



Academic Quality Framework

Student Academic Excellence Awards

Approved by Academic Council

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin) recognizes the academic achievement of all its students through the graduation process which marks the successful completion of a student's engagement with their chosen programme of study. In addition, TU Dublin further recognizes those students who have demonstrated exceptional academic performance within their Faculty through the Student Academic Excellence Awards.

2. Objective

- 2.1 The objective of this policy is to establish the University's commitment to, and basis for the awarding of student academic excellence awards intended to recognise and encourage exceptional academic achievement in the attainment of a recognised taught major qualification award of the University.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to student academic excellence awards associated with the portfolio of taught programmes at Technological University Dublin leading to major qualification awards across National Framework of Qualification (NFQ) Levels 6 to 9. All students on taught programmes are eligible for consideration on an equitable basis. These procedures apply to taught programmes only.

4. Principles for the Bestow of Academic Excellence Awards

- a) Annually, each University Faculty shall normally recommend to Academic Council one student per Faculty School to be the recipient of a Student Academic Excellence Award.
- b) The Student Academic Excellence Award is for exceptional students only who have demonstrated academic excellence relative to other students in their cohort. It is therefore possible that there may be no awardee for a particular academic year.
- c) Faculty School nominations and the adjudication of Academic Excellence Awards will follow the procedures described herein.
- d) Each Faculty will select nominees for Student Academic Excellence Awards using agreed criteria as approved by Academic Council and present those nominations to Academic Council for approval.
- e) In the evaluation of candidates who may be eligible for an academic excellence award, all modules which contribute to the final grading of a programme award will be considered. This is to accommodate situations where academic performance in a programme non-award year contributes to the final classification for the students.
- f) Recipients of the student academic excellence awards will be honoured in university graduation events. Awards are non-transferable.
- g) Decisions to bestow an academic excellence award are final and not subject to appeal.
- h) TU Dublin reserves all rights to establish, grant and administer Student Academic Excellence Awards in accordance with university policy and to make such changes, additions, and deletions to any awards for excellence as it may consider appropriate from time to time.

- i) Faculties may offer other special awards to acknowledge students demonstrating high achievement in award / non-award years, in minor award programmes, CPD programmes, at programme or module level, best project, etc. Such awards will be bestowed locally and not as part of university graduation events.

5. Guidelines for Nominations for Student Academic Excellence Awards

a) Student Eligibility:

- i. Nominated students must be current students on a TU Dublin major taught programme of study.
- ii. All students on major taught programmes from NFQ levels 6 through 9 will be eligible for consideration for the awards. This will include Apprenticeship programmes.

b) Faculty Nominations:

- i. Each Faculty will normally nominate to Academic Council one student from each of its constituent Schools for a Student Academic Excellence Award. In the evaluation of candidates who may be eligible for an award, all modules (ECTS credits) that contribute to the final award classification of students will be considered.

- ii. Nominations for Student Academic Excellence Awards shall be based on student performance data. The Progression and Awards Board for each School within the Faculty will determine who the School nominee will be for that academic year.
- iii. Nomination of candidates should include a transcript of their academic record and calculations demonstrating the attainment of the required standard above their peers and a brief statement of support (200-250 words max) from the Head of School of their nominee.
- iv. Each School will notify its nominee to the Faculty Board for consideration and the Faculty Board in turn will submit the Faculty recommendations to Academic Council for approval.
- v. A short submission of documentation relating to all candidates under consideration for Academic Excellence Awards must be made to Academic Council. This submission must be made at least two weeks prior to the session of Academic Council where Student Academic Excellence Awards are to be considered.

6. Criteria

- a) Only those candidates who have achieved an overall score commensurate with a first-class honours standard (NFQ Levels 8 & 9) or Distinction (NFQ Levels 6 & 7) in the academic year leading to their graduation will be considered.
- b) The candidates will have achieved their final overall score through a first sitting of assessments and will not have repeated any module.
 - Where a student has been granted a deferral of a first sitting of examination by the University, their next attempt will count as a first sitting.
- c) Candidates will have successfully completed all modules contributing to the determination of the student's final award classification in the academic year leading to their graduation.
 - It is noted that for some programmes, the final award classification is based on student performance in the final year with some contribution from some non-award year modules (e.g., some year 3 modules may contribute to the determination of award classification at the end of year 4). In such cases, consideration is given to all modules contributing to the determination of final award classification.

- d) The student with the highest average mark within each programme is considered.
- The term '*within each programme*' is understood to include all streams (i.e. one nomination per programme and not per stream) and both full-time and part-time versions are considered as one programme.
- e) The School selection process will:
- For each eligible programme, identify the student with the highest average score.
 - Calculate the class average score within the programme.
 - Calculate the standard deviation score within the programme. The standard deviation must be greater than 1.0
 - Apply the following formula to the programme data:
$$(\text{Highest student average score} - \text{Class average score}) \div \text{SD}$$
 - Compare these students from across all eligible School programmes to identify the student with the highest score. This student is then put forward to the Faculty Board (Template Appendix 1) with the relevant supporting evidence as the School's nominee for a Student Academic Excellence Award.
 - If approved by Faculty Board, the School nominees are then recommended to Academic Council (Template Appendix 2).

7. Appendix 1: Template for Submissions to Faculty Board


<p>Faculty of School of School Nomination to Faculty Board for Student Academic Excellence Award Academic year: 20xx/yy</p>	
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Student Name	Student Number	Taught Programme Title (<i>Major Awards Only</i>)	Overall Academic Score	Awards Score

Supporting Statement for the School nominee (200-250 words max)

Date of approving School Executive: _____ Head of School's Signature: _____

8. Appendix 2: Template for Submissions to Academic Council

<p>Faculty of</p> <p>Nominations to Academic Council for Student Academic Excellence Awards Academic year: 20xx/yy</p>	
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School	Student Name	Student Number	Programme Title <i>(Major Awards Only)</i>	Programme Level

Note: One nomination per School from each Faculty

Include supporting documentation with this form i.e. copy of **Template for Submissions to Faculty Board** for each School's nomination

Date of approving Faculty Board: _____ Faculty Dean's Signature: _____