

UUSU Learning & Teaching Awards – How to Write a Nomination

Who deserves an Award?

The UUSU Learning & Teaching Awards recognise and celebrate outstanding achievements by Ulster University staff. There are always fewer awards than there are people who deserve them, and because of this you should think carefully about your nomination.

Our panel will be looking for people:

- who have improved the lives of Ulster students and changed things in a practical way;
- whose work has been innovative and creative to increase student engagement and achievements.

How do I write a nomination?

The most important thing is to provide evidence of what they've done and how they've made things better for others.

Your nomination form doesn't need to be a work of art - there isn't a right way or a wrong way to write a nomination and it doesn't need to be particularly formal. There's no "right length". Every nomination is different. But your nomination must tell the story of what your candidate has done.

Give examples of how they have demonstrated outstanding quality. Show how your candidate has:

- contributed in a distinctive way to improving the university experience for students – either through innovative and inspirational teaching, or through providing outstanding support for any other aspect of student life;
- devoted themselves to their role and to improve student life at Ulster;
- showed creativity in the delivery of their role.

A good nomination should also describe as vividly and precisely as possible the difference their contribution has made. Try to answer the following questions:

- what makes your candidate different from others doing the same thing?
- if they have introduced something new: how were things before? What is different now and how has that improved the student experience?

Give details to support these claims. Give practical examples of how this person has achieved what they have.

As long as they are accurate, do not be afraid of using superlatives in citations.

These Awards exist specifically to recognise superlative achievement. **But remember that superlatives without an explanation are just hot air.** Take care always to support any assertions with hard evidence. Do not just say that an achievement has had a widespread effect: describe what that effect has been and show why it has been important.

For example, look at this quote from a winning nomination in 2014:

'This is not a lecturer who will simply make the problem go away this is someone who will work it through with you and better still encourage skills of working it out for yourself, pointing out your strengths along the way.'

It is achievements, and their impact on students, that convinces the Awards panel to select your nominee.

How do I find the right words?

Effective nominations often include nouns such as:

- | | | |
|---|--------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> determination | recognition | zeal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> commitment | innovation | performance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> respect | creativity | ambassador |
| <input type="checkbox"/> drive | selflessness | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sustainability | impact | |

adjectives such as:

- | | | |
|--|-------------|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> trusted | peerless | enthusiastic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> unstinting | persuasive | fair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> conscientious | passionate | tenacious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> wise | exemplary | sympathetic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> inspirational | resourceful | admired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> unflustered | supportive | vibrant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dogged | articulate | diligent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dedicated | | |

and phrases such as:

- making a difference
- going the extra mile
- role model
- overcoming obstacles
- head and shoulders above the rest

What shouldn't I do?

Remember that the judging committee can only make their decisions based on the merits of the information provided to them. A good nomination is the foundation for that. Only the strongest nominations will result in an honour.

To write a good citation, there must be enough information in the nomination form to make a good case. So your nomination shouldn't be just a statement of how great you think they are, it must have examples of how the person is carrying out duties or delivering an experience that is over and above their job description.

Instead, your citation should describe what is special about your candidate's achievements and show memorably and persuasively how and where they have made a difference.

Where do I start?

There are eight categories for you to choose from to nominate your chosen person.

Once you have considered the most appropriate category, submit your nomination using our online form. The question to ask yourself is 'why does this person/team deserve to win this award' – remember to use practical examples to illustrate your claims. We also ask for you to add three words which you think describe the person/team.

The Categories are:

- Ulster Team of the Year
- Excellence in Student Representation
- Excellence in Student Support
- Excellence in Teaching: Faculty Award (to encapsulate a range of areas, will ask for evidence of innovative teaching methods, as well as assessment/feedback and organisation/management of course)
- Excellence in Teaching: Postgraduate Teacher/Demonstrator
- Excellence in Research Supervision
- Inspirational Teacher of the Year

Now that you've decided on your nominee, and the category they will be in – start your nomination!

<http://uusu.org/student-awards/learning-teaching-awards>