Marked improvement as four unis make world rankings

THIS is the first time four Malaysian public universities are ranked in the top 20 of the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings Top 50 Under 50 2018.

Only two Malaysian universities achieved top-20 positions last year namely Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) in 15th and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) in 16th.

The improvement in performance can be attributed to the recent successes of the universities in the overall QS World University Rankings, which is a result of consistently improving performances in QS’s Academic Reputation and Employer Reputation indices, said QS research director Ben Sower.

UoM won the highest ranked institution in 12th spot this year. This was closely followed by UPM in 13th place, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) and Universiti Technology Malaysia (UTM).

Malaysia (18th)

The other Malaysian universities to make the list - though not in the top 50 - are UCSI University (51-100), Universiti Teknologi Petronas (51-100), Taylor’s University (101-150), Universiti Utara Malaysia (101-150), International Islamic University Malaysia (101-150) and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (151-200).

Universiti Malaysia does not qualify at the QS Top 50 Under 50 ranked universities that have been established within the past 50 years.

"Malaysian universities have enjoyed considerable success in this year’s table. They have achieved their highest level of representation in the Top 50 Under 50, and their best-ever positions within the rankings," said Sower.

He said both UCSI University and Taylor’s University made their debut in the QS World University Rankings this year, which rendered them eligible for the Top 50 Under 50. "UCSI University’s position is indicative of its global competitiveness, and its ranking in the overall table determines its position in the Top 50 Under 50 rankings," he added.

On what UCSI University and Taylor’s University need to do to boost their rankings, Sower said improvement in the Top 50 Under 50 ranking will be predicated on improvements in the overall QS World University Rankings.

"To the overall table, UCSI has debuted in a creditworthy position of 411, but it receives low scores for research impact (Citations per Faculty) and global academic standing (Academic Reputation)," he said.

"As for Taylor’s, the two same problems exist. It receives low scores for Academic Reputation and Citations per Faculty," he said.

Improving research performance and forging academic relationships with universities across the world will prove conducive to improvements in these indicators, he added.

Sower said universities from the Asia-Pacific region have dominated the latest edition of the rankings, with 27 of the 50 places occupied by institutions from Asia or Australia.

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore tops the list this year followed by Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology.