Teaching Excellence Awards Scheme 2023-24
Guidance Notes

Overview

The Social Sciences Division runs an annual divisional Teaching Excellence Award (TEA) scheme. The scheme formally recognises the outstanding contribution to teaching and learning and the academic development of students shown by colleagues across the division. The Teaching Excellence Awards aim to recognise individuals' exceptional contribution and dedication to teaching at all career-stages.

All applications should be submitted to the Divisional Office at QA@socsci.ox.ac.uk by **noon on Friday 22 March 2024**. The TEA award nominations will be judged by a panel from the division's Quality Assurance Committee.

Award Categories

(a) Teaching Excellence Awards: Individual/Team Awards for Academic Staff

All individual academic staff or teams (including contract research staff) who undertake teaching of undergraduate or graduate students in the Social Sciences Division at Oxford are eligible to apply or to be nominated by their Head of Department for a Teaching Excellence Award. Applications from established staff are welcomed; it is anticipated that applications from early career staff (in the first five years of their career) will be routed through category (b) outlined below. It is anticipated that up to six awards will be made.

(b) Teaching Excellence Awards: Individual Awards for Academic Staff (Early Career Strand)

All academic staff (including contract research staff and students who teach in colleges) who are within the first five years of their career as a University teacher at any institution, and who undertake teaching of undergraduate or graduate students in the Social Sciences Division at Oxford are eligible to apply or to be nominated by their Head of Department for a Teaching Excellence Award (Early Career Strand). This award will be made in recognition of staff who have been highly innovative and have developed exceptional expertise in teaching within a relatively short period of time. It is anticipated that up to three awards will be made.

(c) Achievement Award for Sustained Commitment to Education

Heads of Department, in consultation with colleagues and students, are invited to nominate individuals who have demonstrated high quality and sustained commitment to education (whether through undergraduate or graduate teaching, graduate supervision, and/or other educational means such as introducing innovative methods of teaching or assessment) throughout their career in the service of Oxford (normally a minimum of 15 years or equivalent). Only Heads of Department may nominate staff for this award. It is anticipated that up to three awards will be made.

(d) Innovation in Supervision Award

All academic staff who undertake DPhil supervision in the Social Sciences Division are eligible to apply or to be nominated by their Head of Department for an Innovation in Supervision award. This award will be made in recognition of supervisors who are trialling new practices and successfully engaging with new methods of supervision. It is anticipated that up to six awards will be made.

Applications

Applications under **(a)**, **(b)** and **(d)** may be made directly by individuals (and teams under **(a)**) or by Head of Department nomination. Nominations under category **(c)** Achievement Award for Sustained Commitment to Education must be made by the Head of Department.

Departments are strongly encouraged to consult students on possible nominations, for instance by discussion with Student Representatives, at Joint Consultative Committees or by contacting student cohorts by email circulation.

Applications and nominations for categories (a) (b) and (c) must include

A case of approximately 1,500-words and no more than 2,000-words addressing the criteria set out below. The case should cover:

- an outline of the teaching/supervision undertaken;
- an account of teaching/supervision development over time;
- evidence of its effectiveness;
- any special methods or innovations introduced;
- a clear rationale for the individual's (or team's) approach to excellence in teaching/supervision, explaining how the form of teaching/supervision, course design and/or assessment (as applicable) are suited to the particular disciplinary content, the educational goals, the students, and the context.

When preparing your application, you should consider the following guide questions:

- What did you do?
- How did you do it?
- Why did you do it that way?

- What difference did it make?
- How can you tell it had impact?

The case **must** include supporting evidence which could include some of the following:

- short statements of support from colleagues (for example, Directors of Studies, Heads of House and Senior Tutors);
- testimonials from students outlining their support for the application, in particular, giving examples of how the applicant has demonstrated excellence in teaching;
- student feedback on courses and on teaching (gathered via the normal mechanisms operating in the subject or subjects concerned). This material must be aggregated and summarised for courses and years to assist interpretation. Where available, average ratings for the subject area should be supplied to give context.
- evidence of student performance, for example, from external examiners and/or colleagues;
- assessor reports on teaching/supervision and related activities as part of the applicant's/nominee's interim review;
- details of activities involved in organising teaching and/or supporting colleagues in developing teaching;
- examples or teaching materials developed and used;
- publications or conference presentations concerning teaching/supervision;
- details of professional development activities and training undertaken in relation to teaching/supervision.

Applications exceeding 2,000-words in length will not be accepted. The supporting evidence is included in the word count; however hyperlinking to supplementary materials is permissible. Supplementary materials are not guaranteed to be studied by the panel.

Applications and nominations for (d) Innovation in Supervision Award must include

A case of approximately 1,500-words and no more than 2,000-words addressing the criteria set out below. The case should cover:

- a clear rationale for the individual's approach to innovation in supervision should be included, explaining how the form of supervision is innovative and contextualised to the particular disciplinary content and the students;
- an account of supervision development and innovation over time (including any special methods or innovations introduced);
- evidence of its effectiveness.

When preparing your application, you should consider the following guide questions:

- What did you do?
- How did you do it?
- Why did you do it that way?

- What difference did it make?
- How can you tell it had impact?

The case **may** include a range of supporting evidence which could include some of the following:

- short statements of support from colleagues (for example, Directors of Studies, Heads of House and Senior Tutors);
- evidence of student performance, for example, from external examiners and/or colleagues;
- assessor reports on supervision and related activities as part of the applicant's/nominee's interim review;
- details of activities involved in supporting colleagues in developing their supervision;
- publications or conference presentations concerning supervision;
- details of professional development activities and training undertaken in relation to supervision.

To prevent a conflict of interest in the supervisor-supervisee relationship **supervisors should not routinely approach current supervisees for supporting statements**. Former supervisees may be approached, however this should be conducted with care to ensure that they are independent (e.g. not a postdoctoral researcher at Oxford) and are not strongly reliant on the former supervisor for references.

Applications exceeding 2,000-words in length will not be accepted. The supporting evidence is included in the word count; however hyperlinking to supplementary materials is permissible. Supplementary materials are not guaranteed to be studied by the panel.

Criteria

The following criteria will inform the panel's assessment of nominations for awards for categories (a), (b) and (c)

- Evidence of excellence above that normally expected;
- Evidence of the development of a thoughtful and well-grounded personal rationale for teaching and/or supervision;
- Evidence of support for student learning, (e.g. through high quality student feedback);
- Evidence of strong student support for the application;
- Evidence of development showing progressive improvements in teaching and/or supervision;
- Evidence of professional development concerning teaching and/or supervision;
- Evidence of contributing new methods and approaches adopted by colleagues;
- Evidence of publication or conference presentation(s) concerning teaching/supervision, or other form of external recognition of contributions to the development of teaching/supervision;
- Evidence of successful developments in course organisation/administration of teaching;

- Evidence of support of colleagues in developing teaching/supervision practice and policy.

The following criteria will inform the panel's assessment of nominations for TEA awards for category (d) Innovation in Supervision Award

- Evidence of innovation in supervision practices;
- Evidence of the development of a thoughtful and well-grounded personal rationale for supervision innovations;
- Evidence of developing a stimulating research environment for students;
- Evidence of helping students develop as researchers, for example, by nurturing curiosity, persistence, and a love of learning;
- Evidence of encouraging students to become members of their scholarly communities;
- Evidence of development showing progressive improvements in supervision practice;
- Evidence of professional development concerning supervision;
- Evidence of publication or conference presentation(s) concerning supervision, or other form of external recognition of contributions to the development of supervision;
- Evidence of support of colleagues in developing supervision practice and policy.

Deadline

The deadline for receipt of applications is **noon on Friday 22 March 2024**. A panel of the divisional Quality Assurance Committee will sit and consider the applications in week 1 of Trinity term 2023. Applications, and any questions, should be made to QA@socsci.ox.ac.uk.