

Varsity rankings must reflect impact 'outside of academia'

Education Minister made this call at summit, saying this is also the view of international panel

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With universities going through deep changes to keep pace with disruption, how they are ranked also needs to evolve.

Rankings need to go beyond just publications and citations, and instead take into account how a university works with industries, communities and government, and improve these areas.

Education Minister Ong Ye Kung made this call yesterday at an education summit organised by Times Higher Education, which publishes one of the world's most recognised university rankings.

"If there is a change I wish for... it will be to evaluate the effectiveness of a university in collaborating with the world outside of academia – industries, society, communities, government – and delivering impact in

all these sectors. This will go way beyond publications and citations, which are the easiest to measure today and we may have relied on quite a lot."

Mr Ong explained this was also the view of the International Academic Advisory Panel, comprising university leaders and chief executives of global companies, that met in Singapore in June to discuss higher education.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

It agreed that current rankings rely too much on research indicators and overlook other areas such as experiential learning and entrepreneurship.

Mr Ong also highlighted two aspects of university collaboration with the outside world.

One is working closely with industry, "to seek the next competitive breakthroughs and innovations".

"We are bringing industries



Education Minister Ong Ye Kung.

TNP PHOTO: **CHONG JUN LIANG**

into campuses, and vice versa. So it is not just a flipped classroom, but also flipped campuses, and flipped faculties. Not just asking students to contribute in class, but industries contributing to education," he said.

He gave the example of the National Institute of Education, which trains teachers here but also conducts research and spearheads innovation in schools.

Another aspect of collaboration is for universities to recognise the work of academia in

industries and Government, and encourage a flow of talent between the sectors.

An example of this was how Nanyang Technological University's Ms Mely Caballero-Anthony was recently promoted to a full professor for her work outside of the university, in chairing the United Nations Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters in 2016 and having served as the director of external relations at the Asean Secretariat.

Times Higher Education is planning to pilot a new university ranking next April, which takes into account factors such as the quality of jobs their graduates land, their contributions to economic growth and innovation and the global partnerships they forge. Called the University Impact Rankings, it aims to provide a broader assessment of a university's impact on society.

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