025 204

103 PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

71 PRIVATE

30 INTERNATIONAL

2024



2025

PROGRESS OF INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION IN UZBEKISTAN'S HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR:

2023

21 programmes
• 6 HEIs

2024

42 programmes
• 10 HEIs

2025

23 programmes
• 7 HEIs

TRENDS 2024-2030

- Outcome-Based Education (OBE)
- Micro-credentials and flexible learning pathways
- Digital QA and automated monitoring tools
- KPI-based and performance-driven funding
- Rapid expansion of HEIs → QA capacity under pressure

Emerging Problems

- Formalistic QA approaches
- Staff workload overload
- Misalignment between programmes and labour-market needs

Critical Warning Signals

- Diploma inflation
- Declining employer confidence
- Risk of reduced international recognition



INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES

- Underdeveloped internal QA (IQA) systems
- Gaps in learning outcomes design and assessment
- Weak mechanisms for student and stakeholder feedback

System-level Challenges

- National Qualifications Framework (NQF) still pending full implementation
- Gaps in transparency and data governance
- Centralised regulatory processes slowing innovation





Are the best universities those that focus disproportionately on research or those that focus on student learning and helping graduates earn credentials for sustainable living and employment?



Are the best universities those which pursue global reputation OR those that encourage civic engagement and responsibility to their communities and wider society?



Are the best universities those which adopt indicators chosen by ranking organisations for their own purposes OR those which choose indicators which best align with the university's mission and purpose?



QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2026



The Tashkent Institute of Irrigation and Agricultural Mechanization Engineers National Research University ranked

721-730th

The National University of Uzbekistan ranked

721-730th

Tashkent State Technical University ranked

901-950th.

Four universities achieved results within higher ranking bands:

Samarkand State University ranked

1001-1200th

Tashkent State University of Economics ranked

1001-1200th

Tashkent State Transport University ranked

1200-1400th

Tashkent University of Information Technologies ranked

1400+th

QUACQUARELLI SYMONDS (QS) - SUBJECT RANKINGS



Uzbekistan State University of World Languages

- Linguistics – 251-300 band

Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature

- Modern Languages – 301-350 band

National University of Uzbekistan

- Modern Languages – 301-350 band
- Mathematics – 401-450 band
- Physics & Astronomy – 601-675 band

TIIAME National Research University

- Environmental Sciences – 351-400 band
- Engineering & Technology – 401-450 band

Tashkent State University of Economics

- Economics & Econometrics – 451-500 band



TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION - IMPACT RANKINGS 2025



Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature	201-300 band
TIIAME National Research University	201-300 band
National University of Uzbekistan	201-300 band
Tashkent State University of Law	301-400 band
Samarkand State University	401-600 band
Tashkent State University of Economics	401-600 band
Samarkand State Medical University	601-800 band
Bukhara State University	601-800 band
Navoi State University	801-1000 band
Tashkent State Technical University	801-1000 band
Uzbekistan National Pedagogical University	801-1000 band

TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION - SUBJECT RANKINGS 2025

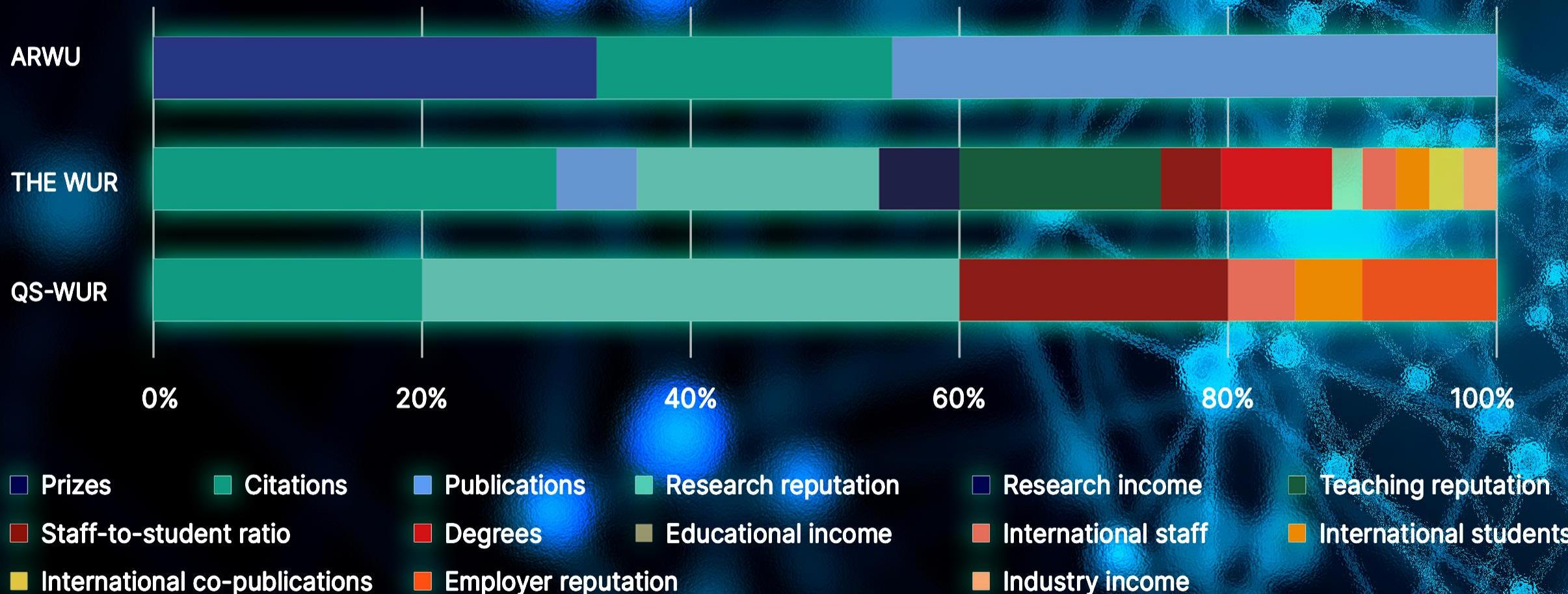


TIIAME National Research University	<i>Engineering</i> 501-600
National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbek	<i>Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics</i> 301-400

National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbek *Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics* 601-800

Tashkent University of Information Technologies
Computer Science and Programming Technologies 1001+
Education 601+

INDICATORS USED IN MAIN RANKINGS





BEFORE USING RANKINGS...

As commercial, for-profit enterprises, international rankings are not accountable to the public, the academic community, or governments (UNESCO UNU, 2023).

Ellen Hazelkorn (TAM, 2024)

For this reason, rankings must be used critically and within a broader QA and evidence-based management framework.

Key Considerations

Ensure rankings support—not drive—your strategic goals and quality agenda.

Rankings should complement internal QA processes, not replace them.

Avoid using rankings as the basis for strategy or for assessing educational or research quality.

QA, peer review, and learning outcomes remain more reliable.

Use limited resources strategically to strengthen QA systems, governance, research culture, and data transparency rather than chasing ranking metrics.

Alternative Ways to Demonstrate Excellence

Position performance relative to the global system (e.g., “top 5% of 21,000 universities”).

Highlight strength in specific disciplines, research areas, or societal impact.

Showcase graduate competencies and employability outcomes.

Communicate contributions to SDGs and national QA priorities.

DO



Develop a strategic plan grounded in your institution's mission, context, and long-term academic goals – not driven by rankings.

Use rankings as one of several tools within a broader QA and benchmarking system, ensuring they complement—not replace—internal evaluation mechanisms.

Create a realistic and evidence-based performance framework, with indicators that meaningfully reflect progress in teaching, research, governance, and impact.

Adopt data-driven decision-making practices, selecting indicators that are relevant, measurable, and aligned with institutional priorities.

DON'T



Do not reshape your institutional mission or academic identity simply to climb rankings, as this undermines long-term quality and relevance.

Do not rely on rankings as the primary or sole set of performance indicators, as this distorts internal priorities and weakens QA systems.

Do not use rankings to drive resource allocation or strategic decisions in isolation, without proper consideration of academic integrity, student needs, and national priorities.

Do not manipulate or artificially enhance public data, as this damages credibility, risks sanctions, and weakens trust among stakeholders.

WHAT RANKINGS MEASURE

Bio- and medical sciences research – focus on citations

Student and Faculty Characteristics (e.g., productivity, entry criteria, faculty/student ratio, employment, salaries)

**Internationalization as % students/staff
Reputation – amongst peers, employers, students**

Emphasis on elite universities and elite/high achieving students



RANKINGS DON'T MEASURE

Teaching and Learning, incl. "added value",

Arts, Humanities and Social Science Research

**Impact and Benefit of Research
Regional or Civic Engagement
Student Experience**

Ignore non-traditional students, e.g., mature and adult learners





KEY RECOMMENDATIONS TO STRENGTHEN QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 1. Focus on your mission – and develop a strategic vision and plan**
- 2. Concentrate on niche areas of education & research – capable of achieving comparable excellence**
Vertical integration – T&L, research, doctoral education, engagement.
University Education Model (UEM) – implemented comprehensively/holistically.
- 3. Collaborate to strengthen capabilities and capacity – education & research**
- 4. Strengthen internal quality assurance (IQA)**
- 5. Internationalisation**
Embrace new models, including virtual internationalisation/COIL, engagement/SDGs etc.
- 6. Change the culture and process of recognition and reward**
- 7. Strengthen institutional governance and the quality of leadership and management at all levels in the organisation.**
Strategic capacity and capability is vital; Professionalisation and modernisation of system and institutional governance
- 8. Engage in peer/bench-learning with appropriate peers as a strategic tool**

Policy Actions To Consider

1. National Strategic Plan for Higher Education
2. Quality Assurance Agency
3. National Science/Research Agency to supports and fund research
4. National Centre for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning
5. Strengthen Collaboration as a Fundamental Principle: e.g.,
6. graduate schools, research centres, education programmes
7. Strengthen Data Collection and Data-analytic Practices and Capacity

TSUULL can confidently present the following as verified QA success stories:

1. Data-driven support and monitoring of low-income students
2. Comprehensive graduation and employment tracking
3. Integration of SDGs into academic programmes
4. Powerful community-engaged learning system
5. Strong external partnerships supporting third mission goals
6. Student-centred environments with measurable wellbeing outcomes
7. Evidence of research-led teaching across faculties
8. Transparent reporting aligned with ESG public information standards

Click here

THAN YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!



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