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.

Sir Albert Sloman (1963)
Guidance Notes for Applicants

What is the Education Award?

The Excellence in Education Award (EEA) are inspired by the University’s purpose, values and vision to achieve excellence in both education and research. Our staff aim to offer students a transformational educational experience; 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:

_In the light of the above criterion, how does your practice demonstrate a proactive, effective and impactful approach to education at the University of Essex?_

What are the Excellence in Education Award categories?

Applicants can apply for either of the three awards below:

- Excellent Graduate Teaching Assistant Award: individual award for GTA/ GLA
- Excellent Educator Award: individual award for academics and/or professional services
- Excellent Educators Award: collaborative award for academics and/or professional services

Who can apply?

All full and part-time members of staff with responsibility for supporting the student learning experience are eligible to apply. This includes professional services staff, academic staff and GTAs/ GLAs.

Applications from all UK partner institutions (University Centre Colchester/ Colchester Institute, South Essex College, the Edge Hotel School, Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust and Kaplan Open Learning) are encouraged.

Individuals and teams can nominate themselves after consulting with their Head of Departmental/School/Section leads or their nominees. Departments/Schools/Sections are also invited to nominate colleagues who promote excellence in education for both awards, where applicable (on the understanding that nominee(s) will be required to fill out the application form and submit it themselves by the advertised deadline). Departments/schools/sections can support their nominee(s) with a reference/testimonial that can be included as evidence to support the application. Colleagues who have received a commendation for a CADENZA application during the current academic year will also be encouraged to apply.

Teams applying for the Excellent Educators Award can be made up of any combination of academic and professional services staff with any level of experience as long as they can demonstrate their contribution and
impact as a team on the student learning experience and that they have raised the profile of education excellence through their work.

Please note:

- Team members applying for this award cannot use the same application or grounds to apply under other categories in the same year or subsequent years.
- Individuals may not be awarded twice but may submit applications for different awards.
- Applications will need to be based on projects, initiatives or endeavours that commenced prior to the current academic year up to three years; given the core achievements have taken place at Essex and during the current or last academic year.
- Any supporting material will be accepted during the same period or after if this further supports the application.

How to apply?

Once you have read through the guidance notes and had an initial discussion with your head of departmental/school/section leads or their nominees to confirm that you can meet the criteria and would like to apply, you need to complete the EEA application form. This is available on the Organisational Development website.

The deadline for applications is 5pm on Friday 25 May 2018. Applications should be submitted electronically to eea-talif@essex.ac.uk.

Guidance on how to write your personal statement and supporting material

Getting Started

The personal statement 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 criteria 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 to:

- Demonstrate effective practice to deliver excellence in education in relation to the university values and mission.
- Describe how your action represents self-initiated behaviour to go above and beyond, and how your values have influenced others.
- Show how your action has led to changes in practice within your context and beyond.

Developing your statement

Your statement is intended to demonstrate how your education contribution has been effective, proactive and impactful. The prompt questions below provide an indication of the frame of reference that reviewers will be considering when judging the merits of your application:

Effectiveness

- To what extent does your statement address an appropriate practice for the award values?
- To what extent does your statement address an appropriate practice in relation to the university values and mission to deliver excellence in education? (This is based on the university strategy and/or Education Strategy and relevant action plans).
Proactivity

• To what extent does your statement demonstrate a proactive approach to practice, predicting change or help develop foresight for change?
• To what extent does your statement offer self-initiated behaviour in their practice above and beyond your everyday role and act as a change agent?

Impact

• To what extent does your statement demonstrate an effective and sustainable practice within your context and beyond. In other words, how had your practice led to changes in practice within your context and beyond?
• To what extent does your statement impact on colleagues and/or students as partners, and how clearly this is articulated?
• To what extent does your statement identify appropriate dissemination routes within their immediate context and beyond? For example,
  - does the statement include inter-departmental, interdisciplinary and/or external collaboration?
  - does the statement include pedagogy/publications in support of excellence in teaching and 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 the award organising team on eea-talif@essex.ac.uk.

After you apply

Once you have submitted your application, it will be reviewed by the EEA panel. To ensure wider representation from our university community, the panel will include students, academics and professional services. Ideally, the panel will include the following members:

- Chair: PVC Education
- Secretary: Organisational Development Administrator
- Deputy Dean Education from each faculty
- Three student representatives from each faculty, such as faculty convenors
- Students’ Union VP Education
- Organisational Development representation (e.g. Education Developers)
- HR Business Partner representation

Your application will be peer-reviewed by the panel members and their decision is final. 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 with colleagues in Organisational Development (Human Resources) how they could be supported to share good practice. Successful applicants may be invited to write a short narrative/
record and short video and have their photos taken. Unsuccessful applicants can re-apply in future rounds given that they can demonstrate sustained/new evidence of impact.

What activities can the award support?

The award breakdown is as follows:

- Up to five individual awards of £250 each are available to staff under the Excellent Graduate Teaching Assistant/Graduate Lab Assistants category.
- Up to four individual awards of £1000 each are available to staff under the Excellent Educator category.
- Up to two team awards of £2000 each are available under the Excellent Educators category.

Awards are to be spent on professional development activities, which may include purchase of software or hardware, travel and/or conference fees, purchase of books and other equipment.

Spending of the awards must comply with the University financial regulations. Please speak to the finance officer in your department/section or the University Finance Section for more information.

Successful applicants can use the award to support their own professional development or learning and teaching activities within their department/school/section. Team awards will be split equally among team members.

Award holders may be contacted by the Organisational Development team inviting them to be involved in projects or events. Successful applicants and teams will receive their awards during a celebration event hosted by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education).

Education Award timeline 2017-18

Excellence in Education Award Timeline 2017-18

Award Nomination Opens
Self nominations and Departments' encouragement of staff to apply. Applications and guidance made available

09/04/2018

Pre-Panel Arrangements
Distribution of applications to panel members.

25/05/2018

Award Winners announcement
Winners will be invited to attend Pro VC Education reception. Winners will notified by OD team with the event details.

28/05/2018

Panel Meeting
Decision making on applications

26/06/2018

Award Submission Deadline
Closing time is 5pm. Applications after this deadline will be rejected.

29/06/2018

Deadline: 5pm – 25th May 2018