

Tips for Completing Teaching Award Applications

Note: These tips are generic for ALTC and EITA Awards applications. They may also be used as a guide for some Faculty-based awards. However, please read them in the context of the particular award for which you are applying (eg reference to Triple i curriculum and USRs is not a criteria of the ALTC awards and reference to supporting material applies only to ALTC awards).

Teaching Excellence Awards

For the synopsis:

- Must be succinct (150-200 words) – it is an overview (in third person)

For the overview:

Start with "who I am, what I do, why I make a difference".

- Introduce yourself - background, brief history of academic life, etc.
- Context of your teaching – what you teach, unit structures, class sizes, student cohort, face-to-face and online, discipline/institutional/faculty specifics, special challenges, etc.
- Teaching philosophy – well articulated; describe how your philosophy drives what you do and why you are successful/make a difference. Describe how you engage with the teaching and learning process, how your approach is appropriate in your teaching context.
- The use of educational jargon is appropriate as long as it would be understood by the assessor and what you describe as your philosophy is evidenced by your teaching practice.
- Describe your development as a teacher, how you have taken on board student and other feedback to improve.

For each of the criteria:

- State your claim.
- Provide your evidence to support those claims, using multiple sources where possible.
- Use examples for illustration.
- You should be able to demonstrate depth as well as breadth of evidence for each criterion. A weakness against one of the criteria will affect your overall application.
- Ensure you address the *Triple i Curriculum* through your criteria (for EITA).

Evidence to support your claims:

- You must include multiple sources of feedback including from peers and students.
- Go beyond standard student evaluations of teaching – include informal (collected by you, unsolicited etc) as well as formal (eVALUate).
- Make sure you have published your USRs and response (if applicable)
- Interweave the feedback into your application as evidence to support your claims.
- Indicate sources of feedback (methods of collecting feedback) and particularly for statistical data, indicate the number of students and response rates in each set of data.
- Choose explicit and strong words/phrases from the written feedback rather than long sentences.
- Indicate how you use feedback and show improvement over time.
- Use feedback and other sources that indicate long-term influence on learning outcomes, e.g. student employment, comments from graduates, students who indicate they want to do postgraduate studies with you, etc.
- Don't forget to include other peer 'feedback' such as the adoption of your teaching models or materials by others, invitations to speak to others, and so forth.
- Look for feedback that speaks to specifics – e.g. concern for diversity.
- Use examples to explain what you do (tied to your approach to teaching) and include evidence to support your claim that this leads to student learning.

Referees:

- Choose referees carefully (one has to be Head of School, Faculty, Unit).
- They should know what you do and why you are an outstanding teacher.
- The reference should add something new, not just repeat what you have written (or at least say it in a different way).

Supporting material (for ALTC Awards only):

- It should support your application. Make sure there is a reason for including it.
- If it is critical material, then perhaps it should be in the application.
- Clearly tag the material so that it is easy to link it from the application.
- You might compile it all on a website – that is easier for assessors to access.

Format and style:

- Follow the recommendations closely.
- Do not go over the page limits (extra pages will be removed!)
- Do not try to cram everything into the application – it must be readable!
- Be consistent in style.
- Use headings and a clear structure.
- Put student feedback comments in italics (or a text box) to emphasise.
- Spell out acronyms.
- Figures and tables might usefully illustrate claims.
- Presentation does not need to be glossy and glitzy. It needs to be simple and readable.

General tips, suggestions:

- The application must stand alone; that is the application without supporting documents should be sufficient to convince the assessors. Don't simply refer to appendices or CV.
- An application should suggest that your teaching is more than what is usual, what is expected of a university teacher.
- Highlight creativity, imagination and innovation.
- Write the application in your own voice.
- Consider having someone interview you about your teaching and then use your responses as the basis for the application. It will sound more personal and perhaps present a clearer argument.
- Look upon it as an exercise in personal reflection.
- The process will challenge what you are doing.
- Continually collect feedback, artefacts of your teaching so you have a large pool to choose from.
- Start writing early, get feedback.



Programs that Enhance Learning

For the synopsis:

- Must be succinct (150 - 200 words) – it is an overview (in third person)

For each of the criteria:

- State your claim.
- Provide your evidence to support those claims, using multiple sources where possible.
- Use examples for illustration.
- The application must stand alone; that is the application without supporting documents should be sufficient to convince the assessors. Don't simply refer to the supporting material.
- Highlight creativity, imagination and innovation.
- Demonstrate sustained effectiveness.
- Ensure you address the *Triple i Curriculum* through the criteria (for EITA).

Evidence to support your claims:

- Include multiple sources of evidence of effectiveness, particularly sustained contribution to student learning, e.g. student employment, comments from graduates, employers, adoption or modelling of program by other institutions, invitations to make presentations about the program, etc.
- Indicate sources of evidence/feedback (methods of collecting feedback) and particularly for statistical data, indicate the number of students and response rates in each set of data.
- Choose explicit and strong words/phrases from the written feedback rather than long sentences.
- Indicate how the feedback has been used to improve the program over time.

Supporting material (for ALTC awards only):

- It should support your application. Make sure there is a reason for including it.
- If it is critical material, then perhaps it should be in the application.
- Clearly tag the material so that it is easy to link it from the application.

Format and style:

- Follow the recommendations closely.
- Do not go over the page limits (extra pages will be removed!)
- Do not try to cram everything into the application – it must be readable!
- Be consistent in style.
- Use headings and a clear structure.
- Put student feedback comments in italics (or a text box) to emphasise.
- Spell out acronyms.
- Figures and tables might usefully illustrate claims.
- Presentation does not need to be glossy and glitzy. It needs to be simple and readable. Use photos and diagrams/tables to convey/support your message.
- Start writing early, get feedback.

Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning

For the Citation:

- Max 25 words – exactly what the citation is for.

For the synopsis:

- Must be succinct - 75 words max. It is an overview (in third person). Don't just repeat the citation words.

For the statement:

Summary of particular contribution and context -

- Start with "who I am, what I do, what I contribute to student learning". Address the specific context of your work and summarise your contribution to student learning. Say why you deserve this Citation.

Addressing the criteria -

- Choose only one or two of the criteria that speak to your strengths as they relate to student learning.
- Ensure that when you address the criterion/a, you relate it to student learning.
- State your claim.
- Use examples for illustration.
- Highlight creativity, imagination and innovation.
- While you need to present your evidence in a separate statement to the statement addressing the criterion/a, you might interweave some feedback into your statement, particularly student or peer comments.

Evidence Statement -

- Indicate sources of evidence/feedback (methods of collecting feedback) and particularly for statistical data, indicate number of students and response rates in the data.
- You should be able to demonstrate depth as well as breadth of evidence.
- Choose explicit and strong words/phrases from the written feedback rather than long sentences.
- Use feedback and other sources of evidence that indicate long-term contribution to student learning
- Look for evidence that speaks to the specific criterion.
- Provide your evidence to support those claims, using multiple sources where possible.
- Show evidence of sustained contribution over time.

Referees:

- Choose referees carefully (one has to be Head of School, manager).
- They should know what you do and why you have made an outstanding contribution to student learning.
- The reference should add something new, not just repeat what you have written (or at least say it in a different way).

Format and style:

- Write the application in your own voice and tell your story. It is a process of personal reflection.
- Follow the recommendations closely.
- Do not go over the page limits (extra pages will be removed!)
- Do not try to cram everything into the application – it must be readable!
- Be consistent in style.
- Use headings and a clear structure.



- Put feedback comments (students, peers, external bodies etc) in italics or a text box to emphasise.
- Spell out acronyms.
- Presentation does not need to be glossy and glitzy. It needs to be simple and readable. Just plain typing.

General tips, suggestions:

- Consider having someone interview you about your teaching and then use your responses as the basis for the application. It will sound more personal and perhaps present a clearer argument.
- The process will challenge what you are doing.
- Continually collect feedback, artefacts that evidence what you do and your contribution to student learning so you have a large pool to choose from.
- Start writing early, get feedback.