

## Do's and Don'ts of applying for a teaching award

There is no single or ideal way of writing an application for an institutional or external teaching award. However, the list below may give you some ideas or pointers. A successful application is like a grant application or a C.V.; it's a sales or marketing exercise that highlights key areas of your Teaching and Learning, making the most out of any evidence. You cannot be self-conscious or reserved in your description of your activities- push descriptive boundaries and milk anything to its full extent. In short, you must drop your modesty.

- Draft a plan what you are going to put in each section before you start
- You will not be able to cover all your teaching and learning; chose key examples to illustrate distinct points- particularly novel approaches or those that make your teaching distinct
- Make sure you fully and clearly address all points that the application requires you to do; it may be beneficial to retain any subheadings provided within the form
- Don't worry about word counts initially. Once you have written your first draft, you can move things between sections, remove waffle, make sentences more focused etc
- Do make sure that you have the correct word count at the end
- Do make sure it's in the correct format asked for
- Don't repeat things in different sections, use alternative pieces of evidence
- Consider using bullet points to direct the reader
- Don't assume a reviewers knowledge and/or understanding (e.g. of organisations or funding streams). They are highly likely to be from outside your discipline
- Don't put in irrelevant details (e.g. module codes) or use acronyms
- Make sure all sentences are focused, don't waffle or use "edu-speak", particularly where you have a restricted word count
- Provide evidence for any claim you make e.g. numerical data (student feedback data) and quotes from colleagues/students; the latter always go down well. If you are using improved exam results as a marker of success, you will need to provide a comparison e.g. with previous year's results
- Make sure any quotes you use are not overly long, only use relevant parts
- Pay attention to the literature, have well chosen references
- Give evidence of taking your work further than your department - include examples of where you have collaborated with external agencies e.g. UK Centre for Bioscience, Learned Societies, delivered presentations to external audiences (places rather than numbers or titles of presentations) or published your work. Highlight examples of external input to, or feedback on, your teaching and learning
- The application should be "free-standing". Supplementary information or links to other information are unlikely to be looked at.
- Get feedback on your draft application, not only from your colleagues but individuals outside your discipline (if it is going to be assessed by staff from other faculties; get colleagues from these faculties to look at it)
- You may have to write it many times before you are happy with it, you have covered all the points required and you are within the word counts for each section
- Do have an idea of your 'Higher Education Ethos' i.e. what is it all for?

This guidance was developed from discussions at the event "Exploring promotion and CV enhancement and discussing the implementation of an e-mentoring scheme in the biosciences",  
[www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/events/leeds070110.aspx](http://www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/events/leeds070110.aspx)