1 PURPOSE

1.1 The Vice-Chancellor’s Awards for Outstanding Contributions to Learning and Teaching (Tier 2) program (hereafter called ‘Tier 2 award/s’) have been established to reward and encourage outstanding practice that facilitates improved student learning outcomes and/or the student experience. A successful Tier 2 award application may provide the recipient with evidence as part of a promotion application at CQUniversity.

1.2 This procedure sets out the processes and requirements regarding Tier 2 award applications, the application categories and the assessment criteria applied in recommending Tier 2 award recipients, Tier 2 award certification and funding, and conditions of funding expenditure.

1.3 This procedure aligns with the Australian Awards for University Teaching (Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning). Tier 2 Awards give eligible applicants an opportunity for national and international recognition by providing a platform from which to develop a national award application.

2 SCOPE

2.1 Any CQUniversity employee (academics, teachers, tutors, or professional staff) may apply for a Tier 2 award in accordance with this procedure.

2.2 Institutional associates (i.e. CQUniversity adjunct or emeritus staff) or other individuals who are not CQUniversity employees, may apply as part of a team in accordance with this procedure.
3 PROCEDURE

Eligibility to apply

3.1 Individuals or teams may apply. Individual applicants, or the team leader, must be a CQUniversity employee, whose practice (or that of the team) can be demonstrated to have measurably improved student learning outcomes and/or the student experience at CQUniversity and the outstanding nature of which has been recognised, more broadly, across the higher education sector.

3.2 The application must demonstrate that the practice has been sustained for a period of no less than three years (two years for early-career academics with up to five years of accumulated experience). Applicants may contact Learning and Teaching Services by email to ltgrants-awards@cqu.edu.au, to confirm eligibility.

3.3 The only instance in which an individual award applicant may lodge more than one application in any year, is if they are a named team member, but not the team leader, in the concurrent application. The content of the individual application (claims and evidence) must be substantially different from the team’s application. The individual application must be accompanied by a Statement of Difference (see documentation requirements below).

3.4 Teams may comprise a maximum of 10 members. Team member contributions are required to be at least 10 per cent with regard to the outstanding practice being demonstrated in the application narrative. Teams may include a maximum of two members not employed by CQUniversity, provided the majority of the team’s members are CQUniversity employees.

3.5 An individual applicant, or team leader, may reapply in the fifth year after receiving a Tier 2 award, provided the subsequent application seeks recognition for a contribution that is substantially different from that previously awarded. The subsequent application must address a different category. For example, a recipient of a Tier 2 award in 2018 would not be eligible to reapply until 2023, unless the recipient had been a member of a recognised team, but not the team leader.

3.6 Individual members of a team (except the team leader) may apply for a Tier 2 award in any year after receiving a Tier 2 team award. The new application must be accompanied by a Statement of Difference.

3.7 Tier 2 award recipients will be invited to develop an application for the Australian Awards for University Teaching (AAUT) Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning.

3.8 Individuals or team leaders who are awarded an (AAUT) Citation may reapply for a Tier 2 award in the fourth year after receiving the AAUT, provided the subsequent application seeks recognition for a contribution that is substantially different from the previously awarded application. The subsequent application must address a different category. For example, an individual recipient (or the team leader of a recognised team) of an AAUT Citation in 2018 would not be eligible to apply for a Tier 2 award until 2022. The new application must be accompanied by a Statement of Difference.

3.9 Individual members of a team (except the team leader) who are awarded an AAUT Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning are eligible to reapply for a Tier 2 award in any round after receiving an AAUT team award, provided the subsequent application seeks recognition for a contribution that is substantially different from the previously awarded application. The new application must be accompanied by a Statement of Difference.

3.10 Unsuccessful applicants are eligible to reapply in the next annual round of Tier 2 awards.

Support for applicants

3.11 Learning and Teaching Services offers a range of development and support opportunities for applicants. These include resources to assist in developing applications, structured workshops and mentoring. Support is also offered in the form of the reviewers’ feedback to applicants.

3.12 A list of award mentors who have experience with the process is available on the Learning and Teaching StaffNet website. Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to seek an award mentor’s assistance as early in the program as possible.
How to apply

3.13 Learning and Teaching Services calls for an expression of interest (EOI) from prospective Tier 2 award applicants at least six months before the final lodgement date. Employees who want to express interest or recommend peers to participate in the Tier 2 award program before an EOI is called may do so by contacting the Learning and Teaching Grants and Awards Officer by email to ltgrants-awards@cqu.edu.au.

3.14 If a peer recommendation is received, Learning and Teaching Services will notify the recommended individual or team leader who will then decide if they want to develop an application.

3.15 Eligible individuals or teams are required to follow the mandatory three-step process below:

1) lodge an EOI
2) prepare and lodge two preliminary draft Tier 2 award applications by the specified due dates
3) prepare and lodge a final application by the specified due date.

Appendix 1 provides an overview of the Tier 2 awards program, including key steps and an indicative timeline.

Step 1: Lodging an EOI

3.16 Individuals or teams intending to apply for a Tier 2 award must lodge an EOI by emailing Learning and Teaching Services, ltgrants-awards@cqu.edu.au, by the due date specified for EOIs.

3.17 The EOI email must include the prospective applicant’s name and contact details.

3.18 After receiving EOI emails, Learning and Teaching Services will contact prospective applicants to inform them of the structured support and mentorship available to assist in developing their application, along with mandatory milestones of the program.

Step 2: Preparing and lodging preliminary draft Tier 2 award applications

3.19 Applicants must lodge each high quality draft application by email, no later than the due dates for preliminary drafts, to ltgrants-awards@cqu.edu.au. The draft applications must meet the documentation requirements, including the specified maximum page limits.

3.20 Applicants will be advised of the due dates for lodging preliminary draft applications during the Tier 2 awards program.

3.21 The preliminary draft applications will be reviewed and feedback will be provided to applicants to assist in developing a competitive final application.

Step 3: Completing and lodging a final application

3.22 Prospective applicants who do not lodge a preliminary draft by the specified due date will not be eligible to lodge a final application.

3.23 Eligible applicants must lodge a final application by email no later than the specified due date to ltgrants-awards@cqu.edu.au. The final application must meet documentation requirements, including all components and strict adherence to formatting and page limit requirements.

3.24 Prospective applicants will be advised of the due date for lodging final applications during the Tier 2 awards program.

Documentation requirements

3.25 Preliminary draft and final applications must include the following:

a) A completed Vice-Chancellor’s Awards for Learning and Teaching Application Coversheet. This form is available on Learning and Teaching StaffNet website. At the preliminary draft stage, an unsigned Application Coversheet is acceptable.

b) An application narrative addressing one of the application categories.
c) Two letters of support that focus on the application narrative and support the claims made therein. One of the letters must be from the applicant’s Dean of School (or equivalent for non-School staff), and the other from anyone able to comment on the applicant’s practice in relation to the application, preferably written by a senior peer to add weight to the statements of support. Letters of support for team applications must relate to the team and should be signed by the team leader’s Dean of School (or equivalent for non-School staff). During the preliminary draft stage, MS Word draft letters of support are preferred.

d) A statement of difference between previous and current applications (required for all previous Tier 2 award recipients who are reapplying), or between concurrent applications (required for individuals or members of a team who are lodging concurrent applications). Individuals or team members who have previously received a Tier 2 award are required to include a summary of the differences between their previous and current applications. Individuals that are also part of a team in the same round are required to include a summary of the differences between their individual application and that of the team.

e) A statement of contribution (only required for team applications) that explains each team member’s contribution and indicative percentage estimate of their contribution, i.e. minimum 10 per cent per team member.

f) A high-quality, formal digital photograph for publication purposes.

3.26 The formatting requirements for the application are as follows:

a) Font size/style: 11pt Calibri or Arial only (narrow and serif font styles are not acceptable)

b) Page margin width: minimum 2cm

c) Format: MS Word is required for preliminary drafts (Adobe PDF is acceptable for the final application)

d) Page limits (A4):
   - application narrative including reference list/footnotes (maximum four pages)
   - two letters of support, on letterhead (maximum one page each)
   - statement of difference (maximum one page)
   - statement of contribution (approximately a quarter page per team member).

e) Digital photograph:
   - full colour, head and shoulders only, with plain white background (taken within the past 12 months)
   - image resolution of 300 dpi (approximately 10cm by 10cm and at least 1 MB)
   - JPEG file format

Application narrative

3.27 The application narrative is the application’s core element and must be written from a first person point of view. The narrative must make the case for Tier 2 award recognition by responding to the chosen application category in ways that explain, illustrate, and substantiate the positive impact that the applicant’s practice has had on student learning, student engagement and/or enhancing the student experience at CQUniversity.

3.28 The application narrative must be presented as a continuous, structured narrative. The narrative must be logical, clear and capable of being understood by non-specialists. If specialised terminology is required, a clear explanation must be provided on the first use of the term. Acronyms must be kept to a minimum and written in full initially. Bullet points should not be used.

3.29 The application narrative should give the reader a clear sense of what the applicant does, how they do it, why they took that approach and the resulting positive impact on student learning. Throughout the narrative a theoretical underpinning should be evident along with documented evidence in the narrative to illustrate claims of impact. Resources describing sources of evidence and to assist with developing the application narrative are available on the Learning and Teaching StaffNet website.

3.30 The application narrative must be written as a stand-alone document, able to be understood without reference to external material, and must be structured as follows:

a) 25-word outstanding contribution summary, as a heading on page 1, describing the focus of the application. This summarises the key features of the contribution for which the applicant seeks
recognition and which are described and evidenced in the narrative. The summary begins with “For…”. Examples are available on the Learning and Teaching StaffNet website.

b) **Overview** of the particular contribution that locates it within the applicant’s specific context. This may include information about the student cohort, the University context, or sector situation with regard to the applicant’s practice. (Recommended length up to one page)

c) **Application Category as a heading.** This section is the main body of the narrative. This section must maintain the focus of the 25-word outstanding contribution summary, address the application category, while framing and substantiating claims that respond to the assessment criteria in 3.32(a) to (f)

d) **Conclusion.** This is optional and may comprise a short paragraph that encapsulates the application’s focus and reinforces the outstanding nature of the applicant’s practice

e) **Reference list.** This must be included on the final page of the application narrative. Alternatively, footnotes may be used. This must be a recognised referencing style and must be presented in a consistent format.

**Application categories**

3.31 When preparing an application narrative applicants must choose one of the four application categories below:

1) **Approaches to teaching and the support of learning that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn.** In addressing this category applicants might consider demonstrating any of the following:
   - fostering student development by stimulating curiosity and independence in learning
   - participating in effective and empathetic guidance and advice for students
   - assisting students from equity and other demographic subgroups to participate and achieve success in their courses
   - encouraging student engagement through the enthusiasm shown for learning and teaching
   - inspiring and motivating students through effective communication, presentation and interpersonal skills
   - enabling others to enhance their approaches to learning and teaching; and developing and/or integrating assessment strategies to enhance student learning
   - other approaches to teaching and the support of learning that demonstrate a positive impact on student learning.

2) **Development of curricula, resources or services that reflect a command of the field.** In addressing this category applicants might consider demonstrating any of the following:
   - developing and presenting coherent and imaginative resources for student learning
   - implementing research-led approaches to learning and teaching
   - demonstrating up-to-date knowledge of the field of study in designing the curriculum and creating resources for learning
   - communicating clear objectives and expectations for student learning
   - providing support to those involved in developing curricula and resources
   - contributing professional expertise to enhance curriculum or resources
   - other aspects of practice related to this category.

3) **Evaluation practices that bring about improvements in teaching and learning.** Evaluation comprises making judgements about the quality of courses and activities that are part of the academic, cultural and social experience of higher education. In addressing this category applicants might consider demonstrating any of the following:
   - advanced skills in evaluation and reflective practice, using a variety of evaluation strategies to bring about change
• adaptation of evaluation methods to different contexts and diverse student needs and learning styles
• contribution of professional expertise to the field of evaluation to improve curriculum design and delivery
• dissemination and embedding outstanding practice identified through evaluation.

4) **Innovation, leadership or scholarship that has influenced and enhanced learning and teaching and/or the student experience.** In addressing this category applicants might consider demonstrating any of the following:
• participating in and contributing to professional activities related to learning and teaching
• innovations in service and support for students
• coordination, management and leadership of units and student learning
• conducting and publishing research related to teaching
• demonstrating leadership through activities that have broad influence on the profession
• providing innovative learning and teaching for different contexts, including technology-enhanced environments, for large and small class sizes and/or to meet the needs of a diverse student cohort
• influence on the overall academic, social and cultural experience of higher education.

### Assessing applications

#### Assessment criteria

3.32 The Learning and Teaching Awards Review Panel (hereafter called ‘the Panel’) will assess applications using the following assessment criteria:

a) the extent to which the application narrative maintains the focus of the 25-word outstanding practice summary, while cohesively and persuasively addressing the chosen application category
b) the extent to which claims for an outstanding contribution in the application narrative are substantiated by a broad variety of relevant evidence, including quantitative and qualitative data
c) the extent to which the described outstanding contribution has had a positive impact/influence on student learning, student engagement or the overall student experience
d) the extent to which the described outstanding contribution has demonstrated innovation, imagination or creativity relative to context
e) the extent to which the described outstanding contribution has gained recognition from fellow employees, the institution and/or the broader community
f) whether the described outstanding contribution has been sustained for a period of no less than three years (two years for early-career applicants), not including time taken for development or trial of any activity
g) the extent to which both letters of support demonstrate the value of the contribution and explicitly support the claims being made in the application narrative.

3.33 When assessing the evidence that supports an early-career individual application, the Panel will consider the career stage of the applicant.

#### Written statement

3.34 The written statement (four pages in total) must be structured as follows:

- citation statement of 25 words describing the nomination’s focus (examples are available on the Learning and Teaching Services)
- summary of the particular contribution and specific context (recommended length up to one page)
- statement addressing one of the nomination categories (include nomination category title as a heading). This statement must address the chosen nomination category and set out and substantiate claims that respond to the assessment criteria (see more information below on what to consider when writing the statement)
• conclusion (recommend one or two sentences wrapping up the nomination’s focus and reinforcing the outstanding nature of the nominee’s practice in terms of the citation statement, included on page four), and

• reference list (included on page four).

3.35 The written statement is the nomination’s core element. To be competitive, the statement must make the case for award recognition by responding to the nomination category in ways that explain, illustrate, and substantiate the positive impact that the nominee’s practice has had on and/or contributed to learning and teaching within the University or across the broader higher education sector.

3.36 The statement should give a clear sense of what the nominee does, how they do it, why they took that approach and the resulting positive impact on student learning. This should be supported by a theoretical underpinning of the nominee’s practice, how and why they take this approach, and clear evidence in the narrative to illustrate claims of impact, i.e. evidence demonstrating that the approach works. Information about the different sources and types of evidence is available on the Learning and Teaching Services.

**Recommending and deciding Tier 2 award recipients**

3.37 The Panel will review and assess final applications and finalise recommendations approximately six weeks after the lodgement due date.

3.38 The outcome of the Panel’s assessment of applications will include feedback to applicants about their application and recommendations from the Panel, via the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching), to the Vice-Chancellor and President for recipients of Tier 2 awards. The Vice-Chancellor and President has the discretion to accept the recommendations.

3.39 All applications that meet the documentation requirements and are deemed to have addressed the assessment criteria sufficiently are eligible for recommendation.

3.40 The Panel’s functions and responsibilities are set out in the [Learning and Teaching Awards Review Panel Terms of Reference](#).

**Rights of challenge**

3.41 Nominees may contact Learning and Teaching Services to arrange an informal meeting with the Panel Chair to discuss any questions or concerns regarding feedback or the process.

3.42 If the matter is not resolved to the nominee’s satisfaction, the nominee may appeal to CQUiversity’s Provost for final consideration. All correspondence and/or requests for meetings will be treated as confidential and must be lodged with Learning and Teaching Services in the first instance.

**Award and funding**

3.43 A Tier 2 award comprises a certificate, memento, and $5000.

3.44 Learning and Teaching Services will finalise all administrative arrangements such as organising announcements, certificates, mementos, and financial requirements, and will provide each recipient with the relevant details and process for expending their Tier 2 award funds.

3.45 Recipients will be presented with the certificate and memento at the annual CQUiversity Staff Awards Ceremony.

**Conditions of Tier 2 award funding expenditure**

3.46 Tier 2 award funds may be used to further the recipient’s learning and teaching scholarship. For example, this may include attendance at learning and teaching or discipline-related conferences, professional development or dissemination activities; purchase of equipment or software; or teaching/marketing relief to enable application for other learning and teaching awards or scholarship activities.

3.47 Purchased equipment and software remains CQUiversity property unless otherwise authorised. All information technology equipment and software must be purchased through Information and Technology.
3.48 Tier 2 award funds are held by the Financial Services and Planning Division and will be released after the recipient’s supervisor and the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) have approved the plans for expenditure. CQUniversity’s policies and procedures (e.g. for procurement, credit card use or travel) must be followed when expending funds.

3.49 Any funding required in excess of the Tier 2 award amount is the award recipient’s responsibility to source.

3.50 Tier 2 award funds must be fully expended within 24 months, otherwise they may be reallocated. If a Tier 2 award recipient leaves CQUniversity’s employ before expending award funds, the recipient is not entitled to those funds.

3.51 Tier 2 award recipients are expected to disseminate their outstanding practice to other employees, through appropriate forums and must advise the Learning and Teaching Grants and Awards Officer, by email to ltgrants-awards@cqu.edu.au, of these activities through a post-award activity report. The report must be received within six months of funding period expiration.

**Applying for Australian Awards for University Teaching (AAUT)**

3.52 Tier 2 Award recipients may be eligible to apply for AAUT.

3.53 Information about the next AAUT program will be disseminated to invited applicants upon communication from Universities Australia.

3.54 AAUT Application guidelines will disseminated when available.

3.55 Eligible individuals or teams are required to follow the mandatory three-step process below:

1) Confirm intention to apply, by email to ltgrants-awards@cqu.edu.au

2) prepare two preliminary draft AAUT applications, and lodge by email to ltgrants-awards@cqu.edu.au, by the specified due dates

3) prepare a final AAUT application, and lodge by email to ltgrants-awards@cqu.edu.au, by the specified due date

3.56 Reviewers will review preliminary drafts and will provide feedback to applicants before the specified due date for final applications.

3.57 The Panel will review all final applications and will recommend applications to the Vice-Chancellor and President for endorsement and lodgement to the AAUT program. The Vice-Chancellor and President has the discretion to endorse applications.

3.58 The Learning and Teaching Grants and Awards Officer will lodge all endorsed applications on behalf of the applicants.

4 **RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Compliance, monitoring and review**

4.1 The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) is responsible for ensuring this procedure is followed and reviewed to ensure it remains current and continues to achieve its purpose.

**Reporting**

4.2 Outcomes of each round of the Tier 2 awards will be reported to Vice-Chancellor’s Advisory Committee and other relevant committees as determined by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching).

**Records management**

4.3 Staff must manage records in accordance with the Records Management Policy and Procedure. This includes retaining these records in a recognised University recordkeeping system.
4.4 Awards-related records must be retained for the minimum period specified in the University Sector Retention and Disposal Schedule, accessible on the Queensland State Archives website.

5 DEFINITIONS

5.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the University glossary.

Terms and definitions

Early-career applicants: applicants with no more than five years of accumulated experience teaching in a higher education institution, including tutoring and part-time teaching. The five years can be non-sequential.

6 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Learning and Teaching Awards Review Panel Terms of Reference
Vice-Chancellor’s Awards for Learning and Teaching Application Coversheet

7 FEEDBACK

7.1 University staff and students may provide feedback about this document by emailing policy@cqu.edu.au.

8 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

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Notes
APPENDIX 1: KEY STEPS IN THE TIER 2 AWARD CYCLE

**Peer recommendation**
Peers may propose individuals/teams as potential applicants to Learning and Teaching Services (LTS) at any time before an expression of interest (EOI) is called.

**Expression of interest (EOI)**
Individuals/teams may lodge an EOI at any time before an EOI is called.

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**INDICATIVE TIMELINE**

- April
- May
- May
- July
- July to August
- September
- September to October
- October
- November

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**LTS calls for EOI's from prospective applicants**

**Prospective applicants lodge their EOI with LTS**

**LTS notifies intending applicants of available support, application process and lodgement dates**

**Intending applicants access support and prepare and lodge preliminary draft applications with LTS**

**Reviewers review and assess preliminary draft applications and feedback is provided to applicants**

**Applicants consider feedback and complete and lodge final application**

**Panel reviews and assesses final applications. Recommendation of Tier 2 award candidates is made to Vice-Chancellor and President**

**Vice-Chancellor and President decides award recipients and notifies them of application outcome**

**Recipients receive award certificate and momento at annual CQUANTITY University Staff Awards Ceremony**