WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

Western Sydney University

Learning and Teaching Awards

Applicant Guidelines

Eligibility

Staff who have won an award in previous year are not eligible to apply for the same award in the subsequent year. Specific eligibility requirements for citations and awards are set out in the table below.

Table 1- Learning and Teaching Award Criteria

Award Type	Eligibility Requirements
Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning	- Applicants must be currently employed, and have worked for a minimum of 12 months at WSU *Exception: Sessional Staff* - Open to individuals and teams - Open to academic and professional staff - Open to permanent, fixed-term and casual staff - Two of the eight awards will be targeted for sessional staff
Excellence in Teaching Awards	- Applicants must be currently employed, and have worked for a minimum of 12 months at WSU - Open to individuals and teams - Open to academic staff - Open to permanent and fixed-term staff - Will be awarded in the following four focus areas: - Excellence in Teaching - Excellence in Teaching – Partnerships - Excellence in Teaching – Education for Sustainability - Excellence in Teaching – Early Career Academics Where an award in not provided for a particular focus area, the award may be provided to and alternate focus area.

One of the Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Academic) Excellence in Teaching Award winners is recommended for the Vice-Chancellor's Excellence in Teaching – Teacher of the Year Award. The Teacher of the Year Award replaces the Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Academic) Excellence in Teaching Award.

Learning and Teaching Award Details

Up to eight Citations for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning and up to four Excellence in Teaching Awards will be awarded. Winners will receive a certificate and a monetary grant. Grants may be used for professional development, to support learning and teaching initiatives or taken as a superannuation or cash payment (after tax, credited through payroll). Grant values are set out in the table below.

Table 2- Learning and Teaching Award Grant Values

Award Type	Grant Amounts
Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning	Eight awards of $1000 for an individual or per team winners
Excellence in Teaching Awards	Four awards of $2000 for an individual or per team winners

Submission Requirements

Applications for all Learning and Teaching Awards require:

1. a completed nomination form signed by the relevant Dean or Head of Unit;
2. a written statement addressing the award criteria; and
3. referee reports (minimum of 2, maximum of 6)

Nominees for a Teaching Excellence Award must submit two of the three following supporting materials:

i. a three-minute video (which could include footage of the nominee talking about their program, their teaching philosophy or interviews with students);
ii. website (URL); and/or
iii. ten pages of printed teaching material in PDF format.

Nominees for a Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning Award must prepare a concise (maximum 25 words) citation which describes the nominee's distinctive contribution. Each citation is unique and reflects the diversity of ways in which the nominee contributes to excellent learning and teaching, including contributions from sessional staff.

Documentary evidence is necessary to support nominations. Generally, documentary evidence is required to be current (one to three years, although submissions may include brief background material from longer than three years ago to contextualise achievements.

The following are examples of supporting evidence:
- Benchmarking services against external providers of similar services (for example, in other universities)
- Additional letters of support
- Testimonials
- Short curriculum vitae
- Client satisfaction surveys
- Feedback from student cohorts or other recipients of initiatives support claims of positive outcomes, gathered from whole cohort or group (rather than selected individual testimonial) through formal surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc.
- Outcomes of student learning, for example, grades, examiners' reports, etc.
- Comparison of experience, results, etc. between pre-intervention and post-intervention.
- Improvements in achieving key performance indicators, for example, retention and progression rates of students.
- Peer review feedback on processes developed or documentary materials produced.
- Evidence of uptake by others of the nominees' initiatives.
- Public recognition of excellence, for example prizes and awards received, referenced conference presentations and publications both nationally and internationally, features in broadcast media, and so on.

Other supporting documentary evidence of positive outcomes are:

- Individual testimonials from students, staff, community members, etc.
- Evidence of targeted mentoring and leadership of others, for example through providing development and networking opportunities to others relevant to the area.
- Documentary materials produced as part of an initiative.
- Invitations to disseminate outcomes of initiatives to colleagues within or beyond the initiating individual or team.

Assessment Panel Considerations

Excellence in Teaching Awards

In assessing nominations against the chosen criterion, 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 developments; and

information contained in student data or institutional student surveys, references, and selected teaching materials submitted. While most awards celebrate achievement over the most recent one to three years, submissions may include further background to contextualise applications.

Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning

In assessing nominations against the chosen criterion, the Panel will consider each nomination on the extent to which it shows evidence that the nominee's contribution has:

- influenced student learning, student engagement or the overall student experience
- gained recognition from fellow staff, the institution, and/or the broader community; and
- been sustained for a period of no less than three years (less for Early Career nominations or sessional staff).

Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning Criteria

Applicants for citations must address one (1) of the four citation criteria in their written statement. The four citation criteria are:

1. Approaches to teaching and the support of learning that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn. This may include:
    i.   fostering student development by stimulating curiosity and independence in learning;
    ii. participating in effective and empathetic guidance and advice for students, assisting students from equity and other demographic sub-groups to participate and achieve success in their courses;
    iii. encouraging student engagement through the enthusiasm shown for learning and teaching, inspiring and motivating students through effective communication, presentation and interpersonal skills;
    iv. enabling others to enhance their approaches to learning and teaching; and
    v.   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:
    i.   developing and presenting coherent and imaginative resources for student learning, implementing research-led approaches to learning and teaching;
    ii. 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;
    iii. providing support to those involved in the development of curricula and resources; and
    iv. contributing professional expertise to enhance curriculum or resources.

3. Evaluation practices that bring about improvement 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. This may include:
    i. showing advanced skills in evaluation and reflective practice, using a variety of evaluation strategies to bring about change;
    ii. adapting evaluation methods to different contexts and diverse student needs and learning styles;
    iii. contributing professional expertise to the field of evaluation in order to improve program design and delivery; and
    iv. 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:
    i. participating in and contributing to professional activities related to learning and teaching, innovations in service and support for students;
    ii. coordination, management and leadership of courses and student learning, conducting and publishing research related to teaching;
    iii. demonstrating leadership through activities that have broad influence on 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; and
    iv. influencing the overall academic, social and cultural experience of higher education.

Excellence in Teaching Award Criteria

Applicants for Excellence in Teaching Awards must address four (4) teaching excellence criteria in their written statement. The four criteria will be given equal weight. The teaching excellence criteria are:

1. use of approaches to teaching and the support of learning that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn;
2. development of curricula, resources or services that reflect a command of the field;
3. evaluation practices that bring about improvements in teaching and learning; and
4. innovation, leadership or scholarship that has influenced and enhanced learning and teaching and/or the student experience.

Final Submission Process

Applications for all Learning and Teaching awards should be submitted in a single PDF file via email to: LearningFutures@westernsydney.edu.au. Applications will be acknowledged by email.

Application Forms

Application forms for citations and awards are available online at

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/learning_futures/learning-and-teaching-awards

The forms contain specific guidance to assist applicants with meeting requirements.

Enquiries and Information

Further information about Excellence in Teaching and Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning awards could be found in the Excellence Awards Policy and Procedures. These can be accessed by the following links:

Excellence Awards Policy:

https://policies.westernsydney.edu.au/document/view.current.php?id=344

Excellence Awards Procedures:

https://policies.westernsydney.edu.au/document/view.current.php?id=345

All enquiries about the application process, or general information should be directed to the Learning Futures Team at LearningFutures@westernsydney.edu.au

Vice Chancellor's Citations for Meritorious Service to the University – Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic

This award category is open to eligible ongoing and sessional teaching staff at both an individual and team level. The citations will acknowledge an individual (one award) and a team (one award) that have developed innovative curriculum and teaching approaches to support student learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For this category of award nominations should be aligned to at least ONE of the following criteria:

- Designed and delivered innovative curriculum and teaching approaches to support student learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Provided leadership or engaged in the scholarship of teaching and learning to influence and enhance student learning and experience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nominees of this award must provide a 500-word application addressing the listed criteria. In addition, a concise citation (maximum 25 words) describing the nominee's contribution to Student Learning during the COVID-19 pandemic needs to be provided.

Each application will be required to have two referees – internal and/or external and provide a 500-word justification discussing the listed criteria.