

Teaching Cultures Survey

1. Overview

The Teaching Cultures Survey (TCS) is a global collaboration between universities committed to improving the status of teaching and learning in higher education. Most participating universities are planning, or already implementing, systemic changes to academic career pathways and the ways in which university teaching¹ is rewarded. These universities are looking beyond cosmetic policy changes: they are instead seeking to nurture a culture that supports, celebrates and rewards university teaching at all stages of the academic career. The TCS provides participating universities with evidence on the perspectives, experiences and aspirations of their academic communities with respect to this critical dimension of the university mission.

The TCS is built around three cross-sectional surveys, in 2019, 2022 and 2025. Each survey is funded by the participating universities and is undertaken as a collaboration between these institutions and Advancing Teaching², a global initiative focused on improving the reward of university teaching.

Each wave of the TCS allows the participating universities to:

1. capture and track feedback from across their own academic community on perceptions, aspirations and experiences of the teaching culture at the university;
2. compare findings and progress with global peer institutions that hold a shared mission to foster an academic culture which supports, celebrates and rewards university teaching.

2. Focus of the survey

Evidence for each wave of the TCS is gathered via an anonymous online questionnaire open to all members of the academic community at each participating university. The questionnaire is designed to take six minutes to complete. Its design is informed both by the wider literature on organisational change in higher education and by the experiences of universities that have already engaged in efforts to reform academic reward systems. Their experience suggests that successful change rests on two key factors: (i) the **academic community's trust** that policies to reward teaching will be delivered in practice by university leaders; and (ii) the extent to which teaching achievements are recognised and supported in key **institutional processes** such as annual appraisals.

In addition to basic demographic information (e.g. gender, post, academic discipline), the survey therefore focuses on the perceptions and experiences of the academic community across four themes:

1. **trust in the system:** perceived institutional commitment to rewarding university teaching;
2. **the levers for change:** the prominence given to university teaching in key institutional processes, such as annual appraisals;
3. **promotion priorities:** the recognition of university teaching in promotion to full professor;
4. **aspirations:** expectations and desires for change in how university teaching is rewarded.

3. Survey management

Participating universities invite their academic communities to participate and assume responsibility for any ethics approval required by their institution. The survey is conducted independently by an external survey team.

The TCS is not collecting personal data such as names or IP addresses. All data is anonymised and securely stored³. TCS data will not be shared with any third party. The survey data is not shared with participating universities, only findings from it.

4. Participating universities

The participating institutions⁴ are geographically diverse – 24 institutions from 10 countries have participated in the survey to date – and bring together a range of different approaches to rewarding and recognising university teaching.

The group of participating universities includes: Aalborg University (Denmark); Chalmers University of Technology; (Sweden); Leiden University (Netherlands); Pontifical Catholic University of Chile (Chile); Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (Malaysia); University College London (UK); University of Auckland (New Zealand); University of Edinburgh (UK); and Utrecht University (Netherlands).

Please note: the confidentiality of findings from each participating university is protected. Care will be taken to ensure that no institution-specific information can be inferred from the amalgamated data⁵.



¹ The term ‘university teaching’ is used to cover all activities relating to teaching and learning at universities. Examples could include: teaching students; curriculum development; pedagogical research; and the development of university educational policy.

² Advancing Teaching: www.advancingteaching.com

³ Further information is available at <https://www.teachingcultures.com/resources/Survey-Information-Leaflet.pdf>

⁴ For information about participating in TCS, see <https://www.teachingcultures.com/info/>

⁵ For more details on survey confidentiality, please see: <https://teachingcultures.com/confidentiality/>