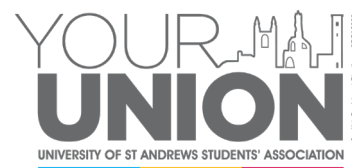


Using nomination data from Student-led Teaching Awards to identify and share good practice

Alice Foulis
(Director of Education, University of St Andrews' Students' Association)



“ Analysing data from the awards bring benefits to everyone who engages with them. ”

The project

The University of St Andrews' Student-led Teaching Awards recognise and reward excellent teaching and support practice. The Students' Association aims to then use this nomination data to extract student-identified best practice, which can be subsequently shared across the institution in the form of an annual report and best practice masterclasses. This project is led by the educational sabbatical officer, but all academic representatives are involved.

Benefits

The main benefits of the awards stem from using the data that is collected annually. The awards have existed since 2009-10 and, over the years, interest and engagement both began to wane. Making changes to the awards, using student nominations for further purposes (such as best practice masterclasses for staff), and continuous evaluation through an annual report, have all ensured that the awards are back on the radar for University senior management and academic staff, as well as for students. Streamlining the process based on feedback from staff and students, means they have a vested interest in continuing to attend the awards and engage with the nominations' process – which can be seen through increased nomination numbers and higher attendance at the awards ceremony. Using the data in this way allows us to show staff exactly what kind of teaching students feel creates a positive learning environment.

Challenges

The main challenge has been to ensure that positive engagement continues as the awards become business-as-usual. The solution to this is to work with colleagues to examine the data and evaluate the project. Generating an annual report is a good way of organising this, and it is useful to get a wide range of students involved too. This will keep the awards fresh and interesting to students and staff.

Working with your institutional colleagues

The University gets involved with the Teaching Awards by hosting their own University Awards in the same ceremony. This is beneficial as it means labour, funding, and attendees can be split between the Students' Association and the University. As well as this, it spreads publicity through both the Students' Association and university social media channels and ensures high engagement from staff and students across the board. Due to this, the University takes an interest in the annual report written by the Director of Education and are helpful in offering recommendations for next year.

What impact has this had on the student experience?

The increase in nominations from 143 in 2017-18 to 336 in 2018-19 suggests that students increasingly see this as a good opportunity to gain more influence over their learning experience. This increase also means greater depth in the data available to understand students' views on a wide range of teaching and support practice.

What advice/top tips would you give to others who might try something similar?

Be prepared for a lack of engagement at first but don't worry, these things often take time to gain traction! Work with your student representatives and institutional staff, and don't be scared to take a new or different approach if things don't work out at first!