"Japan has a proud tradition in research but it is slipping further behind China in both the output of papers and the citations that they attract," says Andrew MacFarlane, Rankings Manager for QS.

"The reputation of Japanese universities among academics and employers is suffering, which suggests that they need to communicate their strengths more effectively, as well as increasing their global research partnerships."

Tokyo University of Science (TUS) is one institution that has taken this route and bucked the trend in the new ranking, becoming the highest-placed Japanese institution to improve its position.

Moving up five places to 137th, it has extended its international research network, with its academics publishing more papers, and seen its reputation rise among academics and employers.

Dr Soichiro Okamura, Vice President of TUS, says the university redoubled its efforts to make research successes such as its Space Colony project and the Center of Fire Science and Technology better known both domestically and internationally.

