

The Herald EDUCATION AWARDS 2026

FOR FURTHER AND
HIGHER EDUCATION

ENTRY GUIDE

ENTRY
DEADLINE:
WEDNESDAY,
MARCH 18

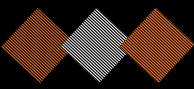


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WELCOME

Now in its second decade, The Herald Education awards celebrate the extraordinary things that are going on in universities and colleges across Scotland.

These awards stand to highlight innovation in teaching, explore how colleges and universities market themselves, support students, and engage with employers, as well as recognising those amazing students who make a significant contribution to student life as well as academia.

The awards help to build future excellence by facilitating the sharing of good practice, with the utmost aim of strengthening the status of learning and teaching in the Scottish further and higher education sectors.

Why Enter?



Celebrate Excellence:

Gain sectorwide recognition for outstanding teaching, research, and student support across Scotland's further and higher education landscape.



Showcase Your Achievements:

From pioneering academic programmes to community partnerships and world-leading innovation, let the impact of your institution shine on a national stage. leading innovation, let the impact of your institution shine on a national stage.



Boost Team Morale:

Champion the teams, departments, and individuals whose dedication drives your institution's success and inspires pride across your campus community.



Gain Valuable Exposure:

Finalists and winners benefit from high-profile media coverage and a prestigious platform through The Herald to highlight excellence to prospective students, partners, and stakeholders. Profile media coverage and a prestigious platform through.



Be Judged by the Best:

All entries are reviewed by an independent panel of sector experts, ensuring fairness, rigour, and credibility throughout the judging process.



Key Dates



ENTRY DEADLINE
Wednesday, March 18



FINALISTS ANNOUNCED
April 2026



EVENT DATE
Wednesday, May 20



SUBMISSION GUIDELINES



Choose Your Category

- Select the category that best fits your organisation, project, or individual nominee.
- Check you meet the specific criteria
- You can enter multiple categories (each needs a separate entry).



The Entry Form

- Go to the official online entry portal or download the offline version from the website
- Work offline to refine your entry and upload to the online portal or email directly to sharon.franchetti@newsquest.co.uk with any supporting materials.



The Questions

- The online entry form will guide you to the relevant category questions. If using the offline version be sure to note the difference between organisation/project questions and individual's questions.
- You are welcome to provide supporting material to enhance your entry such as photographs, video links, website links or testimonials. These should be uploaded/mailed along with your entry form.



Confirmation

- You will receive acknowledgment of receipt.
- All entries are treated confidentially and the detail within is only used for judging purposes.
- **Deadline:** All entries must be received by 11pm on Wednesday, March 18, 2026. Please note entries received after this date cannot be considered and will not be entered into the awards.



Entry Rules

1. The awards are free to enter.
2. Award sponsors or companies affiliated with award sponsors may not enter the category they sponsor.
3. You must have permission of the organisation or individual to nominate them to win an award.
4. Entries are treated in confidence.
5. The word count must be adhered to; judges are looking for clear and concise answers.
6. Supporting information can be included please ensure written material does not exceed two A4 pages.
7. You can submit multiple entries across the categories, but a separate submission must be made for each nomination.

8. Incomplete entries will not be judged.
9. All entries will be acknowledged on receipt. Entries will become the property of The Herald and entries will not be returned.
10. The Herald reserve the right to withdraw an award from any applicant supplying false information within their entry. Judges reserve the right to audit any information supplied.
11. The Herald reserve the right to withdraw an award or nomination from any applicant whose actions may bring the reputation of The Herald, its affiliated companies, the Judges, or our Sponsors in disrepute.
12. Judges reserve the right to move entrants within categories if they

feel their criteria is better suited to another award, to remove categories or to update or add new categories during the awards process.

13. Information supplied will be shared with the judging panel and all information will be treated as confidential. It will not be used for any purpose other than judging the competition. Finalist organisations may be included in related media coverage and may be required to take part in promotional activities about The Herald Education Awards.
14. The judges' decisions are final.
15. By registering and completing an entry for the awards you agree to these terms and conditions.

NOW YOU KNOW THE PROCESS YOU CAN  ENTER NOW



CATEGORIES

ENHANCING STUDENT LEARNING AWARD

sponsored by QAA

This award will be given to a team in a college or university which has made a contribution to enhancing the student learning experience or academic skills. This could be through one-to-one tuition, drop in sessions on essay writing, work to enhance skills of literacy and numeracy or exam preparation and revision. This award will also look for teams who help provide the resources crucial to assist students with their learning. Judges will look for evidence the work has enhanced the student learning experience and/or has been shared or adopted more widely across the institution or by other institutions.

SUPPORTING STUDENT WELLBEING AWARD

This award will be given to a project that supports students in a personal capacity to gain the maximum benefit from their experience at university or college. This could be by providing advice and assistance to students on personal matters, family, health, mental health, safety or financial issues. Judges will be looking for evidence that initiatives have had a positive impact on the experience of students.

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION FROM A UNIVERSITY STUDENT

This award will go to a student who has made an outstanding contribution to their university or wider community including work on or off campus. Judges will be looking for how this person has inspired and motivated others to act philanthropically or made efforts to improve student experiences and that of the local community. This student may also be specifically connected to a sport or leisure activity or one who has overcome hardship, disability or other personal adversity.

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION FROM A COLLEGE STUDENT

This award will go to a student who has made an outstanding contribution to their college and wider community including work on or off campus. Judges will be looking for how this person has inspired and motivated others to act philanthropically or made efforts to improve student experiences and that of the local community. This student may also be specifically connected to a sport or leisure activity or one who has overcome hardship, disability or other personal adversity.

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION FROM A STAFF MEMBER

This award will go to a member of university or college staff who has made an outstanding contribution to their institution or wider community, including work on or off campus. Judges will be looking for how this person has inspired and motivated students in their field of expertise either through teaching or research or how they have used their teaching skills or research expertise to inspire and motivate learners in their surrounding community.

RESEARCH PROJECT OF THE YEAR

This will be awarded to an individual or group of researchers who have undertaken and published an exceptional piece of research in their field. This could be an individual project by an institution or a collaborative project from a number of colleges or universities. Judges will be looking for innovative research that has had significant economic, social, cultural or other public benefit but also which has helped to enhance the reputation of the institution.

OUTSTANDING BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT IN UNIVERSITIES

In this category we will be looking for a university to demonstrate their innovative approach to working in partnership with business and/or public sector organisations either to help develop an aspect of their business by the use of research or which helps develop training and work experience which aids student employability and improves workforce skills.

OUTSTANDING BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT IN COLLEGES

In this category we will be looking for a college to demonstrate their innovative approach to delivering employers' workforce development needs. This should be through partnerships with businesses and/or public sector organisations to develop training which helps student employability, provides them with work experience and improves wider workforce skills.



CATEGORIES



INNOVATIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AWARD

sponsored by Jisc

This award will recognise how an institution is using technology to accomplish new forms of student delivery, learning or research. This could be through a variety of methods, including but not restricted to: innovative teaching techniques; enhanced digital student experience; improved digital literacy; widening access to scholarly communications; use of technology to be more effective and efficient; generation of new business; research data management tools and techniques; and the creation of technology-led spaces to improve learner outcomes. Judges will be looking for demonstrable evidence of innovation and how this has achieved impact, particularly on students.



OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

This award will be given to an individual, team or institution that has made an outstanding contribution to the local community. Judges will be looking for evidence of commitment to areas such as local employment, community volunteer schemes, charity work, environmental initiatives and local product sourcing.



PARTNERSHIP AWARD

sponsored by QAA

This category is about innovative collaboration between institutions with a transformative impact. We are looking for a college or university which has developed strategic approaches in partnership to effect change and enhance the student experience. This may be through joint initiatives around learning and teaching priorities or development of strategies, policies or governance. This award may also be for a formal research or enhancement project, or innovative working practices.



MARKETING/PR CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR

This award will recognise an institution that can demonstrate the success of a marketing or PR campaign which has successfully engaged its target audience. The subject of the campaign could be anything from attracting overseas students, to promoting safety on campus. Judges will be looking for entrants to demonstrate how their campaigns used a variety of media channels and platforms to meet their aims as well as evidence they were successful in achieving their goals.



PARTNERSHIP WITH SCHOOLS AWARD

In this category we will be looking for a college or university to demonstrate their innovative approach to partnering with schools. This should be through partnerships with schools to help provide students access to further and higher education.



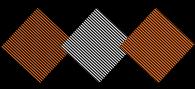
EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AWARD

This award will recognise an institution that is making demonstrable progress in achieving the goals of equality, diversity and inclusion. Judges will be looking for evidence of projects that have identified areas of under-representation amongst either students or staff and have made a difference. This could highlight a range of issues including, but not restricted to gender, equal pay, disability awareness, LGBTI and black and minority ethnic under-representation.



WIDENING ACCESS AWARD

This category will explore how both colleges and universities are using innovative methods to widen access to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This could include summer schools, talent spotting, top-up programmes or articulation. Judges will be looking for evidence of how institutions have engaged with a specific target group and also how they are providing continued support to the students.



CATEGORIES

Awarded on the night:

The following categories are chosen from the breadth of submissions and agreed by our Judging Panel.



HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION OF THE YEAR

This category will recognise a college or university that has demonstrated exceptional performance in the past academic year and is open to all higher education institutions in Scotland. The institution's teaching, research and business performance will be taken into consideration. Judges will be looking for evidence of creative and innovative projects which have enhanced its reputation.



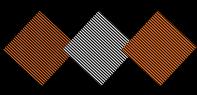
FURTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION OF THE YEAR

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Open University Scotland
This category will recognise a further education institute that has demonstrated exceptional performance in the past academic year and is open to all further education institutions in Scotland. The institution's teaching, research and business performance will be taken into consideration. Judges will be looking for evidence of creative and innovative projects which have enhanced its reputation.



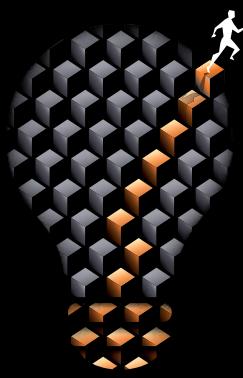
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

This award will pay tribute to an outstanding individual in higher education whose long-term efforts, dedication and sustained commitment have supported the sector. Judges will look for evidence of how this individual has advanced the field of education and demonstrated innovation.



PREVIOUS WINNERS





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For any queries relating to your entry or attendance
at the awards please contact Sharon Franchetti, Event Manager,
on 0141 302 6039 or at sharon.franchetti@newsquest.co.uk

- [@NewsquestEvents](https://twitter.com/NewsquestEvents)
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