

**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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants must be currently employed, and have worked for a minimum of 12 months at WSU</li> <li>• <i>Sessional staff can apply</i></li> <li>• Open to individuals and teams</li> <li>• Open to academic and professional staff</li> <li>• Open to permanent, fixed-term and casual staff</li> <li>• Two of the eight awards will be targeted for sessional staff</li> </ul>
Excellence in Teaching Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants must be currently employed, and have worked for a minimum of 12 months at WSU</li> <li>• Open to individuals and teams</li> <li>• Open to academic staff</li> <li>• Open to permanent and fixed-term staff</li> <li>• Will be awarded in the following four focus areas:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellence in Teaching</li> <li>• Excellence in Teaching – Partnerships</li> <li>• Excellence in Teaching – Education for Sustainability</li> <li>• Excellence in Teaching – Early Career Academics</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Where an award is not provided for a particular focus area, the award may be provided to an alternate focus area.</p>
Excellence in Indigenous Teaching Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants must be currently employed, and have worked for a minimum of 12 months at WSU</li> <li>• This award category is open to eligible ongoing and sessional teaching staff.</li> <li>• Nominees do not have to identify as Indigenous Australian themselves.</li> <li>• Open to individuals and teams</li> <li>• Additional criteria (see below).</li> </ul>

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 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).

## **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.

## **Excellence in Indigenous Teaching Award**

The Excellence in Indigenous Teaching Award is being introduced in 2021 to acknowledge excellence in curriculum and teaching practice in Indigenous areas. Nominees do not have to identify as Indigenous Australian themselves; however, there are additional criteria, as outlined in the Excellence Awards Procedures and reproduced here.

Nominees must address the following criteria for assessment:

- Development of curricula, resources or services that reflect embedded Indigenous knowledge and understanding in meaningful, valuable and engaging ways.
- Use of approaches to teaching and the support of learning that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn.
- Demonstrate with evidence the outstanding nature of contributions that have resulted in students developing a better understanding about Indigenous Australia.

## **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.

## **Submission Process**

From 2021, the submission process will be conducted via an online submission portal. This portal will be made available when applications open.

## **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](mailto:LearningFutures@westernsydney.edu.au)