



Key findings from Selected Higher Education Statistics

2023 Staff Data – Table A and B Universities

Information about the data collection

The Higher Education staff data collection includes information on the number (head count) and full-time equivalent (FTE) of staff employed by Table A providers (public universities) and Table B providers (Bond University, University of Divinity and Avondale University). Reporting is different for full-time and fractional full-time staff compared to those on a casual work contract.

Data for full-time and fractional full-time staff are a snapshot on 31 March 2023. Data for casual staff comprise two submissions. The estimated staffing level for casual staff for the 2023 calendar year (Estimated casual) and the actual staff resources expended by casual staff in the 2022 calendar year are measured in FTEs (2022 actual casual). Some data variables are not collected from casual staff.

Glossary of terms

Full-time Equivalent (FTE) is a standardized method to measure staffing. Full-time staff will be equal to 1.0 FTE, while fractional full-time staff will be a value less than 1.0 (as measured by their proportion of full-time hours). Staff engaged in dual sector universities (providers who offer higher education and VET) will only have their higher education FTE included in this publication.

Headcount is the number of actual persons working in the higher education sector.

Full-time staff are those engaged on a full-time contract under the relevant award (no less than 35 hours per week).

Fractional full-time are staff where the number of hours to be worked each week is a specified fraction of the number of hours which would be worked by a member of staff with a full-time work contract for the job or position and with the same classification type and level.

Casual staff are those who are engaged and paid on an hourly or sessional basis and have no entitlement to paid leave.

Function is a general type of work which a member of staff has formally agreed to undertake in respect of their current duties.

Teaching only function - The work involves only teaching and associated activities or the management and leadership of teaching staff and of staff who support teaching staff. There is no formal requirement that research be undertaken.

Research Only function - The work involves undertaking only research work or providing technical or professional research assistance, or the management and leadership of research staff and of staff who support research staff. There may be limited other work (e.g. participation in the development of postgraduate courses and supervision of postgraduate students).

Teaching and research function - A formal requirement is that both a teaching function and a research function will be undertaken, or the work requires the management and leadership of teaching staff and research staff and persons who support such staff.

Other function - Functions other than a teaching and/or research only function.

Current duties term is the duration of a staff member's current duties or the classification of their tenure. It is reported as tenured, or limited term (fixed term) by length.

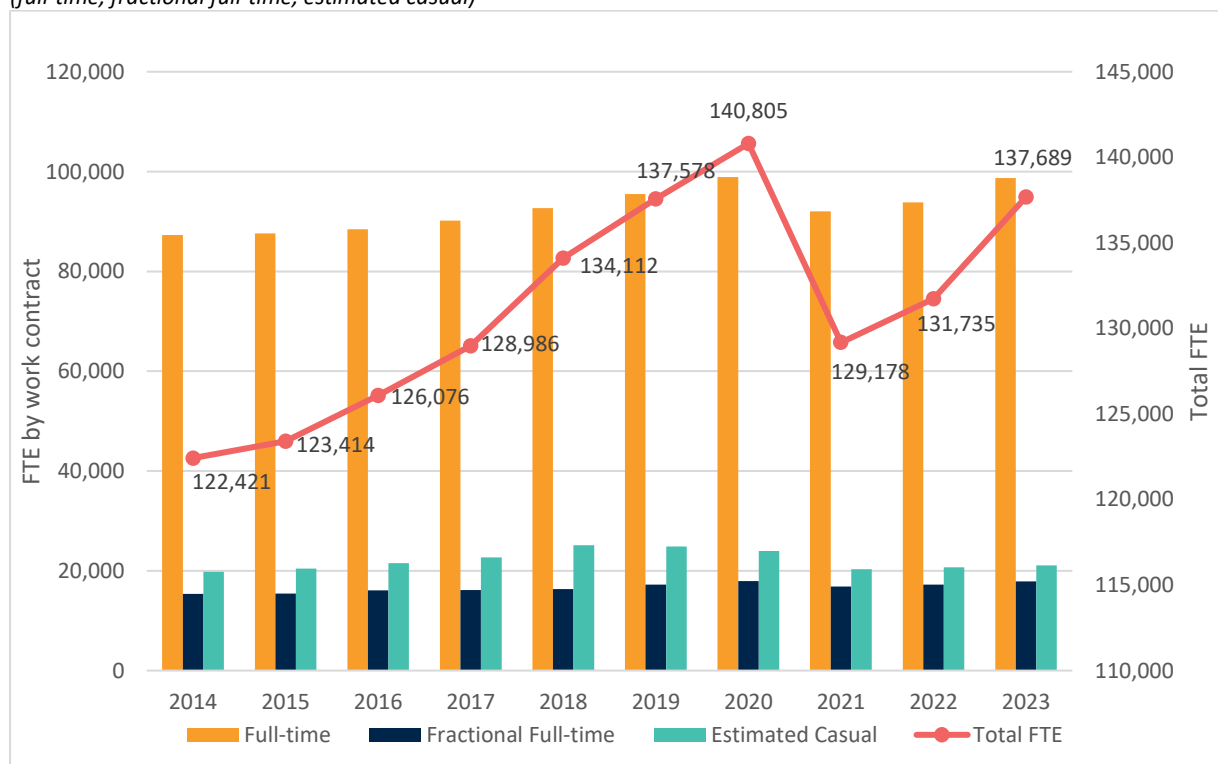
More information can be found in the TCSI [Glossary | TCSI Support](#)

Section 1 – Full-time, fractional full-time (part-time) and estimated casual data.

The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff continues to recover after the pandemic.

- Total staff FTE (full-time, fractional full-time and estimated casual) has continued to recover in 2023 after the steep decrease in 2021 due to the pandemic. While total staff FTE has not fully recovered to 2020 figures, the data appear to show a return to the pattern of consistent growth observed before the pandemic.
- Overall total staff FTE (full-time, fractional full-time and estimated casual) increased 4.5 per cent from 2022 (131,735) to 2023 (137,689). However, total staff FTE in 2023 is 2.2 per cent below the total FTE in 2020 (140,805).
- Full-time staff drove most of the increased FTE, increasing from 93,848 in 2022 to 98,717 in 2023 (5.2 per cent increase)

Figure 1: FTE by work contract¹, 2014 – 2023
(full-time, fractional full-time, estimated casual)



[Data can be found in [table 1 - 2023 staff summary time series](#)]

¹ Work contract refers to hours and associated conditions of engagement for a member of staff. Full-time staff work for a continuous period, on a regular basis, have paid entitlements, and work a minimum of 35 hours per week. Fractional full-time (part-time) staff have the same characteristics except the number of hours are a fraction of full-time. Casual staff are engaged on an hourly or sessional basis and have no paid entitlements.

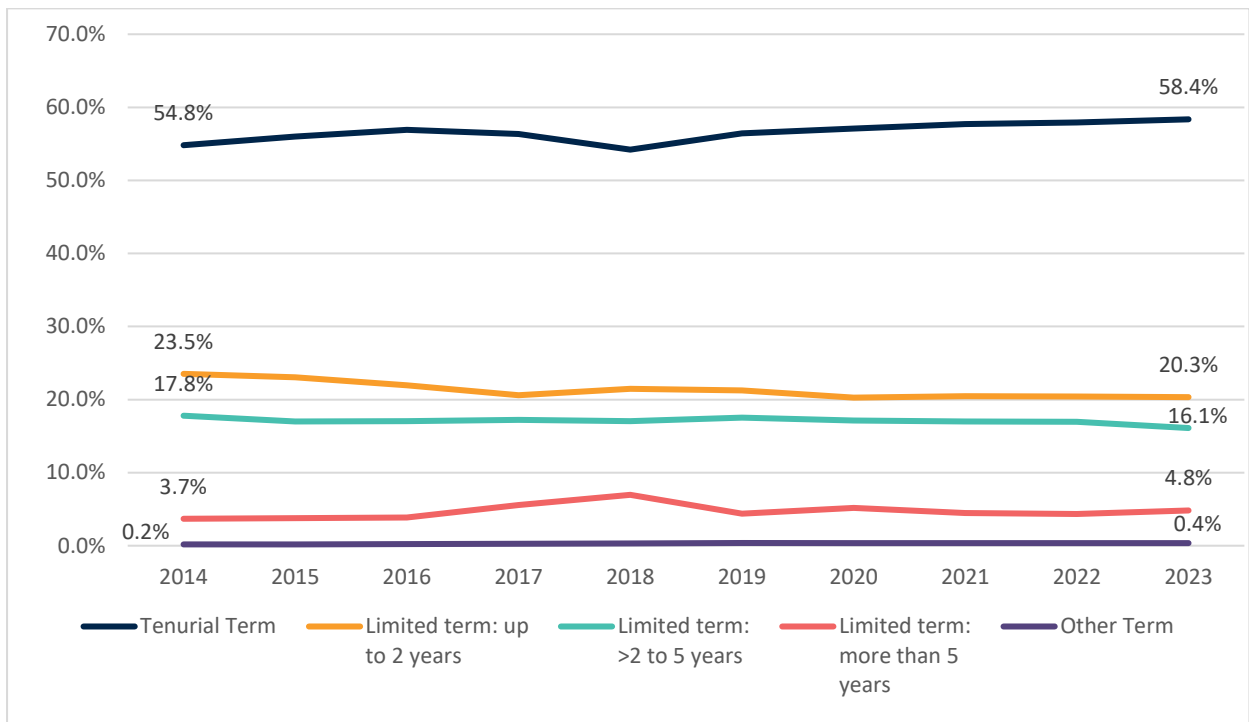
Section 2 – Full-time and fractional full-time (part-time) data

This section contains data for full-time and fractional full-time staff employed at Public (Table A) and Private (Table B) universities as of 31 March 2023. *This section does not include casual staff.*

Full-time equivalent (FTE) staff by Current Duties term

- In 2023, the FTE of *tenurial term* staff made up 64.6 per cent of total FTE, while *limited (fixed) term* staff FTE made up 34.9 per cent.
 - *Tenurial term* FTE increased by 4.8 per cent from 71,881 in 2022 to 75,354 in 2023. An increase of 17.4 per cent from 2014.
 - *Limited term* FTE increased by 5.3 per cent from 38,706 in 2022 to 40,748 in 2023. An increase of 6.7 per cent from 2014.
- Staff on *limited term* contracts accounted for 41.3 per cent of all academic staff FTE in 2023. Figure 2 shows this broken down by length of contract.
- Staff on *limited term* contracts accounted for 30.3 per cent of non-academic staff FTE in 2023.
- In December 2023 new laws (Fair Work Amendment (fixed term contracts)) were introduced to limit the use of fixed term contracts for Australian workers. Limits were applied to both the contract period (maximum 2 years) and the number of consecutive contracts (no more than 2) Australian workers can be employed under for the same or similar work.
- The impact of this regulation reform on the Higher Education sector is not yet observed in the data, as the changes were introduced from 6 December 2023 and limitations on fixed term contracts among Higher Education employees will not apply for new contracts until 1 July 2024. As the Higher Education Staff Data is a snapshot of the sector on 31 March each given year, the impact of this reform will not be fully observable before the 2025 staff data collection is undertaken.
- In 2023, there were 20,612 staff (headcount) with current fixed term duties greater than 2 years, which accounted for 15.8 per cent of all staff (headcount). There were a further 28,310 staff (headcount) with limited term contracts up to 2 years, and these staff accounted for 21.7 per cent of all staff (headcount).
- Since 2014, staff on limited term contracts (both greater than 2 years and up to 2 years) have slowly declined in terms of the proportion of total staff headcount they account for.

Figure 2: Proportion of total academic FTE by current duties term, 2014-2023 (full-time and fractional full-time only)

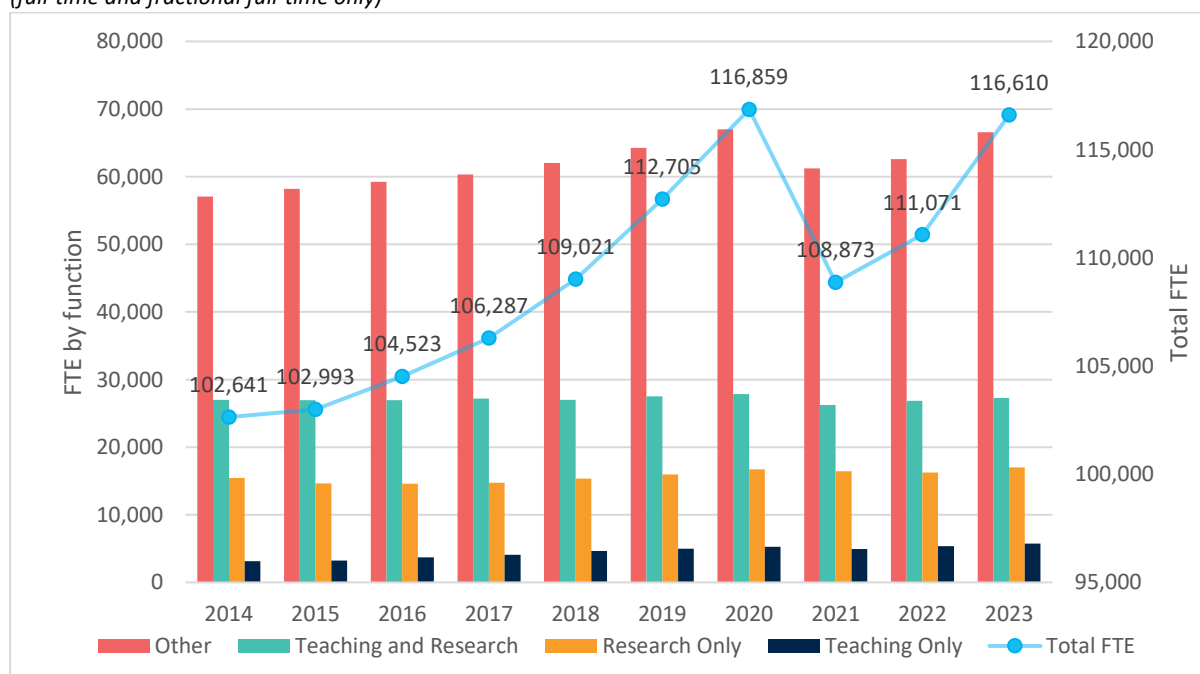


[Data can be found in [table 2 - 2023 staff summary time series](#)]

Full-time equivalent (FTE) staff by function

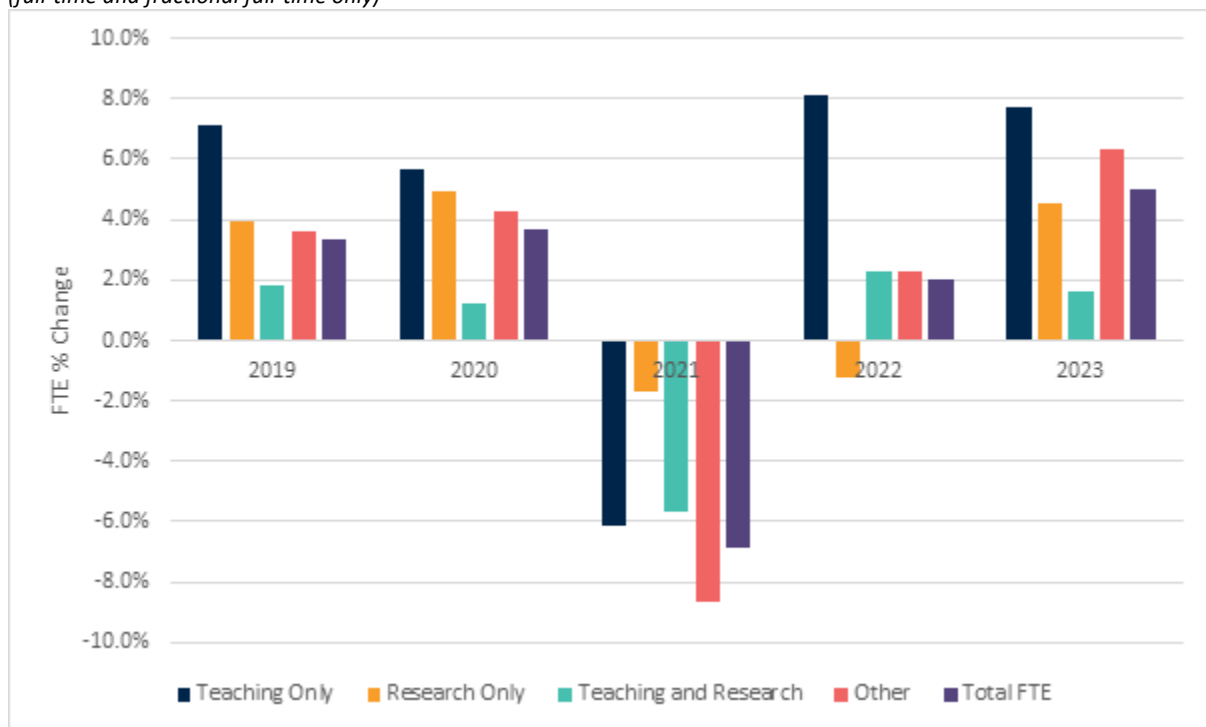
- The FTE of staff with a *Research only* function has increased over the past decade (since 2014) (Figure 3a). This group was only minimally impacted by the pandemic, experiencing a 1.7 per cent decrease from 2020 to 2021, which is relatively smaller than other staff with other functions (Figure 3b).
 - *Research only* FTE has exceeded pre-pandemic numbers in 2023 reaching 16,991 FTE, an increase of 4.5 per cent from 2022, and an increase of 10.0 per cent from 2014.
- The FTE of staff with a combined *Teaching and research* function was relatively stable between 2014 and 2020, then decreased by 5.7 per cent in 2021 as a result of the pandemic.
 - *Teaching and research* FTE has recovered to pre-pandemic levels with 27,282 FTE in 2023. This is an increase of 1.6 per cent from 2022 and an increase of 1.0 per cent since 2014.
- A small proportion of full-time and fractional full-time staff are *Teaching only* -this academic function is dominated by casual staff see [figure 9](#)). *Teaching Only* FTE has seen the largest proportional increase over the decade, increasing by 83.5 per cent from 2014 to 2023 from a very small base.
- Since 2014, the proportional share of *Teaching only* FTE has steadily increased, while *Research only* and *Teaching and research* proportional shares have both decreased slightly. In 2023,
 - *Research only* staff accounted for 14.6 per cent of the total staff FTE.
 - *Teaching and research* staff accounted for 23.4 per cent of the total FTE.
 - *Teaching Only* staff accounted for 4.9 per cent of the total FTE.
- The *Other* category includes all staff not involved in teaching or research. In 2023, the proportion of total FTE accounted for by the *Other* category grew to 57.1 per cent and has almost returned to pre-COVID numbers.

Figure 3a: FTE by staff function, 2014 – 2023
(full-time and fractional full-time only)



[Data can be found in [table 3 - 2023 staff summary time series](#)]

Figure 3b: FTE per cent change by staff function and total FTE, 2019-2023
 (full-time and fractional full-time only)



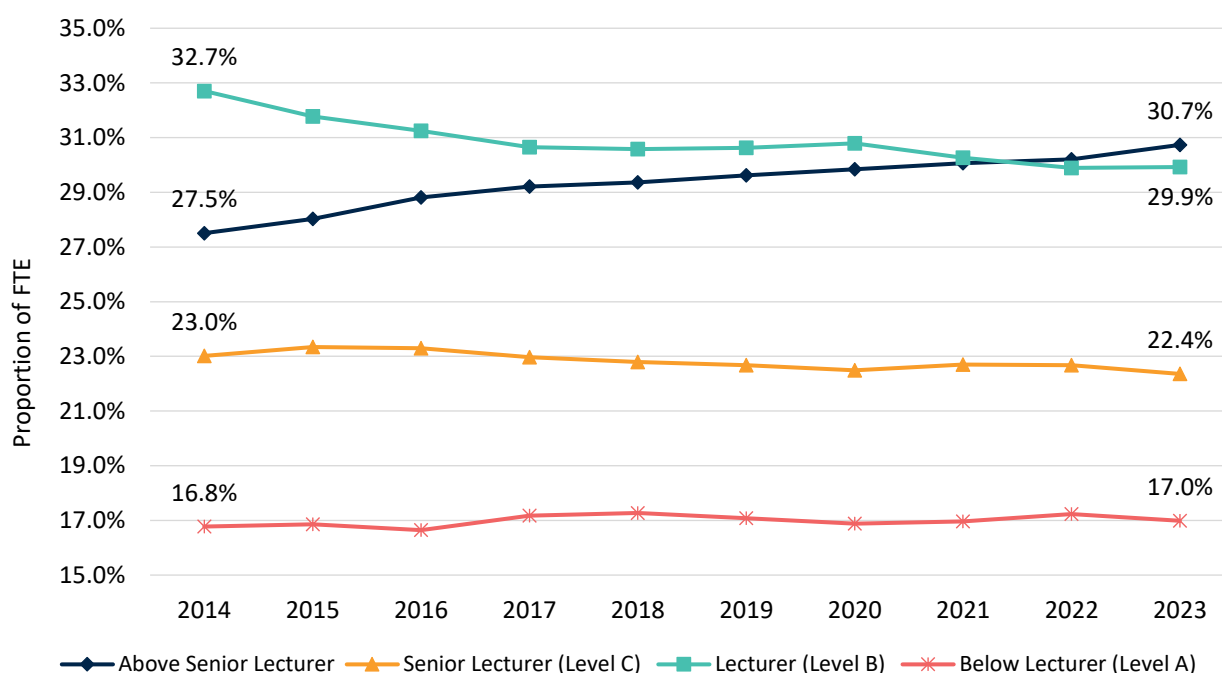
Full-time equivalent (FTE) staff by Current duties classification

- The pandemic affected non-academic staff more than academic staff, with an 8.6% decrease in non-academic staff FTE in 2021 compared with a 4.4% decrease among academic staff. Post 2021, academic FTE staff also recovered more quickly than non-academic FTE staff to pre-pandemic levels.
 - In 2023, the total FTE for academic classifications was above pre-pandemic numbers, reaching a 10-year high of 49,403 FTE staff. This represents a 3.6 per cent increase from 2022 (47,688) and a 12.3 per cent increase from 2014.
 - The FTE of non-academic staff increased from 63,383 in 2021 to 67,207 in 2023, an increase of 6.0 per cent.

Observations within academic classifications

- Above senior lecturer (the highest classification²) reached a 10-year high of 15,184 FTE staff in 2023. This is an increase of 5.4 per cent from 2022, and a 10-year increase of 25.5 per cent.
- The academic classification 'Above senior lecturer' made up 30.7 per cent of the total academic FTE in 2023, surpassing lecturer (level B) in 2022, which has historically accounted for the largest proportion of academic staff.

Figure 4: Proportion of FTE by academic classification, 2014 – 2023
(full-time and fractional full-time only)



[Data can be found in [table 4 - 2023 staff summary time series](#)]

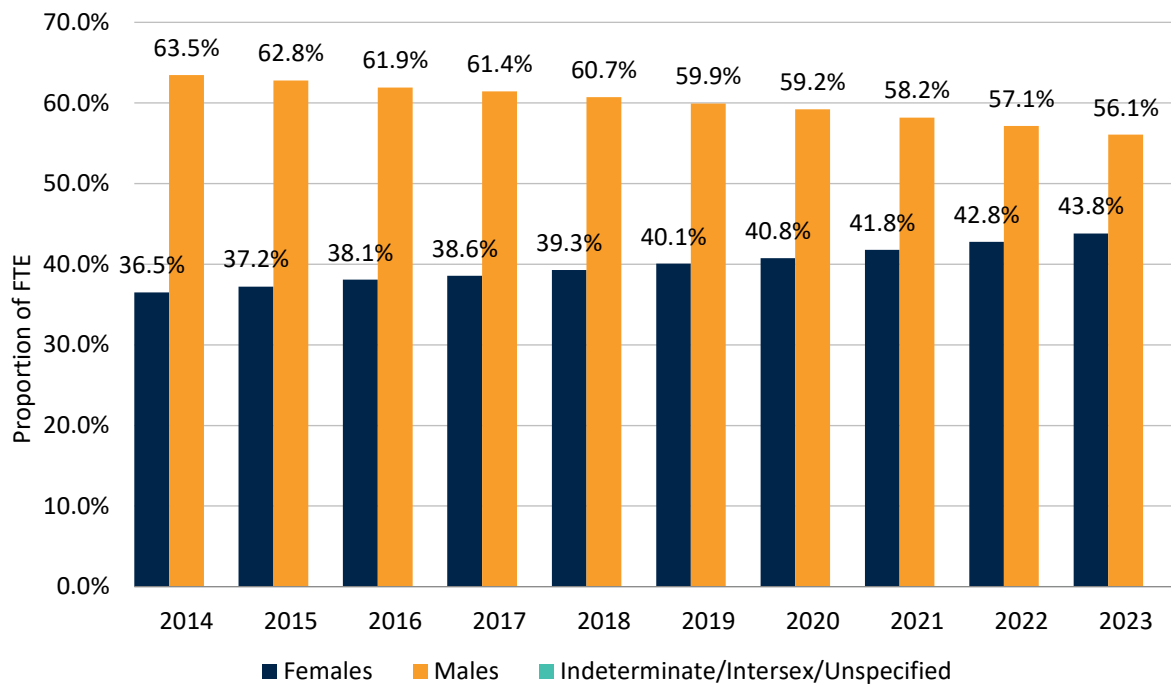
² Above Senior Lecturer consists of:

- Vice-chancellor
- Deputy vice-chancellor
- Professor, Head of school, College fellow and other academic staff in the Level E salary classification
- Associate Professor, Principal lecturer and other academic staff in the Level D salary classification

Full-time equivalent (FTE) staff by academic classification by gender

- The FTE of women in senior lecturer or above academic roles has grown by 41.6 per cent over the last decade (since 2014). In 2023:
 - the FTE of women in senior academic classifications increased from 10,790 in 2022 to 11,491 in 2023 (a 6.5 per cent increase), and
 - women made up 43.8 per cent of the total senior lecturer or above FTE, up from 42.8 per cent in 2022.

Figure 5: Proportion of FTE at senior academic classifications by gender, 2014 to 2023 (full-time and fractional full-time only)

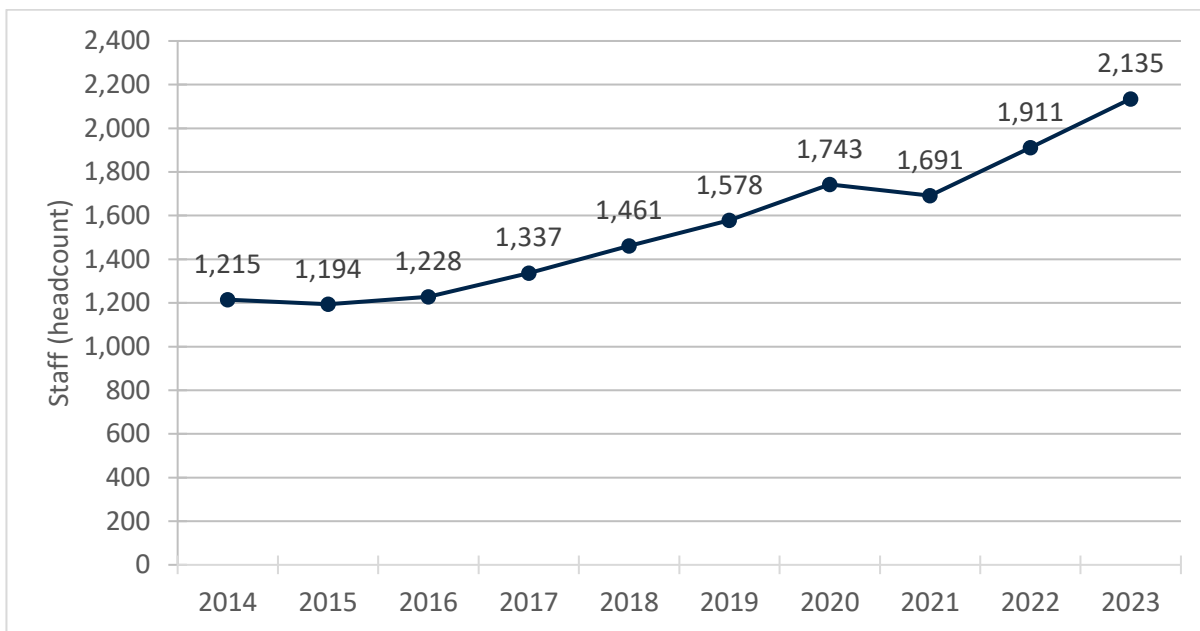


[Data can be found in [table 5 - 2023 staff summary time series](#)]

First Nations staff (headcount)

- The headcount of First Nations staff has grown by 72.6 per cent over the last decade (since 2014). In 2023:
 - The headcount of First Nations staff increased from 1,911 in 2022 to 2,135 in 2023 (an increase of 11.7 per cent), and
 - First Nations staff make up 1.6 per cent of the total staff in 2023, an increase from 1.5 per cent from 2022.

Figure 6: *Headcount of First Nations staff, 2014 to 2023*
(full-time and fractional full-time only)



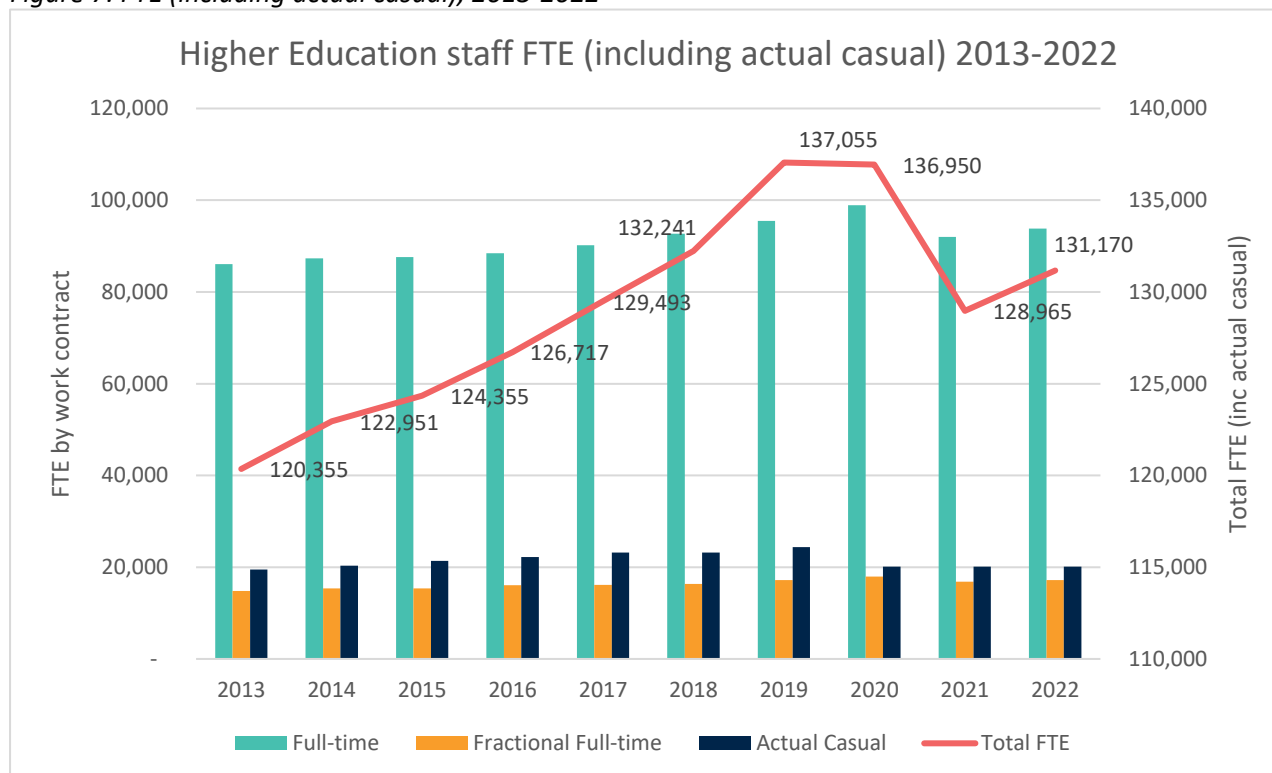
[Data can be found in [table 6 - 2023 staff summary time series](#)]

Section 3- 2022 Actual Casual data

This section contains the latest data available to the department on the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) actual casual staff, with the data including the full-year 2022. Headcount data are not collected for casual staff.

- Prior to the pandemic, actual casual FTE increased by 25.0 per cent (from 19,487 to 24,530) between 2013 and 2019. However, with the onset of the COVID pandemic in 2020, actual casual FTE decreased substantially (by 21.2 per cent) while full-time and fractional full-time staff FTE increased.
- There has been no change in the FTE of actual casual staff between 2020 and 2022, with just under 20,100 FTE actual casual staff recorded in each of these years.
- Casual staff made up an increasing proportion of the total FTE from 2013 to 2019 reaching 17.8 per cent of the total FTE in 2019. Consistent with the large decrease in numbers, the total share of casual staff dropped in 2020 to 14.7 per cent of all FTE.
- In 2022, casual staff made up 15.3 per cent of the total FTE, down from 15.6 per cent in 2021 and 16.2 per cent in 2013.

Figure 7: FTE (including actual casual), 2013-2022

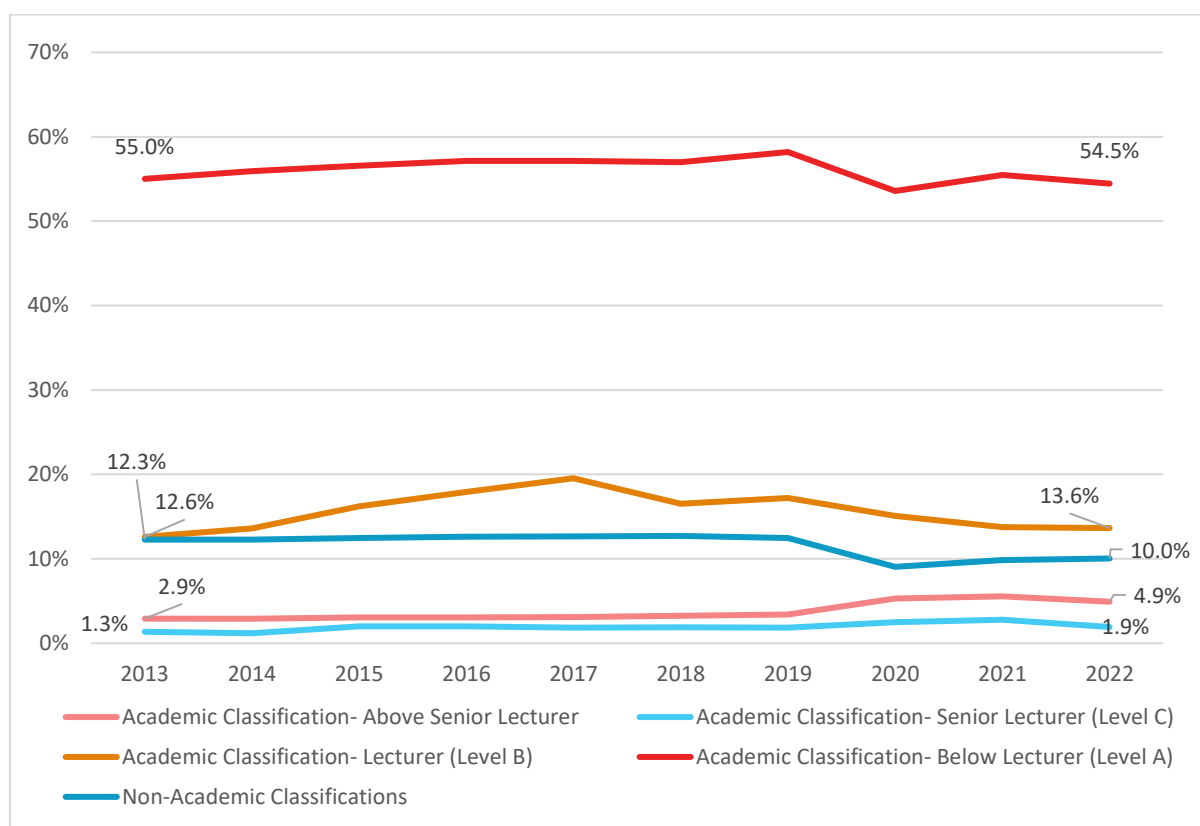


[Data can be found in [table 7 - 2023 staff summary time series](#)]

Actual casual data by academic classification

- Lower academic classifications have substantially higher proportions of casual staff than higher academic classifications. In 2022:
 - 54.5 per cent of all Level A (Below lecturer) academic FTE were casual.
 - In contrast, 13.6 per cent of Level B (Lecturer), 1.9 per cent of Level C (Senior Lecturer) and 4.9 per cent of Above Senior Lecturer were casual.
 - 10.0 per cent of non-academic FTE staff were casual.
- The 10-year trend by academic classification largely follows the trend for all casual FTE, with both academic and non-academic casual FTE increasing from 2013 to 2019 before a rapid decline in 2020 due to the pandemic.

Figure 8: Actual casual as a proportion of all staff for each academic classification, 2013-2022

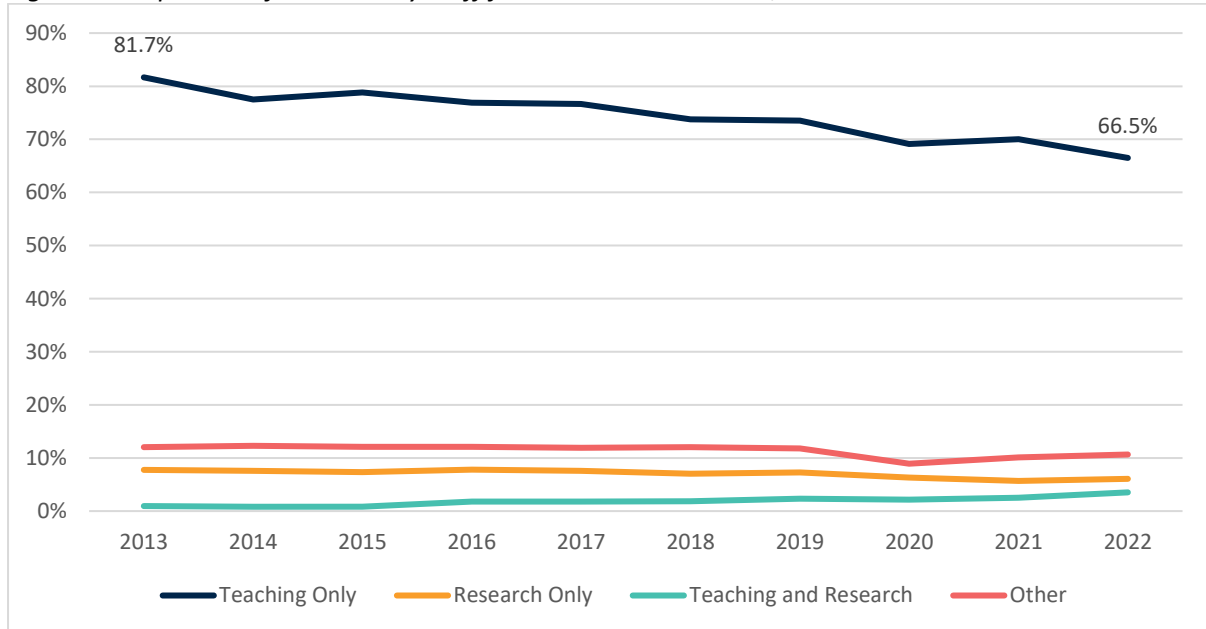


[Data can be found in [table 8 - 2023 staff summary time series](#)]

Actual casual data by function

- The *teacher only* function is dominated by casual staff, with almost twice as many casual staff in *teacher only* roles than full-time and fractional full-time. Casual staff are 66.5 per cent of the total *Teacher only* FTE.

Figure 9: Proportion of total FTE by staff function that are casual, 2013-2022

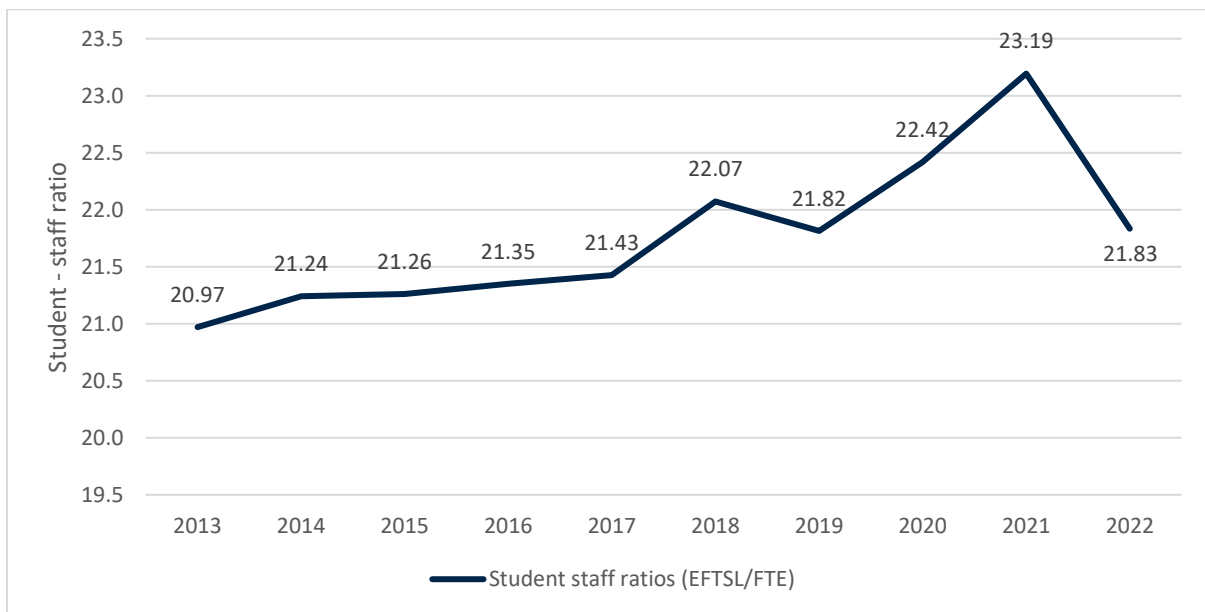


[Data can be found in [table 9 - 2023 staff summary time series](#)]

Section 4 - Student to staff ratios (Table A and B)

- The student to staff ratio measures the full-time equivalent student load for students studying onshore to the academic teaching FTE staff for Table A and B universities.
- In 2022, the student to staff ratio decreased to 21.83 from 23.19 in 2021. This means there are roughly 22 students per academic staff member.
- The rising ratios in 2020 and 2021 were due to academic teaching FTE declining relatively more than onshore student full-time equivalent student load (EFTSL). The decrease in 2022 is driven by a 5.6 percent decline in onshore students studying higher education in 2022, offset by an 0.3 per cent increase in academic teaching FTE staff.

Figure 10: Student staff ratios (EFTSL/FTE) including actual casual, 2013-2022.



[Data can be found in [table 10 - 2023 staff summary time series](#)]