CURTIN LEARNING AND TEACHING
Inspiring and supporting innovation, excellence and impact in learning and teaching
Curtin Learning Institute

Curtin University

Tips for Completing Citation, Teaching and Program Award Applications

Note: These tips are for Curtin Excellence and Innovation in Teaching Awards (EITA) applications. The tips are based on the Australian Awards for University Teaching (AAUT). They may also be used as a guide for some Faculty-based awards. Please read them in the context of the particular award for which you are applying.

Read the appropriate guidelines carefully before starting!!

General Tips, suggestions:

- Consider writing a learning and teaching philosophy which outlines what you believe to be important in your practice.
- Consider having someone interview you about your teaching and then use your responses as the basis for the application. It will sound more personal and perhaps present a clearer argument.
- Continually collect feedback and artefacts that evidence what you do and your contribution to student learning so you have a large pool to choose from.
- Start writing early, get feedback.
- The application must stand alone; i.e. the application without supporting documents should be sufficient to convince assessors. Don't simply refer to appendices or CV.
- An application should suggest that your teaching is more than what is usual, more than what is expected of a university teacher.
- Write the application in your own voice, look upon it as an exercise in personal reflection.

How to present eVALUate data:

Table 1 is an example of how to present eVALUate data. You might include a Faculty Average column for comparison as well.

Table 1. (compared to University average)

Year / Semester	Students Enrolled	Response Rate	Item 1 Learning Outcomes		Item 7 Quality of Teaching		Item 8 Motivated		Item 11 Overall Satisfaction	
			Unit	University Average	Unit	University Average	Unit	University Average	Unit	University Average
2007 / 2	xxx	28%	95	86	89	80	93	83	92	81
2008 / 1	xxx	43%	95	87	91	81	89	84	92	82
2008 / 2	xxx	34%	95	88	88	82	87	84	89	83
2009 / 1	xxx	41%	95	88	92	82	88	84	92	83
2009 / 2	xxx	32%	95	88	91	83	88	84	92	83

Formatting and Style of your application:

- **Follow the recommendations exactly**.
- Do not exceed the page limits (extra pages will be removed!)
- Do not try to cram everything into the application – it must be readable!
- Be consistent in style.
- Use headings and a clear structure.
- Put feedback comments (students, peers, external bodies etc.) in italics to emphasise (you could also put it in a text box).
- Spell out acronyms.
- Use photos and diagrams/tables to convey/support your message.
- Presentation does not need to be glossy and glitzy. It needs to be simple and readable.
- Write the application in your own voice and tell your story. It is a process of personal reflection.
- Start writing early, get feedback.

Collecting evidence to support your claims:

- Look for evidence that speaks to the specific criterion.
- Provide evidence to support your claims, using multiple sources where possible, including feedback from peers and students. Include evidence of effectiveness, particularly sustained contribution to student learning, e.g. student employment, comments from graduates, employers, adoption or modelling of your style and/ or program by other staff / institutions, invitations to make presentations about the program, etc.
- Go beyond standard student evaluations of teaching – include informal (collected by you, unsolicited etc.) as well as formal (eVALUate) forms of evaluation.
- Interweave the feedback into your application as evidence to support your claims.
- Indicate sources of feedback (methods of collecting) and particularly for statistical data, indicate the number of students and response rates in any/each set of data.
- Use comparative data e.g. faculty, university
- Indicate how you use feedback and show improvement over time.
- Use feedback and other sources that indicate long-term influence on learning outcomes, e.g. student employment, comments from graduates, students who indicate they want to do postgraduate studies with you, etc.
- Use examples to explain what you do (tied to your approach to teaching) and include evidence to support your claim that this leads to student learning.
- Choose explicit and strong words/phrases from the written feedback rather than long sentences.

Teaching Excellence Awards

For the synopsis:
- Must be succinct (150-200 words; in third person) – it is an abstract and used for publicity purposes.

For the overview:
Start with "who I am, what I do, why I make a difference".
- Introduce yourself - background, brief history of academic life, etc.
- Context of your teaching – what you teach, unit structures, class sizes, student cohort, face-to-face and online, discipline/institutional/faculty specifics, special challenges, etc.
- Teaching philosophy – well articulated; describe how your philosophy drives what you do and <u>why</u> you are successful/make a difference. Describe how you engage with the teaching and learning process, how your approach is appropriate in your teaching context.
- The use of educational jargon is appropriate as long as it would be understood by the assessor and what you describe as your philosophy is evidenced by your teaching practice.
- Describe your development as a teacher, how you have taken on board student and other feedback to improve.

For each of the criteria:
- Make your **CLAIM**, provide **EVIDENCE** and state the **IMPACT** on student learning.
- Provide your evidence to support those claims, using multiple sources where possible.
- Use examples that illustrate the impact on student learning.
- You should be able to demonstrate depth as well as breadth of evidence for each criterion. A weakness against one of the criteria will affect your overall application.

Referees:
- Choose referees carefully. One has to be the head of your faculty, school, department or your line manager. You are encouraged to choose the second referee external to Curtin (e.g. an industry associate) who is familiar with your work. They should know what you do and why you are an outstanding teacher.
- The reference should add something new, not just repeat what you have written (or at least say it in a different way).
- Ensure referees know of the 1-page limit, sign the Letter of Reference (electronic signature is accepted) and acknowledge the Privacy Notice provided on the Nomination Form.

Supporting material is not required for Curtin awards

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Programs that Enhance Learning

For the synopsis:
- Must be succinct (150-200 words; in third person) – it is an abstract and used for publicity purposes.
- Must cover a description of the program and its teaching areas, the program's contribution to student learning and engagement, and the program's impact on students.

For each of the criteria:
- Make your **CLAIM**, provide **EVIDENCE** and state the **IMPACT** on student learning.
- Provide your evidence to support those claims, using multiple sources where possible.
- Use examples that illustrate the impact on student learning.
- The application must stand alone; i.e. the application without supporting documents should be sufficient to convince the assessors. Don't simply refer to the supporting material.
- Highlight creativity, imagination, innovation and leadership.
- Demonstrate sustained effectiveness.

Referees:
- Choose referees carefully. One has to be the head of your faculty, school, department or your line manager. You are encouraged to choose the second referee external to Curtin (e.g. an industry associate) who is familiar with your work. Choose someone who can make an informed comment about the program and its impact on student learning and the student experience.
- The reference should add something new, not just repeat what you have written (or at least say it in a different way).
- Ensure referees know of the 1-page limit, sign the Letter of Reference (electronic signature is accepted) and acknowledge the Privacy Notice provided on the Nomination Form.

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Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning

Citation:

- Maximum 25 words that clearly describes your contribution.

For the statement:

Summary of particular contribution and context-

- Start with "who I am, what I do, what I contribute to student learning". Address the specific context of your work and summarise your contribution to student learning.

Address the chosen selection criterion:

- Make your **CLAIM**, provide **EVIDENCE** and state the **IMPACT** on student learning.
- Provide your evidence to support those claims, using multiple sources where possible.
- Use examples that illustrate the impact on student learning.
- You should be able to demonstrate depth as well as breadth of evidence for each criterion. A weakness against one of the criteria will affect your overall application.
- Ensure that when you address the criterion, you relate it to student learning.
- Highlight creativity, imagination and innovation.
- Show evidence of sustained contribution over time (at least 3 years; 2 years early career).

Referees:

- Choose referees carefully. One has to be the head of your faculty, school, department or your line manager. They should know what you do and why you have made an outstanding contribution to student learning.
- The reference should add something new, not just repeat what you have written (or at least say it in a different way).
- Ensure referees know of the 1-page limit, sign the Letter of Reference (electronic signature is accepted) and acknowledge the Privacy Notice provided on the Nomination Form.