

## Vice-Chancellor's Staff Excellence Awards

### 2025 Vice-Chancellor's Award for Programs that Enhance Learning

Up to 2 of \$7000 each – Nominations open 28 April due by 4:00pm, Friday 27 June, 2025

### Guidelines for nomination

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Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning recognise programs and services that make an outstanding contribution to the quality of student learning and the quality of the student experience at ECU. The programs and services that receive Program Awards must have demonstrated their effectiveness through rigorous evaluation and set benchmarks for similar activities in other institutions.

#### Staff Eligibility

The Vice-Chancellor's Learning and Teaching Awards are intended to encourage, recognise and reward excellence and achievement in all forms of teaching and/or in innovations, initiatives and services that contribute in diverse ways to student learning. They are available to individuals and teams of academic and/or professional ongoing, contract or sessional staff. Nominees must be employed at ECU at the time of their nomination and receipt of the Vice-Chancellor's Award. The application must pertain to work and impact that has been sustained at ECU for no less than three years (two years for early career). All award winners will demonstrate ECU's values of Integrity; Respect; Rational Inquiry; Personal Excellence; and Courage.

Nominees may only apply for one Award in any one year, with the exception that they may submit one individual application and one team application. Applicants who have received an award in the previous three years are ineligible to apply for the same award category but can apply for a different award category. Unsuccessful nominees are eligible to re-apply.

Please note that usually staff applying for a Teaching Excellence Award will have previously been awarded another form of VC Teaching Award (e.g. sessional; citation; program).

#### Expectations of Award Recipients

Please note, as a condition of entry all applicants may be requested by the Director, Centre for Learning and Teaching (or nominee), or Director, People and Culture (or nominee) to showcase their application on the university website as an ECU learning and teaching exemplar. Additionally, if successful, applicants may be asked to participate in the delivery of professional development activities aimed at the promotion and encouragement of quality learning and teaching practices at ECU.

#### Categories

Nominees must select the relevant program category below. The Program Award categories are:

1. Student experience that supports diversity and inclusive practices.
2. Collaborative educational partnerships in learning and teaching.
3. Curriculum transformation and innovative pedagogy.
4. Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programs that value and enhance student employability.

## Assessment Criteria

All nominations will be assessed on the evidence provided in response to the following **four criteria**, which will be given equal consideration by the assessors:

1. **Positively impacted on student learning, student engagement or the overall student experience for a period of no less than three years, not including time taken for development or trial of any activity.**
  - Extent to which the program positively impacted on student learning, student engagement or the overall student experience for a period of no less than three years.
  - Extent to which the program targets identified needs and directly or indirectly enhances student learning, student engagement and/or the overall student experience of higher education.
  - Extent to which the program promotes and supports equity and inclusiveness by improving access, participation and outcomes for diverse student groups.
2. **Gained recognition from colleagues, the institution, and/or the broader community.**
  - Extent to which the program gained recognition from colleagues, the institution, and/or the broader community.
  - Extent to which the program has led to widespread benefits for students, staff, the institution, and/or other institutions, consistent with the purpose of the program.
3. **Shown creativity, imagination and/or innovation, irrespective of whether the approach involves traditional learning environments or technology- based developments.**
  - Extent to which the program shows creativity, imagination or innovation.
  - Extent to which the program enhances traditional or technology-based learning environments.
4. **Drawn on the scholarly literature on teaching and learning to inform the development of initiatives, programs and/or practice.**
  - Extent to which the program drawn on the scholarly literature on teaching and learning to inform the development of initiatives, programs and/or practice.
  - Extent to which the program has clear objectives and systematic approaches to coordination, implementation and evaluation.

## Evidencing your contribution

The application needs to be strongly supported by a diverse range of evidence. It is recommended that the qualitative and quantitative data are from an extensive range of formal and informal sources, including nominee's self-reflection, student learning, student experience and evidence of institutional, peer and stakeholders' interactions.

- Student voices, through examples and quotations, can convey a cogent account of their experiences.
- Each criterion is weighted evenly.

## Nomination guide and structure

Nominations for Awards for Excellence in Teaching should comprise of the following:

**A. Statement of claims** against the assessment criteria which describes the program activities and achievements and must address all four assessment criteria, providing evidence to support claims. This section is **limited to ten A4 pages comprising** all the following elements presented in order:

- **Proposed Synopsis** of up to 200 words, which includes a description of the program and its contribution to student learning. Please note that hyphenated words will be counted as one word. The concise Synopsis description must be written in the third person
- avoid jargon and use plain English
- inform the broadest possible audience about the program.

Please note that hyphenated words will be counted as one word.

- **Overview** of the program and its context;
- **Statement** addressing **all four assessment criteria** providing supporting evidence including impact on student learning. Please include criterion headings and present in order.; and
- **Reference list:** nominees should use their preferred recognised reference style throughout and include a reference list within the ten pages. Links to reference lists online will not be reviewed by assessors.

**B. Two letters of reference** of no more than **one A4 page each** on official organisation letterhead. Referees should be able to comment on the program's contribution to student learning against the assessment criteria. One of the references should be the Executive Dean of the nominee's school or administrative unit or higher level. References should apply to the program, not individual team members.

**C. Supporting materials**, may comprise **up to two** of the following:

- A three-minute video (which could include footage of team members talking about the program, its vision and interviews with students) – include web address

- Website (URL) - include web address
- 10 pages of supporting materials in PDF format

**D. Statement of contribution (for team nominations).** Team nominations must include one **A4 page** which explains the role and indicates the percentage contribution of team members (limited to team members with 10 per cent or higher), in addition to the team information included within the nomination form.

## Formatting requirements

Please ensure that all documents are A4 page size, fonts are 11-point Arial or Calibri, margins are at least 2cm all around, there is clear definition between paragraphs, and page numbers and section headings are included. The documents should be combined and saved in one single PDF document.

## Submitting a nomination

The nomination should be submitted via the **online nomination form** at [www.ecu.edu.au/staff-awards](http://www.ecu.edu.au/staff-awards), by the due date with the nomination details at A-D above uploaded to the online form in **one (1) single pdf attachment**.

Line Manager and School Executive Dean endorsement will be requested by People and Culture after submission.

## Selection panel

The composition of the panel may be reviewed from time-to-time to ensure it remains relevant and contemporary, and will normally include:

- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) or their nominee as Chair
- Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning) or their nominees
- Manager, Teaching Quality, or their nominee
- Previous winners or assessors at the institutional or national level
- External Reviewer/s, including institutional or national assessors from a different university award winners from a different university, etc.
- A non-voting Executive Officer

Additional panel members may also be drawn from:

- a representative from the Academic Staff Promotions Committee; and/or
- a staff member from People and Culture.

The Selection Panel has the authority to seek further evidence from such persons as it deems necessary to evaluate the nominations.

The Selection Panel reserves the right not to recommend an award if, in its assessment, there is no nomination of sufficient merit.

## Selection Process

The Learning and Teaching Awards selection process is designed to fulfil three key functions:

1. facilitate decisions that are fair, valid, reliable, and transparent;
2. provide quality feedback to all applicants, enabling them to improve future applications; and
3. maximise the number of people who may contribute as assessors and thereby have the opportunity to learn about the process themselves.

The Vice-Chancellor will review the recommendations from the Awards Selection Committee and decide upon the winners. The Vice-Chancellor's decision will be final.

If the selection committee does not believe the criteria has been met to recommend a category winner, they may recommend that no Award be made.

The winners will be formally advised of the outcome. A copy of the certificate will be filed in the respective personal files.

## Method of Payment

Nominated staff must choose a preferred option for payment as part of their nomination prior to the event. An email will be sent prior to the event in November to request the preferred option for payment:

- Cash lump sum payment (paid through the payroll system and subject to income tax at the employee's marginal tax rate) **default option if no choice is made**; or
- Payment credited directly to your UniSuper Superannuation Account as a pre-tax contribution. If nominees select this option they may wish to seek personal financial advice as there are caps on the amount you can contribute to your super each financial year that, if exceeded, may result in additional tax implication; or
- Nominated ECU project /research/school account to be paid into an ECU account of choice. The prize monies must be used for work related expenditure and cannot be redistributed among team members for personal use.
  - Nominees are advised to consult their respective Finance Manager (for School Staff) or Business Manager (for Service Centre Staff) before electing to nominate an ECU account. There are limitations for time period in which prize monies are to be spent and this will vary from area to area. These funds will be allocated to your school/centre in January of the following year and must be used by the end of that year.
  - Work related expenditure does not normally attract Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT). However, if FBT does apply to the expenditure, it will form part of the award amount so the team members would only be eligible to spend the net-of-FBT amount. Nominees are advised to consult their respective Business Manager or School Finance Team if unsure.

For team-based nominations, prize monies will be divided between team members equally unless specified at time of nomination to the People and Culture Executive Officer.

## Presentation of Awards

The Vice-Chancellor will host an event that provides formal and public recognition of the respective achievements and excellence of our staff, at which the Vice-Chancellor's Staff Awards will be presented.

Winners may be asked to present at various public events. Event photography may be utilised to promote the awards.