



Queen's University Belfast Teaching Awards 2025/26

Guidance for Applicants

The Queen's University Teaching Awards recognise the learning, teaching and support practices that enhance the student experience. The Awards are open to academic staff, professional services staff, and Graduate Teaching Assistants.

Applications may be submitted by individuals or teams, and examples of partnership with students are particularly encouraged. Please note the award is not open for staff external to Queen's.

Applicants must complete the application template and then upload the completed file in the designated section of the Microsoft Form, also available on the [Teaching Awards website](#). More information on this process is in Section 4: Application Process.

The website also provides guidance on completing your application, along with examples of previously successful submissions.

Successful applicants will receive a certificate and a Teaching Award pin badge. Additionally, where appropriate, successful applicants will be given support to apply to other recognition schemes, such as:

- Advance HE Fellowship
- Advance HE National Teaching Fellowship Scheme
- Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence.

There will also be a celebratory event in late September 2026 to mark the achievements of the Teaching Award recipients.

1. Categories

Individual

Applications should demonstrate the Reach, Value, and Impact of learning, teaching, and/or learning support activities aligned to at least one of the strategic themes outlined below.

Team

Applications should demonstrate the Reach, Value, and Impact of learning, teaching, and/or learning support activities aligned to at least one of the strategic themes outlined below.

Contact the team: teachingawards@qub.ac.uk

In addition, applications must clearly evidence how the team collaborates to enhance the student learning experience. Collaboration should reflect meaningful interdependence rather than simple coordination.

Teams should describe how they were established, how they have developed over time, and how they continue to work together to achieve impact.

Applications should include only core team members and clearly outline each member's specific contribution.

Both self-nominations and nominations submitted on behalf of colleagues or teams are warmly welcomed.

2. Strategic Themes

Transformative Student Experience

This theme includes work that demonstrates supportive and inclusive practices which enhance the student journey. Examples may include initiatives that respond to the student voice, foster belonging, and improve engagement and satisfaction.

Education for the Future:

This theme includes work focused on curriculum review and design, innovative and effective assessment approaches, and the development of flexible and inclusive pathways that enhance student engagement, attainment, and achievement. It may also include the effective and appropriate use of AI in education.

3. Criteria

Reach: The scale and breadth of influence. This may include impact at departmental, school/faculty, directorate or institutional level, or across diverse student groups (e.g. online learners, students with disabilities, students with caring responsibilities, or international students).

Value: The benefits generated for students and staff. This may include qualitative evidence demonstrating how the work has added value to the student learning experience or to teaching practices. Some applicants may also be working in settings where there are explicit positive ethical elements to their practice.

Impact: Clear evidence of meaningful and positive change in the student learning experience, policy, and/or practice as a result of the activities.

4. Application Process

- Applicants submit a reflective commentary via an MS Form, comprising of either:
 - A written case study (approx. 1000 words)
 - A recorded video (maximum 10 minutes, including a 1-minute introduction)
 - Both formats are assessed equally
 - For either format, you do not need to include references but you can if you wish, they will not be considered part of the word count
- If submitting a recorded video, please consider the following:
 - Follow the same structure as the written sections
 - Use slides sparingly to support clarity
 - Ensure accessibility (clear audio, readable visuals)

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- Ensure the video link is accessible

Please complete the provided template in advance and upload the finished document as the MS Form cannot be edited once it is submitted. [The form can be accessed here.](#)

- Within the Microsoft Form, you will be asked to:
 - Identify at least one strategic theme
 - Complete contact details for the application individual/team
 - Upload your reflective commentary
- The deadline for applications is **31st May 2026**
- An assessment panel will review applications against the above criteria
- Applicants will be notified of the outcome via email

Please be advised that any content exceeding the prescribed word count or time limit will not be taken into consideration.

5. Dissemination

Each award winner or team will be asked to provide a one-minute Continuing Professional Development (CPD) resource to share best practice. This may take one of the following forms:

- A written testimonial (maximum 250 words)
- A one-minute video ('talking head')
- A one-minute audio recording with accompanying slides

These resources will be shared via the CED webpage to support and inspire current and future applicants.

6. Final Checklist

Before submitting, ensure you have:

1. Selected a strategic theme
2. Used the template provided if submitting a written application
3. Defined team roles (if applicable)
4. Addressed all five sections
5. Included strong evidence
6. Provided a final impact summary
7. Stayed within word count/time limits
8. Ensured accessibility of submission link (if applicable)
9. Uploaded reflective commentary and submitted MS Form by the deadline – **31st May 2026**

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7. Application Descriptors

In your application, you must address each of the below areas. Below you will find descriptors. Successful case study examples from last year's awards have also been provided on the Teaching Awards website.

Section	What it means	What to include	Tips / Examples
1. Context and Rationale	Your introduction — the <i>why</i> behind your work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The problem, gap, or opportunity you identified - Background or setting (institution, sector, audience) Why this issue matters (locally or more widely) 	<p>Be specific about the need.</p> <p>For example: <i>Low engagement among first-year undergraduate students in large lecture-based modules highlighted a need for more interactive teaching approaches.</i></p>
2. Activities and Approach	What you <i>did</i> and <i>how</i> you did it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key actions, interventions, or steps taken Methods, frameworks, or models used Who was involved (partners, stakeholders) Timeline or phases (if relevant) 	<p>Focus on process, not just a list of tasks.</p> <p>For example: Explain <i>how</i> your approach addressed the challenge, e.g. <i>introducing flipped classroom methods and peer-led seminars to increase student participation.</i></p>
3. Outcomes	What <i>changed</i> as a result of your activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short- to medium-term changes Improvements in knowledge, skills, behaviours, systems, or processes Evidence of change (data, feedback, evaluation findings) 	<p>Outcomes are not the same as outputs.</p> <p>Outputs are the tangible products or activities delivered (e.g. workshops, resources, tools). Outcomes are the changes as a result of those outputs, such as improvements in knowledge, skills, behaviours, or practices.</p> <p>For example: <i>Students demonstrated improved critical thinking skills and reported greater confidence in contributing to seminar discussions.</i></p>
4. Outputs	The tangible products or deliverables created	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources (toolkits, guides, reports) Events (workshops, training sessions) Media (videos, podcasts, articles) Platforms or tools developed 	<p>Consider what you tangibly produced.</p> <p>For example: <i>A digital toolkit for inclusive curriculum design, a series of staff development workshops, and recorded lecture materials.</i></p>
5. Impact	The broader significance and who benefited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who benefited (students, staff, institutions, communities) Scale or reach (numbers, course, programme, sectors) Why it matters (long-term or systemic change) Potential for sustainability or replication 	<p>This captures the broader significance and lasting contribution.</p> <p>For example: <i>The approach has been adopted across multiple departments, improving student satisfaction scores and informing institutional teaching and learning strategy.</i></p>

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