

Higher Education Bioscience Teacher of the Year Award 2017

Guidance Document

Background

The Higher Education Bioscience Teacher of the Year Award seeks to identify the UK's leading bioscience higher education (HE) teachers, recognising the invaluable role they play in educating and inspiring the next generation of biologists. The competition is open to all employed bioscience teachers in the UK HE system and individuals can be nominated either by self, peer or management nomination using the [nomination form](#).

The HE Bioscience Teacher of the Year Award recognises outstanding learning and teaching practice in the biosciences. The scheme rewards lecturers who:

- Display individual excellence through the development and implementation of approaches to teaching that have proven successful in promoting bioscience student learning and achievement
- Undertake scholarly and professional developmental activities that actively influence and enhance the learning of their students
- Support colleagues and influence bioscience student learning beyond their own department and institution
- Exhibit innovation in relation to teaching that has proven to improve their teaching practices and enhance student learning

The HE Bioscience Teacher of the Year Award has been developed from the UK Centre for Bioscience's Ed Wood Teaching Awards, which were established in 2008/09 to provide an annual opportunity for bioscience academics to receive national recognition for their outstanding learning and teaching practices.

The closure of the UK Centre for Bioscience in 2011 means that the award is now offered and managed by the Royal Society of Biology. The Society and the sponsors, Oxford University Press and Heads of University Biosciences, are delighted to be able to ensure that this Award continues despite the Centre's closure.

Aims of the Award

The Award supports the Royal Society of Biology's objective to 'support and recognise excellence in biology teaching'. The main aims of the Award are to:

- Provide national recognition and reward for excellence in teaching and supporting innovative student learning in the biosciences for individuals in any of the UK home nations (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales)
- Raise the status of teaching in the biosciences as a scholarly activity
- Support individuals in reflecting upon and enhancing their professional practice in support of student learning
- Develop case studies of effective and/or innovative student learning and disseminate these nationally to enhance bioscience student learning experiences across the UK

The prize

The winner will receive the Ed Wood Memorial Prize of £1,000 to spend as they wish; one year's subscription to an OUP journal of their choice; and one year's free Membership of the Royal Society of Biology at the appropriate grade (MRSB or FRSB). The remaining finalists will each receive a £150 prize for their case study, and will also receive one year's free Membership to the Royal Society of Biology.

The winner will be announced and the award presented at the two-day HUBS Spring Meeting on 3-4th May 2017. All shortlisted candidates will be invited to present their case studies at the conference and their delegate fee, worth up to £350, will be waived.

The Ed Wood Memorial Prize is named in honour of Professor Edward J. Wood, who established and became the first Director of the Learning and Teaching Support Network for Bioscience, subsequently the UK Centre for Bioscience, and who dedicated himself to the promotion of biochemistry and molecular biology education.

Who is eligible?

The competition is open to all bioscience teachers in UK higher education, including those involved in higher education provision within further education. To enter, the bioscience teacher in question should be currently employed by a UK educational institution on a part-time or full-time, fixed term or permanent basis.

There is no limit to the number of applications per year from an individual bioscience department/institution.

Previously shortlisted applicants are not eligible to apply the year after they were shortlisted but are fully encouraged to apply again in subsequent years. Applicants who are not shortlisted may enter in consecutive years.

How do I enter?

Round 1

The first round involves entry by self, peer or management nomination, by completion of the [nomination form](#). Applications should address the criteria as set out below and should aim to give the judging panel enough information to build up a picture of the candidate's teaching. A limit of 500 words applies to each section of the application form (excluding references). All applications must be counter-signed by the applicant's Head of Department or line-manager to confirm the accuracy of information.

Applications will be judged using equal weighting given to the following four criteria:

1. Displays individual excellence through the development and implementation of approaches to teaching that have proven successful in promoting bioscience student learning and achievement
2. Undertakes scholarly and professional developmental activities that actively influence and enhance the learning of their students
3. Provides evidence of supporting colleagues and influencing bioscience student learning beyond their own department and institution
4. Exhibits innovation in their teaching practice that has proven to enhance student learning

Application forms should be received by **noon on Monday 31st October 2016**.

Candidates will be informed in **January 2017** of the judges' decisions. Those who have successfully been shortlisted will then enter the second round.

Round 2

In the second round, successful finalists will be asked to prepare a written case study and an accompanying 15 minute presentation based upon the case study. These should both be submitted before the following deadlines:

Case study submission deadline	Monday 27 th February at noon
Presentation submission deadline	Monday 6 th March at noon

Case studies should provide information on the finalists' teaching methodology and practice. They should highlight one teaching methodology or element of practice which has been proven to enhance the bioscience student learning experience and explain the rationale for using this approach, with evidence of innovation and success. The case studies should be around 1500 words long.

Previous finalists' case studies from [2012 onwards](#) are available online.

In previous years, case studies have been organised in the following way:

- I. Background
- II. Reasons for introducing this teaching method
- III. Lecturer's perspective
- IV. Students' perspective
- V. Issues
- VI. Benefits
- VII. Reflections
- VIII. Publications

Finalists may follow this format, or devise an alternative format that they feel best conveys their case study.

The presentation will be given in person to the judging panel, which should be approximately 15 minutes long. Finalists should use this presentation time to discuss their case study and general teaching practices further. Finalists will then complete a 30 minute interview with the judging panel based on the evidence submitted in the Round 1 application form and the Round 2 written case study and presentation. Finalists should be prepared to answer questions on their presentation and case study but also their general practice, methodologies and philosophies in teaching.

In the second round, case studies and presentations will be marked using the following four criteria:

1. The extent to which they demonstrate enthusiasm for improving teaching and learning
2. The presentation of a clear rationale underpinning the approaches adopted, with a grounding in educational principles
3. The impact of the approach taken on students, and support from students for this approach
4. The originality and innovation in approach, and clear communication of work

At the final stage of selection, the four areas of excellence judged in Round 1 will be weighted at 10% each and the case study presentation and interview in Round 2 will carry a higher weighting of 60%.

The judging panel

The 2016 judging panel will consist of the following:

- Royal Society of Biology Council or ETP member – Dr Kim Hardie
- HUBS representative – Professor Peter Heathcote
- Oxford University Press Representative – Jonathan Crowe
- Previous winner (2014) – Dr Nick Freestone
- Previous winner (2015) – Dr Mark Clements

More information

Any questions about the scheme may be addressed to [Sarah Dalmedo](#).

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