Regional Teaching Excellence Awards 2026/27

Shortlisting Guidelines for Participants

For shortlisting, you are required to submit an initial teaching philosophy statement followed by an overview of your pedagogical approaches to, and achievements in, learning, teaching and assessment. This might include curriculum planning and design, assessment and feedback, influencing or leading change, and your commitment to professional development.

This should be no longer than 1,500 words. You should include evidence to support your claims, in an appendix (see below for further guidance).

Please see the Regional Partners Indicators of Excellence (Appendix 1), which will provide a helpful framework to document and reflect on your teaching. Further suggestions are outlined below as to what should be included in your submission for shortlisting.

A) Context statement (approx. 200 words)

This is a short overview of your teaching and learning context. This might include your discipline, subject area, teaching activities, contexts and responsibilities (including UG/PG teaching, engagement in learning enhancement initiatives and curriculum design). This can be presented as a narrative or a table, as you prefer.

B) Teaching philosophy statement (approx. 650 words)

The teaching philosophy is a statement about how you view academic practice and your personal orientation towards teaching, learning and assessment within your academic discipline. In effect, this is a space for you to present your ideological stance on teaching, learning and assessment. This discussion should provide a rationale for the selection of pedagogical approaches that you employ.

O' Farrell (2007) highlights several questions to reflect on when considering your teaching philosophy:

- What do I believe about teaching, learning and assessment?
- What are my goals as a teacher?
- What demonstrates my desire to grow as a teacher?
- What are the opportunities and constraints under which I and others learn?
- Has my approach to teaching, learning or assessment changed?
- What role do my students play in the classroom (listeners, participants etc.)?
- What teaching, learning assessment and feedback practices do I use and prefer? Why?

It is important to distil your beliefs about teaching, learning and assessment in higher education down to their essence. As your teaching philosophy is a personal statement, it should be presented in the first person.

C) Pedagogical approaches to, and achievements in, learning, teaching and assessment (approx. 650 words)

This section should be informed by the RTEA Indicators of Excellence (see Appendix 1). It is not expected – or recommended – that candidates should refer to all elements of the framework; rather, this should be used to guide candidates to identify elements of their practice and to make claims for excellence, supported by evidence (see below for further guidance). For example, candidates may wish to select various aspects of their teaching, and to showcase indicators of excellence which demonstrate a longstanding commitment to innovation and excellence in teaching, learning and assessment. There should be clear coherence between the strategies/approaches highlighted, and the previous teaching philosophy statement. A critical, reflective approach is welcomed in this section.

Including Evidence to Support Your Application
To support the above statement, you should include and refer to evidence which supports your claims of excellence in teaching, learning, assessment or feedback as an appendix to your shortlisting submission. You are required to include some evidence at this point and those who are shortlisted as finalists will be expected to compile a more comprehensive portfolio of evidence.

This evidence should be carefully chosen and be a selection of relevant artefacts which align with the claims included in the main body of your submission. This evidence should also be clearly signposted and contextualised so that their relevance is immediately obvious to the reader. See Appendix 2 for a list of possible evidence which might be included to support your claims of excellence.

How to submit for shortlisting

Please include the cover sheet provided (Appendix 4), which details your name, faculty, department, institution, discipline and number of years teaching, as well as acknowledgement of genAI usage (if applicable). This submission should be saved as one file named as Surname_Firstname and emailed to your institutional contact address by **Monday, 16th November at 12.**

- Mary Immaculate College – LEAD@mic.ul.ie
- University of Limerick – michael.wride@ul.ie
- Technological University of the Shannon - catherineann.oconnell@tus.ie

Shortlisting procedure
All applications will be reviewed by a panel of external experts who will recommend a maximum of three applications from each partner institution from within the regional cluster to be shortlisted. Applicants will receive developmental feedback from the shortlisting panel. The shortlisting panel have been provided with the rubric in Appendix 3, which will be used in conjunction with the RTEA Indicators of Excellence to determine the successfully shortlisted candidates.

APPENDIX 1 – RTEA INDICATORS OF EXCELLENCE

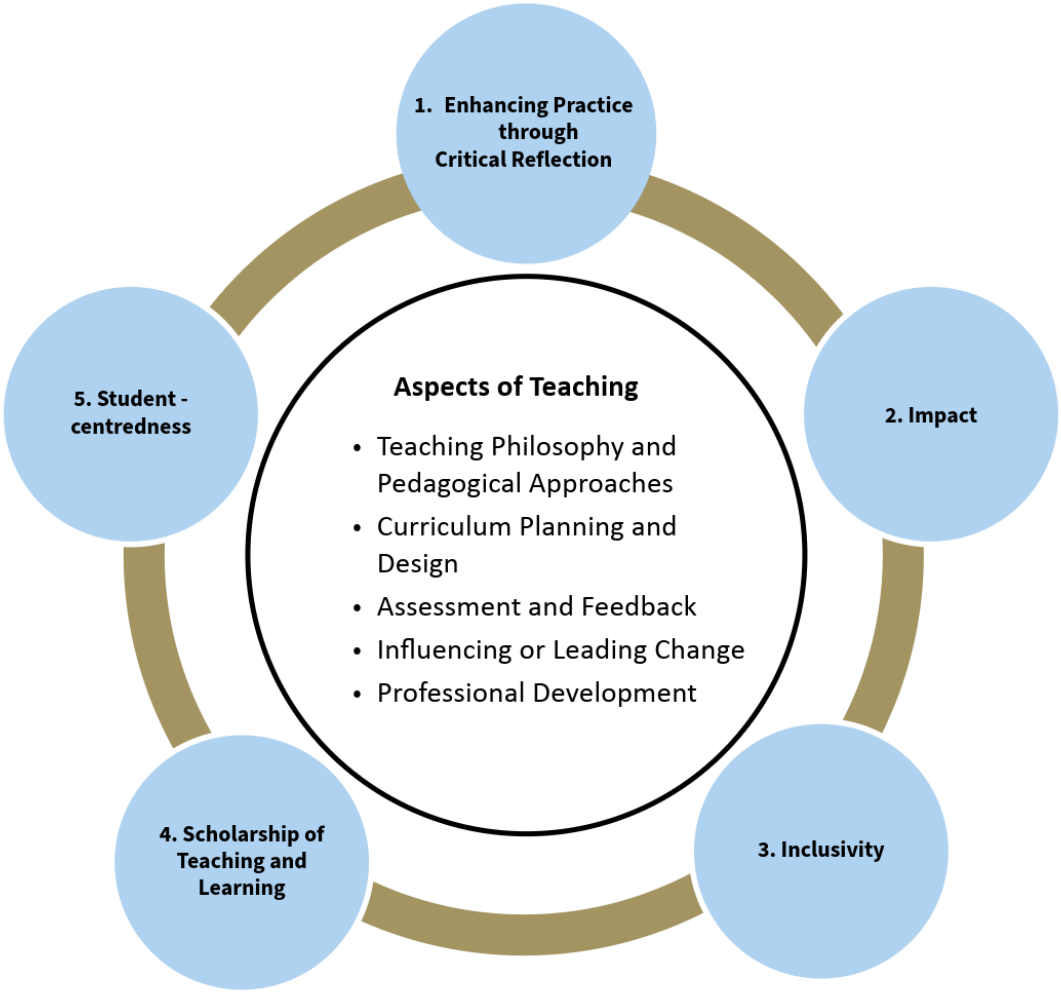

Table: RTEA Indicators of Excellence, adapted from Ka Yuk Chan and Chen (2023}

	Indicators of Excellence				
Aspects of Teaching	**1. Enhancing Practice Through Critical Reflection**	**2.Impact**	**3.Inclusivity**	**4.Scholarship of Teaching and Learning**	**5.Student-centredness**
Teaching Philosophy and Pedagogical Approaches	Provides a rationale for the selection of pedagogical approaches including digitally enhanced learning as appropriate.	Reflecting on the impact of current working practices and context on self.	Creating an equitable learning environment informed by the principles of inclusive practice.	Applying research- and evidence-based knowledge to enhance learning, teaching and assessment practices.	Commitment to active and applied approaches to learning
Curriculum Planning and Design	Programme and module design that incorporates latest developments in the discipline and underpinned by critical reflection.	Evidence of well-designed curricula that enable student learning.	Curriculum design is appropriate for a diverse range of learners informed by the principles of inclusive practice.	Using scholarship to inform curriculum review and design.	Supportive of active, student-centred approaches to learning that engage students and build towards students as partners in their learning.
Assessment and Feedback	Adopting assessment and feedback approaches that encourage critical thinking and independent inquiry.	Assessment design to include assessment of, for and as learning.	Designing assessment and feedback approaches taking cognisance of diverse learners.	Using scholarship to inform assessment and feedback design.	Assessment design that encourages the development of transferable and transversal skills.
Influencing or Leading Change	Influencing positive changes to practice which may include a variety of contexts.	Improving the quality of teaching in the academic community through sharing practices and approaches.	Exploration and engagement with diverse groups to enhance teaching practices.	Conducting research and disseminating findings through publications and Workshops.	Influencing or leading change to support active student-centered approaches to learning.
Professional Development	Demonstrating a commitment to continuous professional development informed by current HE priorities.	Evidence of sustained reflective practice for personal and professional development.	Engaging in professional development to support diverse groups of learners.	Engaging in professional development focusing on contemporary approaches to disciplinary/subject knowledge and pedagogies.	Exploration of student-centred approaches and the development of practice.

Appendix 2 – Evidence to support claims of excellence

You are required to include some evidence at this point, and those who are shortlisted as finalists will be expected to compile a more comprehensive portfolio of evidence. The list below – prepared by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education – outlines the type of evidence that might be included in a teaching portfolio or in the preparation of a submission for shortlisting for the RTEA. Under each heading, you will find suggestions of evidence, mapped to the domains of the National Professional Development Framework. Note that pieces of evidence may be relevant to more than one domain of the NPDF, so there is some overlap. It is not expected that all of these examples would be included, and it is expected that candidates will critically select evidence which directly supports the claims for excellence that are made.

Domain 1 - Personal Development: The 'Self' in Teaching and Learning

- Courses, workshops or seminars attended or programmes undertaken, including face-to-face and online learning.
- Evidence of recent initiatives to enhance learning opportunities.
- Examples of critical incident analysis.
- Teaching Philosophy Statement or self-review documents.
- A Personal Development Plan.

Domain 2 - Professional Identity, Values and Development in Teaching and Learning

- Description of current role & responsibilities, such as external examining, industry liaison, outreach activities, and technological competence.
- Feedback from peers regarding your involvement in organisational/professional activities.
- Evidence of recent initiatives to enhance learning opportunities.
- Feedback from colleagues & students or self-review documents.
- Outcome of peer review or professional observation of teaching.
- Critical comments on relevant books or articles read recently or conferences attended.

Domain 3 - Professional Communication and Dialogue in Teaching and Learning

- Evidence of dialogue with international and national communities/partners to enhance teaching.
- Evidence of the development of learning communities with peers, both disciplinary and interdisciplinary.
- Evidence of the development of academic writing and enquiry skills, such as journal articles, reports, or policy/procedures.
- Evidence of the development of peer, group, and team-working skills for the enhancement of teaching, learning, and scholarship.

Domain 4 - Professional Knowledge and Skills in Teaching and Learning

- Evidence of currency of disciplinary/subject knowledge.
- Evidence of active student-centred approaches to learning.
- Evidence of design and management of sessions, modules and/or curricula.
- Evidence of the application of appropriately aligned assessment and learner-oriented feedback approaches.
- Evidence of knowledge and application of the theories of how students learn within and across disciplines.

- Evidence of exploration and application of inclusive, innovative, enquiry-based, problem-based, and creative approaches to student learning.

Domain 5 - Personal and Professional Digital Capacity in Teaching and Learning

- Evidence of technology-enhanced learning courses/workshops/seminars attended or programmes undertaken.
- Evidence of adoption of an evidenced-based approach to the application of technology in the design of learning for students.
- Evidence of use of technologies for effective communication and collaboration with student, professional, and social communities.
- Evidence of the use of digital tools to create and develop new learning materials, embedding a range of media and interactive resources.

APPENDIX 3 – Rubric to guide shortlisting (used in conjunction with RTEA Indicators of Excellence)

Criteria	Well Achieved	Achieved	Not Achieved
Introduction and & context	Clearly articulates a core belief/metaphor about teaching and learning. Provides a detailed and insightful context of their discipline/professional service area and student profile.	Overview and introduction provided is clear. Provides a context of their discipline and student profile. Core beliefs are articulated but lacking depth in places.	Core beliefs are not articulated or poorly articulated. Context is present but lacks detail.
Teaching Philosophy and Pedagogical Approaches	Key guiding philosophical principles/beliefs are explicit and well-defined. Provides rich, specific, and detailed examples from their own pedagogical practice that directly demonstrate how principles are put into practice.	Core beliefs are articulated well, and principles are presented with good clarity. Provides relevant and clear examples from their pedagogical practice to support their philosophical principles.	The beliefs and philosophical principles are present but may lack clarity. Examples of pedagogical practice are general and lack sufficient detail to fully illustrate the philosophical principles.
Evolving Development as an Educator	Reflects critically and thoughtfully on their development as an educator.	Reflects on their development, showing a clear connection between experience and practice.	Reflection is superficial or lacks a clear connection to their practice.
Support for Claims	A wide range of relevant pedagogical theory and examples from practice consistently and	Claims and principles are supported by relevant academic literature and some	Some claims are supported by literature and practice, but the connections

	effectively supports claims and principles.	examples from practice.	may be weak or inconsistent.
Overall clarity and coherence	Well-structured, consistently clear, coherent, and highly professional.	Well-structured and generally coherent. The argument is articulated clearly, and the language is professional.	Poorly structured, confusing, or lacks a clear argument. The language is unprofessional or difficult to understand.

Appendix 4 - Cover page for the Initial Submission for Shortlisting

Regional Teaching Excellence Awards 2026/27 **Initial Submission for Shortlisting**	
Academic Year	**AY26/27**
Nominee name	
Institution	
Faculty	
Department/Discipline	
Number of years teaching	
Word Count (max 1,500 +/- 10%) (Not including References/Appendices**)**	

Author's declaration:

I hereby confirm that I am the sole author of this submission and that it is not the work of any other individual. All primary and secondary sources that have been consulted have been identified and acknowledged in the appropriate way.

GenAI Usage

If Yes, please provide details as follows:

"The following Gen AI systems [insert AI system(s)] was/were used to [describe specific use of generative artificial intelligence]. The prompts used include [list of prompts]. The output from these prompts was used to [explain use]."

Signed:

Date: