

# Online Learning Rankings 2024: results announced

Eleven universities across four continents are awarded gold in first attempt to measure online learning on a global basis

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What does successful online learning look like? That is the question *Times Higher Education* set out to answer with the new Online Learning Rankings (OLR).

While [online education](#) has been a feature of the internet since its inception – let's not forget the internet's origin as a way to share scientific studies – the past few years have laid bare the importance of online learning, as well as the difficulties in implementing it.

Online courses enabled students to [continue studying through the Covid-19 pandemic](#), and provide access to higher education for those [living in conflict areas](#) such as Ukraine. They bring the possibility of qualifications to those living in education deserts, and of professional development to [lifelong learners](#). But the quality of that education is not uniform, and as the importance of online provision becomes ever more obvious, there is no global standard on how to measure the teaching quality of higher education delivered online. The *THE* Online Learning Rankings 2024 is the first attempt to measure online learning on a global basis.

There is also no global agreement on the definition of online learning. This pilot ranking measures only the parts of universities that deliver online learning, which means the courses are advertised as “online” and at least 40 per cent of the content is delivered online.

In putting together the inaugural OLR, *THE*'s data team found stark differences in the types of provision: from traditional campus universities adding online elements, to fully online operations such as open universities, to new institutions trying to provide higher education to people living in rural areas of low-income countries. Universities have different reasons for, and aims of, online learning and this makes it hard to provide precise ranks. Therefore, *THE* has grouped institutions into three categories: gold, silver and bronze.

In the gold category are 11 universities: three from the US, two from the UK, two from India, and one each from Russia, Hungary, New Zealand and Australia. Fourteen universities are in the silver category



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and 31 in bronze. A further 64 are given reporter status as they submitted data but did not meet the full entry requirements.

## Online Learning Rankings 2024: gold-awarded universities

*Institutions are listed alphabetically.*

Institution	Country	Resources score	Engagement score	Outcomes score	Environment score
American University	United States	69.5	72.3	53.3	72.1
Arizona State University (Tempe)	United States	56.2	67.5	49.4	72.2
HSE University	Russia	62.5	79.2	61.2	57.2
Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies	India	65.4	62.8	64.1	70.9
Massey University	New Zealand	45.5	92.6	27.3	81.4
O.P. Jindal Global University	India	72.3	58.2	79.2	78.0
University of Central Florida	United States	86.5	56.9	71.5	71.1
University of Essex	UK	56.7	76.8	69.2	41.5
University of Liverpool	UK	72.3	52.8	77.6	57.8
University of South Australia	Australia	73.5	45.1	50.1	63.3

University of Szeged	Hungary	72.7	54.3	44.2	67.9
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In this pilot edition, *THE* used [17 metrics grouped into four pillars](#): resources, which measures the staff and resources devoted to online learning; engagement, which has six metrics, including [student survey responses](#) to compare the level of student engagement; outcomes, which measures student progression and whether they would recommend it to others; and environment, which tracks inclusion, diversity and support levels.

The US' [University of Central Florida](#) (gold) is top globally for resources, while New Zealand's [Massey University](#) (gold) achieves the highest scores for both engagement and environment. Ukraine's [Sumy State University](#) is awarded silver but gains the highest score globally for outcomes. Among those awarded gold, India's [O.P. Jindal Global University](#) achieves the best outcomes score.

In contrast to the research-focused [THE World University Rankings](#), no university achieves high scores in all of the pillars in the OLR, reflecting the varying aims of online education providers and perhaps also the burgeoning nature of online learning. The most consistent performer in the gold category is India's [Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies](#); it is the only university to score above 60 out of 100 in all four pillars.

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While the results and the underlying data provide interesting insights, they also contribute to an important global conversation about how best to assess and understand online learning – a large and growing part of the global higher education sector that is still not properly understood or regulated. *THE*'s data team is planning to launch a consultation process on the OLR in early 2025 to improve the approach and methodology for future years.

Curtis Bonk, an education and technology expert at [Indiana University](#), a reporter institution in the ranking, said that success in online higher education differs depending on the aim of the online provision.

“We must ask, success for who and success in terms of what criteria? Success is not simply measured by retention and completion rates, comparison test scores, and satisfaction surveys any more,” he said. “From a learner’s perspective who previously lacked access to many educational opportunities because he or she is in the Global South or an education desert, success occurs every time you power up your computer and are able to access online contents and learn.”

Arizona State University (ASU) is one of the institutions in the gold category and is renowned for its [digital leadership](#); it scores particularly highly in the environment and engagement pillars in the OLR.

Phil Regier, ASU's dean for educational initiatives, told *THE* that "everything we do at ASU concerning online learning is through the lens of ensuring access".

"Let's say, for example, we have a student who doesn't qualify for admission into the university. We don't turn them away. We work directly with students to identify the courses they need and offer them online, allowing students to pay for credits only after completing the course and being satisfied with their grades," he said.

While the aims of online learning provision can vary by institution, universities delivering these courses face many of the same challenges. According to Dr Regier these range "from ensuring equitable access, to maintaining high engagement and academic rigor. A diverse, global student body means navigating differences in technology access, time zones, and language proficiency, all of which can impact a learner's ability to fully participate."

One of the biggest hurdles, Regier said, is ensuring that [online learners feel part of the university community](#). This requires "innovative engagement strategies that go beyond classroom participation to foster a strong sense of belonging within the broader university community".

Linda Harasim, a professor emerita at [Simon Fraser University](#), has written several books on learning theory and online technology. "In my 40 years of research and teaching online higher education, I have found that community building is essential in the online classroom," she said. "Peer collaboration and community represent some of the greatest opportunities for effective learning and augmentation of human intelligence. Humans are genetically programmed to learn best from one another."

However, she added that "teachers face significant challenges in this area. The field has provided little training on the processes involved in creating online learning communities. This lack of support is a significant obstacle to effective online education for both teachers and learners."

Professor Bonk agreed that creating a community was vital and warned that "any attempts to design online communities in an eight week or 16-week course can be extremely time consuming and difficult".

"Communities typically don't just suddenly emerge; they require lots of care and attention. For communities to form, instructors need skills in how to moderate online discussion as well as how to foster engagement among online learners. They also have to help build identity and a shared history," he said.

For Professor Harasim, teaching online higher education requires [different skills](#) to teaching in-person, and universities fail if they do not facilitate lecturers to gain those extra credentials.

Meanwhile, technological developments, while also bringing new opportunities, create additional challenges. None more so than [artificial intelligence](#). Professor Harasim is wary of the direction it is headed.

“Today’s educational AI software is for-profit, based on a business model with limited educational input on the design of the pedagogy or technology. The values in the technology are profit, not necessarily public interest,” she said. “Educational AI is an immense challenge for educational institutions, in that it represents a fundamental shift in control of the institutional mission, values, process and community-focused model.”

Whether AI is a help or a hindrance, it is clear that the importance of online higher education is only going to grow, and universities will need to rise to the challenge.

## Online Learning Rankings 2024: results

*Institutions are listed alphabetically within each tier.*

Institution	Country/territory	Tier	Resources score	Engagement score	Outcomes score
American University	United States	Gold	69.5	72.3	53.3
Arizona State University (Tempe)	United States	Gold	56.2	67.5	49.4
HSE University	Russian Federation	Gold	62.5	79.2	61.2
Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies	India	Gold	65.4	62.8	64.1
Massey University	New Zealand	Gold	45.5	92.6	27.3
O.P. Jindal Global University	India	Gold	72.3	58.2	79.2
University of Central Florida	United States	Gold	86.5	56.9	71.5
University of Essex	United Kingdom	Gold	56.7	76.8	69.2
University of Liverpool	United Kingdom	Gold	72.3	52.8	77.6

University of South Australia	Australia	Gold	73.5	45.1	50.1
University of Szeged	Hungary	Gold	72.7	54.3	44.2
BINUS University	Indonesia	Silver	65.8	41.5	58.8
Don State Technical University	Russian Federation	Silver	57.8	62.1	64.6
International University of Applied Sciences (IUBH)	Germany	Silver	39.5	58.0	49.2
King Abdulaziz University	Saudi Arabia	Silver	31.9	50.2	77.3
National Technical University Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute	Ukraine	Silver	44.8	53.3	61.9
Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais	Brazil	Silver	24.0	85.3	36.6
Shoolini University of Biotechnology and Management Sciences	India	Silver	57.5	35.6	61.9
Sumy State University	Ukraine	Silver	44.6	45.7	84.4
Tecnológico de Monterrey	Mexico	Silver	62.4	56.4	49.1
UNIR – International University of La	Spain	Silver	57.6	65.3	64.0

Rioja					
Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Mexico (UAEMex)	Mexico	Silver	63.3	46.6	69.5
Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja	Ecuador	Silver	50.7	61.0	39.4
University of Guadalajara	Mexico	Silver	57.2	69.1	59.8
University of Santo Tomas	Philippines	Silver	49.4	66.0	50.5
Allama Iqbal Open University	Pakistan	Bronze	34.2	52.0	18.2
Amity University, Noida	India	Bronze	34.3	46.0	59.9
Anadolu University	Turkey	Bronze	39.3	45.2	27.2
Atatürk University	Turkey	Bronze	40.0	46.0	57.9
Cyber University inc.	Japan	Bronze	42.4	37.8	76.0
Damascus University	Syria	Bronze	38.4	67.3	61.6
Deakin University	Australia	Bronze	33.0	55.0	41.2
Duy Tan University	Vietnam	Bronze	29.0	7.7	42.6
Gazi University	Turkey	Bronze	41.1	50.4	68.7
Hellenic Open University	Greece	Bronze	27.9	41.7	58.5
Khwaja Fareed University of	Pakistan	Bronze	55.0	20.5	31.9

Engineering and Information Technology					
KL University	India	Bronze	31.5	46.5	60.3
Lovely Professional University	India	Bronze	40.2	27.5	38.2
Manipal University Jaipur	India	Bronze	41.9	24.8	39.5
Metropolitan College	Greece	Bronze	43.0	42.2	59.4
Midocean University	Comoros	Bronze	13.5	76.6	65.3
Ondokuz Mayıs University	Turkey	Bronze	24.6	40.6	3.1
Port Said University	Egypt	Bronze	50.9	35.7	16.2
Süleyman Demirel University	Turkey	Bronze	29.7	13.7	3.7
Telkom University	Indonesia	Bronze	21.8	22.2	46.2
Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia - UPTC	Colombia	Bronze	20.2	56.9	41.9
Universidad Politécnica Salesiana	Ecuador	Bronze	39.3	57.7	36.0
Universitas Negeri Surabaya	Indonesia	Bronze	20.2	24.6	23.6
Universitas Padjadjaran	Indonesia	Bronze	14.7	37.1	27.9
Universitas Terbuka	Indonesia	Bronze	9.2	33.9	42.1



- Indonesia Open University					
University of Bucharest	Romania	Bronze	57.3	14.6	15.3
University of Burgos	Spain	Bronze	73.3	7.6	21.0
V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University	Ukraine	Bronze	21.3	50.7	29.3
Villa College	Maldives	Bronze	49.4	31.2	22.0
West University of Timișoara	Romania	Bronze	46.5	69.7	48.9
World University of Bangladesh (WUB)	Bangladesh	Bronze	32.9	28.5	41.0
Bahçeşehir University	Turkey	Reporter			
Başkent University	Turkey	Reporter			
Dei Institute - Online University (DIOU)	Tanzania	Reporter			
Dhurakij Pundit University	Thailand	Reporter			
Dr D. Y. Patil Vidyapeeth, Pune	India	Reporter			
EAE Business School	Spain	Reporter			
European University Cyprus	Cyprus	Reporter			
Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul	Brazil	Reporter			

Federal University of Pernambuco	Brazil	Reporter			
Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation	Russian Federation	Reporter			
Florida International University	United States	Reporter			
Fluminense Federal University	Brazil	Reporter			
George Emil Palade University of Medicine, Pharmacy, Science, and Technology of Targu Mures	Romania	Reporter			
GLA University	India	Reporter			
Ibn Tofail University	Morocco	Reporter			
Icesi University	Colombia	Reporter			
Indiana University	United States	Reporter			
Inesem Business School	Spain	Reporter			
Irkutsk State University	Russian Federation	Reporter			
Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa	Turkey	Reporter			
Kafrelsheikh University	Egypt	Reporter			

King Faisal University	Saudi Arabia	Reporter			
Lebanese American University	Lebanon	Reporter			
Louisiana State University	United States	Reporter			
LSPR Institute of Communication & Business	Indonesia	Reporter			
Mapúa University	Philippines	Reporter			
Missouri University of Science and Technology	United States	Reporter			
New Jersey Institute of Technology	United States	Reporter			
Pavlov First Saint Petersburg State Medical University	Russian Federation	Reporter			
Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná	Brazil	Reporter			
Saudi Electronic University	Saudi Arabia	Reporter			
Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences	Iran	Reporter			
Sohag University	Egypt	Reporter			
Tashkent State University of Law	Uzbekistan	Reporter			

Tokat Gaziosmanpaşa University	Turkey	Reporter			
Tomsk State University of Control Systems and Radioelectronics	Russian Federation	Reporter			
Tula State University	Russian Federation	Reporter			
UEES, Espiritu Santo University	Ecuador	Reporter			
Universidad Católica San Antonio de Murcia (UCAM)	Spain	Reporter			
Universidad Estatal a Distancia	Costa Rica	Reporter			
Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (UPB)	Colombia	Reporter			
Universidade Eduardo Mondlane	Mozambique	Reporter			
Universidade Estadual de Maringá	Brazil	Reporter			
Universidade Federal de Sergipe	Brazil	Reporter			
Université 8 Mai 1945 Guelma	Algeria	Reporter			
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia	Malaysia	Reporter			

University Mohamed Boudiaf of M'Sila	Algeria	Reporter			
University of Al- Qadisiyah	Iraq	Reporter			
University of Arizona	United States	Reporter			
University of Brawijaya	Indonesia	Reporter			
University of Fortaleza (UNIFOR)	Brazil	Reporter			
University of Mauritius	Mauritius	Reporter			
University of Mohagheh Ardabili	Iran	Reporter			
University of Mosul	Iraq	Reporter			
University of Nairobi	Kenya	Reporter			
University of Nigeria Nsukka	Nigeria	Reporter			
University of Rhode Island	United States	Reporter			
University of Santander	Colombia	Reporter			
University of Sussex	United Kingdom	Reporter			
University of the Andes, Chile	Chile	Reporter			
University of the Andes, Venezuela	Venezuela	Reporter			

Ural Federal University	Russian Federation	Reporter			
Vistula University	Poland	Reporter			
Western Global University	United States	Reporter			

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