

UCT the only Financial Times ranked MBA school in Africa

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The University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business (UCT GSB) is the only business school in Africa to feature in the prestigious Financial Times Rankings for its ground-breaking Executive MBA programme.

The UCT GSB has retained its position as the number one business school in Africa in the 2020 Executive MBA (EMBA) Financial Times (FT) Rankings, which were announced on 26 October 2020. Ranked 56th in the world, the UCT GSB is the only business school on the continent to make the top 100 this year.

“We are excited to be the best in Africa,” says Dr Catherine Duggan, Director of the UCT GSB. “We are proud that the UCT GSB continues to represent the African continent among this elite group of truly global business schools. It is vital for business leaders to be able to navigate an increasingly complex world—especially in Africa and emerging markets—and that is exactly our focus at the UCT GSB. Our students graduate with a powerful set of tools for leading through uncertainty and change, and this ranking reflects that.”

The UCT GSB MBA specialising in executive management, attracts senior professionals and executives from a spectrum of sectors and industries. According to Associate Professor Kosheek Sewchurran, Director of the EMBA, the programme is tailored for leaders who want to take their careers to the next level and already have some experience in the field of business and leadership. “We have refined the programme to ensure that it draws executives who are serious about character development and who want to shift their intelligence as well as their orientation, to find new ways of leading.”

The FT rankings are recognised to be the most rigorous of the various global rankings of MBA programmes, with strict guidelines including that the programme must be accredited by either the US’s Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business or the European Foundation for Management Development, must be cohort-based, with students enrolling and graduating together, and must have at least 30 graduates each year. The programme must also teach in the medium of English.

Schools are assessed in 19 categories measuring career progress of graduates, the diversity of the school and its research and CSR activities. In 2020, the UCT GSB ranked 11th in the world for corporate social responsibility (CSR) and 11th for its percentage of international students.

“This is a big achievement” says Dr Kutlwano Ramaboa, UCT GSB Deputy Director. “Our school is very small by international standards, and smaller schools are often not able to compete because they do not have the resources to do so or they don’t meet the basic criteria.”

Associate Professor Sewchurran adds that the school is managing to strike the right balance meeting international quality standards on the one hand while also evolving a distinctive programme that is fit for purpose in an African context.

“We have a distinct philosophical approach and practice of teaching that focusses on ‘practice’ and lived experience to drive learning, and a uniquely African orientation. In every design consideration of the programme we consider how we are evolving the skill and competence of executives, enabling them to draw on their lived experience to strategise, innovate their business models, and inhabit their leadership practice with more skill and wisdom.”

“This has proven to be extraordinarily effective in the lives of the leaders who pass through our programme and it is very gratifying that we are achieving international recognition for this approach.”

The UCT GSB's MBA specialising in executive management has also been ranked top in Africa and 45th worldwide by the QS Global EMBA Rankings in 2020. It is one of the fastest growing postgraduate degrees at UCT and places emphasis on the practice of management and leadership rather than a more conventional training in heading up businesses.

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The University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business (GSB) is recognised as one of the best business schools in the world. Its innovative approaches to teaching and learning and commitment to relevance and social impact set it apart from most.

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