

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

Paper No ASQEC/19/37a)

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

22 October 2019

Agenda Item 14.1

ANNUAL REPORT ON PRIZES AND AWARDS – ACADEMIC YEAR 2018/19

COVER SHEET

Presenter: Mr A G Faulkner

No action is required of the Committee.

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ANNUAL REPORT ON PRIZES AND AWARDS – ACADEMIC YEAR 2018/19

1 LIST OF PRIZES AND AWARDS

Total of 507 approved prizes and awards. They are distributed as follows:

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	121
Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment	148
Faculty of Life and Health Sciences	116
Ulster University Business School	115
University-wide prizes	7

2 NEW AND DISCONTINUED UNIVERSITY PRIZES AND AWARDS

During the academic year 20 new prizes and awards were introduced. They are distributed as follows:

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	10
Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment	11
Faculty of Life and Health Sciences	4
Ulster University Business School	6

During the academic year 20 prizes and awards were discontinued as follows:

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	6
Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment	17
Faculty of Life and Health Sciences	3
Ulster University Business School	1

3 UNIVERSITY-WIDE AWARDS

Awards made

a) Business and Professional Women UK Limited Travelling Scholarship (£500)

Five submissions were received during academic year 2019/20. The scholarship was awarded to Ms Hannah Creaney (Year 3, BA Hons Textile Art, Design and Fashion) to assist with travel costs to Uganda to work with Kisakye Ministries, a charity which “seeks to empower, to teach and to help those in need while promoting self-sustainability”.

b) Findlater Award in Social Studies (£300)

Four submissions were received during academic year 2019/20. The prize was awarded to Mr Darren Hutton (Year 3, BSc Hons Health and Social Care Policy) for his dissertation entitled, 'Living Well, Ageing Well and Tackling Loneliness: Factors, Experiences and Implications for Policy'.

c) Greer Garson Film Award (£500)

Four submissions were received during academic year 2019/20. The prize was awarded to Mr Conor Sheerin (Year 3, BSc Hons Cinematic Arts) for his short film titled, 'Stanza', described as "an experimental film in poetic cinema, conceptualising the emotion of time and existence through life".

d) Greer Garson Theatre Award (£500)

Three submissions were received during academic year 2018/19. The prize was awarded to Mr Kris Alexander McDermott (Year 3, BA Hons Drama) for his original play script titled, 'You Fight Your Battles'.

e) McCrea Literary Award (£500)

Five submissions were received during academic years 2017/18 and 2018/19 for this biennial award. The prize was awarded to Mr Paul McVeigh, an Ulster alumnus (BA Hons Combined Humanities, 1987 – 1990), for his three short stories titled, 'Hollow', 'Swimming Lessons' and 'Tickles'.

f) First Trust Bank Convocation Student of the Year Award (£500)

The First Trust Bank Convocation Student of the Year Award is presented annually to a student who has demonstrated significant personal achievement or substantial contribution to the life of the University, its students or the community.

The 2019 award was made to Mr James Gibson who recently completed the BSc Hons International Hospitality Management.

Over the past four years, Mr Gibson demonstrated not only his capacity for hard work, but also his resilience and willingness to help others despite facing several personal challenges. Throughout his time at Ulster, Mr Gibson raised significant amounts of money for good causes and worked tirelessly with academic staff to improve the student experience on the Belfast campus through his leading role in the Student Society and acting as student representative. During his third year, he undertook a prestigious placement in New York. In his final year, Mr Gibson had to contend with a health problem resulting in his becoming wheelchair bound for several weeks during the second semester. Mr Gibson used this time to identify and implement improvements for disabled students thus enhancing their learning experience.

During his time at Ulster, Mr Gibson gave a substantial amount of time in enhancing the lives of others and raising the profile of Ulster University locally, nationally and internationally.

g) John RE Scott Convocation Postgraduate Student of the Year Award (£500)

The John RE Scott Postgraduate Student of the Year Award is presented annually to a student who has demonstrated significant personal achievement or substantial contribution to the life of the University, its students or the community.

The 2018 award (awarded in November of each year) was made to Ms Katie Christie in recognition of her research into CRISPR/Cas9 to treat corneal dystrophies. This research has made a significant contribution to the emerging field of CRISPR/Cas9 gene editing by which molecular surgery is used to precisely repair blinding eye diseases in the DNA inherited from our parents.

Ms Christie was part of the Moore Research Group who was first in presenting world proof of CRISPR/Cas9 gene editing in vivo. She has presented her research findings at major international conferences and has been part of the publication of internationally co-authored, peer reviewed, highly ranked papers, enhancing the reputation of Ulster University. So highly regarded has been her research that she secured funding from industrial partners in the USA to develop an impressive preclinical data package which resulted in a first in man clinical trial for this innovative gene therapy for blinding eye disease.

The success of her doctoral research in Ulster has culminated in securing a prestigious post-doctoral position in the laboratory of Dr Ben Kleinstiver. Based in the Centre for Genomic Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital, the teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School, Ms Christie will continue her studies into the development for therapeutic uses of CRISPR/Cas9.

4 PUBLICISING PRIZES

The following action is taken to publicise awareness of University-wide awards among staff and students:

- (i) posters are forwarded for display to:
 - Faculties and Schools
 - Students' Union
 - University libraries
 - University Career Development Centre
- (ii) information is posted on:
 - Campus reception screens
 - Academic Office website: www.ulster.ac.uk/academicoffice/prizes.html
- (iii) information is included in the University's online student handbook, the Student Guide;

- (iv) information is included in a global email to all students;
- (v) a link is available to the prize's webpage on the Student Portal;
- (vi) regarding the McCrea Literary Award (awarded biennially) which is open to graduates and honorary graduates of the University, information is also forwarded to the Alumni Office for publication.