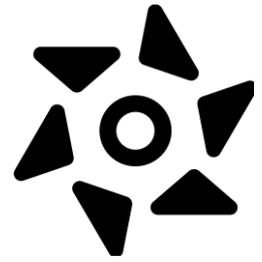


Advancing the reward of university teaching: insights from three waves of the Teaching Cultures Survey



Dr Ruth Graham
March 2026

Acknowledgements

The Teaching Cultures Survey is an independent survey funded by the consortium of participating universities. We are grateful to the academic communities at the participating universities who contributed so generously to the study by completing the anonymous survey. We are also grateful to the institutional and administrative survey leads at each participating institution who collaborated in the survey preparation, circulated the invitations to participate to their academic communities and encouraged participation to ensure as high a response rate as possible.

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Executive Summary

The Teaching Cultures Survey (TCS) is a global collaboration between research-intensive universities that are actively engaged in improving how university teaching is recognised and rewarded within academic careers. The survey captures academics' perspectives on how university teaching is supported, valued and rewarded at their institution. It is designed, in particular, to offer insight into how institutional policies and activities designed to improve the reward of university teaching are embedded and experienced in practice.

Three waves of the cross-sectional survey have now been completed, in 2019, 2022, and 2025. In 2025, 17 universities took part in the survey, spanning nine countries and four continents. Participating universities included King's College London, Utrecht University, the University of New South Wales, and the University of British Columbia. All participating institutions have engaged in – or are planning for – systemic reform in how university teaching is evaluated, supported and/or rewarded in academic career pathways.

In all, 12,071 academics participated in the 2025 survey, spanning all career stages from PhD students to university presidents. Their feedback offers the global higher education community insight into:

- the views of academics at institutions working to strengthen how university teaching is valued and recognised, and **how these perspectives vary** across both participating universities and academic subgroups (such as discipline, contract type and role). This cross-sectional picture is based on survey data from all 17 universities participating in TCS 2025.
- how these views and experiences **change over time** as universities introduce reforms to academic career pathways, promotion processes, and/or the ways in which university teaching is defined and evaluated. This analysis of change over time is based on survey data from the 10 universities that have participated in all three survey waves (referred to as *Returning* universities hereafter).

The survey analysis points to considerable variation between institutions, both in the 2025 findings and in the changes observed over time between 2019 and 2025 at the *Returning* universities. Despite these differences, several clear patterns emerge across institutions and across the dataset as a whole. As outlined below, these patterns point to six key factors that shape academics' experiences of university teaching culture, regardless of institutional context:

1. **Cultural change is achievable within years, not decades:** Over the six-year period from 2019 to 2025, many *Returning* universities recorded substantial shifts in how academics view and experience their institutional cultures. In such institutions – actively strengthening the place of university teaching in academic careers – cultural change that is seen and felt by academics is possible within years rather than decades.
2. **Department leaders play a central role in shaping university teaching culture:** One question sits at the centre of many relationships in the survey data: academics' views of their department leaders' commitment to rewarding university teaching. Where this commitment is seen to be strong, academics are much more likely to report positive views and experiences across multiple survey measures, including how they perceive career prospects for education-focused academics and their confidence in the way university teaching is assessed. These findings suggest that academics' perceptions of their departmental leaders' commitment serve as a proxy for – and potential driver of – how institutional priorities around university teaching are experienced in practice.

3. **Views on institutional priorities and practices differ sharply by career stage:** Across the large majority of participating institutions, early- and mid-career academics report markedly less positive perceptions of how university teaching is valued and rewarded than senior academics and university leaders. This pattern is evident across most survey measures, suggesting that university teaching culture is not experienced uniformly across the academic career pipeline.
4. **Alignment of views across academic groups is a barometer of university teaching culture:** Universities in which the views of education-focused academics and those of research-and-teaching colleagues are aligned – particularly in how they view education-focused careers – consistently score more highly across most survey measures. Alignment appears to be associated with environments in which education-focused academics are more embedded within the wider academic community, supporting shared understandings and integrated practices around university teaching.
5. **Established academics play a key role in culture change:** The most marked changes between 2019 and 2025 were recorded among senior and long-serving academics, with more limited movement among early- and mid-career academics. In other words, while reform efforts are having an overall positive effect, these changes primarily reflect shifts in the views and experiences of more established academics, rather than those of more junior colleagues. As a result, differences in perceptions between career stages have tended to widen over time.
6. **Confidence in how university teaching is measured remains low:** While many aspects of university teaching culture have strengthened since 2019, confidence in the evidence used to evaluate quality and impact in university teaching remains persistently low. This suggests that further work is needed sector-wide to develop and embed evaluation measures that are robust, transparent and trusted by the academic community.

These findings make clear that meaningful cultural change in how university teaching is valued and rewarded in higher education is possible. Progress, however, is often uneven and not experienced equally across academic groups. The findings point to several institutional levers that are closely associated with positive and durable change, including trusted leadership, the integration of education-focused roles, and the prominence given to university teaching in academics' annual performance reviews. Indeed, questions of trust – in leadership, in evaluation systems, and in promotion processes – appear to run through many of the patterns observed in how academics interpret institutional values and cultures.

Taken together, the findings map out a set of building blocks that shape how university teaching cultures are formed. These building blocks provide the basis for other universities to reflect on how the reward of university teaching is interpreted and experienced across different institutional contexts and stages of the career ladder.

Contents

1. What is the focus and approach of the survey?	1
1.1. Purpose of the Teaching Cultures Survey	1
1.2. Participating universities	2
1.3. Survey themes and structure.....	3
1.4. Data analysis in this report.....	4
2. What do the 2025 survey findings reveal?	5
2.1. Main patterns in the 2025 TCS dataset.....	5
2.2. Leadership and teaching culture: why departmental leaders matter	8
3. How do views differ across academic groups?	10
3.1. Differences by career stage.....	10
3.2. Perspectives of education-focused academics.....	12
4. How have academics' views changed over time?	14
4.1. Headline changes across key survey measures	14
4.2. Patterns of change by academic subgroup	16
4.3. Catalysts of positive change.....	18
5. What insights can be drawn for the sector?	19
5.1. Key lessons from six years of the TCS.....	19
5.2. Practical levers for change.....	20
Report Appendices	21
Appendix A. Outline of participating universities	21
Appendix B. Participant profile	23
Appendix C. Survey management	24

Definitions used in the report:

- **University teaching:** a term used throughout this report to cover all activities relating to teaching and learning at universities. Examples could include: curriculum development; teaching students; pedagogical research; student supervision; and educational policy making.
- **All TCS 2025:** the amalgamated dataset of survey responses from all 17 universities participating in the 2025 Teaching Cultures Survey (n=12,071).
- **Returning universities:** the amalgamated dataset of survey responses from the 10 universities that took part in all three survey waves in 2019, 2022, and 2025 (n=8,575 in 2019; n=7,665 in 2022; n=8,031 in 2025).
- **Subgroup analysis:** analysis of the *All TCS 2025* or *Returning* universities datasets by demographic or professional group (e.g. academic role, career stage, contract type, gender, and discipline).
- **Node measures:** survey questions that show strong statistical associations with several other questions in the dataset, as identified through network analysis.

1. What is the focus and approach of the survey?

1.1. Purpose of the Teaching Cultures Survey

The Teaching Cultures Survey (TCS) is a global collaboration between research-intensive universities that are actively engaged in improving how university teaching¹ is rewarded in academic careers. The TCS aims to capture and track how academics experience and interpret this cultural change.

The short, anonymous survey is open to the full academic community at each participating university. It captures academics' views and experiences of how university teaching is supported, valued and rewarded within their institutions, offering insight into how institutional policies and activities are embedded and experienced in practice.

The TCS is built around three cross-sectional surveys in 2019, 2022, and 2025, using the same survey questions in each of the three waves. The surveys are funded by the participating universities and are undertaken as a collaboration between these institutions and *Advancing Teaching*², a global initiative focused on improving the reward of university teaching.

Each wave of the TCS allows the participating universities both to benchmark their findings against global peer institutions and to examine how the perspectives and experiences of their academic community change over time. When the data are viewed at an aggregated level, the TCS offers the global higher education community insight into:

1. the views of academics at institutions working to improve how they reward university teaching, and **how these perspectives vary** across both participating universities and academic subgroups (such as discipline and role). This cross-institutional picture is based on survey data from all 17 universities participating in TCS 2025 (referred to as *All TCS 2025* in Figure 1 and hereafter).
2. how these views and experiences **change over time** as universities progress with their reform efforts, based on survey data from the 10 universities that have participated in all three survey waves (referred to as *Returning* universities in Figure 1 and hereafter).

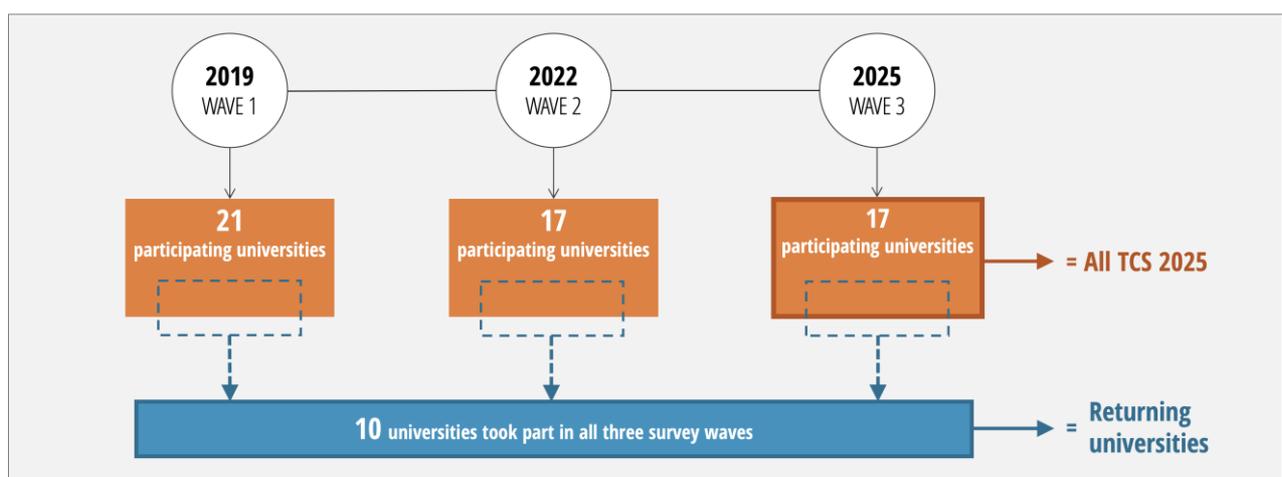


Figure 1. TCS survey participation across three waves, 2019–2025, highlighting the *All TCS* and *Returning* universities datasets.

¹ The term **university teaching** is used to cover all activities relating to teaching and learning at universities. Examples include: curriculum development; teaching students; pedagogical research; student supervision; and educational policy making.

² Advancing Teaching: <https://www.advancingteaching.com>

1.2. Participating universities

As outlined in Figure 2, 17 research-intensive universities took part in TCS 2025, spanning nine countries and four continents. These participating universities are listed in full in Appendix A.



Figure 2. Global spread of the 17 universities participating in TCS 2025, with breakdown by country.

All participating universities have engaged in – or are planning for – systemic reform in how university teaching is embedded in academic career pathways and reward systems. While their approaches vary, their reform activities typically fall into one or more of the following categories:

- **new standards in university teaching:** establishing consistent, evidence-based standards for defining and evaluating excellence in university teaching across key institutional processes. For example, Aalborg University recently aligned its annual performance reviews, promotion criteria, and salary negotiations with a new national Danish framework for university teaching.
- **redesigning all academic career pathways:** establishing new career pathways with the flexibility to accommodate a more diverse mix of academic roles and progression routes. All research-intensive universities in the Netherlands are engaged in these systemic changes.
- **redesigning education-focused pathways:** root-and-branch reforms to improve the status, connectivity, and career advancement opportunities of those in education-focused roles. Universities undertaking such redesigns include UNSW Sydney and King's College London.
- **new merit systems:** introducing '*pedagogical merit systems*' that operate alongside formal career pathways to reward sustained contributions to university teaching, regardless of role or seniority. NTNU in Norway has recently launched such a system.

Further details of the reforms underway at each TCS 2025 university are provided in Appendix A.

Across the 17 participating universities, **12,071** academics took part in TCS 2025, with an average institutional response rate of 29%. The survey was open to all academics with a contract of employment at their institution³, spanning the full career pipeline from PhD students (if employed and engaged in university teaching) through to university presidents (see Figure 3). Respondents are drawn from across all academic career pathways and represent a wide disciplinary mix. Further information about the demographic profile of the survey participants is given in Appendix B.

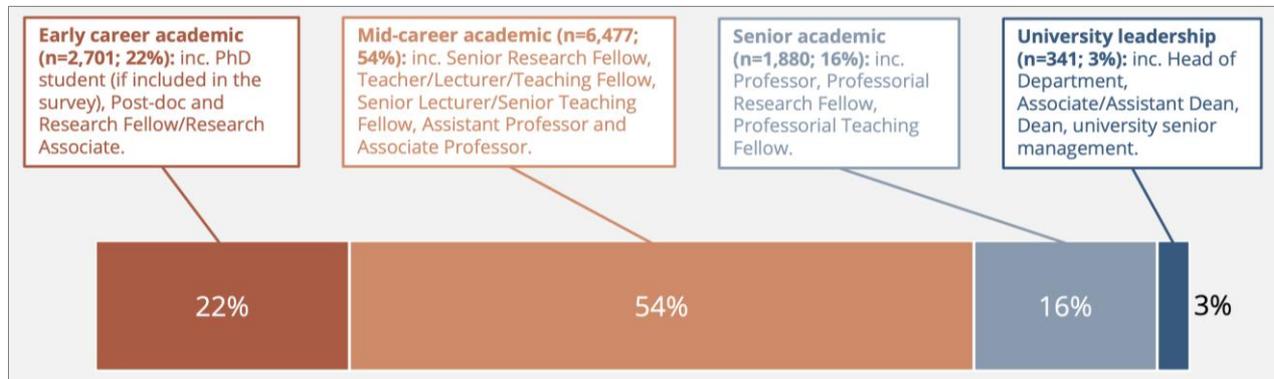


Figure 3. Distribution of respondents across four seniority groups, which together account for 94% of the *All TCS 2025* sample.

1.3. Survey themes and structure

The TCS is designed to capture academics' experience of the embedded culture and values shaping how university teaching is rewarded at their institution. It is grounded in the wider literature on organisational change in higher education and by the experiences of universities that have previously redesigned their academic reward systems. Their experience suggests that sustainable change rests on two key factors: (i) the academic community's trust that policies to reward university teaching will be delivered in practice by university leaders; and (ii) the prominence and recognition of university teaching within key institutional processes, such as annual performance reviews and promotion.

The TCS questionnaire is short and anonymous, designed to take around six minutes to complete. The same questionnaire was used in each of the three waves, with minor adjustments made to reflect local titles, terminology, and institutional structures. It captures **academics' perspectives** on how university teaching is supported, valued and rewarded at their institution across four key areas:

1. **The university's educational environment:** the broader setting in which university teaching takes place, including the role of pedagogical training and the institutional support provided.
2. **Institutional culture and commitment to rewarding university teaching:** the embedded values, norms and priorities shaping how university teaching is recognised and rewarded at the university.
3. **The role of university teaching in formal review and promotion processes:** the prominence of university teaching in key institutional processes, and the robustness of the evidence used to evaluate it.
4. **Future priorities for change to the reward of university teaching:** expectations and aspirations for change in how university teaching is rewarded at the university in the coming years.

In addition, the survey collects basic demographic and professional information (e.g. academic role, gender, discipline, and length of employment) to enable subgroup analyses. Rigorous cognitive testing of the questions was conducted to ensure clarity and applicability across institutional and national contexts. In administering the survey, no personal data were collected – such as names,

³ Note: one university restricted survey participation to education-focused academics only. All other participating universities opened the survey to all members of the academic community with a contract of employment at their institution.

email addresses or digital identifiers – and individual responses cannot be traced back to participants. The survey was administered externally to ensure anonymity and data security. Further details on survey management are provided in Appendix C.

This report presents findings from amalgamated datasets across participating universities; each university also receives a separate confidential report based on its own institutional data.

1.4. Data analysis in this report

This section sets out the analytical approaches used in the report. The analyses highlight results that are both statistically robust and practically useful. Statistical significance is reported at the level of $p < 0.05$. Correlations were examined using Spearman's rank coefficient, with coefficients of ≥ 0.30 regarded as moderate and ≥ 0.50 regarded as strong. These thresholds are widely used in social science research and ensure that only substantive relationships are reported.

The survey is cross-sectional, meaning each wave captures the views of all eligible academics at that time rather than tracking the same individuals over time. Reported changes therefore reflect shifts at institutional and sector level, not individual trajectories. Associations are not necessarily causal and may be shaped by other unmeasured factors. In particular, the second wave of the survey (2022) took place during the period of COVID-19 emergency teaching. This context may have influenced results through temporary shifts in perceptions (for example, of university priorities) and through disruption to institutional processes, such as annual reviews or promotion procedures.

The analyses used in the report are summarised below:

- **Chapter 2 (cross-sectional analysis of 2025 data):** This chapter draws on the *All TCS 2025* dataset: survey responses from across all 17 universities. The analysis for Section 2.2, which explores how survey questions are connected, followed a three-stage process. First, descriptive analysis was used to identify statistically significant differences across the dataset. Second, Spearman correlations were applied (reporting only moderate or strong associations, ≥ 0.30) to explore linkages between questions. Third, a network analysis of institutional-level data was conducted to identify 'node' measures: questions with extensive connections to others.
- **Chapter 3 (subgroup analyses of 2025 data):** This chapter also draws on the *All TCS 2025* dataset. It reports differences between demographic and professional subgroups – such as role, career stage, and length of employment – and examines the views of academics on education-focused career pathways. Propensity Score Matching was used to adjust for other characteristics that might otherwise explain differences in the views of education-focused academics and academics on 'research-and-teaching' career pathways.
- **Chapter 4 (cross-sectional comparisons over time, 2019–2025):** This chapter draws on the *Returning universities* dataset, comprising the ten institutions that took part in all three survey waves. The analysis draws on two main elements. First, descriptive comparisons were used to track changes in key measures between 2019, 2022, and 2025 across institutions and subgroups. Second, Pearson correlations were calculated on percentage-point changes in institutional averages over time to identify clusters of measures that tended to move together. These correlations were based on aggregated institutional data and inform the analysis in Section 4.3. Sensitivity analyses were undertaken to test whether changes in respondent profiles across the surveys explained the observed shifts. The findings proved robust.

Chapter 5 brings the TCS findings together and considers the implications for the global sector. While causality cannot be assumed, the consistent patterns across institutions, subgroups and survey waves point to common factors linked to strong and improving institutional cultures for university teaching.

2. What do the 2025 survey findings reveal?

Chapter outline

This chapter draws on the *All TCS 2025* dataset: the survey responses from academics at all 17 participating universities. **Section 2.1** explores the main patterns in this dataset, focusing on: (i) the headline findings across the five key questions most closely tracked by participating universities; and (ii) how responses differ between universities. **Section 2.2** explores the linkages between survey measures and identifies one pivotal question that sits as a central ‘node’ in the dataset: how academics view their departmental leaders’ commitment to rewarding university teaching.

2.1. Main patterns in the 2025 TCS dataset

Summarised below are the headline findings from the *All TCS 2025* dataset, focusing on five questions that many participating universities are actively monitoring as key markers of institutional change. These five markers are academics’ perceptions of:

1. **the commitment of institutional leaders to rewarding excellence in university teaching.** Survey respondents were asked to rate the commitment of their institutional leaders at three levels – department, school⁴, and university – to rewarding excellence in university teaching. Although views vary between institutions, respondents consistently identify departmental leaders as more committed than leaders at school and university levels (see Figure 4).
2. **the attention given to university teaching in academics’ annual performance reviews (referred to as ‘annual reviews’ hereafter).** Findings suggest that university teaching is not consistently explored in depth in annual reviews: fewer than a third of respondents overall (31%) agree with the statement *“My achievements, goals and ambitions in university teaching were explored in depth in my most recent annual review”*⁴, while a similar proportion (32%) disagree.
3. **the impact of time spent on university teaching for career progression.** Findings point to mixed views on whether time invested in university teaching is beneficial to career progression: two in five respondents (39%) disagree with the statement *“Time spent on university teaching has a positive impact on the career progression of academics at my institution”*, while just 28% agree.
4. **the career advancement prospects for education-focused academics.** Findings point to a perception, shared by around half of respondents, that there are few opportunities for education-focused academics to advance their careers: 50% agree with the statement that *“Roles focused on university teaching are career-limiting at my institution”*, while one in five (20%) disagree.
5. **the importance of university teaching in professorial promotions.** A third (33%) of survey respondents perceive university teaching to be ‘very important’ for promotion to full professor at their university, while two-thirds (66%) say they would like it to be ‘very important’ (Figure 5). This pattern indicates a significant perceived gap between current practice and desired priorities, a contrast not seen to the same extent in the other three domains of academic activity (research, external engagement/enterprise, and university service).

⁴ **Note:** in each university’s questionnaire, terms such as ‘annual review’, ‘department’, or ‘school’ were adjusted to reflect local terminology and structures at that institution. Not all participating universities have an intermediate organisational level (e.g. ‘school’) between department and university.

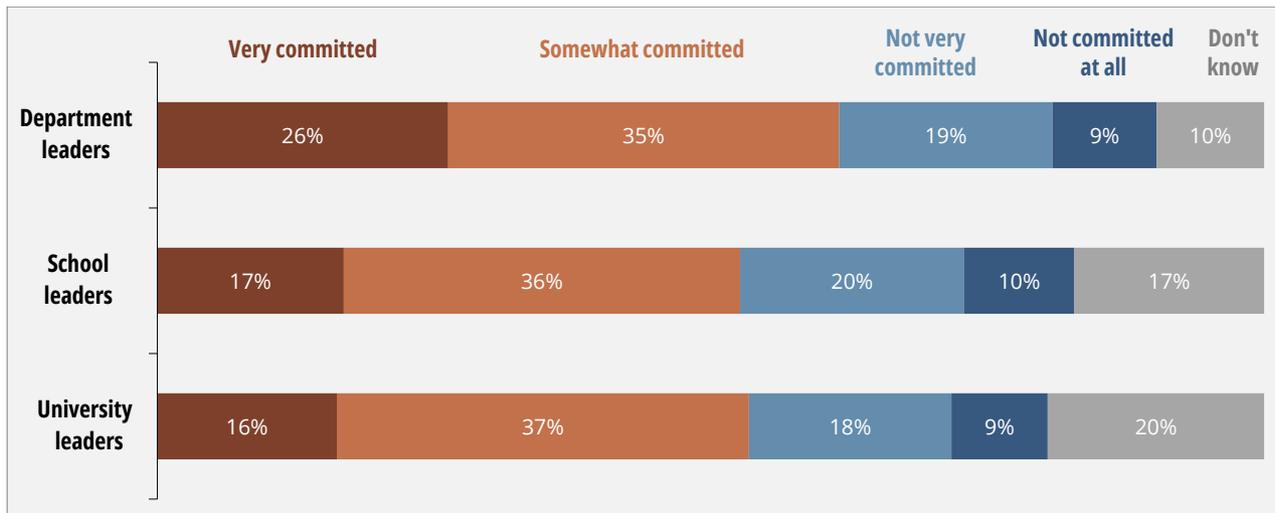


Figure 4. Responses to the questions: “How committed are the leaders at the following levels in your institution to rewarding excellence in university teaching?” in relation to department, school⁴, and university leaders. Results shown here are for All TCS 2025 respondents (n=11,845).

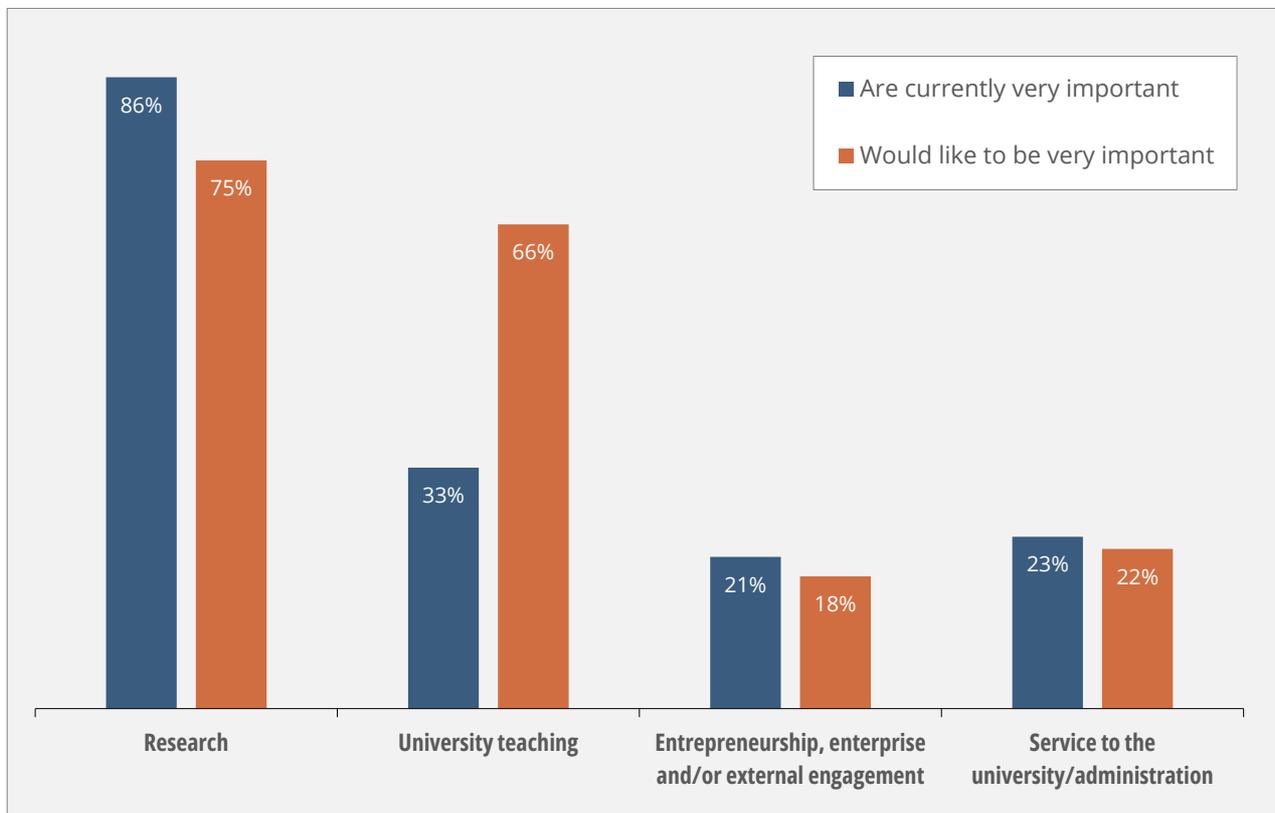


Figure 5. Proportion of respondents selecting ‘very important’ in response to the questions: “In your view, how important are each of the following activities for promotion to full professor (for a typical academic on a teaching/research contract) at your university?” and “How important would you like each of the following activities to be for promotion to full professor at your university (for a typical academic on a teaching/research contract)?” – represented by “are currently very important” and “would like to be very important” respectively. Results shown here are for All TCS 2025 respondents (n=11,616).

These cross-institutional averages highlight broad patterns common to all participating universities. The underlying results, however, vary considerably between institutions. The extent of the variation differs by question: across all survey measures, the difference between the highest- and lowest-scoring universities ranges from around 10% to over 40%.

For example, when asked “How committed are the leaders in your department to rewarding excellence in university teaching?”, the proportion of academics selecting ‘very committed’ ranges across

participating universities from 14% to 45%, highlighting how unevenly departmental leadership commitment is perceived across institutions. Figure 6 presents the results for this question broken down by participating university; each university has been anonymised, ordered by response, and labelled A–O⁵. As discussed in the following section (Section 2.2), this leadership measure is closely linked to many other aspects of university teaching culture: universities scoring well on this question also tend to score well across multiple other survey measures.

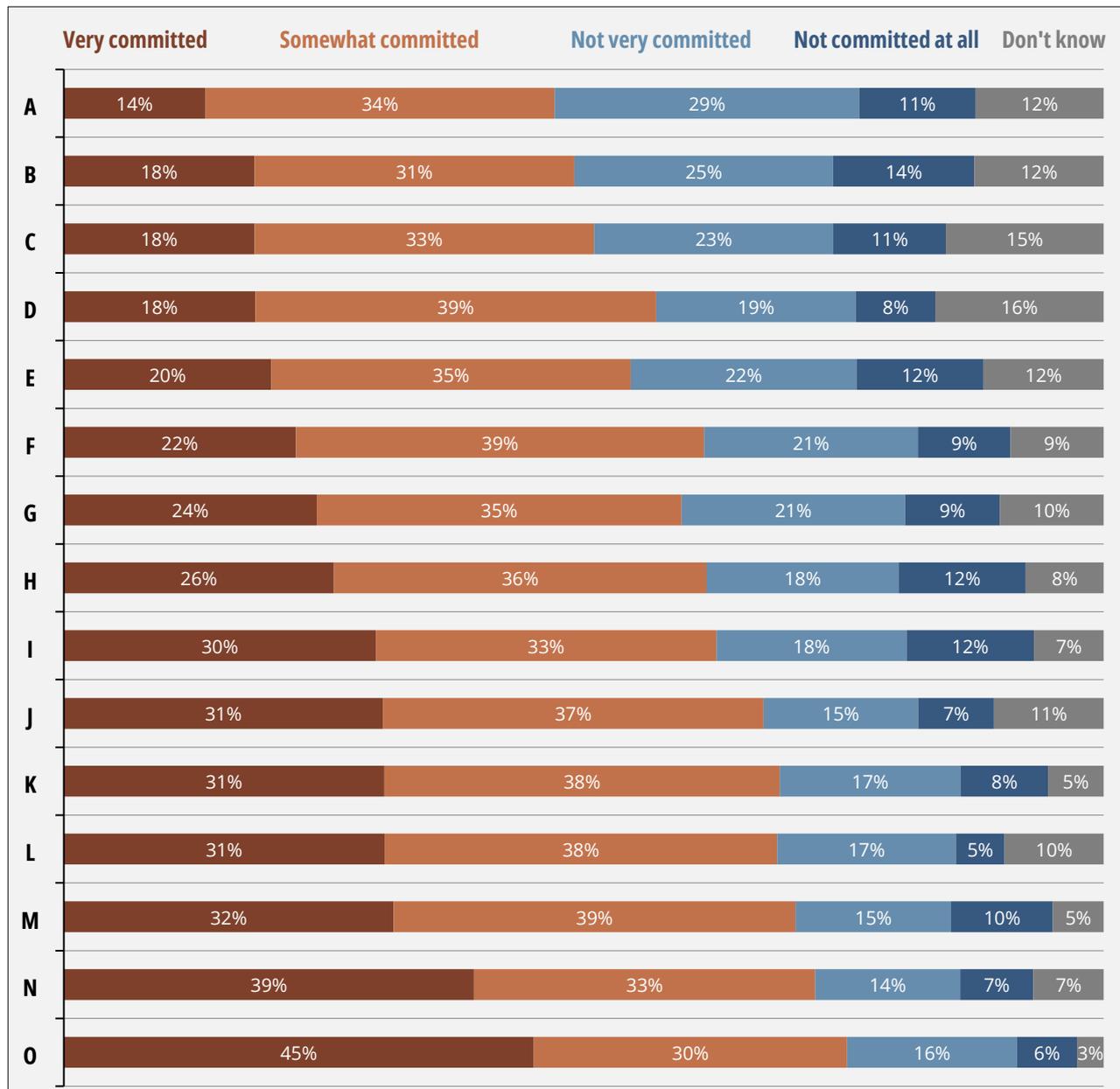


Figure 6. Responses to the question: “How committed are the leaders in your department to rewarding excellence in university teaching?”, by participating university. Universities are anonymised (A–O). Results for two institutions have been excluded due to sample size and/or profile of their responding population⁶. Based on all remaining TCS 2025 respondents (n=11,417).

⁵ **Note:** Each label (A, B, C...) represents a different university participating in the survey. Labels are anonymised and re-assigned for each figure after the data have been ordered. As a result, the same letter does not correspond to the same university across different figures.

⁶ **Note:** In two figures in this report – Figure 6 and Figure 13 – where survey findings are presented at the level of anonymised individual universities, results for a small number of institutions have been excluded due to sample size and/or the profile of their responding population.

2.2. Leadership and teaching culture: why departmental leaders matter

While Section 2.1 highlights substantial variation in how institutions score on individual survey measures, the 2025 dataset also reveals a structural pattern that is common across all participating universities: certain survey questions function as ‘nodes’, showing strong associations with a wide range of other survey measures. The clearest and most powerful of these nodes is the **perceived commitment of departmental leaders** to rewarding excellence in university teaching. This question sits at the centre of many other relationships in the survey data.

As shown in the network diagram in Figure 7, departmental leadership commitment is most closely aligned with four key measures in the amalgamated dataset ($\rho=0.38-0.49$). Academics who view their departmental leaders as committed to rewarding university teaching are more likely to report that:

1. **university teaching is prioritised in annual reviews** (in response to “*My achievements, goals and ambitions in university teaching were explored in depth in my most recent annual review*”).
2. **time invested in university teaching advances career progression** (in response to “*Time spent on university teaching has a positive impact on the career progression of academics at my institution*”).
3. **their university offers a supportive educational environment** (in response to “*My university provides a supportive learning environment with opportunities to develop and improve my teaching practice*”).
4. **measures used to assess university teaching quality are robust** (in response to “*The sources of evidence used to assess the quality and impact of university teaching at my university are robust*”).

The central position of departmental leadership commitment in the network analysis suggests that this measure captures a fundamental feature of how university teaching cultures are formed. It is closely linked to how academics experience and interpret institutional policies and practices: where commitment is seen to be strong, so too is confidence that the university genuinely values and delivers on its commitments to reward university teaching; where commitment is weak, concerns are more likely to extend across multiple dimensions at once. For example, as illustrated in Figure 8, academics who identify their departmental leaders as ‘very committed’ are far more likely to view the evidence used to assess university teaching at their institution as robust.

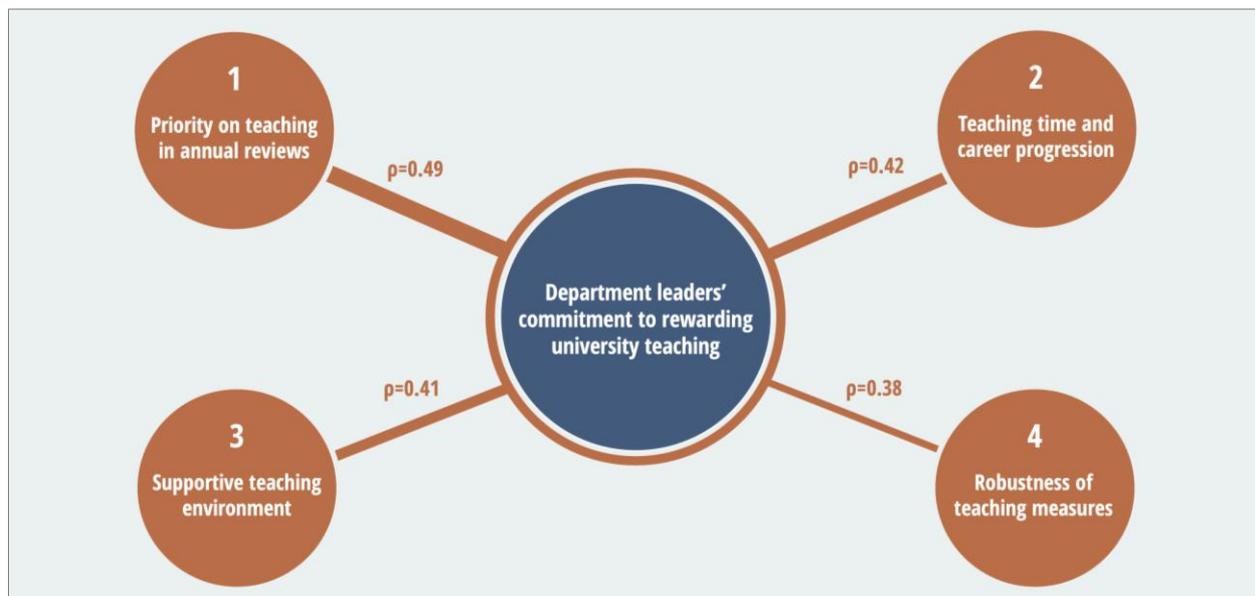


Figure 7. Network diagram of the four survey measures most closely aligned with respondents' views of their departmental leaders' commitment to rewarding university teaching (in addition to the expected alignment with academics' views of school and university leaders). Numbers on the connecting lines show Spearman correlation coefficients (ρ) from the amalgamated dataset; thicker lines indicate stronger associations.

This relationship is not limited to aggregate-level analysis. The same pattern is evident when universities are compared with one another and when variation is examined within each institution. For example, Figure 9 presents data from a single anonymised university, showing that academics who report stronger confidence in their departmental leaders' commitment are far less likely to view education-focused roles as career-limiting than colleagues without such confidence. Taken together, these findings suggest that academics' perceptions of their departmental leaders' commitment serve as a proxy for – and potential driver of – how they experience the wider institutional culture for valuing and rewarding university teaching. Indeed, capturing academics' views of departmental leadership commitment may offer a useful diagnostic lens through which to identify differences in university teaching culture between institutions, departments, and academic groups.



Figure 8. Relationship between views on department leaders and on robustness of evidence: respondents divided into four groups by how they describe their departmental leaders' commitment ('very committed', 'somewhat committed', 'not very committed', 'not committed at all'; responses of 'don't know' excluded), showing the proportion in each group who selected 'very' or 'somewhat' robust in response to the question: "In your opinion, how robust are the sources of evidence used to assess the quality and impact of university teaching at your university?" (All TCS 2025, n=10,999).

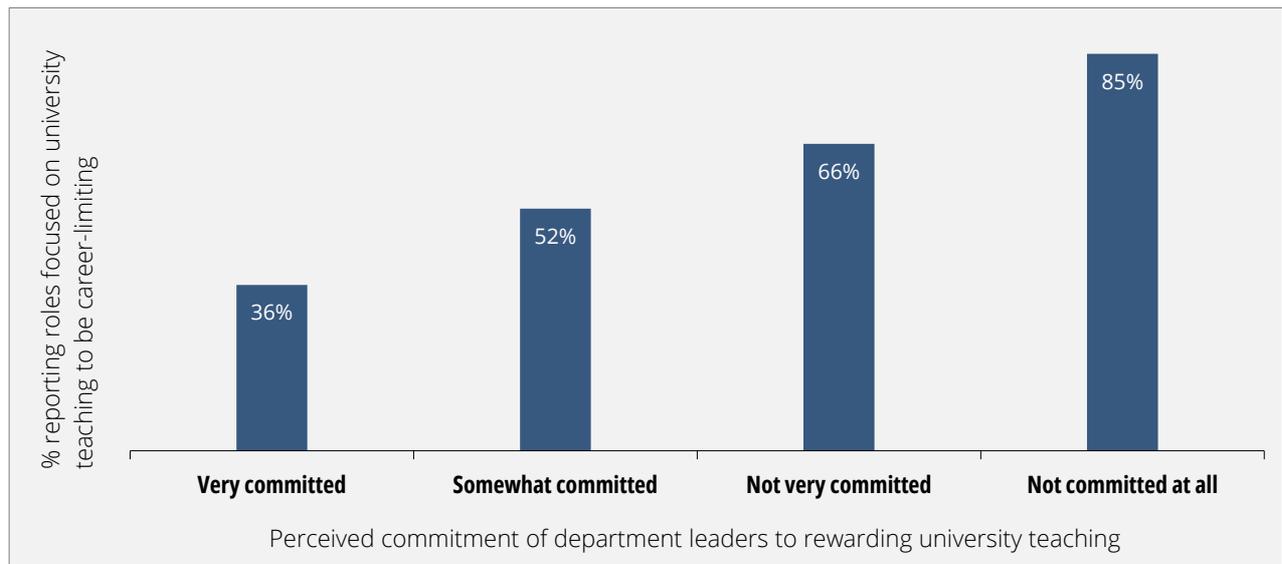


Figure 9. Relationship between views on department leaders and on education-focused careers: respondents divided into four groups by how they describe their departmental leaders' commitment ('very committed', 'somewhat committed', 'not very committed', 'not committed at all'; responses of 'don't know' excluded), showing the proportion in each group who agree with the statement "Roles focused on university teaching are career-limiting at my institution" (data from a single anonymised TCS 2025 university).

3. How do views differ across academic groups?

Chapter outline

This chapter explores differences in how university teaching cultures are viewed across demographic and professional subgroups in the *All TCS 2025* dataset. Seven dimensions were explored (including role, gender, and discipline), but two stand out: contrasts by career stage and by academic career pathway. **Section 3.1** highlights marked differences by career stage, with early- and mid-career academics consistently providing less positive assessments than their senior colleagues. **Section 3.2** examines how alignment of views between education-focused academics and their colleagues on research-and-teaching pathways is a barometer of the wider culture: where views converge, ratings on how the institution rewards university teaching are more positive overall.

3.1. Differences by career stage

In the *All TCS 2025* dataset, perceptions of university teaching culture vary sharply by career stage, with differences of more than 40% between groups on individual survey questions. Even larger gaps – in some cases exceeding 50% – are evident in some institutions. As noted in Section 1.2, survey responses span the full career pipeline, from PhD students (if employed and engaged in university teaching) through to university leadership. For the purposes of analysis, respondents are grouped into four career stages: early-career academics, mid-career academics, senior academics, and university leadership. Details of the roles included in each group are given in Figure 3.

The survey findings point to a broad seniority gradient: assessments of university teaching cultures become progressively more positive with each successive rung up the career ladder, from early-career academics through to university leaders. This trend, however, is not uniform, and each group shows a distinctive profile of responses, as outlined in turn below.

Early-career academics are the group with the least positive views of their university's educational environment and the commitment of its leadership to rewarding university teaching. For example, as shown in Figure 10, only 54% of early-career academics agree that their university provides a supportive environment for university teaching, compared with 88% of university leaders.

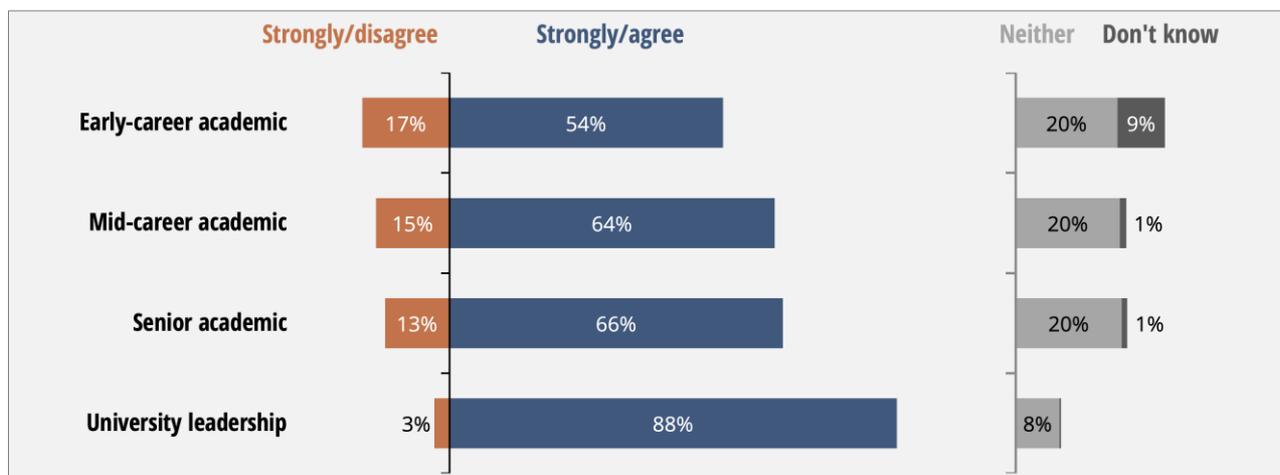


Figure 10. Responses to the statement “My university provides a supportive learning environment with opportunities to develop and improve my teaching practice”, by career stage. Results shown are for *All TCS 2025* respondents (n=11,834).

A similar pattern is evident on leadership commitment: only 42% of early-career academics identify their university leaders as 'very' or 'somewhat' committed to rewarding university teaching, compared to 83% of leaders themselves. Early-career academics are also more likely than their senior colleagues to select 'don't know' in response to questions about the broader institutional culture of educational support, leadership commitment, and the robustness of measures used to assess university teaching. Universities in which a higher-than-average proportion of early-career academics are uncertain about these key dimensions of their institutions' culture also tend to receive less positive assessments from mid-career and senior academics on the same survey measures. A higher proportion of early-career 'don't knows' may therefore be a marker of institutions where the value of university teaching is less visible and the drivers of career advancement less clear.

Mid-career academics stand out as the most sceptical group on most survey measures, particularly those that capture how university teaching is valued and rewarded in practice. For example, mid-career academics are the group:

- least likely to view university teaching as a priority in professorial promotion at their institution, with 28% identifying university teaching as 'very important', compared with 39% among other groups (early-career, senior academic, and university leadership) combined.
- most likely to describe education-focused career pathways as career-limiting, with 57% of mid-career academics reporting this view, compared with 39% among other groups combined.
- least likely to report that time dedicated to university teaching benefits career advancement, as shown in Figure 11.

These patterns of response among mid-career academics are evident across the *All TCS 2025* dataset but are particularly pronounced in the group of 'divergent universities' (as identified in Section 3.2).

Senior academics consistently provide more positive assessments of their institution's values and practices than their early-career and mid-career counterparts. They are less likely than more junior colleagues to identify education-focused roles as career-limiting and more likely to see time spent on university teaching as beneficial for career progression (Figure 11). Their responses also suggest greater satisfaction with existing institutional priorities: only 40% of senior academics say they would like the priority given to university teaching in promotions at their university to increase in the future (compared with 47% of early-career academics, 61% of mid-career academics, and 60% of university leaders), while 43% would prefer it to stay the same – the highest proportion of any group.

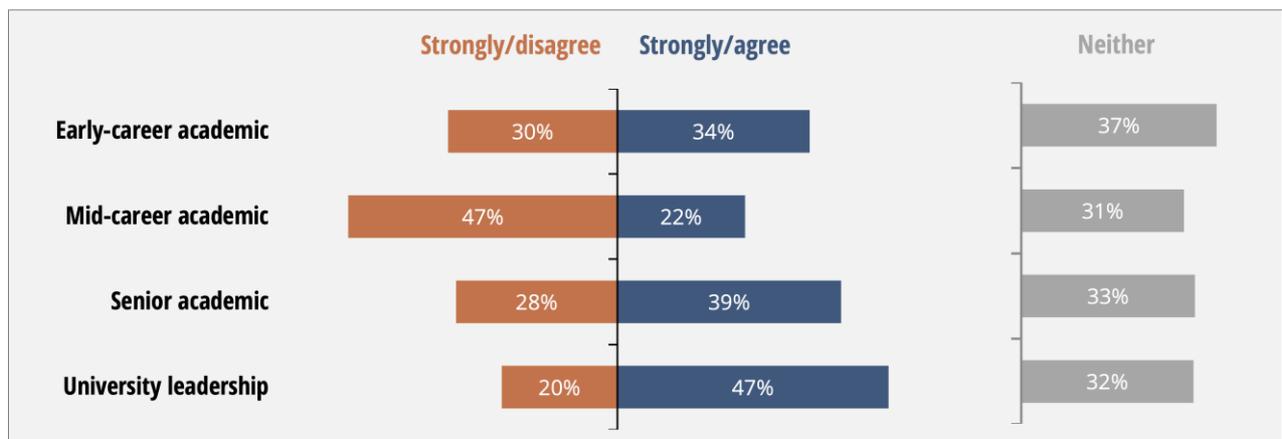


Figure 11. Responses to the statement: "Time spent on university teaching has a positive impact on the career progression of academics at my institution", by career stage. Results shown are for *All TCS 2025* respondents (n=11,554).

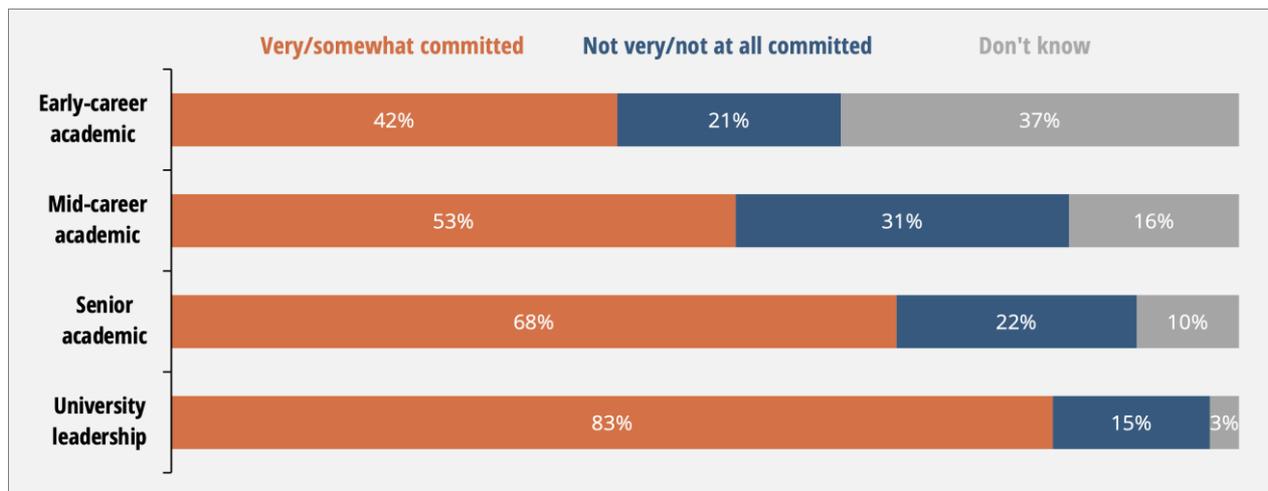


Figure 12. Responses to the question “How committed are the leaders at your university to rewarding excellence in university teaching?” by career stage (*All TCS 2025*, n=11,227).

University leaders are consistently the most positive group across all key survey measures, with widespread agreement that their institution is committed to rewarding university teaching. For example, as shown in Figure 12, members of the university leadership group are the most likely to describe leadership at the university level as ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ committed.

Overall, these patterns by career stage point to a seniority gradient across almost all institutions, in which perceptions improve with career stage but often ‘dip’ at mid-career. University leaders are distinctly more positive than early- or mid-career academics, pointing to a disconnect between how policies are understood by those who set them and how they are experienced by academics as they progress through their careers.

3.2. Perspectives of education-focused academics

The *All TCS 2025* dataset enables comparison between the perceptions of academics on education-focused career pathways and those on research-and-teaching (R&T) pathways. While differences in view between the two groups are evident across most measures, one of the most revealing questions concerns whether education-focused roles are seen to be career-limiting.

Across the dataset, 60% of education-focused academics agree with the statement “*Roles focused on university teaching are career-limiting at my institution*”, compared with 51% of their R&T colleagues⁷. This average, however, masks considerable variation between participating universities: in some institutions, the two groups are closely aligned in their views, while in others their perceptions diverge markedly. This variation is illustrated in Figure 13: for each participating university, the figure shows the proportion of education-focused and R&T academics identifying education-focused roles as career-limiting, with institutions sorted by the responses given by education-focused academics. Against this backdrop, four institutions show closely aligned views between education-focused and R&T academics (hereafter referred to as **aligned institutions**; marked A–D), with an average gap in responses of just 5% and relatively few in either group reporting education-focused roles to be

⁷ Propensity Score Matching analysis confirms that these differing views are not explained by possible differences in the demographic composition of the different groups. Even when career stage, contract type, discipline and gender are controlled for, education-focused academics remain significantly more likely than matched peers to view these roles as limiting to career progression. This suggests that the difference in their perceptions is linked to their academic role, rather than simply a reflection of background characteristics.

career-limiting. By contrast, among the four **divergent institutions** (marked K–N), the gap widens substantially to an average of 23%, with education-focused academics reporting much more negative perceptions of their career prospects than their R&T counterparts.

Looking across the full range of survey measures, the difference between the four aligned and four divergent universities identified in Figure 13 comes into even sharper focus. Among the aligned institutions, survey responses are consistently and significantly more positive. For example, on the commitment of university leaders to rewarding excellence in university teaching, 71% of respondents across aligned universities combined identify their leaders as ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ committed, compared with just 44% across divergent universities – a difference of 27%. Considerable differences between aligned and divergent institutions are apparent across almost all survey measures, including whether their institution provides a supportive environment for university teaching (a gap of 19%) and whether department leaders are seen as ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ committed to rewarding university teaching (a gap of 17%).

Taken together, the evidence points to a relationship between how education-focused academics view their career prospects and how those prospects are perceived by colleagues on R&T pathways. The alignment of views between these two groups appears to be an important barometer of institutional culture. Such alignment may reflect environments in which education-focused academics are more integrated with their R&T colleagues, fostering shared understandings and more cohesive practices in university teaching.

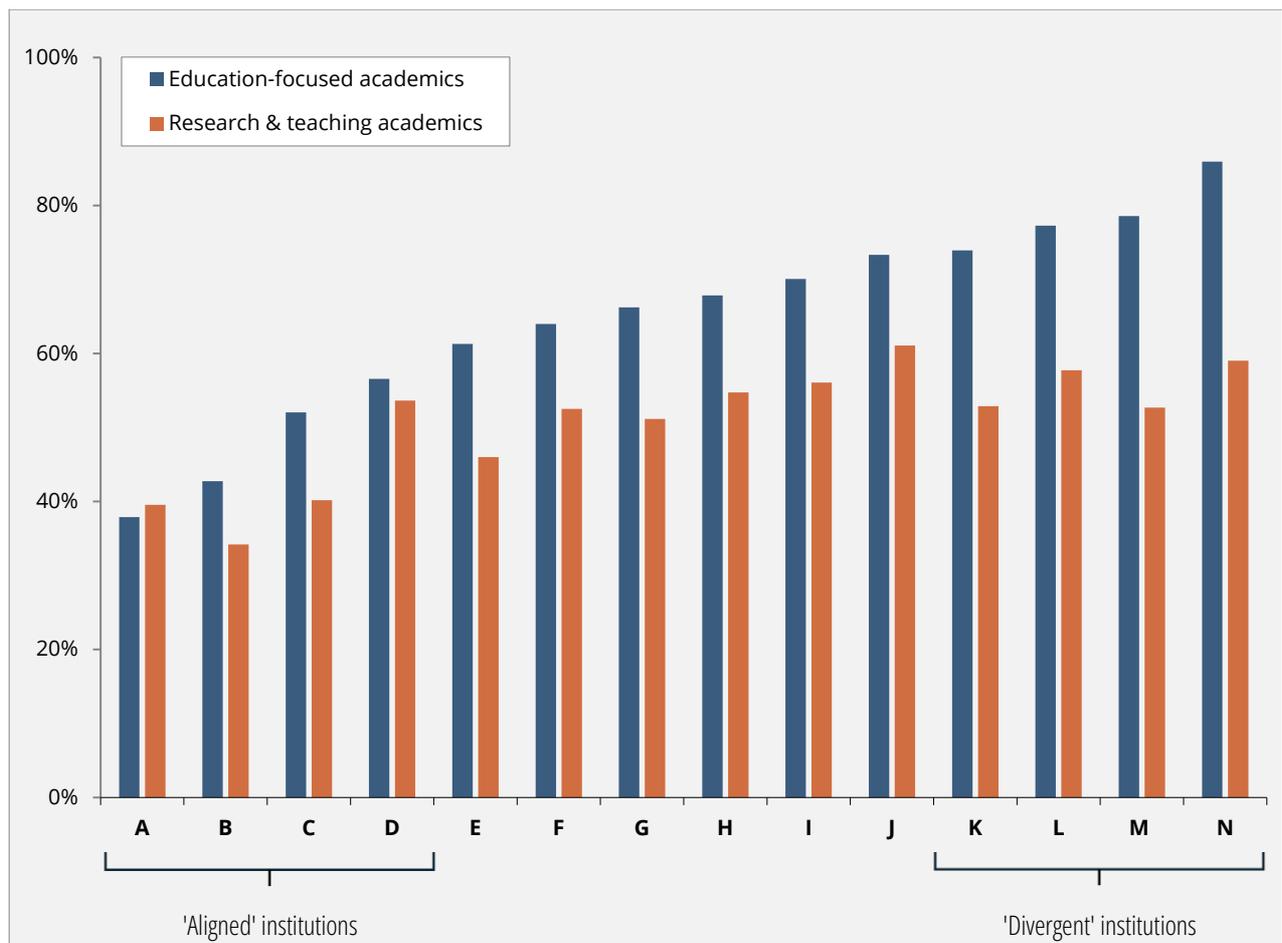


Figure 13. Proportion agreeing with the statement: “Roles focused on university teaching are career-limiting at my institution” for academics on education-focused career pathways (n=1,479) and academics on R&T pathways (n=5,404) across 14 eligible universities, anonymised (A–N). Results for three institutions have been excluded due to sample size and/or profile of their responding population⁶.

4. How have academics' views changed over time?

Chapter outline

This chapter examines how academics' views of university teaching culture have changed over time at the ten universities that took part in all three survey waves (2019, 2022, and 2025). **Section 4.1** sets out the headline trends on the core survey measures, showing that while average scores improved on most questions, the scale and direction of change varies markedly between institutions. **Section 4.2** considers change by demographic and professional subgroup, with the most consistent shifts seen among senior and long-serving academics. **Section 4.3** looks at which survey measures tend to move together, highlighting the link between perceptions of departmental leadership, experiences of annual reviews, and views on how university teaching is measured.

4.1. Headline changes across key survey measures

Ten universities participated in all three survey waves (2019, 2022, and 2025), allowing changes over time to be tracked across this group. For these *Returning* universities as a whole, almost every survey measure showed statistically significant improvements between 2019 and 2025, across a wide range of institutional processes and cultural indicators.

All five priority survey measures identified in chapter 2 – the measures that many participating universities are actively monitoring as key markers of institutional change – improved over the six-year period. The most significant gains among *Returning* universities were seen in three areas:

1. **the commitment of institutional leaders to rewarding excellence in university teaching:** The proportion of respondents rating their leaders as 'very committed' to rewarding university teaching increased across all three levels of the institution: departmental, school⁴, and university. The most significant increase was among those identifying departmental leaders as 'very committed', which rose from 19% in 2019 to 24% in 2025.
2. **the attention given to university teaching in annual reviews:** Agreement with the statement "*My achievements, goals, and ambitions in university teaching were explored in depth in my most recent annual review*" increased from 24% in 2019 to 30% in 2025.
3. **the importance of university teaching in professorial promotions:** The proportion of respondents reporting that university teaching is 'very important' for professorial promotion at their institution rose from 25% in 2019 to 31% in 2025. This increase – 7% (calculated on unrounded figures) – represents the largest overall gain across the core tracked measures. In contrast, views on how important respondents would like university teaching to be remained stable, with around two-thirds continuing to want it to be 'very important' (Figure 14).

There were two other measures that showed statistically significant but more modest improvements: agreement that roles focused on university teaching are career-limiting fell from 53% to 50%, and agreement that time spent on university teaching has a positive impact on career progression rose from 25% to 26% (with a dip to 23% in 2022).

While the amalgamated results show an improvement on almost every survey measure across the three waves, the patterns of change are not uniform across the *Returning* universities. The scale of change varies considerably: while some institutions record marked improvements, others see little

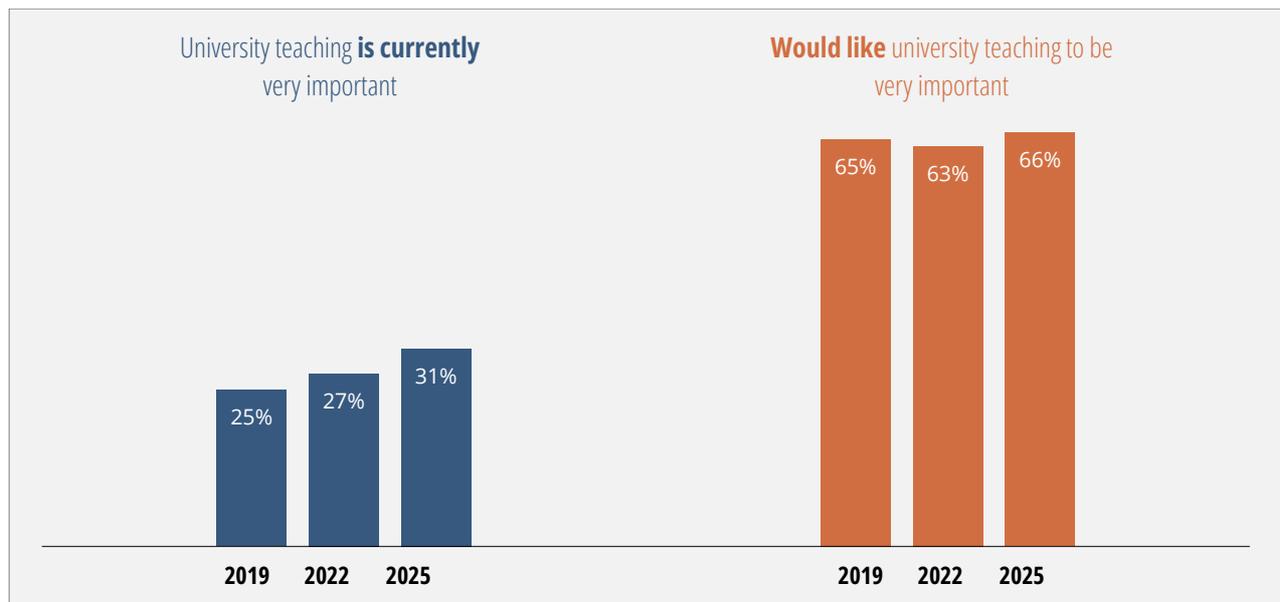


Figure 14. Proportion of respondents identifying university teaching as ‘very important’ in 2019, 2022, and 2025 in response to the questions: “In your view, how important are each of the following activities for promotion to full professor (for a typical academic on a teaching/research contract) at your university?” and “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 teaching/research contract)?” – represented by “university teaching is currently very important” and “would like university teaching to be very important” respectively. Responses shown for respondents at *Returning* universities (n=8,435 in 2019; n=7,515 in 2022; n=7,707 in 2025).

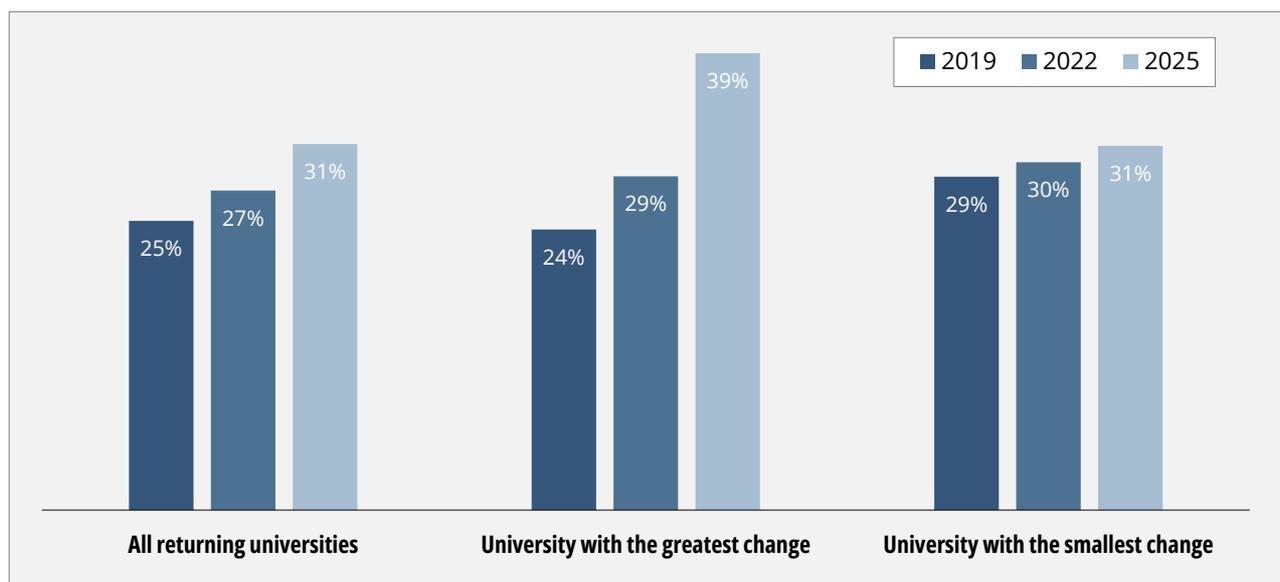


Figure 15. Proportion of respondents identifying university teaching as ‘very important’ in response to the question: “In your view, how important are each of the following activities for promotion to full professor (for a typical academic on a teaching/research contract) at your university?”, in 2019, 2022 and 2025. Results shown for respondents at all *Returning* universities (amalgamated, n=8,435 in 2019; n=7,515 in 2022; n=7,707 in 2025) alongside the individual university recording the greatest improvement and the individual university where views changed least between 2019 and 2025.

movement or even a decline. For example, although there was a rise in the proportion of respondents identifying university teaching to be ‘very important’ in professorial promotions at their institution, from 25% in 2019 to 31% in 2025 overall, this average masks very different institutional trajectories: in one university, the proportion increased from 24% to 39%, while another shifted only from 29% to 31% over the same period (Figure 15).

Indeed, the broader picture is characterised by diverse institutional change trajectories. For example, Figure 16 shows the proportion of respondents identifying their departmental leaders as ‘very

committed' to rewarding university teaching at each of the 10 *Returning* universities. For each of the universities (labelled A-J), Figure 16 presents the proportion identifying leaders to be 'very committed' in 2025 (upper chart) and the change over time between 2019 and 2025 (lower chart). Viewed together, the figure highlights substantial variation both in 2025 scores and in the scale of change since 2019, with no consistent or straightforward relationship apparent between the two. This lack of alignment between 2025 scores and change over time is evident across all core survey measures.

Alongside this diversity in institutional trajectories, it is also important to note areas where little progress has been made or where scores have slipped back. Across the *Returning* universities, the share of respondents identifying the measures used at their institution to assess university teaching as 'very' or 'somewhat' robust fell slightly, from 35% in 2019 to 33% in 2025. In addition, while most academics would still like university teaching to be given greater priority in promotions, the proportion expressing this view dropped from 58% to 55%, with a corresponding increase in those preferring priorities to remain unchanged (20% to 24%). These results underline that not all dimensions of university teaching culture are on an upward trajectory, and that enthusiasm for further change may be softening in some areas.

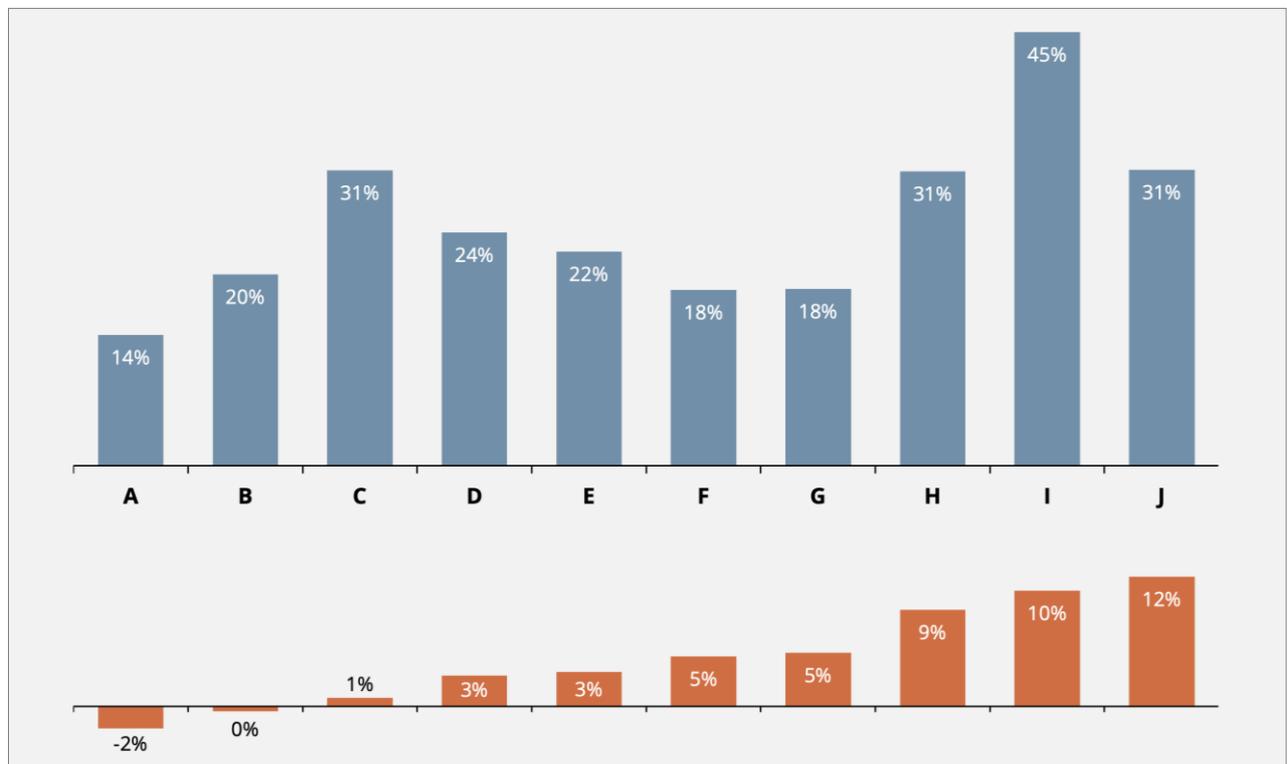


Figure 16. Proportion of respondents selecting 'very committed' in response to the question: "How committed are the leaders in your department to rewarding excellence in university teaching?" at *Returning* universities. Universities are anonymised (A–J)⁵. The upper chart shows the 2025 findings for each university and the lower chart shows the change (in percentage points, not relative terms) from 2019 to 2025 for each of these universities (n=8,520 in 2019; n=7,630 in 2022; n=7,872 in 2025).

4.2. Patterns of change by academic subgroup

Analysis of changes over time across the *Returning* universities by demographic and professional subgroup also reveals some unexpected patterns. One in particular stands out: the most established members of the academic community – senior academics, leaders, and long-serving academics – are the groups whose views have shifted **most** between 2019 and 2025. In contrast, change in perceptions among newly-appointed academics and those early in their careers was more modest.

Across the dataset, two demographic factors show the greatest variation in change patterns.

The first is **career stage**. Across the four career-stage groups (as defined in Section 1.2), senior academics and university leaders showed the most marked increases in positive responses over the six-year period. In contrast, early-career and mid-career academics showed more limited movement on most measures. This pattern is illustrated in Figure 17, showing changes in the proportion of respondents identifying education-focused roles as ‘career-limiting’ in each of the four groups between 2019 and 2025. Early-career academics’ views remained relatively stable over time and, while mid-career academics recorded a decline in agreement with this statement, it was not as substantial as the sharper falls among senior academics and university leaders.

Certain roles also saw particularly sharp improvements. For example, the proportion of department heads identifying university teaching as ‘very important’ in professorial promotions at their university rose by 18% over the six years, from 21% in 2019 to 39% in 2025. Given the link between academics’ views of department leaders and their assessments of wider institutional culture (as noted in Section 2.2), this shift has the potential to drive a wider ripple effect across participating universities.

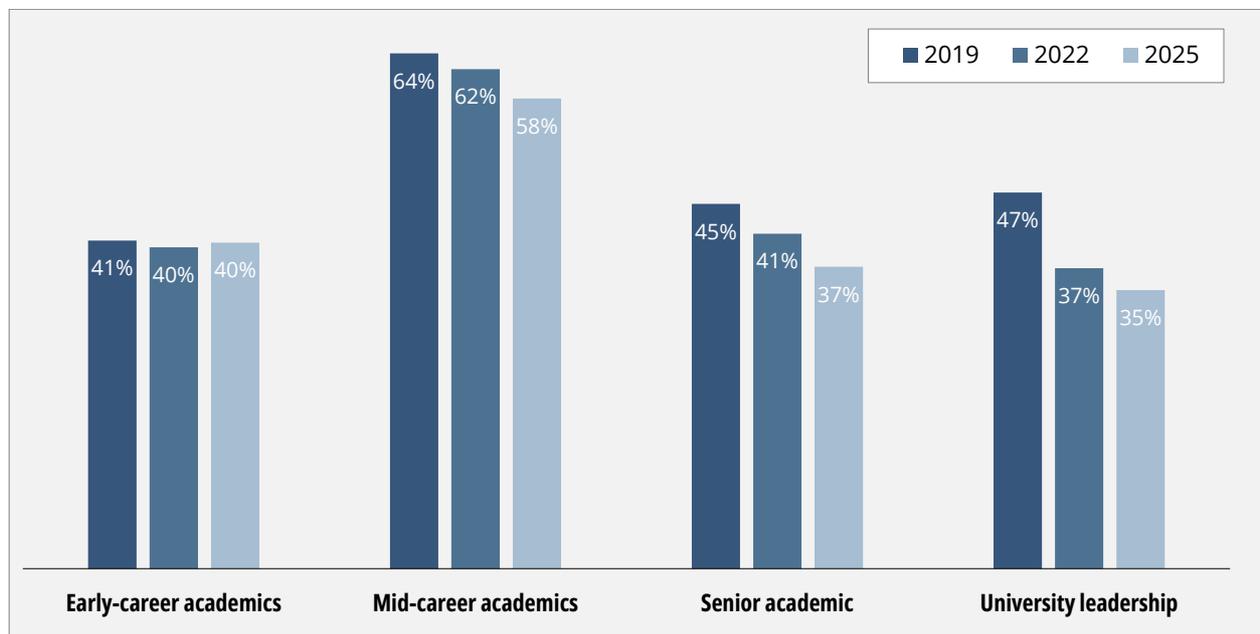


Figure 17. Proportion of respondents agreeing with the statement “Roles focused on university teaching are career-limiting at my institution” by career stage at *Returning* universities (n=8,470 in 2019; n=7,585 in 2022; n=7,656 in 2025).

The second demographic factor showing marked variation is **length of employment**, i.e. the number of years the academic has been employed at their current university. Across many survey measures, there is a clear relationship between an academic’s length of employment and how their views changed over the six-year period. In particular, the longer they have been employed, the greater their improvement in survey scores, with the longest-serving academics consistently showing the largest increases. An example of this relationship is given in Figure 18, which shows changes in response between 2019 and 2025 to the statement “Time spent on university teaching has a positive impact on the career progression of academics at my institution”, by length of employment. Figure 18 shows that agreement declined among newly employed academics but rose steadily among longer-serving groups, reaching an 11% increase for those employed at their university for over 30 years. It is interesting to note that this survey question (like the question on whether education-focused roles are career-limiting in Figure 17) showed only marginal change across *Returning* universities as a whole; beneath these average figures, however, lie substantial differences by subgroup.

Considered across academic groups, these findings suggest that the strongest signs of cultural change at the *Returning* universities are evident among the most well-established academic groups. While early- and mid-career academics show limited movement, it is senior and long-serving academics – the very groups one might expect to be most entrenched in their views – that record the strongest improvements. Indeed, differences in perceptions between career stages have widened over time across many key survey questions. The largest increases in these gaps are often between mid-career academics and university leadership, particularly on questions relating to how university teaching is valued and rewarded in practice. This pattern suggests that these markers of cultural change emerge first among more senior groups, raising questions about whether, and on what timescale, comparable shifts may subsequently be seen further down the career ladder.

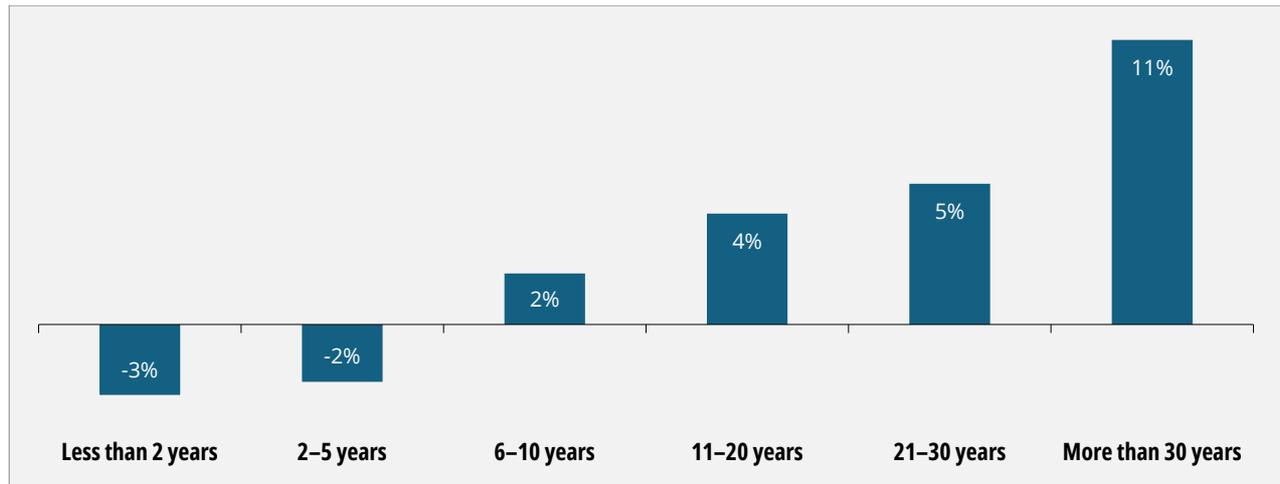


Figure 18. Change between 2019 and 2025 in the proportion **agreeing** with the statement: “Time spent on university teaching has a positive impact on the career progression of academics at my institution” by length of employment at *Returning* universities (n=8,485 in 2019 and n=7,655 in 2025).

4.3. Catalysts of positive change

This analysis also examined whether particular survey questions act as central connectors in patterns of change over time. Across the *Returning* universities, three such measures stand out as potential catalysts of cultural change – questions that move in step with a wide range of others over time:

- **department leadership:** the commitment of department leaders to rewarding university teaching.
- **annual reviews:** the attention given to university teaching in academics' annual reviews.
- **professorial promotion priorities:** the importance of university teaching in professorial promotions.

These three measures sit at the centre of wider shifts in the data. Improvements in each question are consistently linked to positive movement across multiple other aspects of university teaching culture, including views on whether the university provides a supportive educational environment and whether education-focused roles or time invested in university teaching enhance career progression.

The analysis also points to a sequence in how change unfolds. Improvements in perceptions of **departmental leadership** and **annual reviews** tend to come first, signalling shifts in institutional values and processes. Changes in views on **professorial promotion priorities** tend to follow later, reflecting a change in how these priorities are put into practice. These findings suggest that change is rarely piecemeal. Instead, improvements tend to cluster around a small set of connected measures, with academics' views of **departmental leadership**, **annual reviews**, and **professorial promotion priorities** acting as nodes within wider changes in how university teaching is valued and rewarded.

5. What insights can be drawn for the sector?

5.1. Key lessons from six years of the TCS

The survey analysis points to considerable variation between institutions, both in the 2025 findings and in the changes observed over time between 2019 and 2025 at the *Returning* universities. Nonetheless, six clear patterns emerge across institutions that offer shared insights for the sector:

1. **Cultural change is achievable within years, not decades.** It is often said that universities change in units of decades and centuries rather than months and years. The TCS findings, however, suggest that more rapid cultural shifts are possible. In six years, many universities recorded substantial positive shifts in how academics perceive their institutional cultures. In such institutions – actively working to improve how university teaching is valued and rewarded – cultural change that is seen and felt by academics is possible within years, not decades.
2. **Department leaders play a central role in shaping university teaching culture.** One question lies at the centre of many relationships in the survey data: academics' views of their departmental leaders' commitment to rewarding university teaching. Where commitment is seen to be strong, academics are more likely to express confidence that their university genuinely values and delivers on its policies to reward university teaching. Where it is weak, academics are more likely to report negative experiences across multiple survey measures. These findings suggest that academics' views of their department leaders serve as a proxy for – and potential driver of – how they experience the wider institutional culture around university teaching.
3. **Views on institutional cultures differ by career stage.** Early- and mid-career academics report less positive perceptions of how university teaching is valued and rewarded than senior academics and university leaders. This pattern is evident across almost all survey measures, indicating that institutional culture is not experienced uniformly across the academic career pipeline.
4. **Alignment of views across academic groups is a barometer of university teaching culture.** Universities in which the perceptions of education-focused academics and those of R&T colleagues are aligned – particularly in how they view education-focused careers – consistently score more highly across most survey measures. This alignment appears to reflect environments in which education-focused academics are more integrated with their R&T peers, supporting shared understandings and more cohesive practices in university teaching.
5. **Established academics play a key role in culture change.** The most marked improvements across the three surveys were consistently recorded by senior and long-serving academics, with much less pronounced change among early- and mid-career academics. The overall gains recorded across *Returning* universities therefore largely reflect shifts among established academics.
6. **Confidence in how university teaching is measured remains low.** While most survey measures saw improvements between 2019 and 2025, one remained low and stubbornly resistant to change: confidence in how the quality and impact of university teaching are measured. This suggests that work is still needed to develop and embed more robust and transparent evaluation tools that are trusted by the academic communities they serve.

These six findings offer insight into how university teaching cultures are shifting, and the factors most closely associated with positive change. They also highlight the potential for continuing progress. Despite most participating universities having already engaged in major reward-system reforms, the majority of their academics would still like to see greater priority given to university teaching in the future. As these findings make clear, the appetite for further change remains high.

5.2. Practical levers for change

Drawing on the survey findings, this section sets out guidance to help universities strengthen how they recognise and reward university teaching. The guidance draws on two sources of evidence.

First, it draws on analysis of universities that recorded strong results in the 2025 survey and, among *Returning* universities, those that showed high levels of improvement over time. Despite differences in national context and reform approach, these universities shared four common features:

1. department heads are widely viewed as committed to rewarding university teaching;
2. university teaching is consistently explored in depth during annual reviews;
3. the views reported by education-focused and R&T academics are closely aligned;
4. early-career academics are less likely to express uncertainty about the priorities and practices for rewarding university teaching at their institution.

Second, the guidance draws on the wider patterns observed across the *All TCS 2025* and *Returning* universities datasets, including the key lessons laid out in Section 5.1.

Combining these two strands of evidence, five practical levers are set out in the table below to support universities in building stronger and more sustainable university teaching cultures.

①	Invest in department heads. Support department leaders to engage with, champion and consistently enact institutional priorities for rewarding university teaching within their departments.
②	Strengthen annual reviews. Work with line managers to ensure that they recognise the importance of university teaching in academic career progression, and structure annual reviews so that reflection, development, and progression in university teaching are major foci of attention.
③	Strengthen measures of university teaching. Establish clear, evidence-based standards for progression in university teaching, alongside guidance on how impact and achievement should be evidenced and assessed in appointments and promotions.
④	<p>Tailor change strategies to different career stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Early-career academics:</i> given the persistent uncertainty expressed by this group, provide clear signals about how university teaching is prioritised in career progression at the university, alongside access to clearly identified educational mentors or advisers. • <i>Mid-career academics:</i> given the persistent scepticism evident at mid-career, consider offering tangible evidence that university teaching is genuinely valued, such as anonymised promotion outcomes showing how it is assessed and rewarded in practice. • <i>Senior academics:</i> given their more positive views on institutional practices, invite credible educators to act as mentors and champions for more junior colleagues. • <i>University leaders:</i> given the misalignment between their more positive views and those of more junior colleagues, create structured ways to engage with academics' concerns and make visible how commitments to rewarding university teaching are enacted in practice.
⑤	Build cross-community connections. Create opportunities for dialogue and shared practice across education-focused and R&T academics to foster connectivity and collegiality, and build greater recognition of the role played by education-focused academics across the university.

The TCS was conducted during a period of flux in higher education, marked by emergency teaching, funding pressures, and structural change. Despite these challenges, the findings make clear that positive cultural change in university teaching is both possible and sustainable.

REPORT APPENDICES

Appendix A. Outline of participating universities

Seventeen universities took part in TCS 2025, drawn from across nine countries. As noted in Section 1.2, all participating institutions are engaged, or have recently been engaged, in reforms to how they evaluate and/or reward university teaching. Listed below are the 17 participating universities, together with a brief outline of their reform activities:

- **Aalborg University (Denmark)*** has recently embedded a new national framework⁸ for defining and evaluating university teaching into its annual reviews, promotion criteria, and salary negotiations⁹.
- **Chalmers University of Technology (Sweden)*** is currently redesigning its academic career pathways, including both the education-focused pathway and the R&T pathway, with changes expected to strengthen the place of university teaching within progression and reward.
- **Delft University of Technology (TU Delft, Netherlands)*** is rolling out new academic career pathways¹⁰ as part of a coordinated national reform across all Dutch research-intensive universities¹¹. The university recently launched a guide to support career progression on these new pathways¹².
- **Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e, Netherlands)*** has recently introduced a unified blended academic career pathway for all academics¹³ and is also piloting new approaches to evaluating appointment and promotion candidates.
- **Interdisciplinary Transformation University Austria (IT-U, Austria)** is a new-start university and is currently designing its academic evaluation and reward systems from a blank slate with university teaching embedded as a central priority.
- **King's College London (United Kingdom)** recently redesigned its education-focused track – the *Academic Education Pathway* – to strengthen the status, connectivity, and opportunities for advancement on this career pathway.
- **KTH Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden)** is reviewing the priorities embedded in its academic career pathways to increase clarity and operationalise values that are deemed central for a successful faculty. These values include a focus on collegiality and the ‘common good’¹⁴.

⁸ Danish Framework for Advancing University Pedagogy, Universities Denmark: <https://dkuni.dk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/danish-framework-for-advancing-university-pedagogy-1.pdf>

⁹ Danish Framework for Advancing University Pedagogy, Aalborg University: <https://www.iaspbl.aau.dk/projects/danish-framework-for-advancing-university-pedagogy>

¹⁰ TU Delft Recognition & Rewards Perspective: <https://www.tudelft.nl/en/about-tu-delft/strategy/recognition-rewards-perspective>

¹¹ VSNU, NFU, KNAW, NWO and ZonMw (2019). *Room for everyone's talent: Towards a new balance in the recognition and rewards of academics*: <https://recognitionrewards.nl/about/position-paper/>

¹² RRview, TU Delft, Career tracks: <https://rrview.nl/groups/122-tu-delft/welcome>

¹³ Recognition and Rewards, TU/e: <https://www.tue.nl/en/our-university/about-the-university/tue-strategy-2030/talent/recognition-and-rewards>

¹⁴ KTH, New steps towards a fairer career system: <https://intra.kth.se/en/aktuellt/nyheter/nya-steg-mot-mer-rattvist-karriarsystem-1.1446282>

- **Maastricht University (Netherlands)** has introduced root-and-branch reforms to its academic career pathways¹⁵ and embedded tools such as the *Career Compass*¹⁶ to guide annual reviews.
- **Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU, Norway)*** recently launched a pedagogical merit scheme for *Excellent Teaching Practitioners*¹⁷ which offers ongoing rewards to those with the greatest impact on university teaching, regardless of seniority and academic profile. In recent years, the university has also reformed its guidelines for academic positions.
- **Pontifical Catholic University of Chile (PUC, Chile)*** recently introduced new flexible academic career pathways to support progression across a wider range of academic profiles.
- **University of British Columbia (UBC, Canada)** has recently completed an evaluation of its education-focused career track¹⁸, which was first introduced in 2012.
- **University of New South Wales (UNSW, Australia)** introduced its flagship education-focused academic programme¹⁹ in 2017 which has become a feature of the university's *Academic Expectations Framework*, ensuring viable education-focused career pathways and elevating excellent educational practices for all academic staff with university teaching responsibilities.
- **University of Sydney (Australia)** recently redesigned its education-focused pathways²⁰ to provide greater autonomy, clearer advancement criteria, and more robust career progression opportunities. The university has also introduced a new *Academic Excellence Framework* to clarify how excellence is defined in all academic domains, including university teaching.
- **University of Twente (Netherlands)*** has recently launched new career pathways for all university academics as well as new systems to evaluate impact in university teaching.
- **Utrecht University (Netherlands)*** has introduced a single, flexible career pathway for all employees – academics and non-academics alike – that emphasises team spirit, leadership, and impact²¹.
- **Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (Netherlands)*** has recently designed and implemented a new blended career pathway²² for all university academics.
- **Wageningen University & Research (Netherlands)*** has recently launched new academic career pathways²³ that embed systemic changes to progression criteria in line with the collaborative reforms underway across the Netherlands.

It should be noted that the activities outlined above are only a fraction of the activities underway at each of these institutions to improve the evaluation, support, and reward of university teaching.

Please note: the ten *Returning* universities – those that participated in all three survey waves (2019, 2022, and 2025) – are marked above with an asterisk (*).

¹⁵ Recognition & Rewards – Education, Maastricht University:

<https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/nl/file/umrecognitionrewards-educationnarrativepdf>

¹⁶ Career Compass (for Assistant, Associate and Full Professors), Maastricht University:

<https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/file/um-career-compass-assistant-associate-and-full-professors-enpdf-0>

¹⁷ Excellent Teaching Practitioner, NTNU: <https://www.ntnu.edu/pedagogical-merit/>

¹⁸ Educational Leadership Stream, UBC: <https://www.facultyassociation.ubc.ca/members/educational-leadership-stream/>

¹⁹ Education Focussed Careers, UNSW: <https://www.education.unsw.edu.au/teaching/education-focussed-careers>

²⁰ Sydney Horizon Educators, University of Sydney: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/about-us/careers-at-sydney/academic-careers/sydney-horizon-educators-opportunity.html>

²¹ Recognition and Rewards, Utrecht University: <https://www.uu.nl/en/research/open-science/tracks/recognition-and-rewards>

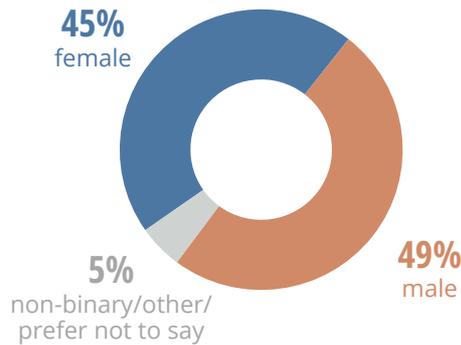
²² Academic Career Paths, Vrije University: <https://vu.nl/en/employee/annual-consultation/academic-career-paths>

²³ Academic Career Framework, Wageningen University & Research, <https://www.wur.nl/en/jobs/personal-development/academic-career-framework>

Appendix B. Participant profile

Outlined below is the profile of the 12,071 participants in TCS 2025, presented by gender, discipline, length of employment, focus on university teaching in their role, and career stage. In addition, 70% of participants were employed on permanent contracts, with the remaining 30% on temporary contracts.

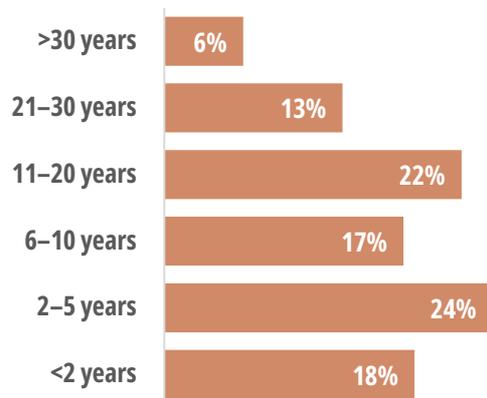
Gender



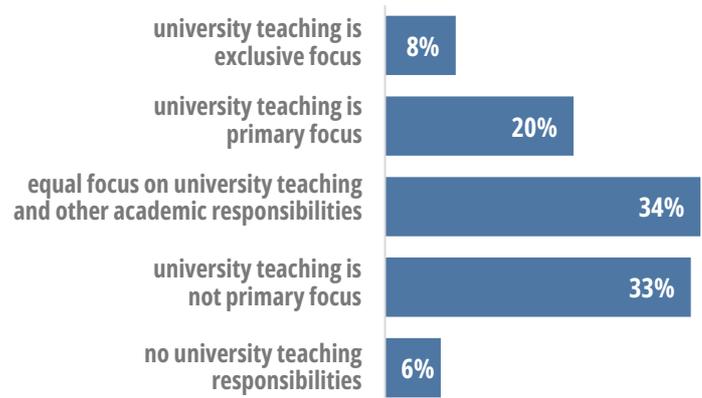
Academic discipline²⁴

A mix of academic disciplines is represented by survey participants, with *Engineering and Technology* as the largest single disciplinary group (22%), followed by *Biological, Mathematical and Physical Sciences* (19%), *Medicine, Dentistry and Health* (15%), *Social Studies* (15%), and *Humanities, Language-Based Studies & Archaeology* (10%). Other disciplines are represented by remaining participants (18%).

Length of employment²⁵



Focus on university teaching²⁶



Career stage



²⁴ Disciplines are grouped by HESA cost centre (for the 10 broad disciplines from codes 101 to 145), see <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/support/documentation/cost-centres/2012-13-onwards>

²⁵ The length of time since the respondent started their first contract of employment at their current university.

²⁶ Focus on university teaching in the previous year as compared to other academic activities (such as research, external engagement, university service or professional practice).

Appendix C. Survey management

Administration

The TCS is a cross-sectional survey, managed locally by each participating university but hosted externally to ensure anonymity and data security. For the 2025 wave, data were collected between March and June, with each university selecting a two- to three-week time window within this period for its survey to be 'live'. The central TCS team provided guidance and resources to support consistent administration across institutions and encouraged universities to maximise response rates.

Data protection

No personal identifiers (such as names, email addresses, or digital IDs) were collected, and responses cannot be traced back to individual participants. Data are hosted on GDPR-compliant systems, retained securely for a limited period, and deleted after use. Each university was responsible for securing ethics approval for local participation.

Reporting and confidentiality

The survey findings provided to universities are fully anonymised, with small subgroups combined to prevent identification of individuals. This amalgamated report presents only aggregated results; confidential findings from individual institutions are provided separately to each participating university.

Survey design

For each wave, the survey captures the views of all eligible academics at participating universities but does not track the same individuals over time. A valid response is defined as completion of at least one attitudinal question; respondents who answered only the demographic questions (the first seven questions in the survey) are excluded.

Universities participating in the 2025 survey

Aalborg University (Denmark)

Chalmers University of Technology (Sweden)

Delft University of Technology (TU Delft, Netherlands)

Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e, Netherlands)

Interdisciplinary Transformation University Austria (IT-U, Austria)

King's College London (United Kingdom)

KTH Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden)

Maastricht University (Netherlands)

Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU, Norway)

Pontifical Catholic University of Chile (PUC, Chile)

University of British Columbia (UBC, Canada)

University of New South Wales (UNSW, Australia)

University of Sydney (Australia)

University of Twente (Netherlands)

Utrecht University (Netherlands)

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Wageningen University & Research (Netherlands)

Further information on this project

Teaching Cultures Survey

www.teachingcultures.com

Advancing Teaching initiative

www.advancingteaching.com

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