

Distinguished Achievement Awards 2024 – Citations for Teacher of the Year

1. Teacher of the Year – Dr James Brooks – Faculty of Science and Engineering

Dr James Brooks has demonstrated outstanding teaching achievements through innovative practices to multiple cohorts this past year. With a student-centric philosophy, he prioritizes understanding each learner's unique needs, fostering open dialogues that informs his teaching approach. James adopts an interactive and open environment, encouraging independent study for lifelong learning.

Upon realising many of his masters' students had a wealth of practical experience, but less experience in academic research, James changed the assessment format from an exam to a more inclusive and authentic discussion. This facilitates a gradual introduction to academic research while enabling students to showcase their prior experience.

His unique grading approach involves students in co-creating evaluation criteria, empowering them in the learning process. He has “foster[ed] an environment where ideas are welcomed, challenged, and developed” through open discussions, peer reviews, and structured independent study, to build collaborative learning communities. His recent appointment as University Academic Lead in Teaching Excellence and Quality is a testament to his contributions to teaching innovation and excellence.

2. Teacher of the Year – Reza Salehnejad - Faculty of Humanities

Dr Reza Salehnejad is one of AMBS's most impactful educators. From a first-year undergraduate unit for over 500 students, through to his MBA and Executive Education teaching, he has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to innovative teaching methods and student engagement. In the past year, he has embraced the evolving role of educators in the age of educational technologies, particularly generative AI, incorporating both teaching AI to students, and utilising AI in his teaching. Reza's utilisation of AI in his classroom reflects his commitment to fostering critical thinking and embracing innovative teaching methods.

Dr Reza Salehnejad envisions a seamless integration of data into the teaching of economics and is excited about the opportunities presented by emerging technologies. His dedication to pushing boundaries, combined with his innovative teaching methods, positions him as a shining example of excellence in education.

3. Teacher of the Year – Dr Annie Pye – Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health

Dr Annie Pye's ability to inspire and motivate students is evident in her innovative approach to teaching. Annie varies her delivery methods, depending upon the subject. For more complex topics such as Research Methods, she takes a blended approach, recognising that students may benefit from engaging with the material at their own pace. Annie's creation of the 20-credit, final year, Psychology of Music module has been designed using evidence-based pedagogic principles. For example, the module involves interactive and immersive elements such as a field trip to the Museum of Science and Industry where students interacted with the exhibition 'Turn it up: The power of music'.

Beyond the classroom, her creation and hosting of the 'Enpsychlopedia' podcast further highlight her exceptional communication skills. This platform not only discusses academic topics but also fosters a sense of community among students and staff. Additionally, her current role as Deputy Programme Director, in which she is co-delivering a major programme review, underscore her ability to provide

clear, constructive feedback and support. Annie's exceptional communication significantly contributes to her effectiveness as an educator and leader.