

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARDS FOR EXEMPLARY PRACTICE IN LEARNING AND TEACHING (TIER 1) PROCEDURE



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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Exemplary Practice in Learning and Teaching (Tier 1) program (hereafter called 'Tier 1 award/s') have been established to reward and encourage exemplary practice that facilitates improved student learning outcomes and/or the student experience at CQUniversity.
- 1.2 This procedure sets out the processes and requirements regarding Tier 1 award applications, the application categories and the assessment criteria applied in recommending Tier 1 award recipients, award certification and funding, and conditions of funding expenditure.
- 1.3 All information about nominating for an award is contained in this document and the related [application coversheet](#).

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 Any CQUniversity employee (academics, teachers, tutors, or professional employees) may apply for a Tier 1 award in accordance with this procedure.
- 2.2 Institutional associates (i.e. CQUniversity adjunct or emeritus staff) are not employees, but 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.
- 3.2 The application must demonstrate that the practice has been sustained for a period of no less than three terms (over a minimum of two years). 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 including the team leader. Team member contributions are required to be at least 10 per cent with regard to the exemplary 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 apply in the year after receiving a Tier 1 Award, 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 and must be accompanied by a Statement of Difference.
- 3.6 Unsuccessful applicants are eligible to reapply in the next round of Tier 1 awards.

Support for applicants

- 3.7 Learning and Teaching Services will offer 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 reviewers' feedback to applicants.
- 3.8 A list of award mentors who have experience with the process is available on the [Learning and Teaching StaffNet website](#) (*available to employees only*). Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to seek an award mentor's assistance as early in the program as possible.

How to apply

- 3.9 Learning and Teaching Services calls for an expression of interest (EOI) from prospective Tier 1 award applicants at least six months before the final lodgement date. Employees who want to express interest or recommend peers to participate in the development program before an EOI is called, by contacting Learning and Teaching Services by email to ltgrants-awards@cqu.edu.au.
- 3.10 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.
- 3.11 Eligible individuals or teams are required to follow the mandatory three-step process below, to participate in the Tier 1 awards program:
 - 1) lodge an EOI
 - 2) prepare and lodge two preliminary draft Tier 1 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 1 awards program, including key steps and an indicative timeline.

Step 1: Lodging an EOI

- 3.12 Individuals or teams intending to apply for a Tier 1 award must lodge an EOI by emailing Learning and Teaching Services, ltgrants-awards@cqu.edu.au, by the due date specified for EOIs.
- 3.13 The EOI email must include the prospective applicant's name and contact details.
- 3.14 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 1 award applications

- 3.15 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. Preliminary draft applications must meet the documentation requirements, including the specified maximum page limits.
- 3.16 Applicants will be advised of the due dates for lodging preliminary draft applications during the Tier 1 awards program.
- 3.17 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

- 3.18 Prospective applicants who do not lodge a preliminary draft by the specified due date will not be eligible to lodge a final application.
- 3.19 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.
- 3.20 Prospective applicants will be advised of the due date for lodging final applications during the Tier 1 awards program.

Documentation requirements

- 3.21 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) One **letter of support** from the applicant's, or team leader's, Deputy Dean (Learning and Teaching), or equivalent for non-School employees or associates. This letter should support the focus and claims in the application narrative. The letter of support for a team application must relate to the team. At the preliminary draft stage, an MS Word draft letter of support is preferred.
 - d) A **statement of difference** between previous and current applications (*required for all previous Tier 1 award recipients who are re-applying*), 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 1 award are required to include a summary of the differences between their current and previous 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.

3.22 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 three pages)
 - letter of support, on letterhead (maximum one page)
 - statement of difference, if applicable (maximum one page)
 - statement of contribution, if applicable (up to 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

- 3.23 The application narrative is the application's core element. The narrative must make the case for Tier 1 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.
- 3.24 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.
- 3.25 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](#).
- 3.26 The application narrative must be written in first-person, as a stand-alone document, able to be understood without reference to external material, and must be structured as follows:
- a) **25-word exemplary practice 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 other relevant contextual information with regard to the applicant's practice. (Recommended length approximately half of 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 exemplary practice summary, address the application category, while framing and substantiating claims that respond to the **assessment criteria** in 3.28(a) to (f).
 - d) **Conclusion**. This is optional and may comprise one or two sentences wrapping up the focus of the narrative and reinforcing the exemplary 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

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

- 1) **Design and planning of learning activities:** In addressing this category applicants might consider demonstrating any of the following:
 - preparation practices
 - knowledge of the discipline
 - knowledge of the student learning process
 - knowledge and effective use of teaching techniques
 - knowledge and application of curriculum design
 - knowledge and effective use of technology
 - innovative design or use of technology.
- 2) **Developing effective environments, student support and guidance:** In addressing this category applicants might consider demonstrating any of the following:
 - availability for consultation that develops students' understanding
 - effective linking of students to appropriate support and services and sustained collaboration with those services
 - how applicants encourage students to support and engage with each other
 - how applicants build communities in the unit/course or discipline
 - how applicants respect and require students to demonstrate respect for others
 - how applicants support students with diverse backgrounds and perspectives
 - innovation in supporting students, and creating supporting or engaging learning environments.
- 3) **Evaluation of practice and continuing professional development:** In addressing this category applicants will need to provide evidence of exemplary practice in evaluating and developing their knowledge, practice and skills related to teaching. applicants should:
 - demonstrate how they use evaluation of practice to guide professional development and engagement in professional development activities, and
 - give evidence of the impact of evaluation and continuous development that enhances students' learning and/or experience.
- 4) **Integration of scholarship, research and professional activities with teaching and in support of learning:** In addressing this category applicants might consider demonstrating any of the following:
 - incorporation of the scholarship of learning and teaching research into teaching practice
 - contribution to learning and teaching within or beyond the applicant's discipline
 - inclusion of discipline-based research in the curriculum
 - engagement of students in pedagogically sound discipline-based research that supports learning
 - incorporation of professional, industry and work-based practice or experiences into teaching practice or curriculum.

Assessing applications

Assessment criteria

3.28 The Learning and Teaching Award 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 exemplary practice summary, while cohesively and persuasively addressing the chosen application category
- b) the extent to which claims for an exemplary 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 exemplary contribution has had a positive impact/influence on student learning, student engagement or the overall student experience
- d) the extent to which the described contribution has demonstrated innovation, imagination or creativity relative to context
- e) the extent to which the described contribution has gained recognition from fellow employees and/or the institution
- f) whether the described exemplary contribution has been sustained for a period of no less than three terms (over a minimum of two years)
- g) the extent to which the letter of support demonstrates the value of the contribution and explicitly supports the claims being made in the application narrative.

3.29 written statement must be structured as follows:

- f) Statement of 25 words maximum describing the focus of the nomination. The statement summarises the key feature of the contribution for which the nominee seeks recognition and which is described and evidenced in the narrative of the written statement. The statement begins with “For...”. Examples are available on the .
- g) Summary of the particular contribution that locates it within its specific context (recommended length is approximately half of one page).
- h) Statement addressing the chosen selection criterion (include the title of the chosen selection criterion as a heading). This statement must address the chosen selection criterion, at the same time framing and substantiating claims that respond to the general assessment criteria.

Recommending and deciding Tier 1 award recipients

- 3.30 The Panel will review and assess final applications and finalise recommendations approximately six weeks after the lodgement due date.
- 3.31 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 1 awards. The Vice-Chancellor and President has the discretion to accept the recommendations.
- 3.32 All applications that meet the documentation requirements and are deemed to have addressed the assessment criteria sufficiently are eligible for recommendation.
- 3.33 The Panel’s functions and responsibilities are set out in the [Learning and Teaching Awards Review Panel Terms of Reference](#).

Rights of challenge

- 3.34 Nominees may contact Learning and Teaching Services at to arrange an informal meeting with the Panel Chair to discuss any questions concerns regarding feedback or the process.
- 3.35 If the matter is not resolved to the nominee’s satisfaction, the nominee may appeal to CQUniversity’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 at in the first instance.

Award and funding

- 3.36 A Tier 1 award comprises a certificate and \$1000.

- 3.37 Learning and Teaching Services will finalise all administrative arrangements such as organising announcements, certificates, and financial requirements, and will provide each recipient with the relevant details and process for expending their Tier 1 award funds.
- 3.38 Recipients will be presented with the certificate at the annual CQUniversity Employee Awards Ceremony.

Conditions of Tier 1 award funding expenditure

- 3.39 Tier 1 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/marking relief to enable application for other learning and teaching awards or scholarship activities.
- 3.40 Purchased equipment and software remains CQUniversity property unless otherwise authorised. All information technology equipment and software must be purchased through Information and Technology Directorate. For further information, contact Learning and Teaching Services by email to ltgrants-awards@cqu.edu.au.
- 3.41 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.
- 3.42 Any funding required in excess of the Tier 1 award amount is the award recipient's responsibility to source.
- 3.43 Tier 1 award funds must be fully expended within 24 months, otherwise they may be reallocated. If a Tier 1 award recipient leaves CQUniversity's employ before expending award funds, the recipient is not entitled to those funds.
- 3.44 Tier 1 award recipients are expected to disseminate their exemplary 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.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 4.1 The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) is responsible for monitoring, reviewing and ensuring compliance with this procedure.

Reporting

- 4.2 Outcomes of each round of the Tier 1 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 Employees 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](#).

6 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[Learning and Teaching Awards Review Panel Terms of Reference](#)

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

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and President
Advisory Committee to Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee
Administrator	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
Next Review Date	5/09/2021

Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	Vice-Chancellor and President 7/09/2016
Amendment Authority and Date	Vice-Chancellor and President 5/09/2018.
Notes	This procedure replaced the Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Exemplary Practice in Learning and Teaching (Tier 1) Procedure (effective date 12/10/2016).

9 APPENDIX 1: KEY STEPS IN THE TIER 1 AWARD CYCLE

