

Awards for Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Supervision Policy

Fact box

- **Policy owner:** Chair, Learning & Teaching Committee
- **Policy category:** Academic: Learning and Teaching
- **Policy status:** Approved
- **Approval body:** Academic Board
- **Endorsement body:** Learning & Teaching Committee
- **Last amended:** 28th Feb. 2024
- **Relevant HESF:**

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to recognise and encourage excellence in teaching at vocational and higher education levels, as well as excellence in Higher Degree Research (HDR) supervision. This includes both English and Languages Other Than English (LOTE) delivery. These awards acknowledge the central position of teaching and research supervision in the Alphacrucis University College (AC) academic community.

Scope

All students, HDR candidates and faculty

Policy

AC is committed to excellence in learning, teaching and HDR supervision across all courses of study, and all modes of delivery. These awards aim to recognise and reward learning support personnel, and teaching and HDR supervision faculty who demonstrate creativity, innovation and excellence in these areas. The awards reflect the Australian Awards for University Teaching that recognises quality teaching practices and outstanding contributions to student learning. Recipients further contribute to systemic change in learning and teaching through ongoing dissemination of knowledge and practice.

CATEGORIES OF AWARDS

AC offers awards in five categories:

1. Award for HDR Supervision Excellence

This HDR Supervision Excellence Award celebrates AC's most outstanding HDR principal supervisors. It gives recognition to principal supervisors and/or supervisory teams renowned for the excellence of their HDR supervision, who have outstanding skills in mentoring candidates, with positive outcomes regarding the original research produced by candidates and who have made a broad and deep contribution to enhancing the quality of the HDR courses.

2. Award for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning

The award for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning recognises and rewards the diverse contributions made by individuals and teams to the quality of student learning at AC. It is awarded to those who have made a significant contribution to the quality of student learning, both direct and indirect, in a specific area of responsibility over a sustained period, whether they are academic staff, general staff, or sessional staff of AC.

3. Award for Teaching with Excellence

The Award for Teaching with Excellence celebrates AC's most outstanding teachers. This award gives recognition to teachers (individuals and teams) renowned for the excellence of their teaching, who have outstanding pedagogical presentation skills and who have made a broad and deep contribution to enhancing the quality of learning and teaching.

Each year, one award may be given to a Vocational Education and Training (VET) trainer and up to two awards may be given to a Higher Education faculty member.

4. Award for Initiatives that Enhance Learning and Teaching

The Learning and Teaching Committee will occasionally nominate potential recipients for the Award for Initiatives that Enhance Learning, which recognises learning and teaching support programs, services, alliances, or innovations that make an outstanding contribution to the quality of student learning and the quality of the student experience of higher education at AC.

5. Career Achievement Award

AC's President will occasionally bestow a Career Achievement Award upon one or more individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to Learning, Teaching and Supervision at AC. This award is given to individuals whose career achievements in Learning, Teaching and Supervision in Christian education have had a major influence and left an enduring legacy.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for one of AC's Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Supervision Awards, nominees must satisfy all the following criteria:

- permanent administrative staff, or either sessional or permanent faculty, or HDR supervisor on contract;
- currently employed on a continuing or fixed-term appointment, or had at least two semester contracts at AC; and
- have completed a minimum of one (1) years' service to AC.

All team nominees must satisfy the criteria to receive one of the AC Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Supervision awards.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Nominations are to be based on outstanding achievement/performance over a period of at least one year for the individual or team who meet the eligibility criteria.

Criteria for the HDR Supervision awards include:

- mentoring candidates to a timely completion;
- supporting the development of candidates' research skills;
- encouraging innovation and engagement at AC, national and internationally;
- energy, passion and commitment to supervision, evident over time;
- timely and constructive feedback provided;

- continuing support to final publication of the research.

For the Award for Initiatives that Enhance Learning, the Selection and Shortlisting Sub-Committee will consider to what degree the nominee's initiatives have created or facilitated one or more of the following:

- widening participation;
- educational partnerships and collaborations with other organisations;
- innovation and flexibility in curricula, learning and teaching;
- student experiences and services supporting learning, development and growth in higher education;
- global citizenship and internationalisation.

For the Award for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning, the Selection and Shortlisting Sub-Committee will consider each nominee's alignment to the following aspects of the AC Learning and Teaching Framework, as well as the student support element of the Student Services and Support Framework.:

- Engaged Learning: effective application of active and cooperative learning approaches, technology and other resources to facilitate and enhance learning;
- Engaged Curriculum: design, development and review of relevant, innovative, aligned curricula at the subject/unit and course level;
- Student Support: Students are equipped by providing the infrastructure and support required to succeed in studies.

In addition to those aspects listed above, for the Award for Teaching with Excellence, the Selection and Shortlisting Sub-Committee will consider each nominee's alignment to:

- Engaged Teaching: evidence-based teaching techniques and strategies that support a high level of quality engagement.
- Engaged curriculum: design, development and review of relevant, innovative, aligned curricula and resources, including approaches to assessment and feedback, at the subject/unit and course level, that enhance student learning;
- Student Support: Students are equipped by providing the infrastructure and support required to develop agency and succeed in studies.

EXPECTATIONS OF AWARD RECIPIENTS

Award recipients are normally expected to disseminate their teaching or HDR supervision philosophies and/or practices. For example, they may be invited to participate in professional development seminars or presentations or produce high quality research publications. The expectation is that award recipients disseminate their practices usually within 12 months of receiving their award.

They may also be encouraged to apply for an Australian Awards for University Teaching if relevant.

Responsible for implementation

Chair, Learning & Teaching Committee

Key stakeholders

All faculty and professional staff working in a learning/student support capacity

Procedures

Awards for Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Supervision Procedure

NOMINATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The Career Achievement Award is given at the discretion of the President. The Learning and Teaching Committee, at its discretion, nominate potential recipients of the Award for Initiatives that Enhance Learning and Teaching. The following procedure applies to the nomination and selection of the remaining three categories of awards.

1. Student, HDR Candidate and Staff Nominations

Annually, the Learning and Teaching Committee will appoint an administrator to oversee the nomination procedure. The Administrator will call for invitations from students, HDR candidates and staff to nominate a staff or faculty member, or an HDR supervisor for one of the awards.

2. Accepting a Nomination

The administrator, on behalf of the Selection and Shortlisting Sub-Committee, will inform the nominees that they have been nominated. Nominees for these awards are given the opportunity to accept or refuse their nomination. The names of those nominated and who have accepted their nomination are announced to AC, along with a call for peer endorsements.

Student Endorsement

Student endorsements are vital for Sub-Committee considerations. Eligible nominees are required to provide a written student endorsement of their nomination.

Peer Endorsement

Peer endorsements are vital for Sub-Committee considerations. Eligible nominees are required to provide a written peer endorsement of their nomination. 'Peers' should include the nominee's upline manager, and may also include direct reports or colleagues.

Peer endorsements are collected through the peer endorsement form.

Student and HDR Candidate Feedback and Learning

Student and HDR candidate evaluations of a nominee's teaching or supervision is crucial to attest to the success of the nominee's teaching or supervision strategies. The Administrator may collect documentary evidence from up to four subjects over four semesters, that may include:

- student or candidate evaluations, interviews, focus groups;
- informal or formal student feedback, including unsolicited student or candidate feedback;
- student or candidate logs and journals;

- online feedback;
- students' or candidates' self-reported knowledge/skills gained;
- rates of attrition, failure, progression to honours/postgraduate;
- grade distribution;
- evaluation of generic skills/outcomes/attributes;
- student or candidate work - assessments, theses, projects;
- employer/workplace feedback approaches to study questionnaire, etc.

3. Appointment of Selection and Shortlisting Sub-Committee

Annually, Learning and Teaching Committee appoint a Selection and Shortlisting Sub-Committee to assess the nominations and recommend the shortlisted nominees and award recipients for each of the awards. The Sub-Committee exercises discretion in its assessment of the strength of the qualitative and quantitative evidence gathered. The Learning and Teaching Committee ultimately selects the shortlisted nominees and award recipients.

The Sub-Committee membership should consist of a minimum of four members, and display equity, especially regarding gender and campus representation. Further, where appropriate, representation from LOTE courses should be included on the sub-committee.

4. Award Selection and Shortlisting

In addition to the criteria for selection as listed for each award in this policy, the Sub-Committee is to assess diversity and equity factors.

Apart from exceptional circumstances, the same person/team will not be awarded the same award for more than two years in a row.

AWARD VALUE

The Award for Programs that Enhance Learning, the Award for Teaching Excellence, and the Award for HDR Supervision Excellence are valued at \$500 each (individual) and \$1000 each (team).

The financial value of the awards is accessed from the Learning and Teaching Budget to be used in accordance with the wishes of the recipient(s) to enhance their professional development, research and/or work. If equipment is purchased with the award money, it may be used exclusively by the staff member or team for the duration of their employment but remains the property of AC. An award may not be taken as cash.

ANNOUNCEMENT AND PRESENTATIONS OF AWARDS

The formal announcement and presentation of the winners of an AC Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Supervision Awards occurs in the annual Graduation Ceremony or similar event. Up to three (3) shortlisted nominees for each of the awards are informed of the outcome. Any shortlisted nominees are recognised during the Graduation Ceremony or similar event.
