

Maynooth University Teaching Award 2024–2025

Information and Guidelines

Introduction

The Vice President Students and Learning is pleased to announce the Maynooth University Teaching Awards for 2024–2025. The aim of the awards is to recognize those individuals and teams that demonstrate excellence and innovation in teaching that has a transformative impact on student learning and engagement.

Maynooth University offers its students an exceptional educational experience that enables them to reach their full potential as students and as individuals. A key strength of our university is its strong community that fosters an open, supportive, and flexible learning environment. This award aims to recognize staff that go above and beyond the normal expectations of their role in enabling this educational experience.

Award Categories and Eligibility

Awards are available in both individual and team categories.

Maynooth University Award for Teaching Excellence

University staff (full time and part time) who are engaged in teaching or support teaching are eligible for nomination for this award. Nominees must be engaged in teaching or the support of teaching and learning in the University in the academic year in which they are nominated. Recipients of the Award are not eligible for re-nomination for an individual award within six years of receiving the Award (but could be nominated as part of a team). Recipients of this award will receive a grant of €2,000 to be used in the further development of teaching, learning, assessment and/or student engagement activities.

Award Categories

- Early-Career Teaching Staff (0-5 years teaching in Higher Education)
- Mid to Late Career Teaching Staff
- University Tutor, Technical, Demonstrator Staff

Maynooth University Team Award for Teaching Excellence:

A staff team can also be nominated for an Award. A team can be made up of collaborating academic and/or professional staff engaged in a specific innovative teaching, learning and assessment initiative that impacts learning and engagement. Nominees must be engaged in teaching in the University in the academic year in which they are nominated. A team in receipt of this award is not eligible for re-nomination within 6 years of receiving the Award (but a team member may be nominated for an individual award).

A team in receipt of this award will receive a grant of €2,000 to support further development of teaching, learning, assessment and/or student engagement activities.

Applicants can only be nominated/considered in one category. Up to four awards can be awarded in a given year.

Outline of Process

The following outlines the various steps and elements of the Teaching Awards process:

- The Office of the Vice President for Students will invite nominations from staff, students, and recent graduates via relevant communications.
- Initial nominations are submitted via a short nomination form addressing these questions:
 - 'What makes this staff members teaching excellent?' (100 words maximum)
 - 'In what way has this staff member's impact on teaching and student learning been transformational?' (100 words maximum)
- Nominated individuals and teams are invited to submit a one-page Teaching Award Submission Form using an online template (3 Questions, 750 words Max).
- Submissions are reviewed and shortlisted by the Maynooth University Teaching Awards Committee.
- Shortlisted individuals and teams are then invited to submit an e-portfolio to evidence their approaches to excellence and innovation in teaching, learning, and assessment using a given guide and template.
- The MU Teaching Awards Committee would expect to recommend a maximum of four Maynooth University Teaching Awards in total per academic year and has the discretion to award additional awards where appropriate.
- Award recipients are announced, and the awards are presented by the Maynooth University President.
- Recipients of the Award will have the opportunity to share their teaching practice/approach with staff of the University.

Portfolio

Once shortlisted, nominees will be invited to submit an e-portfolio which will include a written statement (maximum 1000 words) together with an e-portfolio of supporting evidence, to a maximum of 20 pages. Detailed e-portfolio guidelines will be provided to those shortlisted.

Review Process and Criteria

Teaching Awards Committee:

All nominations and submissions will be reviewed by an Award Committee comprised of the following:

- The Vice President for Student & Learning (or nominee)
- A representative of the Maynooth Students' Union (VP Education or nominee)
- Three Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning Deans (or nominees from the Faculty T&L Committees)
- The Head of the Centre for Teaching and Learning (Chair)
- Nominee from the Centre for Teaching and Learning
- The Head of Student Skills and Success (or nominee)
- An external reviewer with relevant experience in Higher Education Teaching & Learning

Review Criteria

The Awards Committee will review each submission based on evidence of excellence and innovation in teaching, learning and assessment that makes a marked impact on student learning and engagement and includes examples of activities and efforts that go beyond the normal expectations of the role.

The Committee will review submissions against the following broad criteria relative to career stage and category. The committee will bear in mind that not all criteria will be equally applicable to all categories.

- Impact of teaching approach on student learning and engagement
- Quality of teaching and Professional Development
- Leadership in Teaching and Learning
- Curriculum Design and Development
- Scholarly and evidence-based approach to teaching practice

A strong submission would do the following:

- Demonstrate teaching and support activities and actions that are innovative and creative and go above and beyond the expectations of their role.
- Give clear examples and evidence from practice of how their approach has a transformative impact on student learning and engagement.
- Show that they employ sound principles and recognize good practice in their pedagogical approach to teaching, learning and assessment.
- Demonstrate their critical reflection on practice and their subsequent action to develop their practice and professional development as a higher education teacher.
- Demonstrate commitment to aligning their teaching practice to sound curriculum design and student-centred teaching and learning goals and outcomes.
- Evidence a collaborative approach to developing their teaching practice and sharing and disseminating learning and findings with colleagues.

- Show their engagement in research and scholarship to enhance teaching and learning within their own disciplines and/or across disciplines as part of their own professional development.
- Demonstrate an evidence-based approach to their teaching practice.

Guiding Indicators of Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Assessment Practice

University teaching and learning involves very different disciplines, contexts, and students, and therefore the application of rigid, standardized assessment criteria would be restrictive. As such, the following list is offered as a guide to what excellence in teaching looks like and can act as a prompt to support the completion of submissions.

- Use of methods that encourage students to become independent, critical thinkers.
- A recognition and understanding of the diversity that exists within one's own teaching context and discipline and the barriers to learning that might exist.
- Approaches that recognize the diversity of one's students and foster equal opportunity for student learning, assessment, and creativity.
- Relevant and effective use of digital technologies to drive and enhance teaching, learning and assessment.
- A recognition of one's own values and underlying philosophy and principles of teaching and that of their department/discipline.
- An ability to show empathy, respect, and support of all students in their learning journey.
- An ability to deliver learning topics with passion and confidence and in doing so instill these attributes in their students.
- Design and planning of teaching that has pedagogical purpose, acknowledges student needs and creates realistic opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning and progress.
- Use of content and resources that align to contemporary theory and practices relevant to the discipline area.
- Use of creative assessment approaches both drive learning and assess achievement of set learning outcomes and goals both during learning (formative) and at the end (summative).
- Use of good practice in giving timely and constructive feedback to students that can be used to reinforce learning and as a guide to future performance.
- An ability to reflect honestly and critically on one's own practice with a view to continuous professional development.
- Use of continuous and summative evaluation of one's own teaching practice to develop as a higher education teacher and enhance the learning opportunities of students.
- Engagement in the scholarship of teaching, learning and assessment with a view to investigating, researching, and reporting and sharing findings.

Key Dates:

Event Description:	Dates
Call for Nomination	Wednesday 19 th February 2025
Deadline for nominations	Wednesday 5 th March 2025
Invitation email to nominees to accept the Teaching Award nomination	Friday 7 th March 2025
Deadline for acceptance to participate and one-page submission	Friday 21 st March 2025
Review of submissions	Week 24 th March 2025
Invitation to submit portfolios	Tuesday April 1 st 2025
Deadline for receipt of portfolios	Before 12 th May 2025
Candidates will receive outcome	Week 26 th May 2025
Awards Presentation	Early June 2025

Further Information

For further information, please contact teachingawards@mu.ie.