

Awards Programme 2015 – Assessment Report

A total of 87 nominations for Australian Awards for University Teaching were received in 2015. Of the nominations received, 57 were for Awards for Teaching Excellence and 30 were for Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning. A summary of the nominations received and their results is at Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of nominations and results for 2015

	Nominating institutions	Successful institutions	Nominations recommended by expert panel	Nominations approved by the Minister
2015 Awards for Teaching Excellence	21	8	14	14
2015 Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning	18	7	8	8

The Minister for Education and Training approved 14 Awards for Teaching Excellence and 8 Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning. A list of 2015 award recipients is at Appendix A.

All nominations were assessed by at least two assessors, using a scale of 1-5 (where 5 is the highest rating). Twenty-three assessors from 19 eligible institutions were recruited to complete the assessment.

Nominations for **Awards for Teaching Excellence** were assessed on the evidence provided that addressed the four criteria listed below, each of which was accorded equal consideration.

1. 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
4. Innovation, leadership or scholarship that has influenced and enhanced learning and teaching and/or the student experience.

When reviewing nominations against the criteria, assessors and the panels considered the:

1. extent to which the claims for excellence are supported by formal and informal evaluation
2. extent of creativity, imagination or innovation
3. information contained in student data or institutional student surveys, references, and selected teaching materials.

Assessors also considered the contribution to Indigenous education made by nominations for the Neville Bonner Award for Indigenous Education and in the Early Career categories. The career stage of each nominee was considered when assessing criterion four.

Nominations for **Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning** were assessed on evidence provided that addressed the following four criteria, each of which was accorded equal consideration:

1. distinctiveness, coherence and clarity of purpose
2. influence on student learning and the student experience
3. breadth of impact
4. extent to which the programme addressed equity and diversity.

When reviewing nominations against the criteria, assessors and the panels considered:

1. evidence of the effectiveness of the programme in formal and informal evaluation
2. the degree of creativity, imagination or innovation
3. evidence of sustained effectiveness of the programme for no less than 3 years.

General comments on nominations

Assessors were invited to complete a survey indicating their views on the quality of the nominations. The overall quality of the nominations submitted in 2015 was rated good or average. A majority of the assessors agreed that nominees understood and met the selection criteria in their nominations. Some criteria around equity and diversity, evaluation and assessment are not well understood and articulated. The criteria are broadly defined and the nominees should apply their own interpretation to the criteria to build their case for an award at the national level.

The assessors commented on the excessive use of external links. Some nominations included links to videos and websites with overwhelming amounts of content. To be fair to other nominees, assessors generally only spend around 10 minutes in reviewing any materials embedded in the external links in a nomination. Nominees should carefully choose the materials which add value to their claims and demonstrate how their practices have made differences in learning and teaching.

The assessors also pointed out that data should be built into the narrative of the written statements. Data only supports claims effectively when it is benchmarked and demonstrates the difference the nominee has made when compared to the norm.

Nominations could be improved by:

Evidence

- providing a broader range of evidence not only within the nominations but also in the supporting documentation
- validating the data by using a variety of sources, which might include qualitative, quantitative, internal and external sources
- incorporating data and figures within the written statement for full impact; data should not be placed in isolation
- benchmarking data provided by using medium, mode, response rate etc
- connecting data with a point of reference show its impact
- providing an equal amount of evidence in each criterion as the criteria are uniformly weighted
- stimulating examples could be provided as evidence to support the claims
- treating video as supplementary material that helps the reviewers to understand the context and rationale of the teaching methodology, or to share the passion and experience of teaching of the nominees
- providing video footage that adds value and supports the claims made, rather than repeating what is stated in the nomination
- carefully choosing the external links to be included in a nomination so they can precisely support the claims.

External review and quality

- receiving more institutional recognition and support, particularly support by referees to show impacts beyond own institutions and faculties
- including reviews or statements from peers, critical friends or colleagues outside the home institutions
- correlating the criterion with the rest of the nomination to demonstrate impact and better link the evidence
- limiting the overview to key points outlining the purpose of the award nomination
- including engagement with Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL).

Impact

- clarifying the notion of sustainability, as some institutions display extensive experience but not enough impact and vice versa
- providing a wide-range of evidence of how the teaching activities have impacted the progression of average students
- evaluating student engagement or including student perspective in the nomination.

Appendix A

2015 Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning

Educational Partnerships and Collaborations with Other Organisations

- National Exceptional Teachers for Disadvantaged Schools Program, Queensland University of Technology

Innovation in Curricula, Learning and Teaching

- Academic Operations Sustainability Integration Program, University of Tasmania
- National Health Education and Training in Simulation, Monash University
- Peer Assisted Learning Program, The University of Sydney

Postgraduate Education

- Teaching Advantage Program, Queensland University of Technology

Student Experiences and Services Supporting Student Learning, Development and Growth in Higher Education

- Increasing Global Mindedness through International Service-learning: Kenya Immersion Project, The University of Notre Dame Australia
- New England Award, University of New England

Widening Participation

- Aspire UWA, The University of Western Australia

2015 Awards for Teaching Excellence

Biological Sciences, Health and Related Studies

- Dr Craig Engstrom, The University of Queensland
- Dr Mike Weston, Deakin University

Early Career

- Dr Peter Denney, Griffith University
- Dr Catherine J. Frieman, The Australian National University
- Dr Elizabeth New, The University of Sydney

Humanities and the Arts

- Dr Caryl Bosman, Griffith University
- Mr Simon McIntyre, The University of New South Wales
- Associate Professor Halim Rane, Griffith University
- Mr Tim White, Edith Cowan University

Law, Economics, Business and Related Studies

- Associate Professor Kevin Tant, Monash University

Neville Bonner Award for Indigenous Education

- Dr Asmi Wood, The Australian National University

Physical Sciences and Related Studies

- Associate Professor Joe Hope, The Australian National University
- Mr Michael Jennings, The University of Queensland

Social Sciences

- Dr Gery Karantzas, Deakin University