



**THE
TEACHING
AWARDS
2013**



Welcome to the Teaching Awards

The Teaching Awards have always been the highlight of my year, and this year is certainly no exception.

Since the first ceremony in 2009, the event has grown at an astounding rate. In fact, this year's Teaching Awards have been the biggest yet, with a staggering 2,415 submissions overall. There have also been 29 entries for the subject-based nominations, an increase of 12 from the 17 we received last year. And with the introduction of a new category, Best Supervisor, we have also had a record number of postgraduate students getting involved.

Whittling all these nominees down to just nine winners, however, was no easy task! It took three weeks and three stages of panels for each category, and there were many debates along the way. I'd like to thank everybody who contributed time to this process, and congratulate those who were shortlisted at every level.

I really enjoyed reading each of these entries. Not only were they incredibly touching, but they also opened my eyes to some of the fabulous work that is being done across our institution.

IMOGEN SANDERS
VP ACADEMIC AFFAIRS 2012/13

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "i.sanders". The signature is written in a cursive, lowercase style with a small dot above the 'i'.

How it works

The process we use to decide our winners

STAGE 1: STUDENTS NOMINATE

All students are able to nominate for the eight individual awards using forms provided online through the Students' Guild website.



STAGE 2: SSLC FILTER

Each SSLC receives all the nominations submitted for their subject and picks the departmental winner for each category, as well as decide whether they want to enter their department for the two subject awards.



STAGE 3: PANELS SHORTLIST

Panels for each category comprising of staff and students receive the departmental winners and select the shortlist based on the quality of the nomination submitted by the SSLC.



STAGE 4: SUPER PANEL PICKS WINNERS

The Super Panel, a panel of three staff and three students, select the winner and runner up for each category based on the nomination submitted by the SSLC

Change Agents Champion (In Association with Event Exeter)

Presented by Jes Pook, Classics Co-Subject Chair.

Claire Young – Bioscience (Tremough)

“When I was looking to set up Life Nature magazine Claire was the one who suggested that it become a Change Agents project. This turned out to be great advice, and throughout the whole process Claire has always been there to support me. Claire also encouraged me to include a section on female scientists in the magazine, which was a fantastic idea, and will hopefully help the department in its efforts to gain an Athena Swan award.”

Charlotte Knipe – College of Humanities

“An incredibly enthusiastic and supportive member of the department, Charlotte has always had fresh ideas to help with our Change Agents projects, and has been an absolute pleasure to work with over the past year. As well as always being highly supportive of our ideas to improve our department through the SSLC, she is always willing to help in whatever way possible.”

Dr Johanna Harris – English

“Last year Johanna co-founded the extraordinary Care Home Reading Project in collaboration with the University of Exeter’s English Society. The project was set up to motivate students to volunteer by providing them with a project related to their subject, and has since expanded to include over 100 students from the English department. The project has been featured on National television, as well as BBC Spotlight, providing invaluable PR for the University and its students.”

Dr Sharon Strawbridge – Physics and Medical Imaging

“For the past two years Sharon (Shazza) has been known to us as not only a great lecturer, but also as a fantastic Student Engagement Officer for our department. She is so enthusiastic about student engagement it’s almost impossible not to get caught up in it when talking things over with her. What’s more, her door is always wide open to students and she is constantly searching for people to undertake or join in projects.”

Dr Sarah Dyer – Geography (Streatham)

“Sarah has gone out of her way to provide us with the necessary training and support to make our Students as Change Agents project a success. Being part of the group has given each of us the opportunity to improve our self-confidence and empower ourselves in a department that lacks employability provisions. Sarah is always there if we need support or encouragement, and her hard work and dedication to students deserves to be recognised.”

Best Employability Support (In Association with Enterprise)

Presented by James Griffiths, Business Subject Chair

Dr Bridget Woodman – Geography

“Bridget’s experience in the field of Energy Policy means she can translate her wealth of professional experience into the work she does. Her engagement and interests in students allows her to provide personal and beneficial advice to anyone who approaches her. Bridget always goes beyond the call of duty to follow up with students who have asked for help, and even provides assistance to graduates after they have left.”

Dr Sara Burton – Biosciences

“Sara is incredibly inspirational and always offers help and support to students. When it comes to employability, she goes above and beyond, personally calling employers for students as well as arranging a number of conferences and employability events. She also makes a concerted effort to get to know each student individually, and her hard work has even lead to employers specifically seeking out Exeter students!”

Amy Boylan – Engineering

“The innovative work that Amy has done this year has done much to raise awareness of employability within engineering. This year saw the first ever CEMPS careers fairs in the Forum. It was a great success, with a wide range of employers to suit engineering students. Her work was much appreciated, and some have even gone on to apply for internships and graduate schemes as a direct consequence.”

Paul Barton – Management and Organisation

“Paul is one of the most renowned lecturers of Business School. Paul is not just a lecturer, but also a site manager for global sporting events and recruiter for the events industry. Paul’s goal is to educate and deliver the next generation of professional event organisers to a global market, keeping the UK as a flagship region for the world’s most diverse industry. Paul is also the mastermind behind the increasingly popular networking event ‘BACKSTAGE’.”

Jenny Phillips – Economics

“Jenny Phillips has been invaluable for students concerned about employability over the last couple of years, and ensured that it is a key part of every students’ degree programme. Having previously worked in the private sector, she also has an excellent knowledge of full-time work. Where she is not able to give direct advice she always knows all the best support services that are available and useful for students, and is always happy to give up her time to arrange one-to-one meetings.”

Best Graduate Teaching Assistant

Presented by Lucy Lewis, Modern Languages Subject Chair

Lawrence Choo – Economics

“Lawrence engages with students in a way that leaves them thirsty for knowledge, and sparks their interest in otherwise dry theories by applying them to the real world. It’s not easy to inspire students, but through expressing a true zeal for the subject area and by making sure that their individual queries are dealt with extremely efficiently and on personal basis, Lawrence does.”

Isabel Santafe – Modern Languages

“Isabel is an extremely talented teacher who uses her own expertise to help students improve their work. For example, after we have completed a translation and corrected it in class, she will always give us a copy of her own translation of the text. As she recognises the validity of everyone’s ideas and suggestions everyone always feels at ease in her classes.”

Dr Sarah Cooper – Politics

“Sarah is an invaluable member of the department. She is able to explain complex subject matters in a easily comprehensible manner, making students feel at ease in her seminars, and always shares her research in a captivating and thoughtful way. Sarah is also always available to discuss anything a student may have to ask, even for students who are not in any of her classes, which is a true mark of a dedicated and supportive teacher.”

Mike Rose-Steel – English

“Mike has been very supportive in offering advice on both our studies and life after graduation. He motivates his students in original ways, and some students have even attributed their desire to follow an academic career due to his inspiration. Inviting the poet Suzanne Steele to a seminar one morning so that she could discuss and explain her poetry as well as talk about her role as a modern war poet was particularly inspirational.”

Daniel Bedford – Law

“Daniel is well regarded amongst law students as a tutor that challenges his students not only to engage in a far deeper level of analysis of academic commentary, but to also have the courage to form their own points of view. He also offers an open-door policy, ensuring that students who wish to engage with him further on topics are able to do so to improve their understanding.”

Best Feedback Provider

Presented by Alex Phillips, Psychology Co-Subject Chair

Yelena Gedge – Modern Languages

“Yelena always points out the strengths and weaknesses in a tactful and encouraging way. In oral classes she also allows us the freedom to choose how we wish to be assessed formatively, and we often receive her precise feedback within just a couple of hours after the class.”

Dr Bill Peng – Accounting and Finance

“Bill understands the importance of timely feedback to help students develop and learn from their mistakes. Considering the large number of students in the course, its consistent quality and promptness deserves to be recognised. Bill has always been highly efficient despite there being well over 300 students on the module.”

Imogen Moore – Law

“Imogen gives up her time so that she can be available for one-on-one discussions surrounding assessments and always provides high quality feedback. She also sets aside time to explain her feedback to each student. Every piece of feedback that Imogen provides is bespoke to individual students, and in her role as Head of Feedback for the Law School she constantly strives to ensure that an unparalleled quality of feedback is replicated across all modules.”

Dr Siam Bhayro – Theology

“If you’re a Theology fresher, the first essay you have to write is part of Siam’s module, and from start to finish he gives fantastic support and feedback. Once the essay has been completed he completely fills the front of the BART sheet with useful advice. And as well as always returning your work before the three week limit, he also offers one-on-one tutorials to discuss each essay.”

Dr Robert Mack – English

“In the words of one student, Robert Mack returns essays ‘with more red pen on them than printed words’. Not only does he provide incredibly detailed and focused feedback, but he also advises students on useful books and resources, helping them to undertake their own research and become more independent. His passionate approach to his teaching has been inspirational, constructive, and invaluable for many students.”

Innovative Teaching

Presented by Joe Thorogood, Geography Subject Chair

Dr Matt Hayler – English

“Matt incorporates a variety of media in lectures, drawing on subjects as diverse as skateboarding and street dance to help elucidate his pioneering research on digital culture. His digital building project this year had students confront issues as diverse as hypertexts, music and online dating, and encouraged them to discuss and analyse how their personal experience of building through the digital medium changed the objects of their study.”

Dr Catriona Pennell – History

“Catriona’s approach to teaching History is completely unique! She has moved away from the traditional exam in a number of her modules, and instead adopted a take home exam, which is better suited to all the specialist research required in History. Her most innovative form of assessment however is the school workshop, which requires putting together a workshop for year nine students. It takes a huge amount of organisation from Catriona but is a very satisfying form of assessment.”

Dr Afshin Shahi – Politics

“As well as offering students ‘virtual office hours’ via Skype when he is away, Afshin recently organised a trip to Tunisia over the Easter break to enhance his student’s understanding of political Islam, which offered a particularly unique learning experience. A highly efficient and engaging teacher, Afshin always goes the extra mile to ensure that his students learn in an innovative way.”

Dr Sabrina Leonelli – Philosophy

“This year Sabina created a brand new module, Pragmatism and its Enemies, which has been fascinating. In addition to this, she has also encouraged us to think about post-grad research. It is thanks to Sabina that I am now considering pursuing philosophy as career, as she has shown how it can be used to influence and inform beyond the world of academia, and be applicable to current events in society.”

Professor Todd Kaplan – Economics

“Todd absolutely loves clickers! In almost every lecture he presents various multiple-choice questions on the lecture’s topic which students answer anonymously with them. If the results show that a large amount of the class are wrong, then he will expand and explain until everyone understands. Todd also goes beyond the expected to explain topics, and will regularly conduct incredibly useful on-the-spot experiments in his lectures to illustrate certain points.”

Research Inspired Teaching (In Association with PwC)

Presented by Emma Langhorn, Classics Co-Subject Chair

Solomon Lennox – Drama

“Solomon immerses you into the topic you are studying and allows you to explore it in a supportive environment. His clear passion for boxing, wrestling, and Butoh inspires students to be enthusiastic about working in the studio. Solomon even had us buy specific boxing gear (gloves, ropes, gum shield, hand wraps) in order for us to actually train in the sport, which he did alongside us.”

Dr Paul Williams - English

“Paul’s module ‘The Graphic Novel’ is a fantastic example of how his research interests have allowed students to study an area which is both innovative and current. Paul always combines excellent research and theories in his lectures, and always makes the effort to use a wide range of sources. Furthermore, the way he conducts his seminars and assessments allows his students to feel part of the research community, and recognise how they are able to contribute to it.”

Dr Karen Knapp – Medical Imaging

“When Karen isn’t lecturing on current topics using all the latest research, she is inspiring students to think outside of the box when collating data. She has also devoted an inordinate amount of time encouraging students to take their results forward to the UKRC – a nationwide conference held for radiographers and radiologists. As a result of enthusiasm from people like Karen, the UKRC has had many student representatives from the University of Exeter in attendance.”

Dr Miguel Fonseca - Economics

“Miguel enriches every weekly lecture with some of the most cutting edge research. He will always bring in his own research, experiments and data to supplement the module where possible, and will talk in detail about his findings. Miguel even shared with us an experiment he put together to investigate Tax Returns, for which students have been active participants!”

Dr Louise Lawrence – Theology

“Louise leads a module on Theology and Disability Studies, and is herself a pioneer of the discipline. It is one of the most exciting modules on offer to students this year, and everyone loves being part of it as it is so open to new developments. Louise is also very open to the ideas of her students, and as part of her book review assessment has even invited students to criticise her latest yet-to-be-published manuscript.”

Best Supervisor

Presented by Phil Child, PGR Faculty Rep

Dr Jana Funke – History

“Jana’s passion for engagement and interaction with her students makes her both a valuable supervisor and an asset to the University. She always has the drive to push her students further and will always give them her time, sending out emails with ideas and information that they may not have even asked for. To quote her students, her deep interest in historical study is ‘infectious’, and has driven their academic study to new heights.”

Dr Stephen Childe – Engineering

“Stephen has championed the 4th year Formula Student engineering project this year. The project has been running at other universities for many years but this is a first for Exeter thanks to Stephen. He has also inspired third years to take on smaller yet important parts of the project, and there is much excitement that they will be able to continue this work next year. Hopefully, this will see University of Exeter cars winning at Silverstone for many years to come!”

Dr Jude Meakin – Medical Imaging

“Jude dedicated a considerable amount to helping us design and establish an appropriate method of obtaining our data, and provided us with access to a wide range of resources. With her open door policy she is always available for any questions, and treats her students with the utmost respect. In addition to providing exceptional support throughout our research project, Jude has also encouraged us to present our study on a national level at the UK Radiological Conference.”

Dr Tamsin Ford – Exeter Medical School

“Tamsin has skilfully worked with me to overcome the difficulties that I have faced with my PhD. In her position she has also provided some amazing opportunities, such as when she was able to arrange for me a life-changing trip Paris for an international conference. Furthermore, despite being so busy, she always makes herself personally available to her staff and students, and hosts parties and events outside of work to ensure the team network.”

Professor Regenia Gagnier – English

“In the words of one of her students, Regenia is ‘exactly the right combination of terrifying and friendly.’ Extremely supportive and always available both academically and personally, Regenia has truly enhanced her students’ time at Exeter. Her extensive research offers students valuable insights which help them to be active PhD students. Using her own experience, Regenia also helps students discover all the advantages of working in a manner suited to their individual abilities.”

Subject with the Best Research Community

Presented by Charlie Mackay, History Subject Chair

Archaeology

“Archaeology at the University of Exeter is currently ranked second in the UK for its world-leading and internationally recognised research. From locally focused projects such as ‘Unlocking Cornwall’s Bronze Age Past’ to the project ‘Pioneering Metallurgy’, which is based in India, the University’s research culture is hugely varied in both subject matter and geography. So regardless of whether you are interested in landscape archaeology, material culture, experimental archaeology or biological anthropology, you will be spoilt for choice at Exeter. The department is able to offer students supervision in a wide range of areas within the broader discipline and specific sub-disciplines, and to great effect.”

Theology

“Theology promotes a variety of conferences where postgraduate students have the chance to speak, and organises travel arrangements for students so that everyone has the opportunity attend. Theology also offers highly popular lecture series that attracts a range of external speakers. The talks are mainly attended by postgraduate Theologians, but a lot of effort this year has gone into making undergraduates feel especially welcome and part of the University’s research community.”

Physics

“The entire physics department from top to bottom is actively involved in getting students involved in undertaking and enjoying research. During their first year students cycle through a series of introductory experiments on a wide range of physics, and each of these experiments has its own postgraduate student associated with it. This means that there is always someone to help the students understand their experiment as well as understand how research is undertaken. In the Summer breaks between each academic year there are also a range of opportunities for students to undertake paid internships within their departments. All of them provide invaluable experiences which can be applied to their work once they are back at Exeter.”

Most Supportive Member of Staff (In Association with HSBC)

Presented by Katie Williams, Theology Subject Chair

Dr Mike Dobson – Flexible Combined Honours

“Mike always makes time to see you, and doesn’t just give you a five minute slot, but helps you for as long as is necessary. He always answers emails promptly and doesn’t give up when there’s an obstacle, but tries to find a solution to it through other means. He also takes the time to both give you the course options open to you, as well as the chance to discuss them through so that you can find out which one is right for you.”

Jay Pengelly – History (Tremough)

“Instead of making you feel like just another student, from day one Jay remembers everybody’s name and never fails to talk to you. She is always there to help you if you have any questions, and if she doesn’t know the answer she will always find it out for you. She is 100% dedicated to student welfare, and after three years at Tremough, I can honestly say I will always remember her kindness and support.”

Dr Cris Burgess – Psychology

“Despite being an incredibly busy man, Cris always has time for everybody, and is an inspiring and popular member of staff. He is also a genuinely caring and supportive person, and always has time for anyone who needs it. He is also easy to contact, replies to any emails promptly, and is always there to offer pastoral support for anybody who needs it.”

Isabel Moros – Modern Languages

“Isabel comes to class full of energy and encouragement, and always takes time out of her schedule to give both academic and emotional support to her students. She is great at reassuring students who are nervous about their years abroad, and helps them out with their cover letters and CVs. She also organises extra individual grammar classes for those who lack confidence, and has organised excursions in her own free time to give students a practical view on where their studies might lead them.”

Marion Wood – Department of Music

“Before coming to university, I hadn’t sung for almost 10 years and had crippling low self- esteem. However, Marion gave me the confidence to successfully audition for a Music Scholarship, two solos and a small chamber choir for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II during her visit to open the Forum Project last year. I also received lessons from Marion after getting my scholarship, and in this capacity she has supported me in getting to a level I never believed would ever be possible.”

Best Subject

Presented by Alex Louch, History Academic Rep and VP Academic Affairs Elect

English

“From the truly fantastic administrative staff through to the world-leading academics, the entire team within the English department at Exeter offers students an experience like no other. Not only do the department ensure that students from across every year are the first to know of any new developments in modules, teaching or management, but they never shy away from involving students in every process these developments involve. Furthermore, when it came to significantly reshaping a problematic core module within the first year syllabus, the SSLC were involved from the very beginning, offering student opinion on any potential modifications to ensure that the correct path was taken.”

Theology

“You don’t need to look any further than the department’s score on the NSS to see that students genuinely love studying Theology at Exeter. The departmental ethos of care towards its students is unparalleled; personal tutors meet very regularly with any student who needs assistance, and are always there for anyone with a non-academic problem. It is an honour to be taught by the leading experts in so many fields who go out of their way to make sure that their teaching is innovative, engaging and exciting.”

Law

“The Law school’s continuing commitment to students beyond the core academic curriculum deserves recognition. The department’s successful promotion of employability has been exemplified by the new Virtual Law Firm (VLF) programme offered to first years. On top of this, the school has spearheaded community projects and facilitated student engagement by offering a variety of pro bono opportunities for students which are crucial for developing practical skills and providing valuable legal help to the community.”

Best Lecturer

Presented by Hannah Barton, Psychology Co-Subject Chair and Guild President Elect

Dr Gihan Marasingha – Maths and Computing

“From his very first lecture, Gihan was able to capture everyone’s attention and inspire them to learn a complicated and otherwise dry topic with enthusiasm and clarity. Not only is his teaching and his capability to help students learn a point of excellence, but his attitude and approach captivates students. As someone who has is so dedicated to the subject and his students, Gihan means a lot to all of those he teaches.”

Professor Philippe Young – Engineering

“You won’t ever leave Philippe Young’s lecture without the whole class buzzing on their way out. This is certainly a contrast to the silence during his lectures, during which everyone hangs onto each of his words. This quiet is only occasionally broken up by roaring laughter at an unusual narrative, for as well as giving highly illustrative and useful examples from his research Philippe also captivates the lecture with his anecdotes.”

Dr Alex Thompson – Organisation and Management

“Alex’s lectures are great because they explain theory using practical examples that are easy to understand. They are sometimes funny, often drawn from recent events or from his own research, and always memorable. From presentations to documentaries, photos and Youtube clips, he uses a number of visuals in his lectures which capture your interest. Alex also welcomes interaction, and everyone always feels comfortable about asking him questions in lectures.”

Imogen Moore – Law

“Imogen’s passion and outstanding oratory skills create a learning environment that is exceptionally conducive to student participation and understanding. She is able to deconstruct complex legal topics and communicate them in an interesting and interactive manner. What’s more, she also always takes the time to learn her students’ names, and provides one-on-one guidance sessions for essays and exams as well as consistently exceptional feedback.”

Dr Matt Hayler – English

“The passion with which Matt speaks about his subject leaves students feeling inspired and engaged. During lectures and seminars he will delve into his own research expertise to offer cutting-edge teaching that is filled with wit, intelligence and enthusiasm. Sought out and admired by those he doesn’t directly teach for his willingness to help, and hailed by those he does for his comprehensive feedback, his name has become synonymous with great teaching.”

Our thanks go to...

The Subject Chairs and SSLCs whose hard work and enthusiasm has made this event a success.

DARO for their generous funding support, without which this event would not be possible.

Academic Services for their generous support of the drinks reception.

Event Exeter

University of Exeter Jazz Orchestra

The University Press Office and Marketing and Communications Team

Panel members for the hard task of compiling the shortlists in this programme

Finally, our thanks go to Professor Janice Kay and all of the academic colleges for their continued support for the Teaching Awards.



The logo for the University of Exeter Students' Guild. It features the text "UNIVERSITY OF EXETER" in a small, black, sans-serif font at the top. Below it, the words "STUDENTS'" and "GUILD" are stacked in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. The background of the page is white with a diagonal purple-to-white gradient in the top right corner.

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER
STUDENTS'
GUILD