

# Teaching Cultures Survey

## 1. What is the Teaching Cultures Survey?

The Teaching Cultures Survey (TCS) is a global collaboration between research-intensive universities that are working to improve the reward of university teaching<sup>1</sup> in academic careers. 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 short survey captures the experiences and perspectives of the university's academic community, offering insight into how institutional policies and activities designed to improve the reward of university teaching are embedded and experienced in practice.

The TCS enables participating universities to:

1. capture academics' views and experiences of how university teaching is supported, valued and rewarded within their institutions and track how these perspectives change over time;
2. benchmark their findings and progress against global peer institutions that hold a shared mission to foster an academic culture which values and rewards university teaching.

The TCS is built around a series of cross-sectional surveys, held to date in 2019, 2022, and 2025. Each survey is funded by the participating universities and conducted as part of the wider Advancing Teaching<sup>2</sup> initiative, a global programme focused on improving the reward of university teaching.

## 2. What is the 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 university teaching will be delivered in practice by university leaders; and (ii) the extent to which university 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. **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.

All questions went through a rigorous cognitive testing process to validate their clarity and applicability across the different academic populations and institutional contexts covered by the survey.

### 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 does not collect personal data such as names or IP addresses. All data is anonymised and securely stored<sup>3</sup>. TCS data are not shared with any third party. The survey data are not shared with participating universities; only aggregated findings are provided.

### 4. Participating universities

The participating institutions<sup>4</sup> are geographically diverse – 28 institutions from 13 countries have taken part in the survey to date – and bring together a range of different approaches to rewarding university teaching in academic careers. The group of participating universities includes, for example: Aalborg University (Denmark); Chalmers University of Technology (Sweden); Leiden University (Netherlands); Pontifical Catholic University of Chile (Chile); Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (Malaysia); University of British Columbia (Canada); University of Sydney (Australia); University College London (UK); University of Auckland (New Zealand); and King’s College London (UK).

Please note that the confidentiality of findings from each participating university is protected. Care is taken to ensure that no institution-specific information can be inferred from the amalgamated data<sup>5</sup>.

Universities interested in participating in future survey cycles are invited to contact the survey team at [info@teachingcultures.com](mailto:info@teachingcultures.com) for further information.



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

<sup>2</sup> Advancing Teaching: [www.advancingteaching.com](http://www.advancingteaching.com)

<sup>3</sup> Further information is available at <https://www.teachingcultures.com/resources/Survey-Information-Leaflet-2025.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> For information for universities taking part in the TCS, see <https://www.teachingcultures.com/info/>

<sup>5</sup> For more details on confidentiality, please see: [www.teachingcultures.com/confidentiality/](http://www.teachingcultures.com/confidentiality/)