Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching *and* Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Postgraduate Teaching

Guidelines

ACU encourages staff to contribute to the improvement of learning and teaching and acknowledges achievements through a range of teaching awards.

The most prestigious awards offered at ACU are the Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching and the Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Postgraduate Teaching. These teaching awards give recognition to teachers (individuals and teams) renowned for the excellence of their teaching, who have outstanding teaching skills and who have made a sustained, broad, and deep contribution to enhancing the quality of learning and teaching in higher education.

The closing date for applications for these awards is Friday 9th September 2024.

Applications are to be emailed to: CEI@acu.edu.au.

Are you eligible to apply?

Any ACU staff member with a minimum of 5 years' experience within ACU, who has made a significant and sustained contribution to excellent learning and teaching may apply. This includes continuing full-time and fractional staff; academic and professional staff; and sessional and contract staff. This contribution must align with the distinctive Mission, values and strategies of ACU, and reference must be made to these in the application.

Prior to seeking a nomination, applicants should first discuss the matter with their supervisors, and/or Head of School and/or Associate Dean Learning and Teaching (ADLT), or equivalent. Once endorsed the application form should be signed before you proceed to prepare your submission, to ensure that the work you complete in developing your application is eligible for consideration. We recommend you seek this endorsement well before submission deadline. **Self-nominated applications will not be accepted.**

- The Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching covers excellence in teaching across a broad range of levels.

- The Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Postgraduate Teaching is part of the Postgraduate Strategy and is designed to showcase the strong postgraduate culture and teaching excellence at ACU.

Suitable applicants will have high Student Evaluation results, a sustained record of meritorious scholarly practice, innovation, and leadership in teaching (e.g., publications, committee leadership, projects, use of learning technologies), endorsement from senior staff in the Faculty and demonstrable broader recognition from the higher education sector and/or broader community.

It is preferable, but not essential, for applicants to have previous formal institutional or external recognition of teaching excellence (e.g., an AAUT award, and/or an ACU citation for outstanding contribution to student learning).

Conditions

Individuals who have previously won a Vice-Chancellor's Excellence in Teaching Award may not apply for the award for a second time. Similarly, individuals who have previously won a Vice-Chancellor's Excellence in Postgraduate Teaching Award may not apply again.

However, individuals who have previously won a teaching excellence award may apply for a postgraduate teaching excellence award, and vice versa, provided the evidence used to win one award is substantially different from the evidence used in the application for the other.

Individuals who were members of a winning team for either Vice-Chancellor's awards (i.e., teaching or postgraduate teaching) may apply as an individual in either category, provided the evidence used to win the team award is substantially different from the evidence used in the application for the individual award.

Applicants who are included as part of a team application must have contributed 10 per cent or higher.

Applicants who have previously won an AAUT teaching excellence award may apply for either Vice-Chancellor's awards (i.e., teaching or postgraduate teaching). However, the application will need to be tailored to its respective conditions: the evidence must span at least 5 years' teaching at ACU, the written statement must align with the distinctive Mission, values and strategies of ACU, and reference must be made to these (and to relevant plans of the University) in the application.

Award winners are expected to promulgate good practice and contribute to ACU's culture of excellence in learning and teaching by, for example, presenting their work at Faculty and ACU Centre for Education and Innovation events, and supporting future applicants through peer mentoring.

Expenditure of award funds

Funds awarded to award winners may be either transferred to a Faculty/Unit account and should be used by the end of the following year or paid as salary.

Successful applicants electing to have their award funds transferred to a Faculty/Unit account may use the funds at their discretion for any work-related purpose, examples include funding participation at relevant conferences (i.e., travel, accommodation, and conference registration fees), purchase of resources for their teaching, purchase of subscriptions to professional journals/organisations, and/or work-related books.

Alternatively, staff electing to have their award funds paid as salary should note that these funds will be taxed as income. These funds may be spent on items that are not related to your work, or if you wish to purchase work-related equipment (e.g., iPad or Computer).

How to apply

The amount allocated to each category of Teaching Excellence awards is $10,000. The award amount is per individual or team.

Prior to seeking a nomination, applicants should first discuss the matter with their supervisors, and/or Head of School and/or Associate Dean Learning and Teaching (ADLT), or equivalent. Team applications require each member of the team to be endorsed. Once endorsed, applicants will need to complete and sign the Application Form. For a team application, all team members are required to sign the application. **Your completed submission must be emailed to CEI@acu.edu.au by Friday 9th September 2024.**

You should seek a mentor from within your own faculty, or elsewhere, to help you with the application. Read the full list of past citation and award recipients.

The Centre for Education and Innovation can also provide formative feedback on your draft application if it is submitted before the draft deadline. The closing date for draft applications for CEI feedback is Monday 22nd July 2024. Draft applications sent after this deadline will not be reviewed. Draft applications submitted by the deadline will be returned by Friday 9th August 2024.

There are multiple resources available on the Citations and Awards website and the Writing a citation or award application webpage. Candidates can contact CEI staff for support through CEI@acu.edu.au.

Award subcategories

All applicants will be assessed on the evidence provided in response to all four of the following subcategories (with suggestions listed underneath). *Each subcategory will be given equal consideration by the selection panel.*

The four subcategories align with the subcategories used for the *2023 Australian Awards for University Teaching* and are reproduced in full here.

1. **Approaches to teaching and/or the support of learning that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn.** This may include:

- Fostering student development by stimulating curiosity and independence in learning.
- Participating in effective and empathetic guidance and advice for students.
- Assisting students from equity and other demographic subgroups to participate and achieve success in their courses.

- Encouraging student engagement through the enthusiasm shown for learning and teaching.
- Inspiring and motivating students through effective communication, presentation and interpersonal skills.
- Enabling others to enhance their approaches to learning and teaching.
- Developing and/or integrating assessment strategies to enhance student learning.
- Provision of support services or programs that improve the student experience and enable learning.
- Evaluating the quality of programs and activities including consideration of past and current student feedback to support student learning.

2. **Development of curricula, resources or services that reflect a command of the field.** This may include:

- Developing and presenting coherent and imaginative resources for student learning.
- Implementing research-led approaches to learning and teaching.
- Demonstrating up-to-date knowledge of the field of study in the design of the curriculum and the creation of resources for learning.
- Communicating clear objectives and expectations for student learning.
- Providing support to those involved in the development of curricula and resources.
- Contributing professional expertise to enhance curriculum or resources.
- Evaluating the quality of curriculum, resources or services.

3. **Effective assessment practices that bring about improvements in student learning, may have a focus on academic integrity or digital solutions, or any assessment strategies that bring about change.** This may include:

- Showing advanced skills in assessment/alternative assessment practices.
- Using a variety of assessment strategies to bring about change.
- Adapting assessment methods to different contexts and diverse student needs and learning styles.
- Contributing professional expertise to the field of assessment in order to improve program design and delivery.
- Dissemination and embedding of good practice identified through assessment.
- Evaluating the quality of the assessment practices.

4. **Innovation or leadership that has influenced and enhanced learning and teaching and/or student experience.** This may include:

- Participating in and contributing to professional activities related to learning and teaching.
- Innovations in service and support for students; coordination, management and leadership of courses and student learning.
- Conducting and publishing research related to teaching.
- Demonstrating leadership through activities that have broad influence on the profession.
- Providing innovative learning and teaching for different contexts, including technology enhanced environments, for large and small class sizes and/or to meet the needs of a diverse student cohort.
- Influencing the overall academic, social and cultural experience of higher education.
- Evaluating the feasibility of the innovation or the quality of leadership that enhances learning and teaching and/or influence student experience.

Assessment criteria

All nominations will be assessed on the evidence provided in response to the four subcategories, in relation to the follow assessment criteria. You must address *all* the criteria:

Criterion A:	Positively impacted on student learning, student engagement or the overall student experience.
Criterion B:	Gained recognition from colleagues, the institution, and/or the broader community (early career and sessional only require student and colleague recognition).
Criterion C:	Shown creativity, imagination and/or innovation, irrespective of whether the approach involves traditional learning environments or technology-based developments.
Criterion D:	Drawn on the scholarly literature on teaching and learning to inform the development of initiatives, programs, and/or practice.

ACU Criterion	Aligned with the distinctive Mission, values and strategies of ACU (Reference must be made to these)

In assessing nominations against the four criteria, the panel will consider:

- the extent to which the claims for excellence are supported by formal and informal evaluation;
- the information contained in student data or institutional student surveys, references, and selected teaching materials submitted by the nominee.

Preparing your application

Your application is in eight parts. It consists of:

1. Your nomination. You must complete this in full. It must then be signed by either your Executive Dean or ADLT (or equivalent). Please use the Application Form provided on Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Teaching Excellence webpage for this part and parts 2 and 3.
2. Your written statement addressing all four criteria. The maximum for this statement is 8 pages (excluding references).
3. List of references used within your statement.
4. Curriculum vitae (maximum: three A4 pages)
5. Two referee reports, each one A4 page
6. Two recent SELT reports
7. Supporting materials (maximum: ten A4 pages.)
8. A headshot photo, in jpg format, submitted as a separate file at the same time as parts 1-7.

Combine the first 7 of these parts into a single document and save as a single PDF prior to submission.

Written statement

The written statement presents your arguments and evidence to substantiate your claim to sustained teaching excellence. It must address all four subcategories.

The written statement must not exceed eight A4 pages in total excluding the list of references. The formatting requirements are:

- Page size A4
- Do not use columns.
- Font must be 11-point Calibri (Narrow fonts must not be used.)
- Margins must be 2 cm all round.
- Paragraph format: 12-point space between each paragraph.

Evidence to support claims needs to be integrated into the statement: do not use hyperlinks to external resources within the written statement. Where your statement refers to supporting materials, include as section 7 of your application.

The written statement must have three components, presented in the following order:

1. A summary of your claims and context.
2. A statement addressing each subcategory that provides evidence of your contribution over a sustained period. Reference should be made to the ways in which the contribution aligns with the distinctive mission, values and strategies of ACU Vision 2033.
   NB: When applying for the postgraduate award, include reference to the Postgraduate Strategy initiatives.
3. References referred to in your statement.

Additional page for team applications: Written statements for team applications must begin with a statement not exceeding one page which explains the role and percentage contribution of each team member. Team nominations can only include members with a contribution of 10 per cent or higher.

Your written statement should include a summary table of SELT student feedback results (and/or other student evaluation data, where available). Include results over several years showing class numbers, total response numbers, percentage response rates and faculty average scores. Interpretation of the numerical tabulated data

should be provided within the body of the text of your statement.

In addition, you should integrate and triangulate other types of evidence from students, peers, senior staff or external colleagues.

It is strongly recommended that applications are proofread and checked prior to submission. The selection panel members are drawn from a range of disciplines and learning and teaching specialisations; it should not be presumed they have detailed knowledge of your discipline and/or teaching context.

Applicants should refer to the Citations and Awards webpage for resources to assist awards and citation applications.

Curriculum vitae

The curriculum vitae should outline the applicant's educational qualifications, employment history, teaching positions and teaching experience. The curriculum vitae should be no longer than three A4 pages for individual nominations. Teams may allow one additional page per team member. This means a team of three may have five pages (three + two). Pages in excess of this limit will be removed.

Referee reports

Two referee reports of no more than one A4 page each need to be included.

One referee must be the Head of the applicant's Faculty, Department, School or Administrative Unit.

Second referee typically comes from an external colleague.

The referee reports must speak directly to your statement. References cannot be merely a letter of support. Refer to the advice sheet 'Writing a referee report for a teaching award applicant' in the Citations and Awards resources section.

Referee reports must be signed by the referee. Please contact CEI if there may be a delay. If the nomination relates to a team, the referee reports must apply to the team.

Supporting materials

Applicants must ensure that all claims of meeting the assessment criteria are supported by evidence and that the evidence is referred to in the written statement. Supporting material may include digital resources, unit outlines, resource documents, screen captures, URLs, and summaries/extracts of notes of appreciation from, for example, former students, community and professional colleagues.

Names of supporters are not to be used unless their explicit permission has been obtained to quote a comment. A long collection of individual letters of appreciation/praise is not acceptable; instead, provide a brief extract (up to a paragraph) to back up a specific claim.

You may include supporting materials to a maximum of 10 pages.

Digital photograph (JPEG file)

A formal digital photograph to the following specifications must be submitted with each application:
- In colour, with a white background;
- head and shoulders only;
- image resolution of 300 dpi (approximately 10 cm by 10 cm; as a guide, the size of the file must be at least 1 MB).

Digital photographs may be used for publication purposes, including ACU and other promotional materials.

Submitting your application

The nomination, written statement and referee reports must be in order and combined into one PDF. The digital photograph should be uploaded as a separate file.

The closing date for applications is Monday 9th September 2024.

Applications are to be emailed to CEI@acu.edu.au.

The Awards and Grants Assessment Group, will discuss, and assess all submitted applications after applications close. All applicants will be notified of the outcome by email. Applicants who are unsuccessful will be given written feedback on their application from the Committee.