

UNIVERSITI Utara Malaysia (UUM) and Universiti Teknologi Petronas (UTP) have been listed in the *Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2016-17* for the first time.

They join the other five Malaysian universities in the top 980 of the global list. (see table)

Phil Baty, the editor of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, said: "The top 980 list represents just five per cent of the world's higher education institutions, so we congratulate all universities who have made this year's list."

He said it is great news that seven Malaysian universities make this year's list of the world's top universities, including five in the 601-800 band.

"Malaysia invests a huge amount in higher education and has marketed itself as a knowledge economy and innovation hub in recent years.

"However, the nation's public universities have been hit by a 15 per cent budget cut this year, after the economy came under pressure from lower oil and commodity prices," he said when commenting on the release of the rankings last

UUM, UTP make debut in Times rankings

Thursday.

"Malaysia must ensure that it continues to make higher education a priority if it is to succeed in its ambition to create world-class universities," he said.

UUM vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Mohamad Mustafa Ishak expressed his delight that the university has been listed in the rankings this year.

"For a start, 801+ is okay," he said, adding that the university now knows where it stands among almost 1,000 universities worldwide.

Prof Mohamad Mustafa said that UUM is actually at a disadvantage when it comes to citation scores as the university only offers courses in business, management and social sciences.

He explained that citations in the sciences and engineering carried more points in the THE World University Rankings.

UTP vice-chancellor Datuk Dr Abdul Rahim Hashim who expressed his joy at the varsity's place in the rankings, said this was

the first time that the private university is taking part in THE rankings.

"The rankings matter as a form of a measurement on where we are.

"It also helps us to identify our gaps and improve the way we communicate with our stakeholders and the quality of our graduates working in the industry globally," he said.

UPM vice-chancellor Prof Datin Paduka Dr Aini Ideris said that rankings matter when it comes to forming stakeholders' perception of the university.

"Rankings are important for universities to benchmark themselves with their international counterparts.

"And for us to further improve on our performance in the future," she added.

Baty said Singapore is "the star" with Asia's top university calling it home.

He added that the National University of Singapore is ranked 24th while Nanyang Technological University is in 54th place.

Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2016-17

Institution	2016-17 Rankings	2015-16 Rankings
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia	601-800	601-800
Universiti Putra Malaysia	601-800	601-800
Universiti Sains Malaysia	601-800	601-800
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia	601-800	401-500
Universiti Teknologi Petronas	601-800	Not ranked
Universiti Teknologi MARA	801+	601-800
Universiti Utara Malaysia	801+	Not ranked

Source: Times Higher Education

Baty said for the first time in the 12-year history of the rankings, the United States has lost the top spot with the University of Oxford in Britain in first place.

The *THE World University Rankings*, now in their 13th year, apply rigorous standards, using tough global benchmarks across all of a global research university's key missions - teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook.

He said the calculation of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings has been subject to an independent audit by professional services firm PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), making these the first global university rankings to be subjected to full, independent scrutiny of this nature.

For more information, visit www.thewur.com. — By REBECCA RAJAENDRAM