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UCT rises nine places in QS World University Rankings

The University of Cape Town has achieved its highest ranking so far in the annual Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings, due to be released on 10 September 2013. The university has been placed at 145, up nine places from 154 last year. UCT remains the top ranked African university in the QS World University Rankings.

UCT is one of seven South African institutions included in the rankings, which compare the top 800 institutions around the globe, looking at criteria related to research, employability, teaching and international outlook.

Patricia Lucas, UCT's Manager: Communications & Media Liaison, said: "As we have said in the past, South Africa and, for that matter, Africa as a whole benefit from having universities ranked on an international measure such as the QS. A good performance in the rankings is evidence of the world-class education that South Africans and Africans can get at home. Prospective students and staff the world over use the rankings to decide where to study and work."

Lucas said: "At the same time, however, we remain mindful that all ranking systems have inherent flaws. In the South African context, where we have to allocate resources to bridging the gap between inadequate schooling and the high standards of a leading university, there is a risk that too much focus on the rankings might divert resources away from spending to improve access, because there are no criteria to measure that factor."

Lucas continued: "So it's important to understand why a university placed on a particular ranking system, to see different factors contributed to that placement – and why the same university might receive a substantially different score from different ranking systems."

The Times Higher Education (THE) World Rankings are expected later this year. UCT placed at 113 last year, and ranked in the top 200 in the THE rankings in 2012.

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