

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S DEPARTMENTAL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE Applications Guidelines

I. INTRODUCTION

The culture at The University of the West Indies (UWI) has at its heart a commitment to deliver fully on the University's mission to be an innovative, internationally competitive, contemporary university deeply rooted in the Caribbean. The current strategic focus, particularly as it relates to the relevance of its programmes, research output and the kind of graduate it produces, can only be accomplished through a strong commitment to quality principles, service delivery and operational excellence. To this end the UWI intends to reward excellence at all levels and to provide a supportive environment for sustaining excellence.

One (1) award only, valuing US\$5,000.00, may be made to any department demonstrating the highest commitment to quality principles, service delivery and operational excellence.

II. OVERVIEW

The award scheme will be called "**THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S DEPARTMENTAL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE**". This award will form part of the existing Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence Scheme. The award will be made to deepen the quality culture and the commitment to continuous quality improvements notwithstanding constraints. The Award is intended to:

- demonstrate to all stakeholders a commitment to the quality principles as well as commitment to service delivery and operational excellence;
- recognise departments that can demonstrate the success of their efforts at continuous quality improvement;
- promote departmental awareness of quality principles as an increasingly important element of competitiveness in higher education; and
- champion and inspire engagement in quality improvement activities and best practices.

III. ELIGIBILITY

All academic and administrative departments, institutes, sections, sites, research units, and centres, which have made significant efforts in enhancing the quality of their processes and procedures to monitor and ensure quality of services and products, notwithstanding constraints. While these efforts might be the result of follow-up activities subsequent to quality assurance exercises with members of the Quality Assurance Unit, they need not be limited to quality assurance evaluations and reviews, and may be the result of other

interactions – for example, with accreditation evaluation teams, or through benchmarking against best practice.

However, departments should have undergone a quality assurance review or a quality evaluation exercise, and demonstrate adequate responsiveness to the recommendations of these quality assurance activities.

IV. INELIGIBILITY

No individuals can apply for this Award.

Departments that have not undergone a quality assurance review or a quality evaluation exercise are not eligible.

V. CRITERIA

Only quality assurance activities during **the preceding five-year period** will be considered.

The award will be based entirely on the principles of quality. Departments must demonstrate or provide evidence that their quality assurance performance meet the following criteria:

1. ***Leadership*** - Highlights the leadership arrangements in place that institutionalizes a quality culture. This includes deployment of mission and core values; the approach to decision-making; the use of teams; effective communication across all groups; and maintaining an internal environment support of staff involvement in achieving departmental objectives.
2. ***Well developed and well managed processes and procedures*** - Highlights ways in which departmental systems and processes are designed to ensure achievement of goals and objectives related to the mission of The UWI. Also indicates the ways in which procedures are implemented with available resources and within specific timeframes.
3. ***Data-driven to affect decision-making*** - Highlights the frequency with which needed data are collected and managed; demonstrates how the quality and availability of needed data have been used to improve decision-making, efficiencies and workflows.
4. ***Driven by high standards*** - Highlights standards which are benchmarked internally, nationally, regionally and internationally; demonstrates the ways in which the application of these standards has led to improvements in service, products and operations generally
5. ***Student- and Stakeholder-centred*** - Highlights ways in which stakeholder feedback has been used to improve processes and procedures to provide better service and improved products; provides evidence of increased level of stakeholder satisfaction as a result of the quality enhancement initiatives. This includes for example, reported instances and testimonials of surpassing expectations while delivering the products and services.

6. ***Innovative*** - Highlights particular innovations, benchmarked against best practice which have been proposed, developed and implemented to enhance the process of continuous improvement in key areas of departmental operations. Indicates where initiatives are not simply the following of existing quality standards and practices.
7. ***Results Oriented*** - Highlights clear achievement of stated departmental goals and objectives, related to the strategic objectives of the University, supported by evidence (for example, quantitative and/or qualitative data).

VI. PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

A. The Application

1. A written application **must be submitted through** the Head.
2. The application will:
 - (i) Demonstrate or provide evidence of the ways in which the performance of the department / section / institute / site / research unit / centre reflects sound quality principles, service delivery and operational excellence.
 - (ii) Include a narration of not more than **1,500 words**; supporting evidence need not be incorporated in this total.
 - (iii) Be assessed on the evidence of the quality improvements provided.
 - (iv) Be judged against the claims outlined in the narrative.
3. The application must be submitted by the established deadline.

B. Repeat Applications

- (i) Repeat applications are encouraged from departments whose initial application had been unsuccessful.
- (ii) Repeat applications from departments whose initial applications were successful would not be entertained.

C. Initiation

Any department/section/institute/site/research unit/centre wishing to be considered for an award will submit an application, through the Head, to the Campus Registrar or to the University Registrar, by the established deadline.

D. Selection Process

Step #1: The Campus Registrar or University Registrar will be the first conduit for the processing of applications. The Registrar will be responsible for:

- a) Receiving the applications and checking for completeness and adherence to the requirements;
- b) Submitting the applications for further screening and evaluation to the local Selection Committees.

Step #2: The Campus and Centre Selection Committees, whose composition will include two (2) additional members who are familiar with the quality process, will evaluate the applications and recommend the finalists for the Award.

Step #3: The Campus and Centre Selection Committees will submit their recommendations to the Office of Administration which will in turn forward them to a special University Selection Committee, whose composition will include external representatives from the private and public sectors and two (2) co-opted persons familiar with the quality process.

Step #4: The University Selection Committee will meet to review the recommendations and applications and select the recipient of the Award.

Step #5: The Office of Administration will announce the awardee.

E. Announcement of the Award

The Award will be announced publicly. Announcements will include (i) the criteria used to determine the Award; and (ii) the number of applications submitted for consideration by the Committee.

F. Presentation of the Award

The Award will be presented at the Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence Ceremony.

G. Prohibition

No award may be made to department/section/institute/site/research unit/centre without a favourable recommendation from the special University Selection Committee.