

Outstanding Student Contribution to Education Awards (OSCEAs)

The student awards

There are currently two opportunities to recognise excellence in teaching at Cambridge: the Pilkington Prize and the CUSU Student-Led Teaching Awards. As yet, however, there is little opportunity to recognise the outstanding contributions that students themselves make towards enhancing educational practices across Cambridge. The Cambridge Centre for Teaching and Learning has therefore developed this new award, the Outstanding Student Contribution to Education Award (OSCEA).

The purpose of the OSCEA is to show our appreciation of 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 in their voluntary or extracurricular activities.

Timeline:

- May 29th : Nominations open to staff and students to nominate outstanding students
- June 17th : Nominations closing date
- June 19th : Shortlisting of nominations by selection criteria
- June 21st : Selection panel review of shortlisted nominations
- June 24th : Awards announced (online/email)

Categories:

Four categories of award are proposed, with staff and students asked to nominate undergraduate or postgraduate students who they think have made a significant positive impact on the educational experience at Cambridge.

1. 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.

2. 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 extra-curricular initiatives.

3. Academic Representative (Department, Faculty, School or Institute)

Being an elected Academic Representative allows students to work with their institutions to resolve issues raised by their peers, and work together with CUSU and their Departments/Faculties to share good practice or even contribute to larger-scale institutional changes. Students might be nominated for going above and beyond in representing the student voice on learning and teaching matters.

4. JCR or MCR Representative (Colleges)

While the focus of most JCR and MCR committee members is community-building and welfare within their colleges, they might also make significant positive contributions to the learning experience of their peers. Students might be nominated for going above and beyond in their efforts for the educational experience of their college communities.

The Awards

Each shortlisted student will receive a 'special commendation' certificate. The winners of the four categories will receive a certificate and an engraved trophy.

Nomination process

Any current student or staff member – academic, academic-related or professional – may nominate a current student at the University of Cambridge.

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 nominated student's educational community that goes above and beyond;
- A key role in stimulating other students' engagement with their learning and teaching experiences in either College or Department/Faculty contexts;
- 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.

Selection process

The CCTL will review nominations according to the above criteria and create a shortlist which will be considered by an Awards Panel. Nominations may be shortlisted based on meeting just one criterion, and particular consideration will be given to multiple nominations for the same student. If the Panel does not believe that any of the nominees meets the criteria, they may recommend that no award be given. There is no requirement that the award be presented annually.

Composition of the Awards Panel

The Awards Panel will comprise two members of the CCTL Steering Group, two CUSU/GU representatives and at least one member of the CCTL.

Enquiries

Please contact Dr Ruth Walker, Cambridge Centre for Teaching and Learning, if you have any questions or comments about this new award.