

Rewarding university teaching in academic careers: Mapping the global movement for change

Swedish National Network for Distinguished
and Excellent Teachers

Dr Ruth Graham

16th June 2025



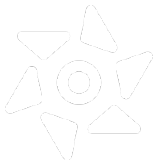
Outline of talk

- 1** Context: the Advancing Teaching initiative
A decade of action to improve the reward of university teaching
- 2** What does effective practice look like?
Common features of success, as identified by global peers



Global initiative to improve the support, evaluation and reward of university teaching in academic careers





Global initiative to improve the support, evaluation and reward of university teaching in academic careers

University teaching refers to all activities relating to teaching and learning at universities.

Examples could include: teaching students; curriculum development; pedagogical research in higher education; student supervision and the development of university educational policy/strategy.

2014 – 2018

2017 – 2019

2018 – 2019

2021 – 2022

2024 – 2025

2024 – 2025

Advancing Teaching activities:

- Bringing together change leaders and educational experts from across the world
- All resources and outputs are open-source
- Undertaking studies that respond to the key challenges faced by institutions working to improve the reward of university teaching

2014 – 2018

2017 – 2019

2018 – 2019

2021 – 2022

2024 – 2025

2024 – 2025

2014 – 2018

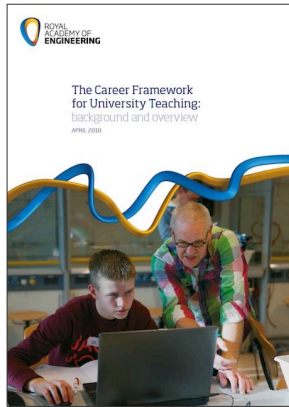
2017 – 2019

2018 – 2019

2021 – 2022

2024 – 2025

2024 – 2025



How can progression in university teaching be defined and demonstrated?

2014 – 2018

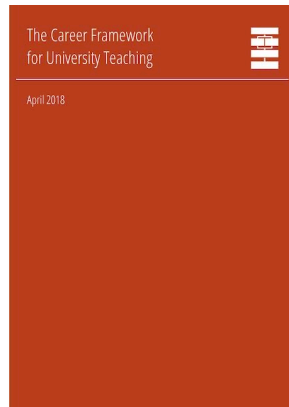
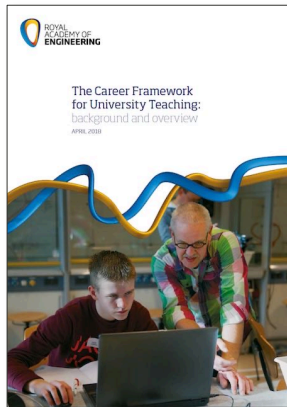
2017 – 2019

2018 – 2019

2021 – 2022

2024 – 2025

2024 – 2025



Career Framework for University Teaching

Adopted and adapted by over 50 universities and HE systems worldwide

Aims: to establish a flexible framework to guide and support the career progression of academics on the basis of their impact/achievement in university teaching

2014 – 2018

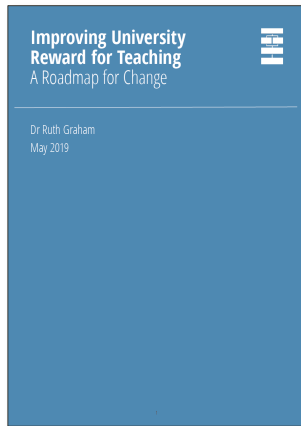
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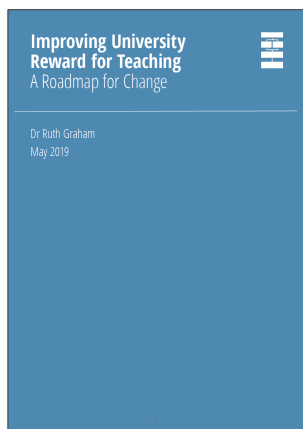
2021 – 2022

2024 – 2025

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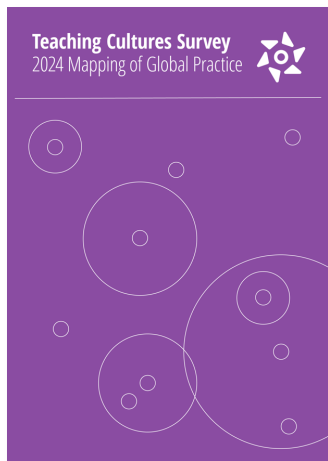
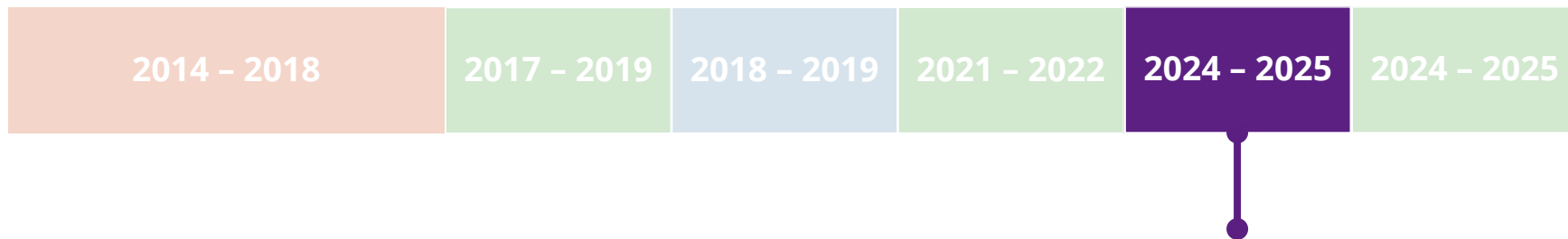
How can universities best manage the change process?



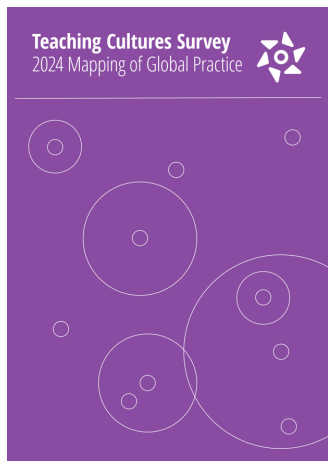
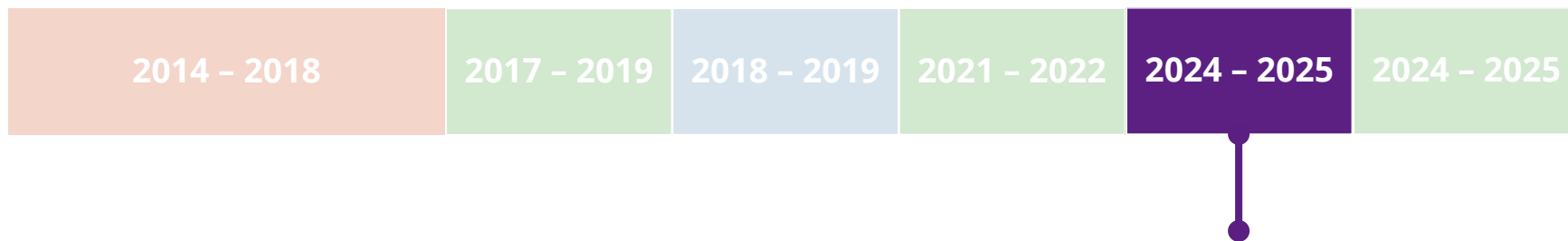
Roadmap for Change

Aims: distilling the experiences of universities that have engaged in changing institutional support and reward systems for university teaching, the report addresses three questions:

- What are the key steps in the process of change?
- What major challenges are typically faced?
- What strategies are associated with success?



What can the community learn from global best practice?



Mapping of global best practice

Study conducted: October 2023 – January 2025

Aims: canvassing views from change leaders worldwide to map the global movement for change to the reward of university teaching and showcasing best practice solutions from across the world.

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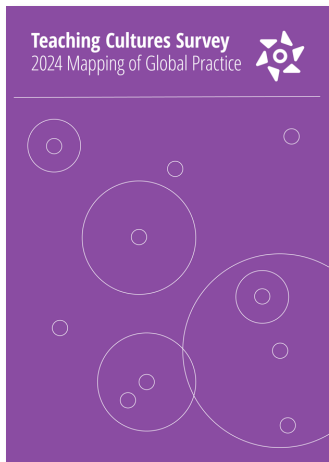
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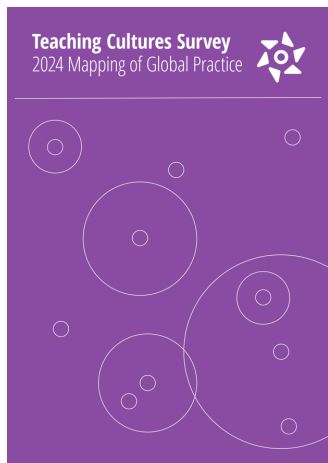
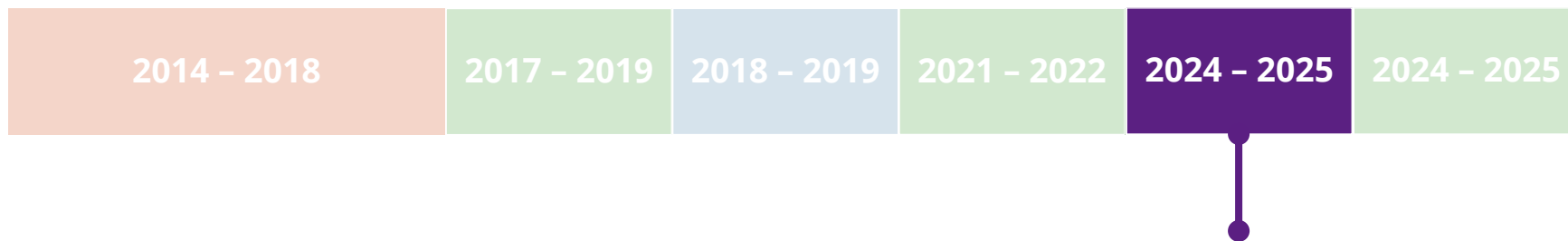
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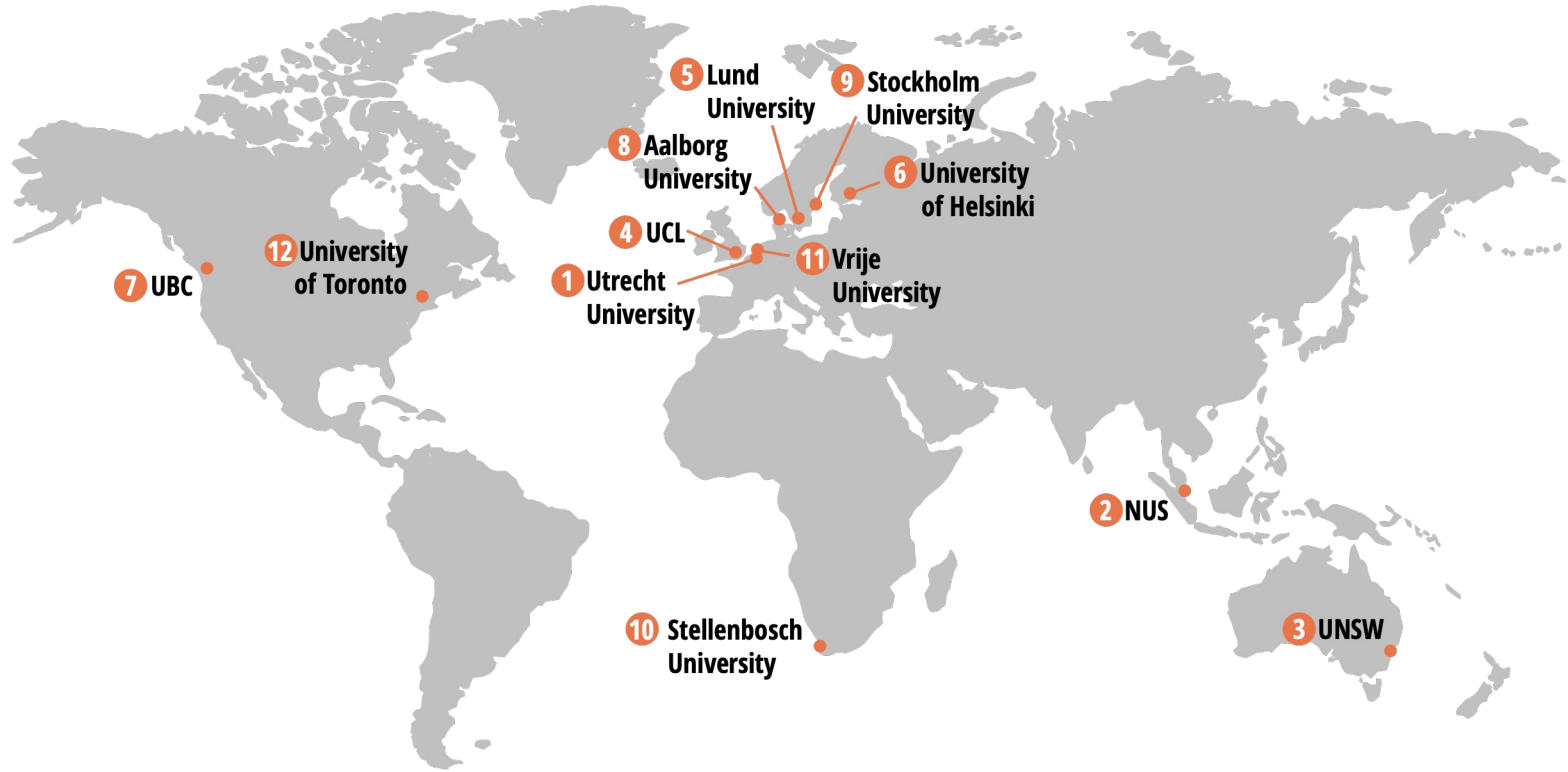
Drawing on one-to-one key informant interviews (**n=127, from 26 countries**) to capture views from change leaders worldwide to map the global movement for change to the reward of university teaching and showcasing best practice solutions from across the world.



Aims:

1. **Global mapping:** to map and integrate evidence that captures the movement for change to the reward of university teaching

Most highly-regarded universities worldwide:



National collaborations for change:

- **Denmark:** following a bottom-up model for change to career pathways, led by Danish university leaders
- **Malaysia:** government-led initiative, asking all Malaysian universities to implement new academic career pathways
- **Norway:** bottom-up development of 'pedagogical merit' system to support the reward of teaching, now required by government
- **Netherlands:** 'bottom up' collaboration, building on agreement of Rectors of Dutch research universities

2014 – 2018

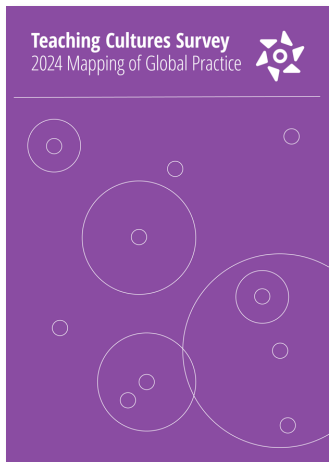
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Aims:

1. **Global mapping:** to map and integrate evidence that captures the movement for change to the reward of university teaching
2. **Best practice handbook:** a handbook of global best practice that helps universities to improve the recognition and reward of teaching and learning

Most highly-regarded universities worldwide:



What are the common ingredients of success?

1

Career pathways that effectively reward impact in university teaching and promote:

Collegiality and collaboration in education

Flexible and diverse academic careers

Clear progression routes to **educational leadership**

1

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Collegiality and collaboration in education

Flexible and diverse academic careers

Clear progression routes to **educational leadership**

UCL (UK): Blended career pathways

UCL Academic Careers Framework

In 2017, UCL launched its Academic Careers Framework for 2017/18 promotion round.

The Framework focuses on the candidate's impact across four domains: teaching, research, institutional citizenship and enterprise/external engagement. Candidates must identify which of these four domains is: a **threshold** ability, a **core** ability and an **extended/specialist** ability.

UCL are currently working to improve annual appraisals and educational leadership track.



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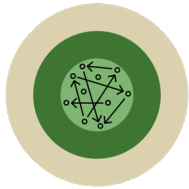
Collegiality and collaboration in education

Flexible and diverse academic careers

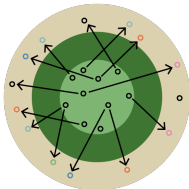
Clear progression routes to **educational leadership**

UNSW (Australia): Education-focused pathways

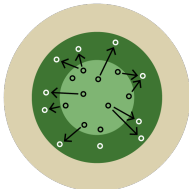
Building educational communities



connectivity within the EF community



connectivity with the wider UNSW academic community



Connectivity with external educational communities



UNSW
Australia

2

underpinned by robust and flexible institutional support systems that:

are rooted in a unified set of university teaching **standards**

offer robust and reliable **processes to evaluate and assess** university teaching

foster **continuous educational development** at all career stages

protect time for educational development, innovation and leadership

2

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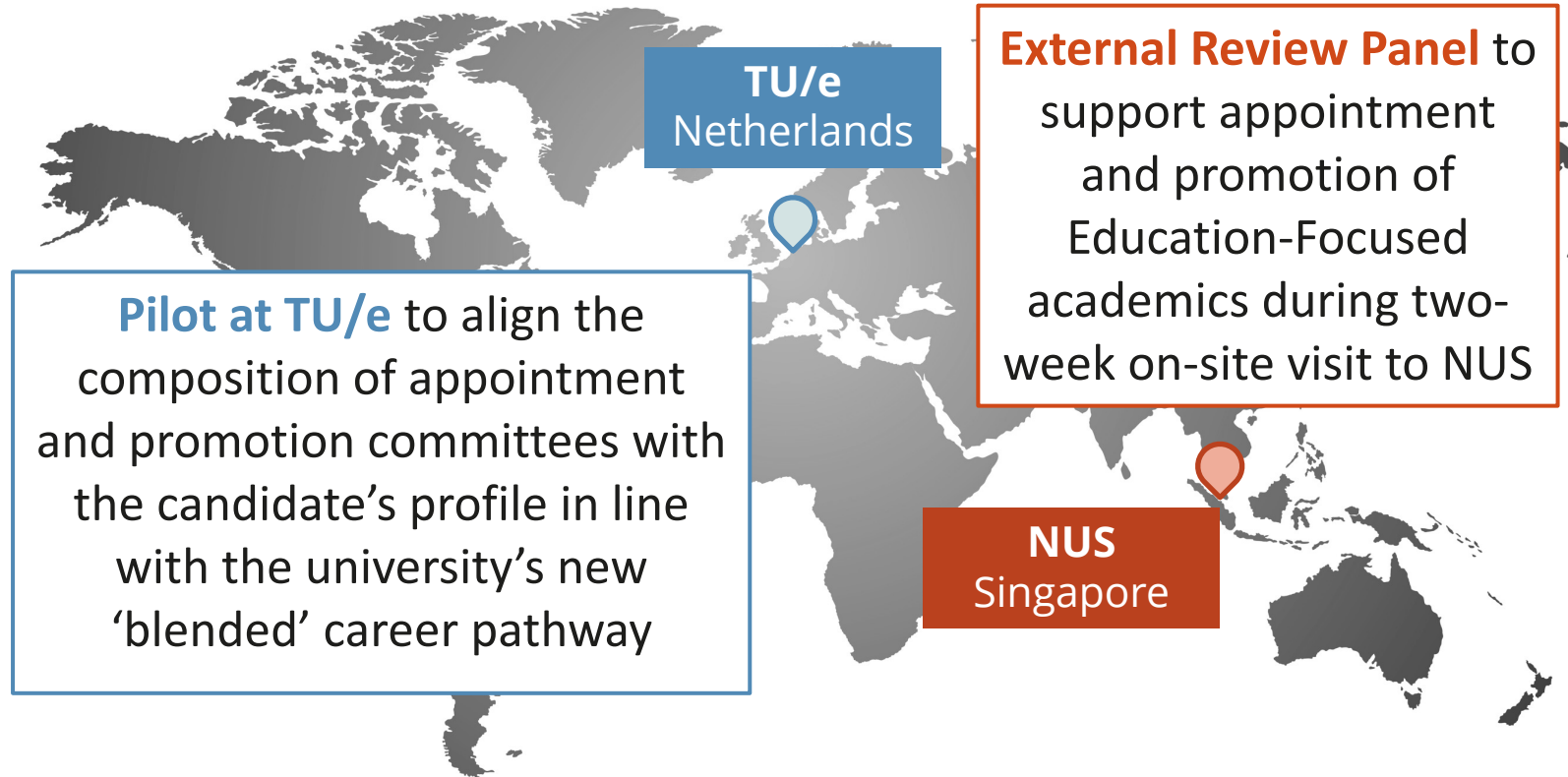
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NUS and Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e)



TU/e
Netherlands

Pilot at TU/e to align the composition of appointment and promotion committees with the candidate's profile in line with the university's new 'blended' career pathway

External Review Panel to support appointment and promotion of Education-Focused academics during two-week on-site visit to NUS

NUS
Singapore

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Utrecht University (Netherlands) continuous educational development



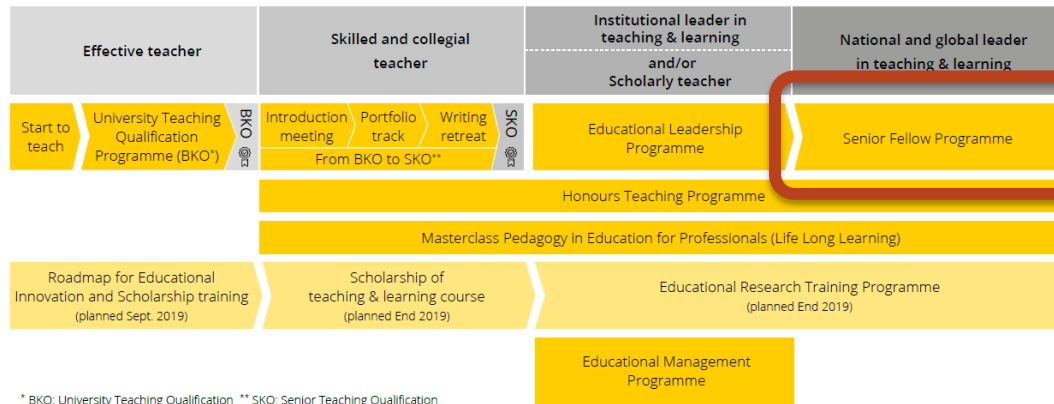
Clear definitions and progression routes for educational leadership

Courses & Programmes for teacher development

CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT

Short Courses & Trainings <i>Educational Consultancy & Professional Development</i>	Online courses & workshops on blended learning <i>Educate-it</i>	Personal development <i>Development Guide</i> <i>Human Resources</i>	Community <i>Teachers community TAUU</i>	Educational advice personal consultation on educational development
Educational design	Engaging education	Professional skills	Experiment space <i>Teaching & Learning Lab</i>	Trending offer
Teaching delivery	Video	Leadership & management	Faculty offer workshops, events and trainings organised within your faculty	English language proficiency
Feedback & assessment	(Peer) feedback	Personal development		Intercultural awareness
Evaluating teaching	Skills & Collaboration			
Coaching & mentoring	Assessment			

CAREER-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT based on The Career Framework for University Teaching (teachingframework.com, Dr. R. Graham)



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foster **continuous educational development** at all career stages

protect time for educational development, innovation and leadership

3 embedded in an institutional culture that champions university teaching and prioritises:

visible **representation of university teaching** in institutional communications and functions

active cross-institutional and inter-institutional **collaborations** in university teaching

scholarly approaches and continuous improvement in university teaching

the pursuit of **individual interests**, passions and pathways in university teaching

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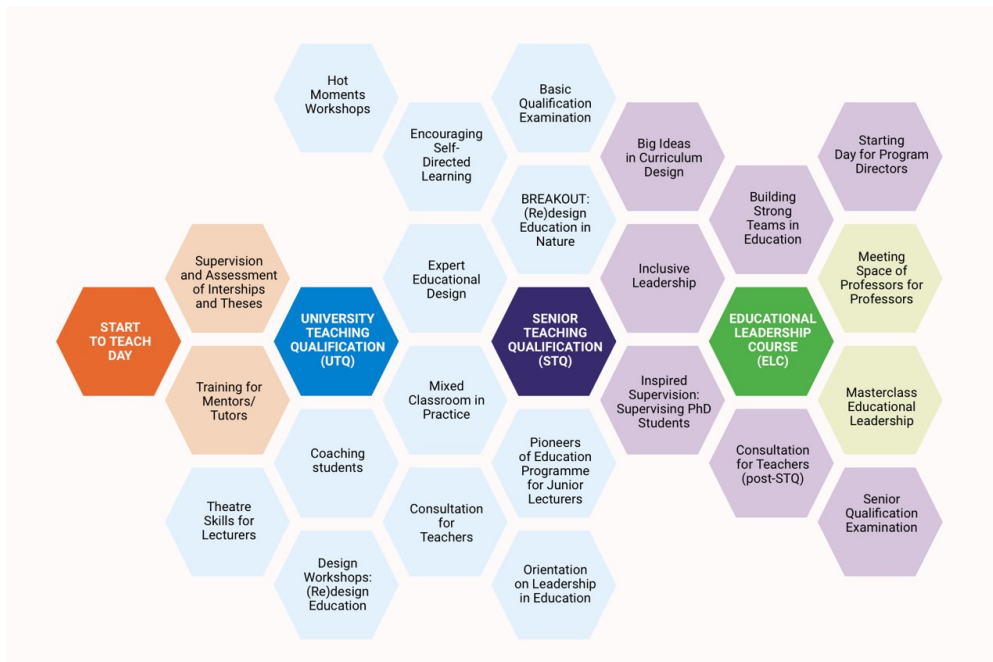
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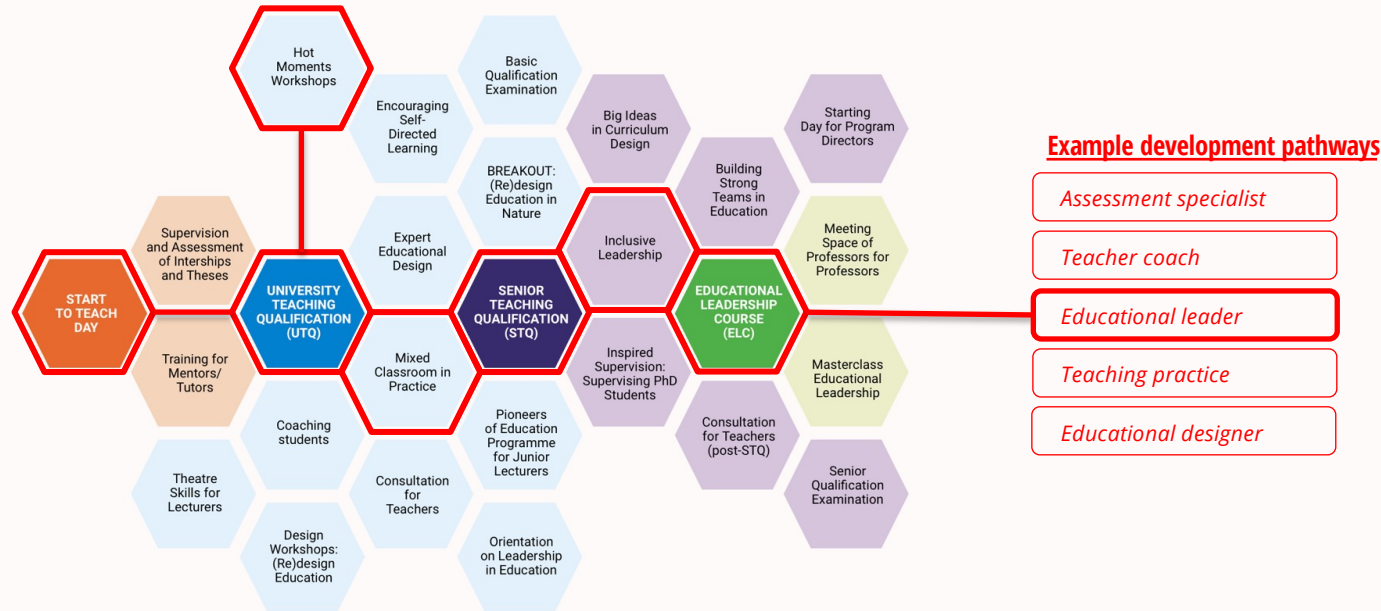
Vrije University (Netherlands)



Vrije University Continuous Development Path:



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Next steps

- Teaching Cultures Survey 2025: data analysis and report writing
- Survey findings released in October 2025
- Next Advancing Teaching meeting in Copenhagen in October 2025
- Ongoing roll-out of changes at university collaborators

Home About Framework Survey Global mapping Resources

Advancing Teaching

Global initiative to improve the recognition, reward and evaluation of university teaching

Latest updates

Overview

Universities across the world are striving to enhance the quality of the student experience; central to this mission is the establishment of an academic culture that celebrates, rewards and supports teaching achievement. Advancing Teaching is a global initiative to improve the reward, recognition and evaluation of university teaching. It is working with universities across the world to support and inform change to academic career pathways and institutional recognition systems.

Career Framework

The Career Framework for University Teaching is a resource to inform change to the institutional reward and recognition of university teaching

[Learn More](#)

Faculty survey

More than 20 universities worldwide are participating in the Teaching Cultures Survey, which tracks the academic teaching culture over time

[Learn More](#)

Global mapping

A new project, launched in November 2023, to map best practices in the global movement for change to the reward of university teaching

[Learn More](#)

www.advancingteaching.com

National collaborations

This set of videos showcases five countries that have established, or are in the process of establishing, national collaborations to reform university reward and recognition systems. Although each takes a different approach, all incorporate a major focus on improving the evaluation and reward of university teaching.



Introduction



Sweden



Malaysia



Denmark



Norway



Netherlands

Well-regarded university reward systems

A number of universities in the Advancing Teaching network have already implemented systemic reform to their academic reward and recognition systems. The videos below provide an overview of three that have been particularly influential, from: UCL (UK), the University of Wollongong (Australia) and Lund University (Sweden).



UCL (UK)



University of Wollongong
(Australia)



Lund University (Sweden)

Thank you

1 Evaluating impact
Defining and evaluating impact/achievement in university teaching in ways that are robust, clear and consistent.

2 Career pathways
Designing career pathways and progression criteria that appropriately reward achievements in university teaching

3 Professional development
Building systems to support educational development in for all academic profiles and stages of the career ladder

4 Cultural change
Overcoming cultural barriers to change, such as achieving parity of esteem between research and teaching



Common challenges facing education-focused pathways

The pathways are...

1 ... based on poorly defined progression criteria that are not consistently applied or align with institutional priorities

2 ... perceived as a low-status career routes with limited opportunities for advancement

3 ... limited in autonomy and time for academic development

4 ... isolating, with restricted mobility opportunities

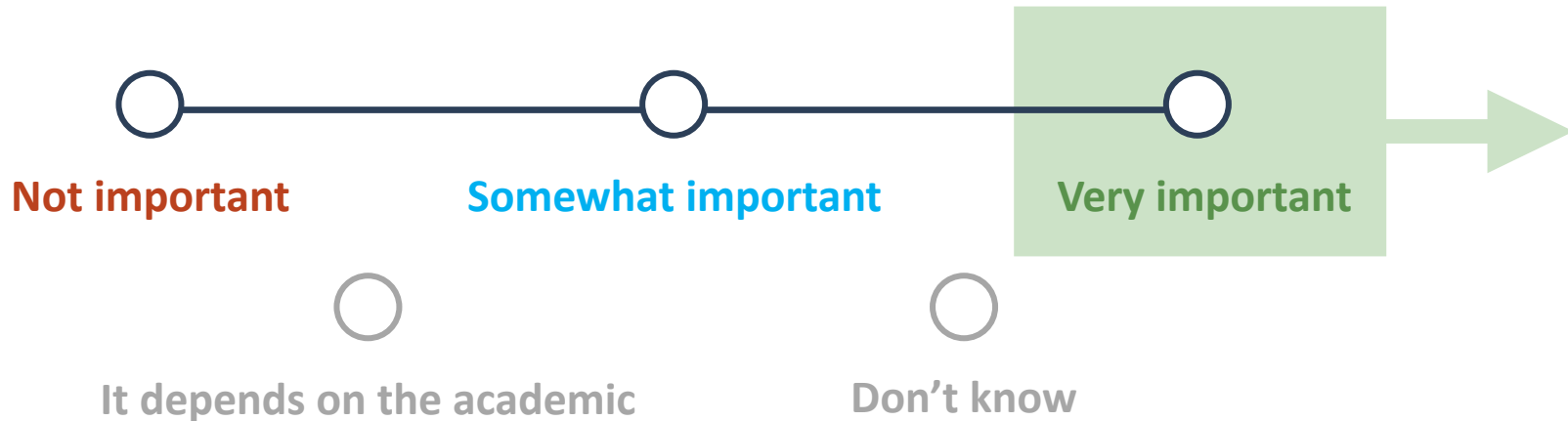
Academics experiences and priorities: promotion to full professorship

“How important **would you like** each of the following activities to be for promotion to full professor at your university (for a typical academic on a research/teaching contract)?”

1. **university teaching**
2. **research**
3. **entrepreneurship**, enterprise & external engagement
4. **service** to the university / administration

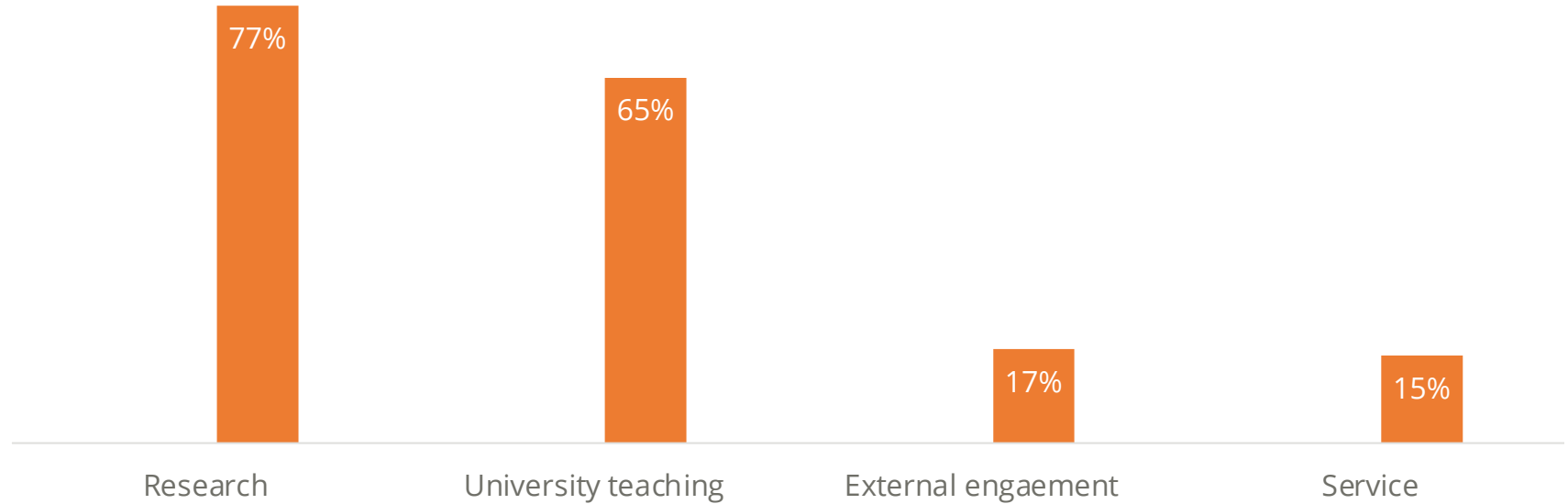
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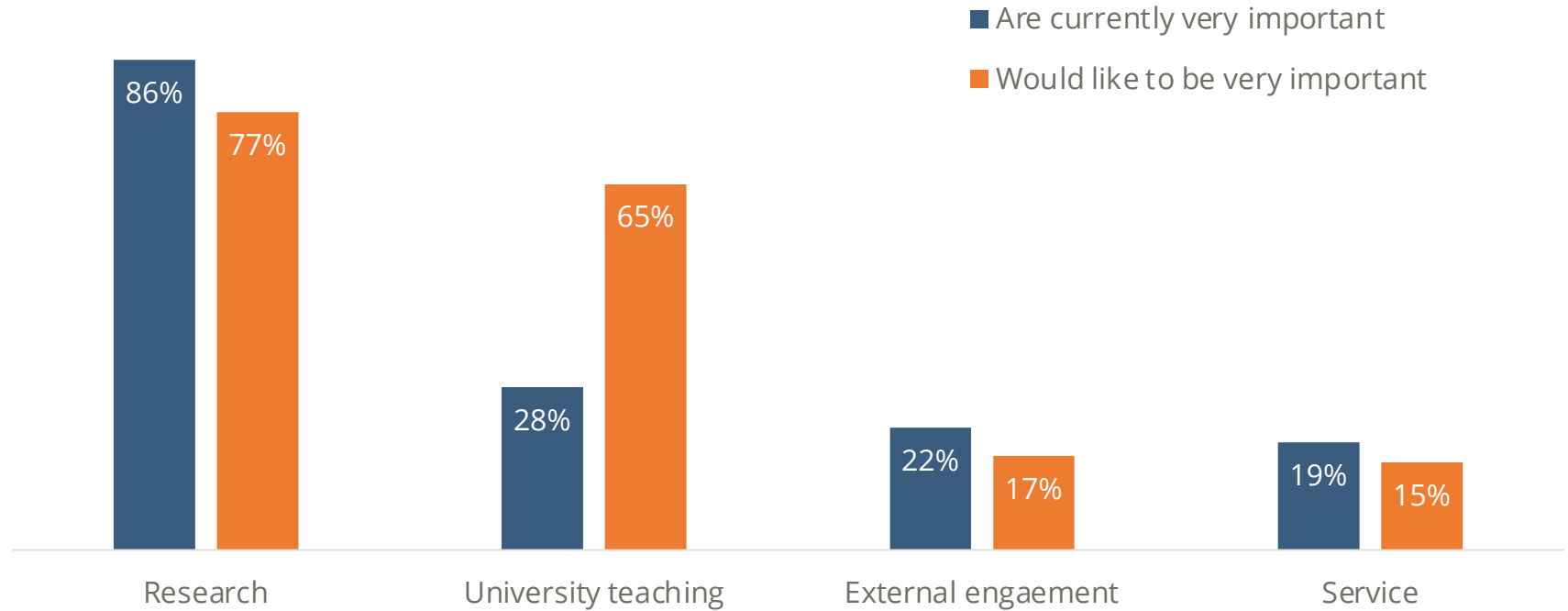
Respondents who would like each activity to be very important ...

■ Would like to be very important



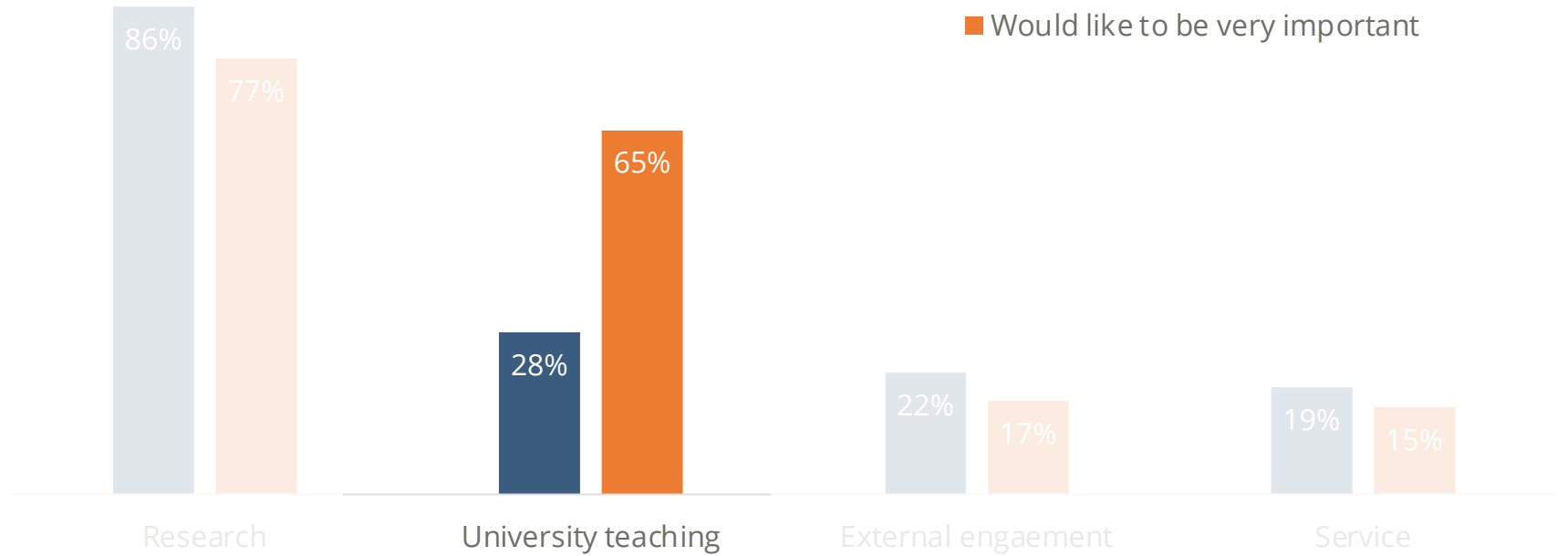
n = 9,847

... respondents who report each activity currently is very important



n = 9,847

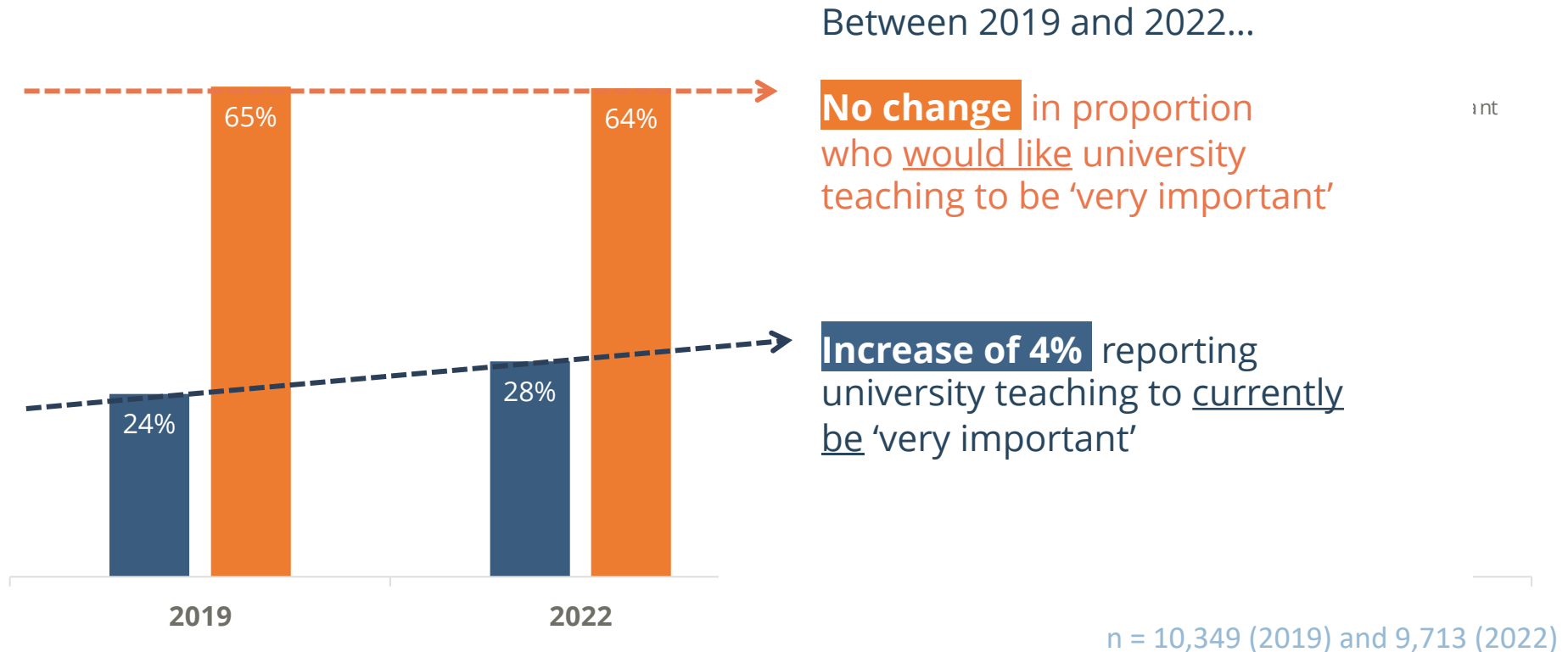
- Are currently very important
- Would like to be very important



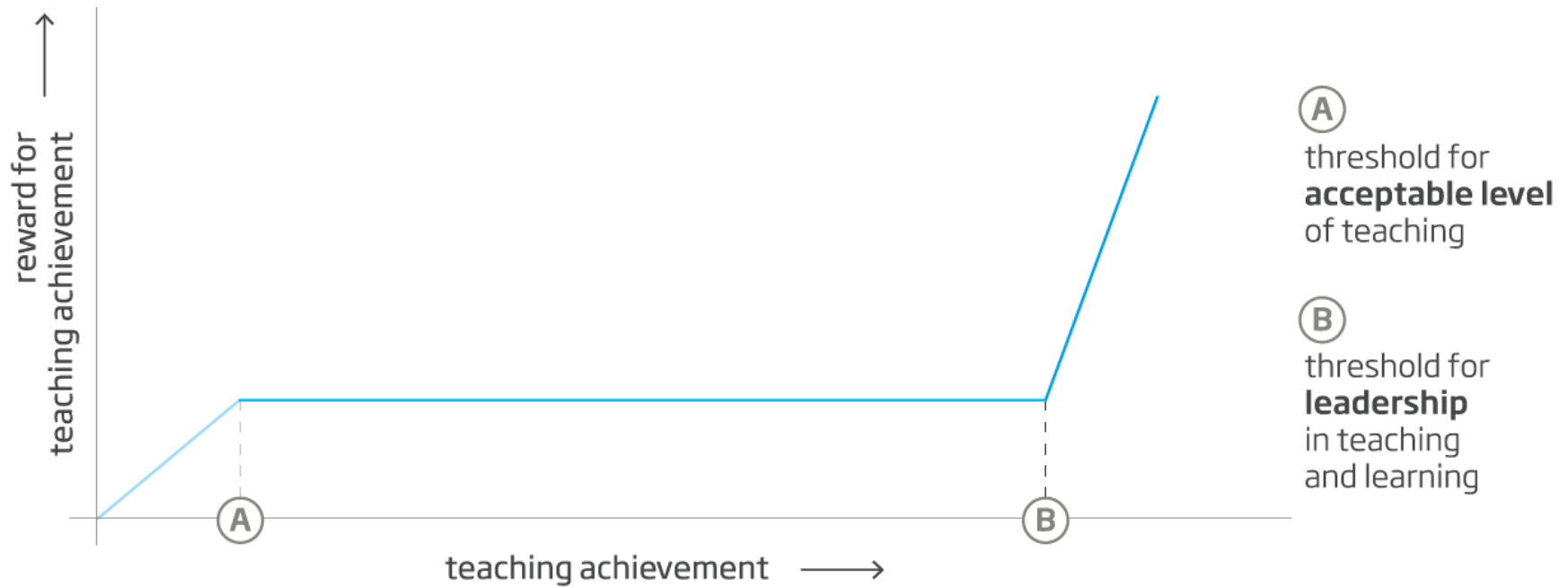
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Increase in those reporting UT to be 'very important' from 2019–2022 ...

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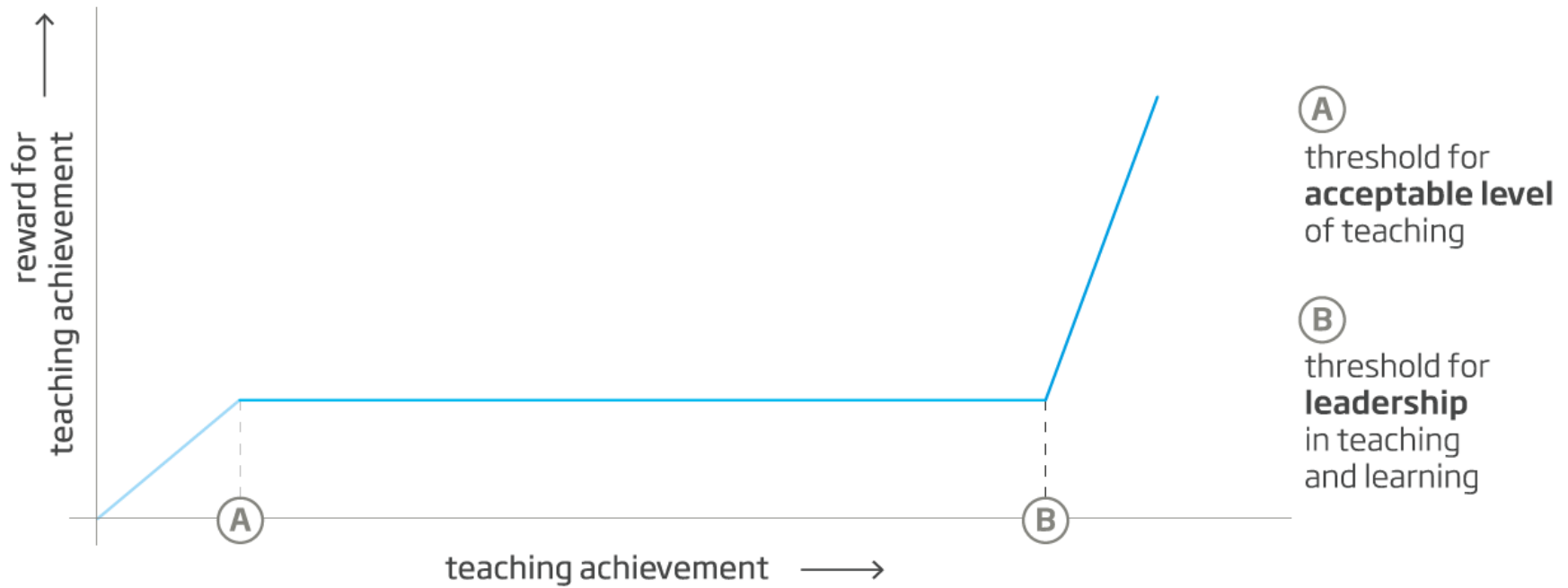






Challenges:

- › the absence of clear and accepted **definitions** of progressive 'levels' of teaching achievement that punctuate each stage of the career ladder



Challenges:

- › the absence of clear and accepted **definitions** of progressive 'levels' of teaching achievement that punctuate each stage of the career ladder
- › the inadequacy of the forms of **evidence** currently used to demonstrate and evaluate the teaching contribution of academics at each stage in their career progression

2014 – 2018

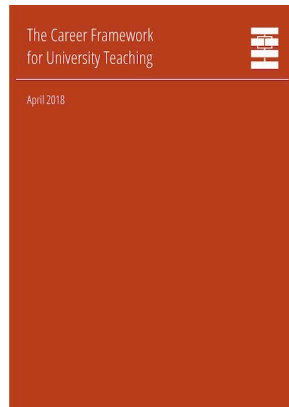
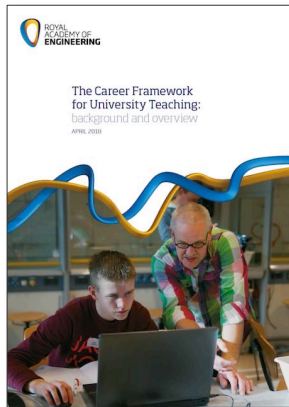
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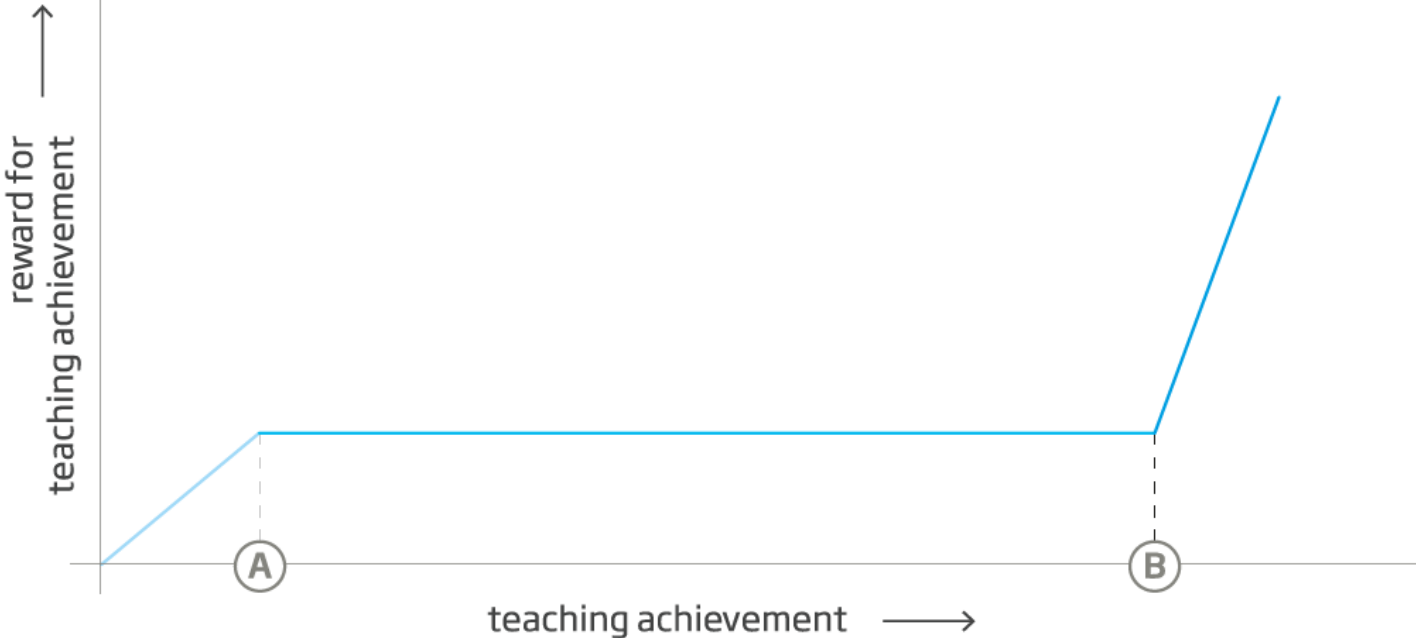


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The Career Framework for University Teaching



The Career Framework for University Teaching

