

Outstanding Student Contribution to Education Awards

The Outstanding Student Contribution to Education Awards were inaugurated in 2019 by the Cambridge Centre for Teaching and Learning. The purpose of these awards is to recognise the outstanding contributions that students themselves make towards enhancing educational practices across the University.

They are an opportunity to show our appreciation for our students' efforts to improve the learning and teaching experiences of their peers, and to celebrate their contributions to enhancing the excellence of Cambridge education through voluntary or extracurricular activities. We continue to be delighted by the enthusiastic response to the awards each year and the incredible breadth of nominations we receive.

Please contact [Dr Ruth Laing](#), Cambridge Centre for Teaching and Learning, with any enquiries.

Timeline

The deadline for submission of nominations is **12pm Monday 4 July**.

We hope to shortlist and select the winners in early July and make a public announcement by the end of July. If you have submitted a nomination, we will get in touch to confirm the outcome once all of the nominee(s) have been notified and accepted (or declined) the award.

Categories

There are five categories for which a student(s) can be nominated. Please select the category you deem most appropriate in the nomination form, but rest assured that we recognise there may be overlap. The selection panel may re-categorise any nomination if they deem it more appropriate, depending on the content and the numbers received for each category.

As a guide, we would recommend selecting the 'Representative' category if the activities were carried out in a formal representative role, even if those activities contributed to, say, inclusive practices. Similarly, working to make practices more inclusive with the aim of improving access should be submitted to the 'Access & Outreach' category.

- 1. Academic or College Representative**

Being an elected representative – whether academic, JCR or MCR – allows students to work with their institutions to resolve issues raised by their peers, and work together with Cambridge Students' Union to share good practice or even contribute to larger-scale institutional changes. Students might be nominated for going above and beyond the expectations of their role in representing the student voice on teaching and learning matters.

- 2. Access & Outreach**

Our students play an integral role in the University's efforts to widen access and reach the public through outreach efforts. Students might be nominated for going above and beyond in their

voluntary efforts at outreach or access events or mentoring schemes, or for their own initiatives in these areas. They might contribute to institutional access reviews or advocate for change.

3. Inclusive Practice

In light of the University's commitment to widening access and participation, it is important to acknowledge the outstanding work undertaken by students in giving voice to underrepresented cohorts, and in driving initiatives to improve the educational experience of all. Students might be nominated for their voluntary or extracurricular initiatives, or for stepping up to demonstrate or advocate for particular inclusive teaching and learning practices.

4. Peer Support

The transition to university can be challenging, and the voluntary contributions by students in supporting their peers are often unrecognised but of great value to the university community. Students might be nominated for their outstanding voluntary contributions to supporting their peers' learning in small or large ways, for instance in taking the initiative to set up a study group, or in department-wide or College extracurricular initiatives.

5. Innovative Practice

The contributions that students make towards inspiring, informing or founding new approaches to educational practice usually go unrecognised. Students might be nominated for their work assisting Departments, Faculties or Schools with educational review or reform. They might have driven the decision to undertake a curriculum review, or even set up a new practice entirely on their own initiative.

Eligibility

Any current student or staff member may nominate a current student at the University of Cambridge. A student nominated in a previous year may be nominated again. A student who was an Award Winner or Highly Commended in a previous year may be nominated again, but not for the same activities that formed the basis of their previous award.

It is important to note that these awards are intended to recognise **voluntary** efforts undertaken *in the capacity* of a student. A student undertaking compensated work or official teaching duties would thus not be eligible. For example, a PhD student may be nominated for setting up a peer literature club but would not be eligible for their paid work supervising undergraduate students. Please instead consider submitting a nomination to the [Student-Led Teaching Awards](#) organised by Cambridge Students' Union.

Groups may be nominated as well as individual students; up to three named individuals may be provided to receive the award and we must have the contact details for at least one named student. Please make clear in your nomination text if the individual(s) are representing a broader group (for example, whether you are nominating the MCR President, or nominating the MCR as a group represented by the President).

[Submit a nomination here](#)

Winner Selection

The selection panel maintain the right to present more than one award for a particular category if there is a particularly strong set of nominations, or not to present an award for a particular category if none of the nominations are deemed strong enough.

Selection Criteria

Winners will be selected based on the breadth and depth of detail provided in the nomination process that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- A positive contribution to the student's educational community that goes above and beyond
- A key role in stimulating other students' engagement with their learning and teaching experiences
- A positive impact in representing other students' voices on issues related to learning and teaching
- Leadership in driving initiatives, projects or events focused on enhancing the educational experience of other students at Cambridge

Some weight may be given to the number of nominations received for a particular student or group of students, but multiple nominations do not guarantee an award, nor are they necessary to secure an award. Most awards are granted on the basis of one strong nomination. We discourage nominators from organising mass nominations where citations are near identical or clearly written based on a shared set of prompts.

Although a former Award Winner or Highly Commended student may be nominated again on a new basis, they will be given slightly less weight when being compared against other nominations.

Selection Process

CCTL will review the entire set of nominations received and curate a longlist for each category, removing any nominations that are clearly ineligible (for example the activity forming the basis of the nomination is compensated work) and moving nominations between categories if appropriate.

Each longlist will be sent to two or more representatives from the selection panel, who will curate a shortlist according to the above criteria and briefly review nominations for the other categories. These shortlists will be compared and discussed at the panel selection meeting (nominations may again be moved between categories at this stage), and a final set of shortlists and winners decided.

Composition of the Selection Panel

The Selection Panel will comprise members from CCTL, colleagues from appropriate teams within Education Services, and student representatives from Cambridge Students' Union (at least one undergraduate and one postgraduate).

Showcasing the Winners

Both winners and those shortlisted will receive a certificate and be featured with an extract from their nomination(s) on the CCTL website. Those shortlisted are presented as 'Highly Commended'.

Your consent is given, on submission, for excerpts of the text written in support of the nomination to be presented on the CCTL website. We will ask permission of the nominee(s) before publishing. If there is content integral to the nomination which you are concerned about being published, please get in touch.