



**Award Category 1:
Excellence in Teaching (Design and Practice) 2011
Information for Applicants**

1. Introduction
2. Guidelines for *Excellence in Teaching (Design and Practice) Award*
 - a) Eligibility
 - b) Selection Criteria
 - c) Method of Application
3. Important Information Applicable to all Awards
 - a) Support for Applicants
 - b) Application Format and Submission
 - c) Responsibilities of Awardees
 - d) Judging Panel, Late Submissions and Appeals Policies

1. Introduction

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Social Sciences seeks to recognise and reward excellent teaching that engages with and responds to evidence of effective student learning through the *Excellence in Teaching (Design and Practice) Award*.

The Faculty encourages eligible staff to consider applying for this award. Applying for this award encourages critical reflection on teaching and learning. It involves the evaluation of teaching practice and engagement with higher educational research to strengthen and improve student learning. The other two award categories are: *Excellence in Teaching (Practice)* and *Teaching Initiative*.

In 2011, the Faculty will award up to \$1000 to *Excellence in Teaching (Design and Practice) Award* winners to support their research and/or teaching needs.

Applications Due: Friday 26 August 2011

NB: Applications are NOT returned to the applicant but are shredded after the judging panel's decisions are finalised. Please keep full and complete copies of your application along with the originals of any supporting documents, teaching materials and learning resources.

2. Guidelines for *Excellence in Teaching (Design and Practice) Award*

Staff in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences are encouraged to apply for awards in categories for which they are eligible. See below for details about eligibility, award criteria and for details about putting together an application for an *Excellence in Teaching (Design and Practice) Award*, and section 3 for important information relevant to ALL awards. Other awards in this program are *Excellence in Teaching (Practice) Awards*, *Teaching Initiative Award* and *Dean's Citation for Excellence in Tutorial Teaching*.

a) Eligibility

This award is suitable for Unit of Study Coordinators in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Sydney. Applicants must have responsibility for Unit of Study design, delivery and evaluation. Those who have received an Excellence in Teaching Award in the past two years are ineligible to apply.

b) Selection Criteria for *Excellence in Teaching (Design and Practice) Award*

Applications will be assessed on the basis of evidence provided to support claims against each of the criteria (these are listed below and included on the application form). Selection will be based on the demonstration of excellence across all criteria. These criteria are aligned with criteria used by the University in assessing its Vice Chancellor's Outstanding Teaching Award (and these in turn align with criteria for the Australian Learning and Teaching Council Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning). A Faculty Award provides a good foundation for progressing to these other awards.

Applicants should pay careful attention to the ways in which they **present and argue their case** and **provide evidence**. This entails an emphasis not just on 'what' you do or seek to achieve, but on 'how' and 'why' you do it, how you measure outcomes, and particularly how you obtain and respond to student feedback.

1. Overview of teaching context and philosophy

This section should present and explain the context in which teaching takes place and clearly articulate your teaching philosophy and conception of student learning.

2. Approaches to teaching that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn

(This might include evidence of using approaches informed by a coherent philosophy or conception of student learning; promoting student-centered learning; using approaches that enhance students' critical thinking and/or other generic skills; encouraging/engaging in reflective practices; promoting awareness of scholarly values; engaging students through high level communication skills and so on).

3. Development of curricula and resources that reflect a command of the field

(Might include evidence of the ability to organise and structure materials that reflect a command of the field; developing and/or incorporating coherent, imaginative resources for learning; engaging students in research-led teaching and learning; creating cogent alignment between teaching and learning processes, assessment strategies and learning objectives and outcomes).

4. Approaches to assessment and feedback that foster independent learning

(Might include designing well-integrated or authentic assessment tasks that promote student learning; using a variety of innovative assessment tasks; structuring formative and summative assessment approaches to support student learning; providing timely and worthwhile feedback to students on their learning; developing approaches to assessment and feedback that foster independent learning).

5. Respect and support for the development of students as individuals

(Might include structuring student access to the information, knowledge and skills required in units of study; providing assistance to students at risk and students from equity groups; developing or using teaching approaches that address or cater for cultural diversity).

6. Scholarly activities that have influenced and enhanced learning and teaching

(Might include participating in scholarly activities that have influenced and enhanced learning and teaching; making innovative or sophisticated use of evaluation and reflective practice; contributing to the teaching community; or to scholarship in higher education or to scholarship on teaching in a particular discipline).

NB: This written application should present your **case for excellence**, addressing each of the criteria and using evidence in support. Evidence could include, for example, reflection on and discussion of student evaluation data and a description of actions taken as a result of evaluation. Your case might also be informed by feedback on your teaching by supervisors, peers or colleagues and/or relevant scholarly literature in higher education, and reflection/action in response to such evidence. Student evaluation data can derive from 'official' unit of study evaluation forms and/or from informal feedback. Please do not simply reproduce unprocessed evaluation data in your application, or attach original surveys. Rather, you should aim to provide key information, in abbreviated or summarised form, to illustrate and support your claims. You should, however, keep originals of surveys or copies of actual responses in case they are required.

- c) **Method of Application for *Excellence in Teaching (Design and Practice) Award***
- A written application is required, addressing each of the above criteria. Criteria are also listed in the Application Form.
 - ***The total word count in addressing all the criteria should not exceed 4000 words. A4 single sided pages using Times New Roman 12 point font are required.***
 - **Pages or words provided in excess of what is specified here for both the application and supplementary materials will be disregarded.**

Application Checklist for *Excellence in Teaching (Design and Practice)*

1. The application cover sheet including name(s) of applicant(s) and contact details.
2. Your written application addressing each of the criteria, using the spaces provided in the Application Form. Responses to each of the criteria may vary in length, but your total word count addressing the criteria should not exceed 4000 words (excluding cover page and supplementary materials).
3. Supplementary materials (up to 10 single sided pages) may include the following:
 - Evidence of leadership or involvement in improving teaching and learning through, for example, participation in professional associations, projects and committees related to teaching and learning, and so on.
 - Contributions to scholarship on teaching and learning through journals, conferences, etc.
 - Copies of formal teaching qualifications or previous teaching awards.
4. Six (6) copies of your full application submitted to Dean's Personal Assistant in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Office, on or before 5.00 pm on Friday 26 August 2011.

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3. Important Information Applicable to all Awards

a) Resources and Support for Applicants

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to make use of the available support and to seek as much feedback as possible from suitable mentors and colleagues on their draft applications. This is designed to be a supportive and encouraging process.
- A Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Teaching Award workshop will be held in July 2011. This workshop is to inform and support prospective applicants.
- Designated members of the Teaching and Learning Committee will be available to help applicants in the preparation of their application (NB: Committee members on the judging panel do not provide advice to applicants). Your first point of contact is one of your **School Representatives** on the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. The Teaching and Learning website has the details of current T&L School Representatives: http://sydney.edu.au/arts/teaching_learning/governance/membership.shtml
- Previous Teaching Excellence Award winners may also assist applicants in writing or preparing of applications. A list of previous winners can also be found on the Teaching and Learning website: http://sydney.edu.au/arts/teaching_learning/awards/past_winners.shtml
- Copies of previously successful applications are held by Dean's Personal Assistant and may be viewed in her office, during office hours (between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm, Room J2.05, A14 – Quadrangle). The Teaching and Learning Committee thanks the awards recipients for permitting us to make their applications available for this purpose.

- The Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL) Website has relevant advice on how to construct a case for a Vice Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Teaching. The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Awards are closely aligned with this VC's Award. The ITL's website carries advice about the range of evidence (sources or data) and how to use this evidence effectively in mounting your case: <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/awards/ot.htm>
- The ITL provides workshops for constructing VC and ALTC applications early in Semester 1 each year. These workshops are helpful for gaining experience in drafting any teaching award applications.
- For any other advice, please contact the Director of Academic Support and Development, Teaching and Learning. Visit http://sydney.edu.au/arts/teaching_learning/about/contact.shtml for contact details.

b) Application Format and Submission

- Applications for Awards should follow the instructions set out for each award, and use the application pro forma provided.
- Six (6) copies should be submitted to Dean's Personal Assistant in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Office, on or before 5.00 pm on Friday 26 August 2011.

c) Responsibilities of Awardees

- Each awardee's name and academic affiliation will be placed in a Teaching Award Recipients List on the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Teaching and Learning website. Awardees may be contacted by other members of academic staff in the Faculty in relation to the preparation of an application, or other matters related to their teaching.
- Permission may be sought from successful applicants to obtain a hard copy of their application for Teaching and Learning Committee archives and for use as an exemplar to support applicants in future years.
- Awardees will be asked to make a short presentation on their teaching at the Award presentation ceremony. This ceremony will normally be held in the semester following that in which the awards are announced.

d) About the Judging Panel, Late Submissions and Appeals Policies

- Judging panels for the Faculty's Teaching Excellence and Initiative awards are normally comprised of five members: one active member of the Teaching and Learning Committee, the Pro-Dean of Teaching and Learning (Chair), at least one past award winner, one Head of School (on a rotational basis), and a representative from another Faculty's T&L Committee or the Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL). Members of judging panels do not provide advice or guidance to intending applicants.
- The Judging Panel assesses applications according to the *quality and strength of the case for excellence made against each of the criteria*. There is no fixed quota for determining how many applications for the Excellence in Teaching Awards can be successful.
- Late submissions of applications cannot be accepted for equity and timeline reasons.
- Applications are NOT returned to applicants but shredded after the judging panel's decisions are finalised (except where successful applicants have granted permission for their application to be retained and used to support prospective applications). Please keep full and complete copies of your application along with the originals of any supporting documents, teaching materials and learning resources.
- Applicants who wish to appeal against the decision of the judging panel should note that appeals are considered only on the basis of a problem or fault in the application process. The judgement of the panel about the merits of applications relative to the criteria is final and not subject to appeal.