



Terminology Guide Saudi Ranking of Higher Education Institutions

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General Administration of Ranking Programs
Education and Training Evaluation Commission

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



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Ranking Terminology Guide

This guide includes terms and definitions related to the comprehensive matrix indicators for the Saudi Ranking of higher education institutions.

	Term	Definition
General Ranking Terms		
1	Higher Education Institutions	National or foreign universities and colleges that have legal authorizations to provide post-secondary education and award academic degrees or professional degrees.
2	Ranking	Ranking of higher education institutions through criteria and indicators within certain areas.
3	Global Rankings (International)	A process that aims at ranking higher education institutions in different countries according multi criteria and indicators that focus on the three functions of higher education institutions: academics, research, and community service, technical environment and infrastructure. The most famous international ranking systems are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shanghai Ranking • Times • GreenMetric • QS • Webometrics
4	Local Rankings of Higher Education Institutions	Ranking systems originated locally within each country (governmental or follow private or non-profit bodies) that authorize and accredit higher educational institutions based on specific standards and indicators aligned with each country's educational system, unlike international ranking systems.
5	Saudi Ranking of Education Institutions	A mechanism to measure and rank higher education institutions' performance within the Kingdom in accordance with a declared methodology, using specific standards and indicators that highlight the aspects affecting quality, capabilities and outputs of higher education and training to increase competitiveness, improve local and international ranking, and enable students and stakeholders to make appropriate decisions.
6	Ranking Criteria	A set of standards and rules governing the measurement of ranking and rating higher education institutions' performance level in terms of education quality, academics, research and other areas, depending on a set of indicators in accordance with various categories.
7	Ranking Categories	Differentiated groups to rank higher education institutions according to specific criteria and indicators, so that each category focuses on a specific area that highlights aspects of excellence and development opportunities in higher education institutions.
8	Educational Category	A ranking category concerned with all educational institutions' performance that contains (15) indicators, grouped into (3) main domains and (5) sub-domains.



	Term	Definition
9	Comprehensive Category	An optional ranking category concerned with academic and research performance for universities that have research activity and contains (28) indicators, grouped into (5) main domains and (10) sub-domains.
10	Ranking Data Governance	Implementing unified policies, standards and specific procedures for establishing and managing all ranking data for higher education institutions to ensure its full compatibility on all ranking data management platforms and applications in a standardized manner.
11	Data Cleaning	A process that aims to achieve the highest quality of data used for ranking, by correcting data fields that contain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorrect values. • Missing values. • Inconsistent formatting with predefined data format controls. • Duplication. • Incomplete values. • Vales that lead to contradictory results. • Extreme values (too small or relatively very large).
12	Ranking Indicators	A set of qualitative and quantitative measures used to track the educational institutions' performance to infer the extent to which they meet the target performance standards.
13	Higher Education Indicators	Specifications and standards necessary for guarantying an accepted quality of higher education and increasing its effectiveness and ability to compete in the field of education.
14	Targeted Value	Expected performance level (desired outcome) of an indicator. For example, if the indicator is the student-faculty ratio, the target value is 1:20 (20 students per faculty member) and its value depends on national, global or competitive indicators among educational institutions.
15	Indicator code	A designated serial number of letters and numbers specified for each indicator that indicates the ranking category, main domain and sub-domain to which the indicator belongs.
16	Indicator Weight	Percentage of the indicator effect on the specified field.



	Term	Definition
17	Evidence	Attached documents that prove the validity of entered data, provided they are approved (stamped) by a responsible authority (such as number of students printed from an academic or administrative system at the educational institutions, or number of faculty printed from HR... etc.).
18	Data Quality Elements	Suitable data for the purpose for which it was collected that is: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accurate: Precise and free-of-errors. 2. Complete: contains no missing values. 3. Numeric: only numbers. 4. Time framed: Within the specified time frame required for each data field. 5. Time-bound: time-based and time-sensitive. 6. Validated: To validate the accuracy, completeness, and confidentiality of the entered data. 7. Approved: Data approvals according to the governance of roles and responsibilities. 8. Evidenced: Provide evidences to the required data fields.
19	Digital Platform	A digital portal dedicated to registering higher education institutions in the Saudi Ranking of Higher Education Institutions and provide information and data required to complete the ranking processes.
20	Authorized Person	University president, director or dean (college).
21	Authorization File	An official regulatory document that authorized personnel (university president or Dean) delegate each of (data approval clerk, data viewer and data entry clerk) as responsible for the process of providing the Education and Training Evaluation Commission with the educational institution's ranking data, and accordingly access permits will be granted to those specified to access the electronic ranking data portal, however access will not sent until the document is signed and uploaded to the portal.
22	Data Entry Clerk	Authorized person by the head of the educational institution, who's responsible for collecting and entering the required data for the Saudi Ranking Portal in accordance with the specified regulations.
23	Data viewer	Authorized person by the head of the educational institution to audit and verify the ranking data quality entered on the Saudi Ranking Portal and certify the Data Quality Document.
24	Data Approval Clerk	Authorized person (or delegate) responsible for the final approval of the data entered on the Saudi Ranking Portal and its submission to the Education and Training Evaluation Commission.
	Indicators' Time Frame Calculation	Period concurrent with the required data, specified in a Gregorian academic or financial year or years.



	Term	Definition
26	Year Subject to Ranking	Period of collecting data specified and subjected to ranking by the Education and Training Evaluation Commission within a given academic year.
27	Academic Year	Two or more semesters and a summer semester, if any, or four or more levels, and a summer level or two summer levels, if any.
Quality of Teaching and Learning (Educational Outcomes)		
28	Assessment of Graduates' Knowledge and Skills	A survey prepared by the Education and Training Evaluation Commission to evaluate the level of graduates' knowledge and skills, their educational programs and institutions, and their employers
29	On-Time Graduation	Graduation within the minimum permitted period of the program. For example, in a four-year program, if students were admitted in the first semester of 2012-2013, they would graduate on time by the end of the academic year 2015-2016.
30	Minimum Permitted Period	Approved duration of academic degree programs in higher education institutions, which usually ranges between three and 6 years according to the Saudi Ranking of Educational Levels and Specializations.
Quality of Teaching and Learning (Learning Environment)		
31	Students	All undergraduate and postgraduate students (if any postgraduate programs).
32	Bachelor Students	Students seeking a first university degree at level (6) or long-term first-degree programs at level (7), according to the Saudi Standard Ranking of Educational Levels and Specializations.
33	Postgraduates Students	Students enrolled in master's or doctorate programs in educational institution, not including scholarship students.
34	Enrolled Students	All students of an educational institution, regardless of their academic status; registered, unregistered, withdrawn, differed, suspended or expelled.
35	Teaching / Study unit	Weekly theoretical academic lectures (or clinical lessons), no less than fifty minutes, or practical or field lessons, no less than one hundred minutes. While a teaching unit lasts for one semester.
36	Teaching Load	The number of teaching units completed by a faculty member (and the like), as the highest limit of the teaching load is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The professor has 10 teaching units. • Associate Professor: 12 teaching units. • Assistant Professor: 14 teaching units. • Lecturer: 16 teaching units. • Teaching Assistant: 16 teaching units • Language teacher: 18 teaching units.
37	Faculty Members	Full, associate and assistant professors.



	Term	Definition																								
38	Exempt Faculty Members	Faculty members assigned instructional (teaching) and non-instructional (administrative or research) teaching loads; 3 or 6 units																								
39	Teaching Staff	Full, associate and assistant professors; and (lecturers, teaching assistants, language teachers and research assistants are defined as faculty member equivalents.																								
40	Admitted Students	High school graduates accepted to study at an educational institution																								
41	Enrolled Students	Students who are actually studying in a given semester (or year), not including those who postponed, withdrew or discontinued																								
42	Unenrolled Students	Students enrolled in a university but are not actually studying in a given semester (or year), including those who postponed, withdrew or discontinued																								
43	Withdrawn Students	Enrolled students who do not continue studying at least four to eight weeks before the start of the final exams in majors that follow the academic year system																								
44	Bachelor Graduates	First, second, third or Summer semester graduates (if any)																								
45	Full-time or Equivalent for Students	Number of study units students are allowed to enroll in during a semester or academic year as determined by the educational institution (highest and lowest limit of units allowed).																								
46	Full-Time or Equivalent for Faculty Members	Standard number of work units not less than the number of hours determined by the educational institution																								
47	Educational field	<p>Broadest field, branch or scope of the content of programs or educational qualifications according to the Saudi Standard Classification of Educational Levels and Specializations issued in 1441 AH, where the fields and specializations were approved and published on its electronic portal and approved by the Council of Ministers on Muharram 27 1442 AH (15/09/2020) and the fields are:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Field</th> <th>Code</th> <th>Field</th> <th>Code</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Communication and Information Technology</td> <td>.٦</td> <td>Education</td> <td>.١</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction</td> <td>.٧</td> <td>Arts and Humanities</td> <td>.٢</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Veterinary</td> <td>.٨</td> <td>Social Sciences, Journalism and Media</td> <td>.٣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Health and Well-Being</td> <td>.٩</td> <td>Business, Administration and Law</td> <td>.٤</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Services</td> <td>١٠</td> <td>Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics</td> <td>.٥</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Field	Code	Field	Code	Communication and Information Technology	.٦	Education	.١	Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction	.٧	Arts and Humanities	.٢	Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Veterinary	.٨	Social Sciences, Journalism and Media	.٣	Health and Well-Being	.٩	Business, Administration and Law	.٤	Services	١٠	Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics	.٥
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48	Educational Environment	Refers to the place in which the educational process takes place and can include educational approaches, cultural contexts, physical environment, infrastructure, educational tools and resources, or technology used within the educational institution.																								



	Term	Definition
49	Students survey	One of the evidence of the quality of teaching and learning processes in an educational institution. It is implemented once a year and consists of two questionnaires: one for new bachelor students and the other for those continuing. Each questionnaire consists of five levels of consent (strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, disagree, strongly disagree) and four variables (quality of educational process, readiness of educational environment, infrastructure, learning resources, and general assessment), with a relative weight for each variable according to its importance in the assessment process.
50	Freshmen	High school graduates admitted to study at a higher educational institution
51	Continuing Students	Enrolled bachelor students who have completed at least one year in the year subject to the ranking
52	Teaching Staff's survey	One of the evidence of the quality of teaching and learning processes and infrastructure readiness of an educational institution. It is implemented once a year in an educational institution, and it consists of a questionnaire targeting faculty members. Each questionnaire consists of five levels of consent (strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, disagree, strongly disagree) and four variables (quality of the educational process, readiness of the educational environment, infrastructure, learning resources, and general assessment) with a relative weight for each variable according to its importance in the assessment process.
53	Student Retention	Represents the educational institution's efforts to keep its students from dropping out. For freshmen, it is measured by the difference in number between bachelor students accepted (a year before) and those who passed the first year (within a year) in the year subject to the ranking
54	Student Exchange	A program through which students are selected to study at partner educational institutions, for at least one semester, with the aim of enriching students' scientific and professional experience through exposure to other cultures
55	Cooperative Training	A program that aims to achieve the highest degree of alignment between what student study in their field of specialization and what employers require through the cooperation of the educational institution with employers in training students to practice what has been learned in the specialization in the actual work environment.
56	International Students	Non-Saudi bachelor and graduate students (unless an educational level is specified)
57	Students Dropout	Failure to continue studies, due to expulsion, dropping out, or withdrawal from an educational institution.
58		
Quality of Teaching and Learning (Academic Accreditation)		
59	Accreditation	An official certificate from a recognized body that (an institution/program) has met the minimum required academic accreditation standards.
60	Institutional Accreditation	A certificate from the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Evaluation (NCAAA) to a higher education institution stating that it met the required quality assurance and academic accreditation standards



	Term	Definition
61	Conditional Accreditation	Accreditation of an institution/program that has met the main criteria and key performance indicators, but has some shortcomings, giving the institution or program an opportunity for improvement or development to ensure that it obtains full accreditation within a period of time not exceeding two years from the date of the accreditation decision Source: Academic accreditation policies approved by the decision of the Board of Directors of the Education and Training Evaluation Commission in its eighth meeting (second session) on 28/06/1443 AH corresponding to 31/01/2022 AD
62	Full Accreditation	Level of accreditation status that indicates that (an institution/program) has successfully demonstrated - through external evaluation - that it has fully met all the required accreditation standards of the NCAAA. Source: Academic accreditation policies approved by the decision of the Board of Directors of the Education and Training Evaluation Commission in its eighth meeting (second session) on 28/06/1443 AH corresponding to 31/01/2022 AD
63	A Standing Institutional Accreditation	The year subjected to ranking is within the period specified for institutional accreditation.
64	Academic Programs	Courses, activities, and learning experiences tailored to achieve specific goals and learning outcomes over a period of time to acquire a specific degree or qualification
65	National Program Accreditation	A certificate from the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Evaluation (NCAAA) to an educational institution stating that the program meets the required quality assurance and academic accreditation standards Source: Academic accreditation policies approved by the decision of the Board of Directors of the Education and Training Evaluation Commission in its eighth meeting (second session) on 28/06/1443 AH corresponding to 31/01/2022 AD
66	International Program Accreditation	A document granted by an independent international body based in one of the countries with a high-quality higher education system, authorized to carry out the work of quality assessment and academic accreditation (after obtaining the approval of the NCAAA for accrediting specific programs) in post-secondary education programs.
67	Program with a Standing Accreditation	A program that has obtained program accreditation and the year subject to ranking is within the period specified for the program accreditation
68	v	A program licensed by the Ministry of Education that has not graduated a batch yet.
	Continuing Education	An institutional education intended and planned by an educational provider, which may constitute an addition or alternative to formal education within a process of lifelong learning of individuals to secure the right to education for all regardless of age and covers life skills, employability, social or cultural development programs. Therefore, it does not necessarily apply the structure of a regular continuous educational system, and can be of short in duration, low in intensity, in the form of short courses, workshops, or seminars and often leads to qualification that may not officially recognized by the relevant national educational authorities.

Research activity (impact of scientific research)



	Term	Definition
69	ISI Journals	Refereed journals specialized in publishing research papers in global databases such as: a. Clarivate Databases. b. Scopus Databases. c. Arabic classified publishing databases such as (ARCIF).
70	Scopus Databases	Database containing abstracts and references from articles published in refereed academic journals, which covers approximately 22,000 titles from more than 5,000 publishers, of which 20,000 are journals reviewed by experts in scientific, technical, medical and social disciplines (including the arts and humanities). Scopus searches also include searches of patent databases and is available for online subscription.
71	Clarivate Databases	A company specialized in approving and following up on ISI journals, conferences and books, and issuing an impact factor for each journal.
72	ARCIF Databases	A factor to measure the impact and reference citations of Arab academic or research journals, and it is part of a database of more than 4,300 titles of Arab journals issued in Arabic, English and/or French, in various disciplines and issued in 20 Arab countries.
73	Academic Citation	Reference of new research to previously published research, which is a tool to measure originality, strength, and significance of research.
74	Quartile Rankings Q1-Q4	Journals in each of the basic fields are divided according to their distinct number and impact factor into four quarters: so that the journals' greatest impact factor is in the first quarter Q1 and so on. This division gives a clearer picture because the impact factor for certain branches is higher than it is for others. For example, a journal in engineering sciences with an impact factor of 3 may be in Q1 while in medical sciences journals need to have an impact factor above 10 to be in Q1
Research activity (scientific production rate)		
	Quote in the top 10%	Percentage of research papers ranked in the top 10% of cited papers in the world in their respective fields. Each research paper receives a percentage score representing its location, in terms of citation rank, compared to similar papers (having the same year of publication, subject and type of document).
75	Published Books	General or academic literature published in accordance with the standards, rules and procedures approved by the Academic Council of an educational institution.
76	ISI Papers	Papers published in databases such as (Scopus, Clarivate ARCIF and other databases).
77	Academic Production	Research outcomes from published papers, books, theses, and patents.
Research activity (Research Expenditure)		



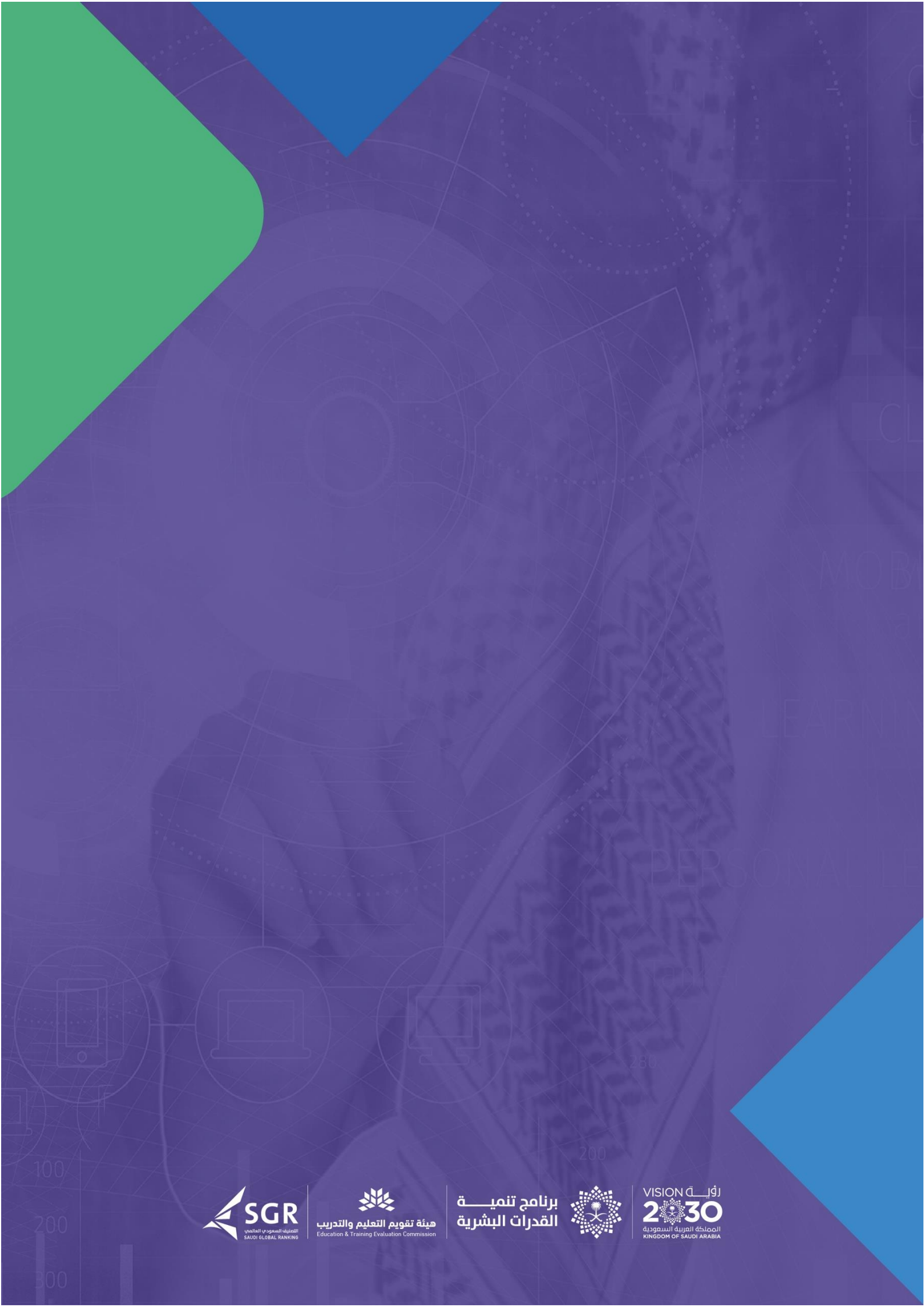
	Term	Definition
78	Educational Institutions' Revenue	Total allocations (or support) from the Ministry of Finance in addition to the total returns the educational institution receive from the overall investment (self-management of resources and various investments)
79	External Parties	Any party outside the educational institution, local or international.
80	Research Funding	Financial support provided by an external entity to the university to implement a research project in accordance with a set of policies, regulations and controls approved by the educational institution
Innovation and Knowledge Transfer (Innovation)		
81	Patent	A document that grants an exclusive right to one who comes up with an innovation that enables him/her to prevent its manufacture, use, distribution, import or sale for commercial purposes without his/her consent
82	Entrepreneurial and Emerging Companies	It is a business based on a business model that can be developed, replicated and expanded effectively, adopting an innovative idea to solve a problem in a specific market, and it is self-funded or from external sources, and the age of the startup is estimated at approximately (6) years
Innovation and knowledge transfer (knowledge transfer)		
83	Faculty Exchange	A program where selected faculty members contribute to teaching and/or research at partner educational institutions for a period of at least one semester, with the aim of professional development through openness to other cultures
84	International Research Awards	Incentive rewards (financial or moral) offered by international institutions to researchers who have accomplished distinguished research, to stimulate creativity in research, create a competitive environment, and enrich science with valuable research. For example, the Nobel Prize and the King Faisal Prize
85	International Faculty Members	Non-citizen faculty members (PhD holders), who contribute to academic teaching, research, or both.
86	License Agreements	Licensing of patents and innovations through agreements granted to inventors or innovators (individuals or entities) by competent governmental or private, local or international authorities
Recruitment		
87	Full Working Hours	Number of standard working hours determined by an employer
88	Alignment of Graduate Jobs With Their Major	A tool for measuring educational institutions' learning outcomes' quality via a questionnaire prepared by ETEC to measure the quality of educational programs and their fulfillment of the labor market needs
Community Service		



	Term	Definition
89	Community Service	Services provided by the entity to meet the needs of its communities and engage with its development priorities. It is the third function of universities, which is concerned with activating the university's community role through its contributions to both social responsibility and volunteer work.
90	Social Responsibility	University's commitment to sustainable practices to serve and develop the community, solve its issues and meet its needs in accordance with specific regulatory frameworks and in coordination with the relevant sectors
	Sustainable Development	It is the development that takes into account the economic, social and environmental dimensions in investing the available resources to meet the needs of the current generation without harming the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
91	Responsible projects	The sustainable development projects emanating from the academic disciplines under the umbrella of the university's social responsibility, by which they serve their communities economically, environmentally or socially.
95	Volunteer Work	Any effort or work carried out by a regular or legal person willingly and voluntarily provides a service free of charge (data of volunteer indicators will be calculated from the data registered on the National Platform for Voluntary Work as of 1/1/2021).
96	National Volunteering Portal	A Saudi incubator for volunteer work that provides a safe environment that serves and organizes the relationship between those who provide volunteer opportunities and volunteers in the Kingdom

References

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برنامج تنمية
القدرات البشرية



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المملكة العربية السعودية
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