

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

Guidelines

About the Awards

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.

An award amount of **\$10,000** is available per individual or team.

The closing date for applications for these awards is **5 pm, Monday 31 August 2020**.

Fully completed applications must be emailed to: awards&grants.LTC@acu.edu.au.

Are you eligible to apply?

Each year, LTC will invite Faculties to nominate suitable teaching staff to participate in the award selection process. If you feel that you would make a good candidate, you should feel free to discuss the matter with your supervisor, and/or the Associate Dean Learning and Teaching (or equivalent). **Self-nominated applications will not be accepted.**

Eligible ACU staff are ongoing full-time and part-time academic staff who have made a significant and sustained contribution to student learning over a period of at least five years. This contribution 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.

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. Applications should reflect the [Postgraduate Strategy](#) initiatives.

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 OLT or 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 Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. Similarly, individuals who have previously won a Vice-Chancellor's Excellence in Postgraduate Teaching Award may not apply for the Vice-Chancellor's Postgraduate Teaching Excellence Award.

However, individuals who won a **teaching** excellence award can 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 of the 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 made a contribution of 10 per cent or higher.

If you have previously won either an OLT or an AAUT teaching excellence award you may apply for this award, but you will need to tailor your application to its conditions: evidence must span at least 5 years' teaching at ACU, and your 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 Learning and Teaching events, and supporting future applicants through peer mentoring.

How to apply

Applicants must first be selected and endorsed by their Faculty or Unit through a nomination. Nominations must be signed by either your Executive Dean or your Associate Dean Learning and Teaching (or equivalent). Team applications require each member of the team to be endorsed. Please ensure that the appropriate section of the nomination is signed prior to submission.

After nomination, develop and submit your written statement (full details below) before the closing date.

The Learning and Teaching Centre can provide you with formative feedback on your draft application. Make sure before you start that you have looked through the resources in the teaching citations and awards section of the LTC website. You can contact LTC staff for support through awards&grants.LTC@acu.edu.au. You should also seek peer support and feedback from senior staff and past award winners in your Faculty or Unit.

Expenditure of award funds

Funds awarded to Teaching Award winners will be transferred to a Faculty/Unit account and should be used by the end of the following year. Successful applicants may use the funds at their discretion for any work-related purpose, including for example, to expand their skills/knowledge in higher education by 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, or purchase of equipment to be used at work for work purposes. Alternatively, staff may elect to have their award funds paid as salary. NB: Funds used in this way will be taxed.

Award criteria

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

1. Approaches to teaching and 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.

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.

3. Evaluation practices that bring about improvements in teaching and learning

Evaluation comprises making judgements about the quality of programs and activities that are part of the academic, cultural and social experience of higher education (note that evaluation practices do not include student assessment). This may include:

- showing advanced skills in evaluation and reflective practice
- using a variety of evaluation strategies to bring about change
- adapting evaluation methods to different contexts and diverse student needs and learning styles
- contributing professional expertise to the field of evaluation in order to improve program design and delivery
- the dissemination and embedding of good practice identified through evaluation.

4. Innovation, leadership or scholarship that has influenced and enhanced learning and teaching and/or the 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.

In assessing nominations against the four criteria, the panel will take into account:

- the extent to which the claims for excellence are supported by formal and informal evaluation;
- the extent of creativity, imagination or innovation, irrespective of whether the approach involves traditional learning environments or technology-based development;
- 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 8 parts. It consists of:

1. Your **nomination**. This is the first part of the application form. You must complete this in full. It must then be signed by either your Executive Dean or your Associate Dean Learning and Teaching (or equivalent). The application form is provided on the Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Teaching Excellence webpage for this part.
2. Your **written statement** addressing all four criteria. The maximum for this statement is 8 pages (excluding references). Please use the application form provided on the Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Teaching Excellence webpage for this part and part 3, the references.
3. List of **references** used within your statement.
4. your **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 this as a **single PDF** before submission.

Written statement

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

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 makes reference to supporting materials, include them 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 criterion 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. 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 Unit Pulse 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. See the table in the document 'Including evaluation and feedback in your Award application' in the Resources section.

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.

ACU assessors on the Awards and Grants Committee are drawn from a range of disciplines and learning and teaching specialisations; you should not presume they have detailed knowledge of your discipline, or your teaching context.

Applicants should refer to the webpage '[Citations and awards to recognise excellence in teaching](#)' for resources to assist awards and citation applications.

Curriculum vitae

The curriculum vitae should outline the nominee'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 references: You need to obtain referee reports of *no more than* one A4 page from **two referees**.

- One referee must be the Head of the applicant's faculty, department, school or administrative unit.
- For your second referee, credible examples would be the ADLT or equivalent, the head of a unit or a key person in the Faculty or Unit, or from an external colleague.

Purpose-written: The referee reports must speak directly to the criteria for your statement. References cannot be merely a letter of support. See the resource '[Writing a referee report for a teaching award applicant](#)' on the webpage 'Citations and awards to recognise excellence in teaching'.

Signatures: Referee reports must be signed by the referee. However, it is more important to submit your application on time. So, if either of the referees is unavailable to sign-off when the application needs to be submitted, please contact the Learning and Teaching Centre to explain the issue so you can submit the application on time and then submit the signed document as soon as possible.

Teams: 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 selection 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 former students, community and professional colleagues, and so on. On no account are names of supporters 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, use brief extracts (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 before uploading to the LTC mailbox awards&grants.LTC@acu.edu.au. The digital photograph (jpg format) should be uploaded as a separate file.

The closing date for applications is **Monday 31 August 2020**.

Applications are to be emailed to: awards&grants.LTC@acu.edu.au