UUM climbs up 10 places in QS World University Rankings

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PETALING JAYA: Despite its status as a non-research and non-comprehensive university, Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) has successfully climbed up 10 places in the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings 2018.

The 33-year-old university moved up from 739 to 729.

"We are also one of the top 20 universities in Asean.

"To me, this is an awesome achievement for UUM because we are a non-research and non-comprehensive university," said UUM vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Seri Dr Mohamed Mustafa Ishak.

On the varsity being non-comprehensive, Prof Mohamed Mustafa said it does not provide programmes in the sciences such as medicine and engineering.

"Our niche areas are management and social science courses and yet, we managed to beat older universities (in the rankings).

"This shows that although we don't have half the strength of these universities and purely depend on our social science and management courses, we are still able to (move up in the rankings)," he added.

Prof Mohamed Mustafa said the varsity takes pride in its achievement as it is able to position itself in the global rankings and be on par with older research universities.

"We hope to be among the top 10 universities in South-East Asia and top 300 in the world by 2020.

"Although we know it is an uphill battle due to the fact that we are not a science-based university, we will strive hard to ensure that we will improve our position," he said.

Some of the efforts taken by the varsity to further improve its rankings include increasing its lecturers' key performance indicators and collaborating with top universities in the world, he added.

The QS World University Rankings is an annual league table of the top universities in the world, which this year saw 4,854 institutions being considered and 959 institutions ranked.

Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh announced last week that the country's five research universities have made it to the top 1% in the world out of 26,000, with its oldest university, Universiti Malaya (UM) on the verge of being among the world's top 100 in the QS World University Rankings 2018.

He said UM, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia and Universiti Sains Malaysia generated more than RM6.18bil in research revenue between 2007 and 2016.

QS research director Ben Sowter said this has been a successful year for Malaysian higher education institutions with the results indicating that the country has nearly doubled its share of the top 300 universities.

Other Malaysian varsities in the rankings are Universiti Teknologi Petronas in the 601-650 bracket, International Islamic University Malaysia (701-750) and Universiti Teknologi Mara (751-800).

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology topped the rankings this year, followed by its American counterparts Stanford University and Harvard University.