



University of Essex

Excellence in Education Award 2024

Guidance for Applicants

**“The University of Essex...must continue to be a place of intellectual rigour,
a teaching institution of the highest quality...it must stand for excellence.”**

- Albert Sloman (1963)

Excellence in Education Award: Background

The Excellence in Education Award (EEA) is inspired by the University's strategy to achieve excellence in both education and research. Our staff aim to offer students a transformational educational experience through intellectually challenging and stimulating courses of study that are based on creative and innovative approaches to education.

As a member of the University, the EEA exists to recognise and celebrate commitment to promote and achieve an outstanding learning experience that enables our students to contribute positively to communities and societies around them. It invites applications from all colleagues who can demonstrate commitment to the University's values and mission to deliver excellence in education.

In the application statement, applicants should address the following question:

How does your practice demonstrate an effective, proactive and impactful approach to education at the University of Essex?

The EEA 2024 panel warmly welcomes applications on an open range of pedagogic (teaching and learning based) topics in relation to the achievement of excellence in education.

Excellence in Education Award: Categories

There are four categories for the EEA 2024. These can be submitted by self- or peer-nomination (with the exception of the **Student Recognition** category which can be used by *students only* to recognise inspiring staff).

- Excellent **Assistant Lecturer and Graduate Laboratory Assistant** Award (individual)

The recognition is given to Assistant Lecturers and Graduate Laboratory Assistants in recognition of their significant contribution to excellence in module delivery or contribution to new approaches to the enhancement of the learning experience of students and staff.

- Excellent **Educator** Award (individual or collaborative)

The recognition is given to individual members of teaching staff or teams, learning and teaching support staff in recognition of their significant, consistent and sustainable contribution to excellence in module design, content, delivery; or contribution to new approaches to the enhancement of the learning experience of students and staff.

- Excellence in Education **Leadership** Award (individual)

The recognition is given to individual members of staff who teach or support learning and demonstrated excellent leadership in learning and teaching. Nominees need to evidence a sustained, successful, and transformational leadership in learning and teaching within the University and proactivity in sharing best practice within Essex and/or with other institutions.

- **Student Recognition** (individual or collaborative)

This recognition is given by students to individual members of staff or teams that are considered inspirational in their approach to teaching and the support of learning. Please note there is **no** panel-considered award bestowed upon a particular winner in this category but rather, *all* individuals named by students will be recognised.

To engage with this category, students are invited to complete a dedicated Microsoft Form (<https://forms.office.com/e/mSU6zXAZ1e>) rather than submit a formal application form and/or any supporting materials (unlike that required of the other categories).

Excellence in Education Award: Criteria

All applicants or nominees should be able to evidence at least one of the following criteria:

- Excellence in curriculum/module design, content or delivery;
- Contribution to innovative approaches to education, learning and teaching or the improvement of the learning experience of students and staff within or outside a particular module, department, school, centre or section.

In addition, applicants/nominees for the Excellent Educator Award should be able to evidence:

- Consistency and sustainability of excellent practice demonstrating effective approaches to learning and teaching over a period of time;
- For collaborative awards, explanation of how the team collaborates and how that collaboration has been an advantage.

In addition, applicants/nominees for the Excellence in Education Leadership Award should be able to evidence the following transformational leadership qualities in education:

- Impact on learning and teaching, learning support, organisational and administrative practices within or outside a particular department, school, centre or section;
- A focus on sharing best practice, institutional leadership and working with other institutions.

The extent to which these criteria will be weighted in the final judgement will be commensurate with career stage and role: for instance, would be expected to have more limited possibilities for some criteria, whereas lecturers would be expected to have more opportunities.

Peer-nominated applications will be considered alongside self-nominated applications. However, peer-nominated applicants would be informed of their nominations and given the opportunity to comment and/or consider enhancing their applications with a reflective narrative and supporting evidence if applicable. Peer-nominated applicants reserve the right to withdraw their application from the process if they wish.

Who can apply?

- All full- and part-time members of staff with responsibility for teaching and/or supporting the student learning experience are eligible to apply or nomination. This includes members of academic staff, professional services staff, technicians with educator roles, Assistant Lecturers and Graduate Laboratory Assistants.

- The Excellent Assistant Lecturer and Graduate Laboratory Assistant Award is open to all Assistant Lecturers and Graduate Laboratory Assistants across the University campuses, departments, schools, centres or sections.
- The Excellent Educator Award (individual or collaborative) is open to individual members of academic and teaching staff or teams, learning and teaching support staff or technical staff across the University departments, schools, centres or sections.
- Excellence in Education Leadership Award (individual only) is open to individual members of academic and teaching staff, learning and teaching support staff or technical staff across the University departments, schools, centres or sections.
- All applicants are requested to agree to a statement indicating that their Head of Department/School/Section (or their designate) support their application.
- Under peer-nominations, nominees will receive an email from Organisational Development informing and congratulating them on their nomination. They will be given three options to either develop their nominations further, submit the application as it is or withdraw from the process.
- Applications or nominations from teams under our collaborative awards can be made up of any combination of academics, professional services staff and students with any level of experience as long as individuals can demonstrate their contribution and impact within a team.
- Previous winners of the award are eligible to apply in the same category five years after the year that the original award was received.
- Applications from all our UK partner institutions are encouraged.
- Team members applying under collaborative awards cannot use the same application or grounds to apply under other categories in the same year or subsequent years.
- Individuals may not submit applications for different awards categories to the same panel.
- Applications will need to be based on projects, initiatives or endeavours that commenced during or prior to the current academic year up to three years, with the focus of the application being towards the recent academic year.
- Unsuccessful applicants may apply for the award in subsequent years with a revised application as per panel feedback.

How to apply:

Once you have read through the guidance notes, please complete the EEA application form. This is available for download on the dedicated [Excellence in Education Award Moodle page](https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=13229) (<https://moodle.essex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=13229>).

Please note any applications towards the **Student Recognition category** (individual or collaborative) or are to be made by students via the **dedicated Microsoft Form only** (<https://forms.office.com/e/mSU6zXAZ1e>).

The deadline for all applications is:

Monday 16 September 2024 (5pm)

Applications should be submitted electronically using the link provided on the [Excellence in Education Award Moodle page](#).

If you are from a partner institution, please email your application directly to eea@essex.ac.uk.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to email us on eea@essex.ac.uk.

Guidance on how to write your personal statement and supporting material:

Developing your statement

The personal statement (for applicants and nominees) is the most important component of the award. As a result, plan to put a good amount of time and effort into fine-tuning your statement. Although the award allows significant flexibility in content, layout and evidence, there are three main aspects that will be used by the panel to establish the strengths of your candidacy: effectiveness, proactivity and impact.

In the statement, we are asking you or your nominee to consider the following:

- **Effectiveness** - Demonstrate how your statement meets the award criteria to deliver excellence in education.
- **Proactivity** - Describe how your contribution represents **self-initiated behaviour** to go above and beyond your expected role.
- **Impact** - Show how the applicant's action has **led to changes in practice and/or influenced others** within your context and/or beyond through sharing good practice and supporting colleagues.

Successful applications to the awards often address the following in their submission:

- Aims, objectives and rationale for the individual or team's approach to a particular learning scenario, environment or issue.
- Demonstration of student involvement with the individual or team submission (if applicable).
- Focus on how the individual or team has addressed a thematic topic such as assessment and feedback, employability, academic support, and so on.
- Description of how the individual or team has approached a particular situation.
- Detailed and reflective account of the outcomes and impact of the individual or collaborative work
- Use of evidence of how the individual or team's work has enhanced student learning

Supporting material

This is your opportunity to provide evidence that you regard as *relevant to support the narrative in your statement*. You are invited to follow the guidelines below:

- Up to three sets of supporting documents may be submitted, but in total they should comprise of no more than six sides of A4 if the evidence is in a written format.
- Documents can be in multiple formats (e.g. PDF, PowerPoint, Word, images, video files, etc.)
- Supporting materials may include: photographs, tables, graphs, documents containing statistics, testimonials from colleagues and Heads of Sections/Departments and Schools, supporting research, evaluation or inspection reports, promotional materials and media coverage.

For further information and support, please contact eea@essex.ac.uk.

After you apply:

Your application will be peer-reviewed by a cross section of the panel members and their decision is final. Applications in each award category will be reviewed by a student, academic and professional services staff panel member. Ideally, the panel will include the following members:

- **Chair** Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)
- **Reviewers**
 - Three academic staff representatives (typically Faculty Dean Undergraduate from each Faculty)
 - Three student representatives (typically Faculty Convenors from each Faculty)
 - Three professional services staff (typically Education Developers or in an Education related role)
- **Observers**
 - Students' Union VP Education
 - Head of Academic and Professional Practice
 - EEA Lead (Organisational Development)
- **Secretary** - Organisational Development Administrator

All applicants will be informed within 5 working days of the panel meeting by email with the panel's decision and feedback. There will be opportunity after the panel to discuss the outcomes with colleagues in Organisational Development.

Sharing Good Practice and Celebrating Excellence:

- All award winners and unsuccessful applicants are welcome to request face-to-face feedback (via Zoom if preferred) to discuss how they could further develop their practice or disseminate their practice more widely to have an institutional/national or international impact.
- All are welcome to book onto our annual Celebrating Excellence in Education event - more details will be shared nearer the time.
- All EEA winners will receive a recognition certificate signed by Vice Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) and Student Union President.
- All applicants will also be given the opportunity and encouraged to share their good practice by contributing to University events and various support resources.
- All applicants may be invited to facilitate the creation of a poster or a short talk or presentation in order to share their good practice at relevant events. Full support will be provided by Organisational Development.
- EEA winners, where suitable, will be encouraged and supported to prepare for other internal or external awards such as National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) and Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE). Individuals will receive support and guidance preparing these applications from the Organisational Development team.

Excellence in Education Award 2024 timeline:



Award Launches for Applications

Monday 20 May 2024



Award Submission Deadline for all Applications

Monday 16 September 2024 (5pm)



Panel

Wednesday 20 November 2024



EEA 2024 Celebration Event

Wednesday 4 December 2024