

Faculty of Science Learning and Teaching Award

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1. Introduction

The Faculty of Science recognises and encourages excellent teaching that leads to enhancement of students' learning outcomes and supports the student experience. The Faculty strongly encourages eligible staff to consider applying for this award which seeks to promote, reward and support excellence in learning and teaching. The award criteria are designed to encourage reflection on learning and teaching and to support the development of applications for Vice Chancellor's (VC) awards for learning and teaching and for Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT) awards, grants and fellowships.

For an individual, the Award provides access to \$1000 for teaching development and *either* a salary loading of \$2500 for 3 years *or* \$2500 for 3 years for teaching leadership and development activities. For a team, the Award provides access to \$1000 for teaching development and \$2500 for 3 years for teaching leadership and development activities.

2. Guidelines for the Faculty of Science *Learning and Teaching* Award

(a) Eligibility

This award is suitable for both academics and teams of academics in the Faculty of Science. It is expected that individual applicants or at least one member of a team will have significant responsibility for teaching design, delivery and evaluation such as a year, unit or laboratory coordination role. Those who have received a Faculty of Science, a VC or an OLT Excellence in Teaching Award in the past two years are ineligible.

(b) Selection Criteria

Applications will be assessed on the basis of demonstrated and sustained outcomes for the criteria described below and a brief proposal for professional development over the course of the Award. The criteria are deliberately aligned with those used for assessing applications for the VC *Outstanding Teaching* Award and the OLT *Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning*.

The case should be based on evidence that supports the individual's or team's claims against all of the criteria. Applicants should concentrate on using this evidence to demonstrate *why* they teach in the way they do and *how* this leads to improved learning outcomes. In addressing each of the criteria below, the case should also explain how their practice is sustainable and shared with colleagues.

- 1. Approaches to teaching that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn**
This may include evidence of using approaches informed by a proven philosophy of student learning and approaches that are focused on students' learning needs and promote student-centred learning. The case should demonstrate respect and support for the development of students as individuals. This may include approaches that assist students who are at risk or from equity groups or which specifically cater for diversity.
- 2. Development of curricula and resources that reflect a command of the field**
This may include evidence of the ability to develop and share materials that are innovative, reflect a command of the field and engage students in research-enriched learning and teaching. It may include evidence of creating cogent alignment between learning and teaching processes, assessment strategies and learning objectives and outcomes. It may also include evidence of scholarly activities that have influenced and enhanced learning and teaching in higher education or in a particular discipline.
- 3. Approaches to assessment and feedback that foster independent learning**
This may include evidence of the successful implementation of well-integrated or authentic assessment tasks that promote student learning. It may include approaches to assessment and the timely-provision of feedback that foster independent learning. It may also include evidence for the proven adaptation of assessment methods to different contexts and diverse student needs.

The written case should use the application form to address each of these criteria supported by quantitative and qualitative evidence. This evidence should be used to demonstrate the effectiveness of the approaches used in improving student learning outcomes and/or the student experience. Evidence that demonstrates the sustainability and sharing of these approaches is particularly encouraged.

Evidence might include some or all of the following: reflection on and discussion of student evaluation data, comments from staff-student liaison committees, peer review and formal or informal feedback from students, supervisors, peers or colleagues. It is expected that evidence will be drawn from more than one source and show a sustained contribution. Student evaluation data can be derived from unit of study evaluations (USE) or teacher surveys, but a simple reproduction of unprocessed data is not suitable.

Informal feedback such as quotes from emails may be included but an indication of whether it was solicited or invited should be given. Students' names should not be included, but it is expected that comments from staff are labelled and the relationship of the staff member to the applicant is outlined. Original surveys or copies of emails should not be attached to the application, but should be kept by the applicant in case they are required.

A brief proposal for professional development should also be included. This should indicate how the Award will be used to develop individual or team teaching and leadership and to promote teaching excellence across the Faculty of Science and the University.

(c) Method of Application

The application form and closing date are available on the Faculty of Science website:

- http://sydney.edu.au/science/teaching/faculty_teaching_awards.shtml

The application form must be used to address each of the above criteria and to include a teaching and leadership development plan. The total word count should not exceed 2000 words with no more than 500 words used for the plan. The 3 criteria should be addressed roughly equally. Up to 10 pages of supplementary information addressing the points below may be included:

- Evidence of leadership or involvement in improving learning and teaching through, for example, year, unit or laboratory coordination, participation in professional associations, projects and committees related to learning and teaching
- Contributions to scholarship on learning and teaching through journals and conferences that are relevant to the case
- Scanned copies of formal teaching qualifications or previous teaching awards.

3. Support for Applicants

Applicants are strongly advised to seek feedback from suitable mentors and colleagues on their draft applications. Designated members of the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee will be available to assist with the preparation of cases, but the first point of contact should be the relevant School / Unit representative on this committee:

- <http://s14.sydney.edu.au/science/staff/committees/index.shtml>

The Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL) website has relevant advice on how to construct a case for VC and OLT teaching awards. The ITL also provides workshops on writing applications early in semester 1 each year. As the criteria for the Faculty of Science *Learning and Teaching Award* align with those for these awards, these workshops and the information on the website on using a range of evidence are highly recommended:

- <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/awards/>

For other information or advice, please contact the Associate Dean for Learning and Teaching:

- http://sydney.edu.au/science/about_us/people.shtml#associate_deans

4. Responsibilities of Learning and Teaching Award Winners

Each Award winner's name, academic affiliation and a brief synopsis of their teaching case will be placed on the Faculty of Science Learning and Teaching website.

Award winners may be contacted by other members of the academic staff in the Faculty in relation to the preparation of an application, or other matters related to their teaching. Hard copies of successful applications will be retained and may be used as exemplars to support applicants in future years. Award winners are expected to present an overview of their teaching or of a teaching intervention at a Faculty of Science Teaching Tips Seminar, to initiate teaching collaborations across the Faculty, and to contribute actively to the development of teaching excellence in the Faculty and the University.

5. Selection Panel

The applications will be considered by a panel chaired by the Associate Dean for Learning and Teaching, a Pro-Dean, a member of the Learning and Teaching Committee, a previous winner of a Faculty or VC teaching award and a representative from another Faculty's Learning and Teaching Committee or from the Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL). The panel will assess applications according to the *quality and strength of the case for excellence made against each of the criteria and the proposal for professional development* and will make recommendations to the Dean.