

Vice-Chancellor and President's Awards for Excellence - Operational Policy

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set the conditions under which the Vice-Chancellor and President recognises and rewards exceptional staff performance and achievements through Awards for Excellence.

1.2 This policy must be read in conjunction with the linked Vice-Chancellor and President's Awards for Excellence - Procedures.

2. Scope and application

2.1 This policy applies to all eligible staff of the University.

3. Definitions

3.1 Refer to the University's Glossary of Terms for definitions of terms as they specifically relate to policy documents.

4. Policy statement

4.1 The principal purpose of the Vice-Chancellor and President's (VCP) Awards for Excellence is to recognise and reward exceptional performance and achievements that contribute to the realisation of the University's Strategic Plan and are aligned with the University's values.

5. Principles

5.1 The Awards aim to:

- (a) foster the engagement and commitment of staff and encourage them to take pride in their work;
- (b) encourage staff to take initiative and consciously contribute to the University's institutional capacity and capability;
- (c) ensure staff are clear about what the University values in relation to academic and professional work;
- (d) ensure the achievement that is formally recognised and rewarded contributes to the achievement of the University's strategic priorities; and
- (e) provide an opportunity to celebrate exceptional staff performance and achievements as per 4.1 above.

5.2 Eligibility

5.2.1 The VCP Awards for Excellence are open to all employees, including professional and academic staff (continuing, fixed term and casual).

5.2.2 To be eligible to receive an Award for Excellence, a staff member must have:

- (a) a current full-time or fractional appointment; and
- (b) been employed continuously by the University for at least one year by the end of the year in which the Award applies.

5.2.3 The Award for Excellence in Research Impact – Early Career Academic is available to an individual academic staff member only. In addition, to be eligible to receive the Award, a staff member must have been awarded a PhD or equivalent research doctorate within the five-year period prior to the commencement of the process to determine the Award for that year. A staff member who was awarded a PhD within the last eight years can be eligible if their academic career has been significantly interrupted.

5.2.4 A casual academic staff member is eligible to receive an Award for Excellence under any of the Award categories when:

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Vice-Chancellor and President

RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE MEMBER

Vice-Chancellor and President

DESIGNATED OFFICER

Director, People and Culture

FIRST APPROVED

8 October 2012

LAST AMENDED

10 May 2024

REVIEW DATE

10 May 2024

STATUS

Active

(a) they hold a current casual academic appointment on the date of the commencement of the process to determine the Awards for Excellence for that year; and

(b) they have been employed for at least two teaching periods by the end of the year in which the Award for Excellence applies to.

5.2.5 A team of staff, including academic and professional staff members, can receive an Award for Excellence where all members of the team have contributed equitably to the success of the team and the achievements for which the Award is presented.

5.2.6 Executive members and Senior Staff are not eligible for Awards for Excellence. Staff acting in any of these positions are also not eligible for nomination for their performance and achievements while acting in the position.

5.2.7 Staff members who have received an Award for Excellence in the past three years can be eligible for nomination in the same category, however new evidence of achievement must be demonstrated.

5.2.8 Individuals undergoing performance management cannot be considered for an Excellence Award. In the instance of an individual undergoing performance management being part of a team nomination, they will not receive the team award should the nomination be successful.

5.3 Award categories

5.3.1 Awards for Excellence

5.3.1.1 The Vice-Chancellor and President can present Awards for Excellence in the following categories:

(a) Learning and Teaching;

(b) Research;

(c) Engagement; or

(d) Service.

5.3.1.2 The Awards for Excellence are presented annually.

5.3.1.3 The Vice-Chancellor and President can choose not to present an Award in any category or categories.

5.3.1.4 The Award Categories are broken down into the following Awards:

| AWARD CATEGORY | AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE |
|-----------------------|---|
| Learning and Teaching | Award for Excellence in Learning and Teaching |
| | Award for Excellence in Student Opportunity & Employability |
| Research | Award for Excellence in Research Impact |
| | Award for Excellence in Research Impact – Early Career Academic |
| Engagement | Award for Excellence in Community Engagement and Impact |
| | Award for Excellence in Sustainability and Accessibility |
| Service | Award for Excellence in Leadership and Transformational Change |
| | Award for Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion |

5.3.2 Learning and Teaching Awards

5.3.2.1 The Award for Excellence in Learning and Teaching recognises and rewards significant contributions to the delivery of high-quality teaching, learning and graduate outcomes. Examples can include:

(a) innovative teaching practice that impacts students' engagement with learning or graduate outcomes;

(b) leadership within, and perhaps beyond, the University that inspires staff engagement with and advancement of teaching and shapes students' learning outcomes; and

(c) scholarship in learning and teaching that influences teaching practice within, and beyond, the University.

5.3.2.2 The Award for Excellence in Student Opportunity & Employability recognises and rewards significant contributions towards inspiring more people to achieve their ambitions through education, and enabling more people to work, contribute and innovate in their local and global communities. Examples can include:

- (a) implementation of a significant student-centred initiative that contributed to an exceptional student experience;
- (b) exceptional support of students in making meaningful contributions to their communities; and
- (c) demonstrated leadership through activities that have a positive impact on fostering a student-centred culture.

5.3.3 Research Awards

5.3.3.1 The Research Awards recognise and reward excellence in research performance, achievement, impact and leadership.

5.3.3.2 To determine recommendations for either Research Award, the Advisory Committee must consider and discuss research performance data and other elements of research achievement and leadership such as:

- (a) research outputs and outcomes, for example, publications in quality peer-reviewed journals and significant grant income and infrastructure;
- (b) research leadership and research collaborations that strengthen research capability, influence research practice or advance a productive research culture within the University, such that others are guided and supported to achieve significant research outcomes;
- (c) impact of research within the discipline/field and beyond the University, for example through esteem and impact factors; and
- (d) the establishment and maintenance of productive relationships with industry, and other strategic partners, including international universities and research organisations.

5.3.4 Engagement Awards

5.3.4.1 The Award for Excellence in Community Engagement and Impact recognises and rewards excellence in engagement and the development of strategic partnerships regionally, nationally or internationally. Examples can include:

- (a) the establishment and maintenance of strategic and productive partnerships, connections and relationships with people, groups or organisations through which social, civic and professional functions are performed;
- (b) significant external recognition for scholarly contributions through the application of discipline knowledge within the region and beyond; and
- (c) influence within the community through professional commentary on issues of general public interest and the creation of opportunities for discussion of intellectual, social, economic and cultural issues of importance to the wellbeing of the community.

5.3.4.2 The Award for Excellence in Sustainability and Accessibility recognises and rewards contributions to socially responsible practices through engagement with staff, students, industry or community. Examples can include:

- (a) creating opportunities that provide positive impacts on social, financial or environmental outcomes;
- (b) aligning sustainability or accessibility initiatives with the University's teaching or research activities;
- (c) developing future-focused physical or digital infrastructure, strategies or practices to enable enhanced accessibility and engagement with our students, industry partners or communities.

5.3.5 Service Awards

5.3.5.1 The Service Awards recognise and reward excellence in service and corporate citizenship that enable transformational change and impact positively on success for students or staff.

5.3.5.2 The Award for Excellence in Leadership and Transformational Change recognises and rewards outstanding contributions that have demonstrated exemplary leadership in supporting a positive, respectful, safe and performance-based culture. Examples can include:

- (a) nurturing high quality, inclusive relationships with peers, alumni, suppliers, communities and government bodies;
- (b) implementation of a significant innovative project or program that contributes to the achievement of the University's performance objectives; and
- (c) development and implementation of new concepts, products or services that significantly improve the staff or student experience.

5.3.5.3 The Award for Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion recognises and rewards outstanding contributions to positive cultural change in regard to equity, diversity or inclusion. Examples can include:

- (a) developing and improving University systems and processes that significantly enhance engagement and accessibility for students or staff;
- (b) initiatives that nurture, attract and retain a diverse student population and high-performing workforce; and
- (c) enhancing the reputation of the University for equity, diversity and inclusion in the wider community.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 An Advisory Committee is established to determine the recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor and President for each Award for Excellence. The nominated committee members bring their respective specialist expertise.

5.4.2 In determining the recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor and President, the Advisory Committee takes achievement relative to opportunity and by level into consideration. Opportunity can be impacted, for example, by factors such as parental leave, carer's responsibilities or illness. The complexity of level is also considered. For example, exceptional performance and achievement for a Level A academic is different from exceptional performance and achievement for a Level C or a Level E academic, and similarly a Level 5 professional staff member compared to that of a Level 8 or 10 professional staff member.

5.4.3 Recommendations for each Award are made to the Vice-Chancellor and President by the Advisory Committee Chairperson. The Committee is not required to recommend an award for each category if no applicants are deemed appropriate.

5.4.4 The Vice-Chancellor and President determines the recipients of the Awards and can approve or not approve any recommendation for an Award or choose an alternative recipient.

5.4.5 The Vice-Chancellor and President's decision is final.

6. Authorities and responsibilities

6.1 The Vice-Chancellor and President makes this policy in accordance with the University of the Sunshine Coast Act 1998 (Qld).

6.2 The Vice-Chancellor and President is authorised to make procedures and guidelines for the operation of this Policy. The procedures and guidelines must be compatible with the provisions of this policy.

6.3 The Director, People and Culture is authorised to make associated documents to support the application of policy documents. These must be compatible with the provisions of the respective policy document.

6.5 This policy operates from the Last Amended date, all previous policies related to the Vice-Chancellor and President's Awards for Excellence replaced and have no further operation from this date.

6.6 All records relating to the Vice-Chancellor and President's Awards for Excellence must be stored and managed in accordance with the Information Management – Governing Policy.

6.7 This policy must be maintained in accordance with the Policy Framework – Procedures and reviewed on the standard 5 year policy review cycle.

6.8 Any exception to this policy to enable a more appropriate result must be approved in accordance with the Policy Framework – Procedures prior to the deviation of the policy document.

6.9 Refer to Schedule C of the Delegations Manual for operational and administrative authorisations set out in this policy.

6.10 The following authorities and responsibilities are delegated under this policy:

| ACTIVITY | UNIVERSITY OFFICER/COMMITTEE |
|---|--|
| Call for nominations for the Vice-Chancellor and President's Awards for Excellence | Director, People and Culture |
| Determine the recommended recipients for the Vice-Chancellor and President's Awards for Excellence | The Advisory Committee makes recommendations for each award type |
| Determines the recipients of the Vice-Chancellor and President's Awards for Excellence; can approve or not approve any recommendation for an award or choose an alternative recipient | Vice-Chancellor and President |

END

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Academic Promotion - Operational Policy](#)
- [Conflict of Interest - Governing Policy](#)
- [Performance Management - Operational Policy](#)
- [Vice-Chancellor and President's Awards for Excellence - Procedures](#)

LINKED DOCUMENTS

- [Vice-Chancellor and President's Awards for Excellence - Procedures](#)