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## UKZN IS NUMBER ONE IN AFRICA IN THE WEBOMETRICS RANKINGS

The University of KwaZulu-Natal has been rated number one in Africa for **the first time** in the recent Webometrics Rankings released on Saturday 2 August 2013. The achievement by UKZN is significant as the rankings show an increase in ratings from 5<sup>th</sup> position to first in the African continent <http://www.webometrics.info/en/Africa>.

Globally UKZN is now placed 381 as compared to 773 in 2012. A total of 11 994 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) were assessed globally of which 974 were HEIs in Africa. The University in terms of access to research publications, informal scholarly communication and electronic publications has achieved much work. A special tribute must go to the staff, the students, the Research Office and Corporate Relations.

The “Webometrics of World Universities” is an initiative of the Cybermetrics Lab in Spain and is the “largest academic ranking of Higher Education Institutions”. According to their website Webometrics uses an “a-priori” scientific model for the building of the composite indicator.

Year	Ranking	World Rank	Presence Rank*	Impact Rank*	Openness Rank*	Excellence Rank*
2012	5	773	835	1816	1052	579
2013	1	381	1370	368	817	549

Webometrics currently uses two criteria to measure the ranking of websites viz. **Visibility** of the website (which is the **Impact** the website has) and **Activity** on the website. The latter is composed of three equally weighted sub-criteria viz. **Presence**, **Openness** and **Excellence**.

The greatest improvement and the main contributing factor for the increase in the ranking is the **Impact** criterion which is calculated from the number of links on diverse third-party sites to the UKZN website. Those links are seen as “recognizing the institutional prestige, the academic performance, the value of the information, and the usefulness of the services as introduced in the webpages according to the criteria of millions of web editors from all over the world”.

UKZN has also seen an increase in rankings in terms of **Openness** and **Excellence**. **Openness** is measured by the number of rich files published on institutional research repositories according to

the academic search engine Google Scholar. One of the contributing factors that most probably may have led to the increased Openness ranking is the regular updating of the IRMA database by the Research Office. **Excellence** is measured by the number of “academic papers published in high impact international journals.” Thus the increase in Openness and Excellence rankings reflect an increase in both the quantity and quality of academic papers being published from UKZN.

The scholarly and scientific work of our academics and researchers must be applauded. As a research-intensive institution their contributions underpin the excellent standing of the University of KwaZulu-Natal at a global level.

**Issued by:**

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