

2026 UGC Teaching Award

Guidelines

Section I: Overview

- 1.1 The University Grants Committee (UGC) Teaching Award (the Award) is established to honour staff who excel in teaching in the UGC sector. The Award, held annually, not only recognises past and present teaching performances and achievements, but also the teachers' leadership in and scholarly contribution to teaching and learning within and across universities. The awardees are expected to become "ambassadors of good teaching" to collectively make a real and sustained impact in promoting teaching excellence in the UGC sector.

Section II: Structure and the Award

- 2.1 There are three categories under the Award, *i.e.* (1) General Faculty Members (open to individuals only); (2) Early Career Faculty Members (open to individuals only); and (3) Collaborative Teams.
- 2.2 Each UGC-funded university may submit no more than three nominations in total. There should be no more than one nomination from each university for each Award category. Any nominee should be included in only one of the three Award categories and be included in only one university's nomination.
- 2.3 There will be a maximum of three awardees in total, and the Selection Panel reserves the right to give out less than three awards. There will be no more than one award in each category. The awardees and the finalists, *i.e.* those nominees who are shortlisted for the selection interview but not selected for an award, will be announced at the 2026 Award presentation ceremony and carried in UGC's press release. Each awardee shall receive a grant of \$1,000,000 (to be shared among all members in the case of collaborative team).

Section III: Eligibility

- 3.1 The Award is "discipline-neutral", *i.e.* universities may nominate individuals/teams from any discipline. All nominees should not have received a UGC Teaching Award as an individual or as the team leader/member of a winning team in the past five years, except that previous recipients of a UGC Teaching Award in individual categories (*i.e.* General Faculty Members and Early Career Faculty Members) within the last five years are eligible for nomination as team leader/member in the Collaborative Teams category.

- 3.2 The nominees for the *General Faculty Members* category should be full-time staff (excluding visiting staff) with teaching duties which focus primarily on UGC-funded programmes (*i.e.* the majority of the courses in terms of number or hours taught by the nominees are UGC-funded).
- 3.3 The nominees for the *Early Career Faculty Members* category should have no more than six years of teaching experience in higher education institutions as at the closing date for nomination. The length of teaching experience is counted on a semester basis and can be non-sequential. The nominee should be a full-time staff (excluding visiting staff) with teaching duties which focus primarily on UGC-funded programmes.
- 3.4 For the *Collaborative Teams* category, the nominated teams should be inter-disciplinary (*i.e.* involving more than one department within a UGC-funded university) and/or inter-institutional (*i.e.* involving more than one UGC-funded university). A team comprising only members from the same department may also be nominated providing that its pedagogical work possesses strong potential for application beyond the disciplinary and institutional boundaries. A team leader should be designated and the nominated team may comprise a maximum of five members including the team leader. For a team comprising members from more than one UGC-funded university, the nomination will be regarded as submitted by the team leader's university. Each nominated team must include at least one full-time teaching staff (excluding visiting staff) with teaching duties focusing primarily on UGC-funded programmes. The team may also include other academic and/or support staff (including teaching assistants) employed on a full-time or part-time basis.

Section IV: Selection Criteria

- 4.1 All nominees for the Award will be assessed based on the following three criteria -
 - (a) **Adoption of learner-centred approaches, ability to engage/inspire/impact on students and demonstration of superior acumen in teaching**, which may include a good understanding of pedagogy, understanding how students learn and adopting suitable teaching and assessment approaches that can achieve better student learning outcomes; being able to interact with students and engage them in learning with enthusiasm; inspiring and supporting students, with respect for their diverse learning needs, to build confidence and capability (including critical thinking, analytical skills, values, *etc.*); and outstanding classroom teaching (in face-to-face, virtual or hybrid settings).
 - (b) **Course/programme/curriculum design that can reflect a command of the field**, which may include demonstrating up-to-date knowledge of the field of study in the design of the curriculum and student learning resources (*e.g.*, textbooks, e-learning resources), adopting complementary research-informed teaching practices, incorporating research findings into curriculum design and teaching strategies by highlighting the connection between theory and practice, developing appropriate student

learning outcomes, and adopting innovative approaches to teaching and assessment which can facilitate students' achievement of the learning outcomes *etc.*, at/within an institutional, inter-institutional or sector-wide level. Nominees could outline whether and how they have incorporated research findings into their curriculum design and teaching strategies, highlighting the connection between theory and practice.

(c) **Past/present achievement(s) and leadership in teaching and potential scholarly contribution to and impact on the development of effective teaching practice within the nominee(s)' own university and/or in other institutions**, which may include demonstrating educational research and innovations in the field of study; and demonstrating leadership and evidence-based impact in the promotion of teaching excellence within and across disciplines and/or universities. In the case of early career faculty nominations, the focus will be on the nominees' potential of leadership in teaching as well as their past achievements. In the case of team nominations, the contribution of each of the team members, as well as the scale and complexity of impact of the team's collaborative work on the development of effective teaching practice at/within an institutional, inter-institutional or sector-wide level will be considered. Each team member's contribution in propagating the impact of their collaborative endeavours within his/her own university will also be taken into consideration. In addition, universities are also welcome to include examples of other prior collaborations among team members in the nomination materials (if the team is nominated for a specific project) but new and innovative collaborative initiatives are also encouraged. Under all three categories, nominations may outline strategies on how their good practices have been disseminated in the sector and their relevant extent, together with plans, if any, on how their impact could be further extended to the wider teaching community.

4.2 The three criteria carry no specified weighting. The Selection Panel will consider each nomination on its own merit with reference to the criteria.

Section V: Lodgement of Nominations

5.1 Universities are invited to submit for each nomination the following:

- (a) A completed nomination form in **Appendix**;
- (b) The university's nomination and evidence to substantiate the assertions made against the selection criteria (in no more than four pages and no more than 1 600 words);
- (c) The nominated individual/team's statement of teaching philosophy with reference made to the three selection criteria (in no more than five pages and no more than 2 000 words);
- (d) Evidence-based materials showing the impact of the nominated individual/team's excellent teaching on students' learning outcomes and the manner in which the nominated individual/team's work may be generalised and applied to other disciplines (in no more than two pages and no more than 800 words);

- (e) Evidence-based materials showing the nominated individual/team’s engagement in professional development activities and commitment to continuous professional development (in no more than two pages and no more than 800 words);
- (f) The personal curriculum vitae of the nominated individual/team, which will be shared with the media/public should the nominated individual/team be selected for the Award (in no more than four pages and no more than 1 600 words). For team nomination, one additional page (in no more than 400 words) per team member can be submitted. For example, a team with three members will be allowed to submit curriculum vitae of up to six pages (four plus two);
- (g) The nominated individual/team’s proposal of initiative(s), including the English and Chinese name of the initiative(s), the implementation timetable (the initiative(s) should be completed within a three-year timeframe and is not necessary to be a single project) and how the Award’s grant will be utilised to undertake learning and teaching related initiative(s) (in no more than three pages and no more than 1 200 words). For team nomination, elements of dissemination of good collaborative teaching practice within the UGC sector or the higher education sector in general should be incorporated in the proposal; and
- (h) (For *Collaborative Teams* nomination only:) materials on demonstration of impact of the collaborative work on the development of effective teaching practice, and the role and percentage contribution of each of the team members (in no more than two pages and no more than 800 words).

5.2 Universities should make good use of the institutional statements (*i.e.* item 5.1 (b) above) to support the application. Online information in the form of links inserted in the nomination package will not be considered. For qualitative comments from students and colleagues, universities should only include those collected from formal sources or through formal processes such as course evaluation.

5.3 Universities are requested to provide one set of electronic copy of the above in “Times New Roman” font (size 12) and strictly observe the page and word limit as stated in item 5.1 above. Any part(s) of the submission going beyond the page or word limit (including appendices and attachments) or not complying with the above requirements will be disregarded. The UGC Secretariat may contact the nominated individual/team, through the nominating universities, for clarifications and/or further information.

Section VI: Selection Panel and Process

6.1 All nominations will be considered by the Selection Panel, which will comprise members with the following backgrounds:

- (a) Members of the UGC/Quality Assurance Council (QAC) (academic and lay members);
- (b) Former recipient(s) of the UGC Teaching Award; and
- (c) An External International Expert.

6.2 The Panel will consider the nominations based on the nomination package submitted, and shortlist a number of nominated individuals/teams as the finalists to attend an interview. All nominated individuals/teams will be informed of the timing of the interview sessions around three weeks in advance. The Panel will not assess the merits of the award grant proposals as part of the selection process but will consider the soundness of the proposals and offer comments/suggestions as appropriate.

6.3 Universities will be requested to provide an award citation (in English and Chinese) for each finalist in a week's time after they are informed of the short-listing results. The award citation (one page in English in no more than 300 words and one page in Chinese in no more than 450 words) should be written by senior management of the university or the nominated individual/team and will be shared with the media/public should the nominee be selected for the Award.

Section VII: Allocation of the Grant and the Cash Award

7.1 The award is in the form of a grant of HK\$1,000,000 for each awardee (an individual or a team), including a Project and Professional Development Grant (PPDG) of HK\$900,000 and a cash award of HK\$100,000. The awardee may utilise the full amount of PPDG for undertaking learning and teaching related initiative(s) that benefit the UGC sector by advancing learning and teaching, or make use of up to HK\$150,000 of the PPDG for participating in professional development activities in teaching and learning to be held locally or outside Hong Kong (such as seminars, workshops or programmes aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning knowledge and skills). The cash award of HK\$100,000 is for the individual/team's personal use in appreciation of the awardee's past/present achievements and future contribution to the UGC sector.

7.2 The award monies will be disbursed to the awardee's university. Awardees should observe the relevant guidelines of the universities concerned in expending the grant for undertaking the learning and teaching related initiative(s) or professional development activities. All learning and teaching related initiatives should be completed within three years while the use of PPDG for professional development activities shall be subject to a five-year timespan. Any unspent balance upon completion of the initiative should be returned to the UGC Secretariat.

7.3 If an awardee selected for the individual award plans to leave his/her university before completing the initiative and is to be employed by another UGC-funded university, he/she could seek approval from the UGC Secretariat for transferring the grant to his/her new university for continuing to deliver the initiative. If the awardee is not to be employed by another UGC-funded university, his/her university is required to return the unspent balance of the award grant to the UGC Secretariat. For the Collaborative Teams award, if a team member has left his/her university, the other team member(s) should continue to deliver the initiative.

- 7.4 Awardees shall submit (through their respective universities) to the UGC Secretariat progress and final reports on details of the initiative(s) undertaken, including but not limited to a breakdown of the project expenditure, beneficiaries of the initiative(s), as well as the impact of the initiative(s) to the universities concerned and the UGC sector as a whole. Such reports shall also set out details of the expenditure for professional development activities supported by the grant, as well as confirmation by the awardee that the relevant guidelines of the universities concerned in expending the grant have been duly observed.
- 7.5 Any major changes to the award grant projects (*e.g.* change of project deliverables and duration) require the prior approval of the UGC Secretariat.
- 7.6 The respective universities should, as far as practicable, make appropriate teaching relief arrangements for the awardees to facilitate the delivery of the initiative(s) or participation in professional development activities funded by the Award's grant.

Section VIII: Obligations of the Awardees

- 8.1 The awardees will become “ambassadors of good teaching” in their universities as well as the entire UGC sector. Awardees may be invited to present their teaching philosophies and share experiences at, among other occasions, the Presentation Ceremony of the UGC Teaching Award to be held in Autumn 2026, as well as in the video programme to be produced by the UGC for publicising awardees’ contribution and achievements.
- 8.2 All awardees, finalists and nominees will be invited to join the Hong Kong Teaching Excellence Alliance (HKTEA), an organisation established with funding support from the UGC with the aim to cultivate a network to enable UGC Teaching Award Fellows to collectively play a sustained role in promoting teaching excellence in and beyond the UGC sector. Members are expected to contribute actively towards the dissemination and propagation of good teaching practices and pedagogies through participation in key events and sharing sessions to be organised by the HKTEA for such purposes. The personal information and supporting materials submitted by the awardees as required in Section V above will also be shared with HKTEA for the purpose of facilitating promotion of best practices.

Appendix



2026 UGC Teaching Award Nomination Form

(Please complete a separate form for each nominated individual/team and tick the boxes as appropriate)

University	
Category	<input type="checkbox"/> General Faculty Members or <input type="checkbox"/> Early Career Faculty Members or <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborative Teams

Section 1: Particulars of Nominated Individual/Team Leader of Nominated Team *

Title	
Name (<i>in both English and Chinese, if applicable</i>)	
Post Title	
Faculty/Department	
Postal Address	
Telephone No.	
Fax No.	
Email Address	
Team Name (<i>if applicable and optional</i>)	

Section 2: (For Collaborative Teams Nomination only) Members of Nominated Team *

	Name (<i>in both English and Chinese, if applicable</i>)	Post Title
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

* The name(s) and post title(s) provided above will be used for the production of the Award plaque/certificate and shared with the media/public should the nominee(s) be selected for the Award. The university should notify the UGC Secretariat of any changes in the interim before the selection process is completed.

All awardees, finalists and nominees will be invited to join the Hong Kong Teaching Excellence Alliance (HKTEA) and participate in its activities. In this connection, the UGC Secretariat will share relevant information with the HKTEA for such purposes.

Section 3: Declaration of Nominated Individual/Team Leader of Nominated Team

I (print name of nominated individual/team leader of nominated team)

.....
accept/on behalf of the nominated team, accept nomination for the UGC Teaching Award, and understand and have no objection that information submitted to the UGC in connection with the nomination be used primarily for the purpose of assisting the UGC (through the Award's Selection Panel to be established) to determine the recipients of the awards.

Signature

Date

Section 4: Particulars of Institutional Contact Officer

Name	
Post Title	
Postal Address	
Email Address	
Telephone No.	
Fax No.	