First-ever QS World University Rankings for Physics and Environmental Sciences point to future leaders in sustainable technology

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QS Quacquarelli Symonds, compiler of the annual QS World University Rankings®, has revealed today the results of the first QS World University Rankings® in Environmental Sciences and Physics on http://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/world-universityrankings/2011/subject-ranking

Australian National University is 10th in the world for in Environmental Sciences. University of Melbourne takes 14th spot for Physics & Astronomy. 18 Australian universities featured in the natural sciences rankings.

For Physics, Cambridge takes top spot, with Harvard, MIT, UC Berkeley and Oxford making up the top five. ETH Zurich, Tokyo University, Melbourne University, ENS Paris, University of British Columbia and National University of Singapore all feature in the top twenty. For Environmental Sciences, Harvard tops the ranking with UC Berkeley, MIT, Cambridge and Stanford making up the top five.

Australian National University takes the 10th spot whilst Tokyo University (11th) is the best Asian university and ETH Zurich (12th) is the top Continental European university.

Universities are ranked based on academic reputation, employer reputation and research citations per paper which makes up thirty percent of the score in both Physics and Environmental Sciences.

Cambridge's table-topping performance in physics was helped by influential research into the use of graphene to develop sustainable alternatives to batteries, and lightweight components for cars and planes. The work was among the most highly cited physics research according to the Scopus citations database, and has helped secure a €1 billion EU research grant. Cambridge was also rated number one for academic reputation in physics by the international academic community, and was judged by graduate employers to be the best university for producing high calibre physics graduates.

The first-ever QS ranking for Environmental Sciences shows the international nature of the rush to develop green alternatives, with universities from sixteen different countries in the top 50. Harvard leads a group of nine US-UK universities at the top of the table, but Australia National University (10), University of Tokyo (11), ETH Zurich (12=) and University of British Columbia (12=) all rank highly. The presence of China's Peking University at 22nd reflects the country's new emphasis on green research, with Wen Jiabao last year announcing ambitious reduction targets of 40-45% emission per unit of GDP by 2020.

In addition to Environmental Sciences and Physics, the best-performing universities in Metallurgy and Materials, Mathematics, Earth and Marine Sciences and Chemistry are also revealed today on www.topuniversities.com

Australian Universities' performance in top 200

QS World University Rankings® Natural Science 2011	Environmental Science	Physics & Astronomy	Metallurgy & Materials	Mathematics	Earth & Marine Sciences	Chemistry
Institution	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
Australian National University (ANU)	10	28	44	18=	9	33
University of Melbourne	16	14		26	30	23
University of Queensland (UQ)	26	101-150	51-100	40	101-150	51-100
University of Sydney	27	51-100		49	17=	46
University of New South Wales (UNSW)	38	51-100	39	51-100	101-150	51-100
Monash University	51-100	51-100	40			41
University of Adelaide	51-100	151-200	151-200	101-150	51-100	
University of Western Australia (UWA)	51-100			151-200	101-150	151-200
Griffith University	101-150					
James Cook University	101-150					
RMIT University	101-150	151-200				
Macquarie University	151-200				51-100	
University of Tasmania	151-200				101-150	151-200
University of Wollongong			51-100			151-200
Curtin University of Technology				151-200		
University of South Australia				151-200		
Queensland University of Technology						101-150
Deakin University						151-200

Source: QS Quacquarelli Symonds 2011 (www.topuniversites.com)

Ben Sowter, head of research at QS says, "The fact that universities from 16 different countries feature in the top 50 of our QS Rankings in Environmental Sciences and Physics highlights the globally competitive nature of today's multidisciplinary research which can lead to innovative patents, creating enormous commercial benefits for the countries involved, as well as solving pressing environmental issues and enabling sustainable economic growth for future generations."

Over 50,000,000 people have viewed the QS World University Rankings in the past 12 months, and the QS Global Academic Advisory Board has developed the inaugural QS World University Rankings by subject in response to a demand for more granular detail. Universities are ranked based on academic reputation, employer reputation and research citations, with weightings tailored to each subject.

For more information and tables, contact:

Simona Bizzozero
+44 (0) 7880 620 856
simona@qs.com

Vickie Chiu
+44 (0) 207 284 7292
vickie@qs.com

QS Quacquarelli Symonds
Since 1990, QS has become established as the world's leading network for top careers and education. Producers of the QS World University Rankings®, QS's innovative research, events, publications and university solutions provide new ways of bringing universities into contact with the best and brightest students worldwide.

QS World University Rankings®
The QS World University Rankings® is an annual league table of the top 600 universities in the world and is arguably the best-known and respected ranking of its kind. Compiled by the QS Intelligence Unit in close consultation with an international advisory board of leading academics, the QS World University Rankings ® is widely referenced by prospective and current students, university professionals and governments worldwide. The purpose of the rankings has been to recognise universities as the multi-faceted organisations they are and to provide a global comparison of their success against the notional mission of remaining or becoming world-class. The rankings are based on four key pillars, research, teaching, employability and internationalisation.

Ben Sowter
Ben Sowter is the Head of Research at QS, QS Intelligence Unit. He holds a BSc in Computer Science from the University of Nottingham, where he was also awarded the Union Prize for outstanding contribution to the student union and served as chairman of the Nottingham University Debating Society. Ben is fully responsible for the operational management of all major QS research projects and is actively involved in all the collection, compilation and tabulation of all the data that lead to, amongst others the World University Rankings® research in which he has been involved since its initial inception in 2004. A frequent contributor to the press, Ben's opinion on global education trends and his expertise is used regularly by major global publications.

Scopus Database from Elsevier
QS Rankings use citation data from Scopus which is the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature and quality Web sources. Its unique database contains abstracts and references from over 18,000 titles from more than 5,000 international publishers, ensuring broad interdisciplinary coverage. Scopus is a trusted source of bibliometric data, also used by many other organisations including: the OECD, the Australian Research Council, iFQ (Institut für Forschungsinformation und Qualitätssicherung) and ISTEP (National Institute of Science and Technology Policy of Japan).