

Dean of the Doctoral College Award for Excellence in PhD Research Supervision

Guidance Notes
October 2025

DEAN OF THE DOCTORAL COLLEGE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN PHD RESEARCH SUPERVISION

1. INTRODUCTION

As part of the strategy for supporting research excellence, Ulster University wishes to recognise the outstanding accomplishment of staff members. This indicator of recognition is in the form of an annual award for Excellence in PhD Research Supervision.

There will be up to four awards for Excellence in PhD Research Supervision available biennially. The winners of these Awards will be honoured at a Research Excellence Award ceremony. Their profile will be featured on the Doctoral College website and PURE.

Focus of Award

This Award for Excellence in PhD Research Supervision is awarded to individuals who have been supervising PhD researchers over several years and can demonstrate a sustained body of exceptional supervision, encouragement and support for PhD researchers and influenced research supervision practices and culture within their area of practice.

In particular, the individual's contribution will be directly related to the themes and priorities within the [University's strategy](#), [Research Strategy](#), and sector priorities for PhD supervision. It is expected this will focus on practices that demonstrate a stimulating environment for research, foster an inclusive and diverse culture and/or promote a strong record of successful PhD completion and progression.

2. ELIGIBILITY

- Any member of staff who is involved in PhD supervision at Ulster University and has been providing PhD supervision over a period of 5 years.
- Has supervised at least one PhD researcher to successful completion.
- Previous award winners may not be re-nominated for the same category of award until at least three years have passed since their previous success.
- Those who have been nominated previously but did not receive an award can be nominated again the following year.

3. NOMINATION CRITERIA

Nominations should demonstrate excellence in two one or more of the following areas:

1. Researcher Success

Timely completions, publications, career progression.

2. Development Support

Engagement with development plans, training, and mentoring.

3. Research Culture

Fostering inclusive, ethical, and collaborative environments.

4. Innovation in Supervision

Use of creative approaches, digital tools, or interdisciplinary methods.

5. Feedback and Recognition

Positive testimonials from supervisees and peers.

Research Supervision Awardees will be expected to share their experience and practice with colleagues at Ulster supported by Doctoral College. They will be expected to provide ongoing leadership in PhD supervision through involvement in Doctoral College led initiatives for PhD supervision and mentoring colleagues.

4. NOMINATION PROCESS

Who Can Nominate:

- Current or former PhD researchers,
- Heads of School, Research Directors or PVC Executive Deans,
- Supervisory peers,
- Self-nomination will be considered but needs to include a supporting statement from either/or a current or former PhD researcher supervisor supervised by them or a fellow supervisor or RD/PgT.

Submission Requirements:

- Completed nomination form.
- Supporting statement (max 1000 words).
- Up to 3 letters of support from PhD researchers or colleagues.

Completed forms should be submitted to the relevant Faculty Associate Dean for Research and Innovation no later than 12 noon on Friday 16 January 2026.

5. REVIEW PROCESS

- Scoring rubric based on nomination criteria
- Shortlisting and final selection by consensus

The selection panel will ONLY draw on the evidence presented in the nomination form when making their decision, so please ensure a good case is presented for submission, providing evidence of how the nominee meets the relevant criteria.

Assessment Panel

- Dean of the Doctoral College (Chair).

- Four Associate Deans for Research and Innovation.
- Heads of Doctoral College.
- PVC Research.

6. NOTIFICATION

All nominees will be informed of the outcome in Spring 2026. The winners will be honoured at the Research Excellence Awards ceremony in May 2026.



www.ulster.ac.uk/awards/research-excellence-awards