

The UL Teaching Excellence Awards 2020-21

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Application Process

Who can be considered for the award?

The award is open to all teaching staff and those involved in the pedagogic support of learners in UL.

How does the award application process work?

Teaching staff can either self-nominate or be nominated by a colleague for the Teaching Excellence Award. If you have been nominated by a colleague please include their details under the “nominator section” when submitting your teaching portfolio online.

An open call for submission will go out in October each year.

For the Academic Year 20/21 your initial teaching portfolio will be submitted to CTL on Wednesday 16th December, 2020.

Can I submit material after the deadline, I only teach in Semester 2?

If you do not have documentation or recording of your teaching available for the deadline, it is advisable to collate the information for the following year’s award process.

2. Short-listing

Your application is reviewed by your Faculty panel who will provide you with written feedback on your application. Each faculty panel will recommend one overall finalist who will go forward for the overall University Teaching Excellence Award.

Finalists for the UL award will prepare a presentation and will have their teaching recorded by CTL for the next phase. The University winner will be announced shortly after the panel meet.

How much of a time commitment is likely to be involved if I am short-listed?

The time commitment will really depend on how much work you have already done on reflecting and providing evidence of your performance and impact as a teacher. Therefore, it is likely to differ from candidate to candidate.

If I entered last year, can I enter again this year?

Applicants can enter once in a two year period. The rationale for this re-application period is that it allows enough time for the individual to evolve and develop their practice based on feedback and to reflect on it within a portfolio. The experience of reflecting on your teaching should strengthen your practice as a teacher and should put you in a stronger position when you enter a second or subsequent time.

3. Process

What forms of information can I use to provide evidence of my teaching effectiveness?

Phase 1 of the award:

- Within your teaching portfolio you will provide a short statement (1,500 words max) outlining your approach to, and achievements in, the teaching/support of their subjects.

- A maximum of two relatively recent (i.e. within the last 3 years) examples of UL student feedback (e.g. SETs or focus group reports) that provide details on students' experiences of and responses to their teaching
- A peer observation report OR a statement from a peer within a UL context (1,000 words approximately) who is in a position to comment on their teaching/support activities and has an understanding of the subjects that they teach
- You will provide your own recording of your teaching/engaging with students in a UL context. Recording may contain up to three examples of practice and can be a maximum of one hour in duration, in total. Please include a short commentary (maximum 500 words) to contextualise the recording for the evaluation panel. This could detail, for example, group related variables, aims of the session, content and anticipated learning outcomes, plus any other additional relevant information. A contextual statement on the recording provided is required.

Phase 2 of the award:

Following Faculty Award Panel meetings, if you make it to the final shortlist, you will be asked to review your portfolio and resubmit your statement and supporting documentation (statement not to exceed 4,000 words) [portfolio guidelines](#) for the overall institutional award.

A recording of your teaching should also be included, this can be one of your teaching sessions or a sample of no more than three teaching sessions totaling 50 minutes, Max 1 hour. Please note that you may also submit your portfolio electronically using an eportfolio platform of your choice. Please ensure that the external panel are provided with any necessary passwords to ensure full access.

Each candidate will make a presentation on how you meet the criteria (no longer than 15 minutes) to an international panel, comprised of expert teaching and learning specialists from Ireland and the UK.

The deadline for this is noon on the 21st of April 2021.

4. Preparation and Support

Where can I get advice about preparing my application?

On-going support will be available from the CTL Teaching and Learning Advocate throughout the process.

What if my subject area is very technical? Will that put me at a disadvantage?

No. Differences between disciplinary areas will be taken into account and you will not be disadvantaged if you teach in an area that students typically find difficult or challenging.

5. Professional Benefits

How will this process benefit me professionally?

As teaching and learning is becoming an increasing focus of strategic attention across further and higher education, being short-listed for or winning this award provides clear evidence of your commitment to teaching and your performance as a teacher. The process of preparing a teaching portfolio will provide you with an opportunity to

reflect on and gain increased insight into your practice as a higher education teacher.

When will the Award Ceremony take place?

All UL award winners will receive their awards during conferring ceremonies. All faculty winners will be recognised and celebrated at a special event, where and when possible, by CTL.