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UCT remains top in SA in THE World University Rankings

The University of Cape Town is South Africa's top achiever once again, although it has dropped 28 places to 148th in the latest Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2016-17 results published on 21 September 2016.

"UCT is disappointed to have dropped in the rankings," says Professor Danie Visser, Deputy Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for research and internationalisation.

"However, this does not mean that our research and teaching are declining in quality. It is important to note that rankings are relative – in other words, institutions are ranked in relation to one another. Therefore an institution can maintain or even improve its actual scores, but drop in places when ranked against other institutions that have improved even more. This year, UCT saw only a very slight drop in its overall score, but a significant drop in places."

The THE rankings use five main categories, each intended to represent excellence in higher education, weighted as follows: teaching 30%, research 30%, citations 30%, international outlook 7.5%, and industry income 2.5%.

UCT has performed particularly well in the industry income category: it remains in the top 10% of all universities worldwide (ranked 54th out of the total of 980 institutions).

UCT improved its score in the citations category, which measures the number of times a piece of research is cited, or referred to, but dropped one place. It maintained its score in international outlook, yet saw a slight drop in places (126th from 120th).

UCT's scores in teaching and research dropped very slightly, but this resulted in a significant drop in its ranked position in both categories. In teaching, scores improved in the ratio of doctorate to undergraduate students and in the number of doctorates awarded to academic staff, both important indicators for a research-intensive university.

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