

ACU Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning

Guidelines

ACU Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning are designed to recognise and reward staff who have made an outstanding contribution to student learning at the University. Both individual and team contributions may be recognised.

The closing date for final applications for ACU Citations is **Monday 8th September 2025**.

[Submit your Citation application here.](#)

ACU citation categories

Citations can be awarded in the following five categories in 2025:

CITATION CATEGORIES	ELIGIBILITY
ACU Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning: General	Individuals and teams from academic and professional staff who have made a significant and sustained contribution to student learning over at least three years .
ACU Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning: Early Career	Individuals with no more than five years' experience teaching in a higher education institution including tutoring and part-time teaching, and who have made a significant and sustained contribution to student learning over at least two years .
ACU Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning: Casual staff	Individuals and teams from academic and professional staff who are employed as casual or contract staff and who have made a significant and sustained contribution to student learning over at least two years .
ACU Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning: Integrating Catholic Intellectual Tradition in Teaching Practice	As per general requirements, with a significant and sustained contribution to student learning through themes or activities which reflect the Catholic Intellectual Tradition. (See notes under 'Subcategories')
ACU Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning: Building Cultural Capacity	As per general requirements, with a significant and sustained contribution to student learning through themes or activities which build cultural capacity. (See notes under 'Subcategories')

It is the intention of the Awards and Grants Assessment Group (AGAG) to award citations across as many categories as possible, with the provision that there are eligible applicants in each category.

Are you eligible to apply?

Any staff member who has made a significant and sustained contribution to excellent learning and teaching may apply. Eligible ACU staff include ongoing full-time and fractional staff; academic and professional staff; and casual and contract staff.

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 nomination

section of the application form should be signed before you proceed to prepare your submission. We recommend you seek this endorsement well before the submission deadline, to ensure that the work you complete in developing your application is eligible for consideration. **Self-nominated applications will not be accepted.**

If you are a winner of a previous teaching excellence citation or award, please note the conditions about submission and re- use of evidence in the conditions below.

Conditions

It is expected that applicants progress through the awards categories from citation to VC award and on to national AAUT awards. While applicants can apply for a second citation, or a citation after receiving a VC award or AAUT award, in deciding whether to award the citation, consideration will be given to applicants with no prior citations or awards who meet the criteria. Preference will be given to these applicants.

If you have won any of the following citations and/or awards (either individually or as part of a team), you may not re-use evidence presented as part of your winning application for a subsequent ACU citation for outstanding contribution to student learning.

- ACU Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning
- AAUT Citations or awards
- ACU Vice-Chancellor's Teaching Excellence Award
- ACU Vice-Chancellor's Postgraduate Teaching Excellence Award
- Advance Higher Education's Global Teaching Excellence Award

Applicants may submit only one application per year, but an applicant may be included in any number of team nominations as well as being an individual applicant. Team nominations can only include members with a contribution of 10 per cent or higher. Evidence used in an individual nomination cannot be relied upon to support a team application – the contributions may overlap but must be substantially separate. Similarly, any individual who is part of more than one team application must ensure that evidence used in one team application is substantially separate from evidence used to support another team application.

Citation 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 citation funds

The amount allocated to each category of citation is \$5,000. The award amount is per individual or team.

Funds awarded to citation 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*: 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 may elect to have their citation funds paid as salary. Funds used in this way will be taxed as income and 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

Prior to submission, applicants must be endorsed through a signed nomination by any of the following: the ADLT (or equivalent), Head of School, Director or Manager. Team applications require each member of the team to be endorsed. Please ensure that pages 2 & 3 of the *Application Form* are completed and signed prior to preparing your submission.

You should seek a mentor from within your own faculty, or elsewhere, to help you with the application. Past award winners are all listed on the [Citations and Awards Webpage](#).

The Centre for Education and Innovation can provide formative feedback on your draft application, if requested by the draft submission deadline. The closing date for draft applications for CEI feedback is Monday 21st July 2025. Draft applications sent after this deadline will not be reviewed. Draft applications submitted by the deadline will be returned by Friday 8th August 2025.

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

Subcategories

You must select **ONE** of the four subcategories listed below and make a statement that provides clear and consistent forms of evidence matched to the subcategory addressed.

When addressing the subcategory, you must make clear how your contribution to excellence in learning and teaching aligns with the distinctive *Mission, values, and strategies of ACU as evident in [ACU Vision 2033](#)*. Reference must be made to these (and to relevant plans of the University) in the application.

Note: When applying for a citation for “**Integrating Catholic Intellectual Tradition in Teaching Practice**”, this feature of your claim to excellence must be the dominant part of your arguments and evidence.

Note: When applying for a citation for “**Building Cultural Capacity**”, this must make up the largest portion of your arguments and evidence.

The four subcategories align with the subcategories used for the 2024 *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 selected subcategory, in relation to the following 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 casual 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)

Preparing your application

Your application is in four parts. Please use the *Application Form* for parts 1 and 2. The application consists of:

1. Your **nomination**. You must complete this in full. It must then be signed by one of the following: your ADLT (or equivalent), or Head of School, or Director, or Manager.
2. Your **written statement** addressing one subcategory. Maximum 4 pages excluding references.
3. Two **referee reports**. You must obtain these and add them to parts 1 and 2 to create a single document.

Save Parts 1, 2 and 3 as a **single PDF** before submission.

4. A headshot **photo**, in jpg format, submitted as a separate file at the same time as parts 1, 2, & 3.

Written statement

The written statement presents your arguments and evidence to substantiate your claim to have made an outstanding contribution to student learning. It must address **one** of the four subcategories.

The written statement must not exceed **four** A4 pages in total *excluding a list of references*.

Note: Formatting requirements apply:

- Page size A4

- Do not use columns.
- Font must be 11 point Calibri (narrow fonts must not be used)
- Margins must be 2cm, with single spacing 6 pt between paragraphs

Evidence to support claims needs to be integrated into the statement: do not use hyperlinks to external resources; do not attach evidence beyond the page limit; do not use appendices.

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

1. A summary of the particular contribution, its alignment to the chosen subcategory and its specific context (1-2 paragraphs).
2. A statement addressing your chosen 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*.
3. References referred to in your statement.

For staff involved in teaching, your written statement should include a summary table of SELT student feedback results (and/or other student evaluation data, where available). Include results that demonstrate a sustained contribution in relation to the chosen subcategory and provide context such as 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. For staff not involved in teaching, other forms of evidence of sustained impact are required.

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 Assessment Group 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.

Referee reports

Two referee reports of no more than *one* A4 page each.

1. One referee must be the Head of the applicant's Faculty, Department, School or Administrative Unit.
2. For your second referee, credible examples would include: the ADLT or equivalent, Head of Unit or a key person in the Faculty or Unit, or an external colleague.

The referee reports must speak directly to the subcategory selected for your statement. References cannot be merely a letter of support. Refer to the ['Writing a referee report for a teaching award applicant'](#) resource.

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.

Submitting your application

The nomination, written statement and referee reports must be in order and combined into one PDF before sending to CEI@acu.edu.au by close of business **Monday 8th September 2025**.

The digital photograph (jpg format) should be uploaded as a separate file.

The Awards and Grants Assessment Group, chaired by the Academic Lead, Scholarship and Professional Learning, 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.