



Student Achievement Awards Ireland 2019 Marking Scheme

General Marking Guidelines:

- In all sections, shortlisters and judges are asked to allocate a score within the ranges outlined. Choose the statement that most accurately reflects your judgment of the information provided and mark within the corresponding range
- There are no marks on offer for the “any other comments” section or supporting materials. These sections simply give expression to the information provided.
- If you are asked to judge a category in which any of the shortlisted applicants are personally known to you, or if you discover any unforeseen conflict of interest, please inform us at awards@usi.ie before submitting your judgment.
- You are asked to be particularly attentive to any personal restrictions (caring responsibilities, parenting etc.) or disabilities or medical conditions disclosed during application. Any applicant who choose to disclose any circumstances or condition shall have the right not to have that information disclosed without their expressed permission. Shortlisters and judges should take any such information into account when judging the relationship between capacity and performance.

QUERIES TO AWARDS@USI.IE

Student Leader of the Year

Blurb: *This award will go to the nominee who has demonstrated the most impressive leadership in the student community during the academic year 2018/2019. Through their work the successful nominee will have campaigned to protect and enhance the student experience for their peers and, in doing so, will have become a role model within the student movement.*

This award recognises extraordinary leadership in student life. A leader is not necessarily someone who holds a position of authority in a students' union, club or society - it just has to be someone who is identified as a leader by their peers. As such, applicants are asked to detail how they have demonstrated leadership and how that leadership has had an impact on the student experience.

Please list the activities/areas of student life in which the applicant has demonstrated leadership (50 words) - 10 marks

The shortlister may award marks on a discretionary basis where they are satisfied that the response represents relevant participation as a leader in student activities.

How has the applicant demonstrated leadership? (150 words) - 40 marks

- Extraordinary student leaders are those who have demonstrated a year-round commitment to enhancing the student experience, and who have done so in an extraordinary way.

0-9 Marks	The applicant has not demonstrated a commitment to leadership
10-19	The applicant has shown leadership on occasion
20-29	The applicant has been an effective leader
30-40	The applicant has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to leadership and has worked or campaigned throughout the year to protect and enhance the student experience for their peers

How has this leadership had a positive effect on student life in their college? (150 words) - 50 marks

The most important leadership brings about change and inspires people. In this section, applicants are asked to outline what impact their leadership has had on the student experience. Demonstrable impact is preferred and may include the motivation of other students to take up positions of leadership and to be effective leaders.

0-9 Marks	No evidence of impact.
10-19	The person who wrote the application clearly appreciates the virtue of hard work, but has failed to outline what effect it has had.
20-29	The applicant is an active member of the student community
30-39	The applicant has had a positive effect through initiatives, campaigns or events
40-50	Through their extraordinary leadership in student life the applicant has enhanced the student experience for their peers and is a role model for other students

Part-Time Officer of the Year

Blurb: *Students' Unions, and particularly sabbatical officers, rely hugely on the work done by part-time SU officers. These officers frequently sit on the Students' Union Executive, where one exists, and give up their time to assist in the development and implementation of policies and campaigns. This award will go to the part-time officer who has gone above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that 2018/2019 was a successful year for their SU.*

General guidelines:

- For the purposes of eligibility, "part-time officer" shall refer to students' union positions only;
- Part-time officers may be paid or unpaid, depending on their union;
- A small number of part-time officers may be fulfilling their role while on sabbatical or on a year away from study. For the purposes of eligibility these students will be considered members of their union unless we are otherwise instructed by the relevant union;
- Part-time officer is a broad term without formal definition. All elected part-time roles in affiliated students' unions are eligible, with the exception of class representatives.

Please describe the "above and beyond" activities of the part-time officer (200 words) - 50 marks

Shortlisters and judges should give the highest marks to applicants whose contribution to the work of their students' union and/or their area of expertise or representation is **beyond** what is to be expected. Simply fulfilling the role as outlined is not sufficient to constitute "above and beyond". Successful applicants should have contributed to a broad range of SU activities, although exceptionalism in a specific brief is also important to recognise.

0-9 Marks	Description of activities is a list of tasks that should be expected of the role.
10-19	Applicant has clearly fulfilled the expectations of the role but hasn't exceeded expectations..
20-29	Occasionally exceeded expectations and improved the work of the students' union in certain tasks, campaigns or initiatives.
30-39	On several occasions the applicant's hard work beyond what should be expected of them has positively contributed to the work of the students' union.
40-50	The tireless applicant's willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty has uniquely enhanced the work of the students' union (either generally, or in their specific brief).

How has their work had a positive effect on student life/the Students' Union in their college? (150 words) - 50 marks

The most successful applicants are those whose work has had a demonstrable positive impact on some area of student life. They needn't have single-handedly lowered fees or changed policy, but students should have benefited from their work. This can either be through specific initiatives run by the PTO, or through their overall contribution to the students' union. "Demonstrable" impact connotes something measurable, but a well-articulated explanation as to how a PTO has raised awareness or brought an important issue to the fore is also acceptable.

0-9 Marks	No evidence of impact.
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10-19	The person who wrote the application clearly appreciates the virtue of hard work, but has failed to outline what effect it has had.
20-29	The applicant has had a positive effect through one initiative, campaign or event.
30-39	The applicant has had a positive impact in a number of arenas, but not on a year-round basis.
40-50	The applicant has helped their students' union to thrive throughout the year, and without them it wouldn't have been possible AND/OR their work in their specific area of competency has had a clear and positive impact on student life.

International Student of the Year

Blurb: *This award will be presented to an international student who has been an integral part of student life throughout the academic year 2018/2019. International students often face barriers to integration in Ireland, not least because they are far from the comforts of home and family, but play important and valued roles across activity on and off campus. The recipient of the award will have integrated into campus life and stands out as a role model for students, having demonstrated the ability to be an ambassador for student life in Ireland.*

An international student is “one whose normal place of residence is *outside* the island of Ireland but who is resident in Ireland for the purpose of study over a shorter or longer period.” (ICOS).

Describe the student life activities in which the applicant was engaged in the 2018/19 academic year (150 words) - 10 marks

The shortlister may award marks on a discretionary basis where they are satisfied that the response represents relevant participation in student life.

How has the applicant helped other students to orientate themselves to the college experience? (200 words) - 50 marks

The most successful applicants will have demonstrated their work and participation in student life - whether co-curricular or curricular. In this section, we are particularly interested to hear how the applicant has encouraged the participation, successful integration, academic success, wellbeing, or other success of other students. Applicants will be expected to have demonstrated that their activities have been orientated towards these objectives.

0-9 Marks	Insufficient attempt to outline how the student has engaged in student life.
10-19	The applicant has participated in a range of activities in student life.
20-29	The applicant has participated in some initiatives aimed at ensuring the success of other students
30-39	The applicant has been an important part of initiatives aimed at ensuring the success of other students
40-50	The applicant’s work has been focussed on ensuring the success of other students AND/OR the applicant has led a number of initiatives to ensure the success of other students

How was their work had a positive effect on student life in their college? (100 words) - 40 marks

The applicant may be considered an “ambassador for student life in Ireland” and/or a “role model” through their extraordinary participation in student life. In this section, applicants are expected to outline how they have affected the student experience through their participation.

0-9 Marks	No evidence of impact.
10-19	The person who wrote the application clearly appreciates the virtue of hard work, but has failed to outline what effect it has had.
20-29	The applicant has had a positive effect through an initiative, campaign or event.

30-39

Through their extraordinary participation in student life, the applicant has improved the college experience and/or the experience of other students.

Equality Campaign of the Year

Blurb: *Equality has long been at the forefront of the work of the student movement, with USI and its membership leading and significantly contributing to social justice for decades. This award will recognise the campaign or ongoing advocacy that has highlighted injustice and advanced the cause of equality on campus, in the public eye and/or wider community.*

The award recognises activism towards equality in the fields of age, disability, family status, gender identity or expression, marital status, membership of the Traveller Community, nationality, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio economic circumstance. The award recognises an individual, group, society, or Students' Union who led and organised an outstanding equality campaign without regard to whether or not that activism was campus-based.

For this award, shortlisters and judges should take into account budget and other relevant limitations. Campaigns should be assessed on their purpose, their messaging, their relevance to students, their promotion, their events, and their achievements.

Describe the campaign with a particular focus on its objectives and events (200 words) - 30 marks

The highest-scoring campaigns should demonstrate a clear focus on improving, promoting or protecting an aspect of equality, and how they get their message across.

0-9 Marks	The campaign did not have clear objectives with regards improving, promoting or protecting equality.
10-19	The campaign had clear and important objectives, but not all of its events and initiatives complemented these
20-25	The campaign had relevant objectives and a good programme to match
26-30	The campaign had clear and relevant objectives and its diverse events and initiatives brilliantly complemented these objectives.

What was the impact of the campaign? Was it successful in achieving its objectives? (200 words) - 55 marks

This award specifically seeks to recognise campaigns which made progress towards its stated objectives. Applicants will need to evidence prior consideration of what they wanted to achieve from the campaign, and to include an honest assessment of how successful they were. Campaigns should be student-focused and seek to engage as many students as possible within the target group.

0-9 Marks	The applicant fails to demonstrate that their campaign was goal-focused AND/OR the campaign did not engage students
10-19	The campaign did not have much success in achieving its objectives
20-34	The primary achievement of the campaign is that it has raised awareness of the issue in their college or community
35-44	The campaign is demonstrably on course to make progress on the issue(s) and engaged a moderate number of students

45-55	There is a tangible positive outcome resulting from the campaign AND/OR the campaign has achieved several of its primary objectives AND/OR the campaign has led to significant and demonstrable progress on the issue(s) AND the campaign engaged a relatively large number of students
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What was the campaign budget? - 15 marks

The point of this question is not to penalise campaigns run by better-resourced groups, but to evaluate the success of the campaign in relation to the available resources. A well-funded campaign that is highly successful should not be penalised. These marks can be rewarded on a discretionary basis.

Welfare Campaign of the Year

Blurb: *Protecting students is one of the core missions of USI and local Students' Unions. This award will go to the campaign which has done the most to promote or protect the welfare of students in Ireland. Budget and other limitations will be taken into consideration and should be clearly outlined on the nomination submission form. An individual, groups of individuals, organisations, clubs, societies and Students' Unions may be nominated for this award.*

For this award, shortlisters and judges should take into account budget and other relevant limitations. Campaigns should be assessed on their purpose, their messaging, their relevance to students, their promotion, their events, and their achievements.

Describe the campaign with a particular focus on its objectives and events (200 words) - 30 marks

The highest-scoring campaigns should demonstrate a clear focus on improving, promoting or protecting an aspect of student welfare or wellbeing, and how they get their message across.

0-9 Marks	The campaign did not have clear objectives with regards improving, promoting or protecting an aspect of student welfare or wellbeing.
10-19	The campaign had clear and important objectives, but not all of its events and initiatives complemented these
20-25	The campaign had relevant objectives and a good programme to match
26-30	The campaign had clear and relevant objectives and its diverse events and initiatives brilliantly complemented these objectives.

What was the impact of the campaign? Was it successful in achieving its objectives? (200 words) - 55 marks

This award specifically seeks to recognise campaigns which made progress towards its stated objectives. Applicants will need to evidence prior consideration of what they wanted to achieve from the campaign, and to include an honest assessment of how successful they were. Campaigns should be student-focused and seek to engage as many students as possible within the target group.

0-9 Marks	The applicant fails to demonstrate that their campaign was goal-focused AND/OR the campaign did not engage students
10-19	The campaign did not have much success in achieving its objectives
20-34	The primary achievement of the campaign is that it has raised awareness of the issue in their college or community
35-44	The campaign is demonstrably on course to make progress on the issue(s) and engaged a moderate number of students
45-55	There is a tangible positive outcome resulting from the campaign AND/OR the campaign has achieved several of its primary objectives AND/OR the campaign has led to significant and demonstrable progress on the issue(s) AND the campaign

	engaged a relatively large number of students
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What was the campaign budget? - 15 marks

The point of this question is not to penalise campaigns run by better-resourced groups, but to evaluate the success of the campaign in relation to the available resources. A well-funded campaign that is highly successful should not be penalised. These marks can be rewarded on a discretionary basis.

Education Campaign of the Year

Blurb: *At the heart of the USI constitution is the pledge to protect and promote education. This award will recognise the campaign which sought to promote these values on campus and which brought about tangible benefits to the student body. Campaigns run by Students' Unions, student societies and individual students are all eligible for consideration. Budget and other limitations will be taken into consideration and should be clearly outlined on the nomination submission form.*

For this award, shortlisters and judges should take into account budget and other relevant limitations.

An "education campaign" is one which seeks to promote, protect, or otherwise advance the academic interests of students. Its objectives can be in the field of quality assurance, teaching & learning, student engagement, student rights, exam success, assessment, and more.

Describe the campaign with a particular focus on its objectives and events (200 words) - 30 marks

The highest-scoring campaigns shall be those which demonstrate a clear focus on improving, promoting or protecting an aspect of academic interest. Campaigns should be assessed on their purpose, their messaging, their relevance to students, their promotion, their events, and their achievements.

0-9 Marks	The campaign did not have clear objectives with regards improving, promoting or protecting an aspect of academic interest.
10-19	The campaign had clear and important objectives, but not all of its events and initiatives complemented these
20-25	The campaign had relevant objectives and a good programme to match
26-30	The campaign had clear and relevant objectives and its diverse events and initiatives brilliantly complemented these objectives.

What was the impact of the campaign? Was it successful in achieving its objectives? (200 words) - 55 marks

This award specifically seeks to recognise campaigns which made progress towards its stated objectives. Applicants will need to evidence prior consideration of what they wanted to achieve from the campaign, and to include an honest assessment of how successful they were. Campaigns should be student-focused and seek to engage as many students as possible within the target group.

0-9 Marks	The applicant fails to demonstrate that their campaign was goal-focused AND/OR the campaign did not engage students
10-19	The campaign did not have much success in achieving its objectives
20-34	The primary achievement of the campaign is that it has raised awareness of the issue in their college or community
35-44	The campaign is demonstrably on course to make progress on the issue(s) and engaged a moderate number of students
45-55	There is a tangible positive outcome resulting from the campaign AND/OR the campaign has achieved several of its primary objectives AND/OR the campaign has

	led to significant and demonstrable progress on the issue(s) AND the campaign engaged a relatively large number of students
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What was the campaign budget? - 15 marks

The point of this question is not to penalise campaigns run by better-resourced groups, but to evaluate the success of the campaign in relation to the available resources. A well-funded campaign that is highly successful should not be penalised. These marks can be rewarded on a discretionary basis.

Outstanding Mental Health Activism

Blurb: Mental health forms a large part of the work of the student movement. This award will go to the campaign, society, or individual activist which has done the most to promote or protect the mental health of students in Ireland in 2018/2019. Budget and other limitations will be taken into consideration and should be clearly outlined on the nomination submission form. An individual, groups of individuals, organisations, societies and Students' Unions may be nominated for this award.

The most successful applicants will be able to demonstrate that their activism is based on up-to-date research into the student experience of mental health. Where relevant they should demonstrate a knowledge of appropriate referral procedures.

Describe the activism undertaken by the applicant in 2018/2019 (200 words) - 40 marks

In this section, the applicant should outline the range of activities undertaken under the rubric of activism. They should give a clear description of their objectives. They should prioritise details of activities and objectives over motivation.

0-9 Marks	The applicant has not demonstrated a commitment to mental health activism OR the
10-19	The applicant has participated in mental health activism
20-32	The applicant has taken the lead in mental health activism in their college and/or community
33-40	The applicant has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to mental health activism and has actively and properly organised & motivated others in the interest of mental health.

What was the impact of the activism? (200 words) - 50 marks

The most successful applicants are those whose activism has had a demonstrable positive impact. "Demonstrable" impact connotes a preference for something measurable (a policy change etc.), but a well-articulated explanation as to how activism has *significantly* raised awareness is also acceptable.

0-9 Marks	The applicant fails to demonstrate that their activism was goal-focused
10-19	The activism led by the applicant has made little to no progress AND/OR was not properly sustained
20-29	The primary outcome of the activism led by the applicant is that it has raised awareness of the issue in their college or community
30-39	The activism led by the applicant is demonstrably on course to make progress on the issue(s)
40-50	There is a tangible positive outcome resulting from the activism led by the applicant AND/OR the activism led by the applicant has achieved several of its primary objectives AND/OR the activism has led to significant and demonstrable progress on the issue(s)

Please outline any relevant practical considerations, e.g. budget available - 10 marks

The point of this question is not to penalise activism by better-resourced groups, but to evaluate the success of activism in relation to the available resources. Well-funded activism that is highly successful should not be penalised. These marks can be rewarded on a discretionary basis.

Mature Student of the Year

Blurb: *This award is dedicated to recognising the achievements of mature students in higher level education. Mature students face a plethora of challenges when returning to education and overcoming these challenges requires resilience and commitment. This award will go to a mature student who has been an active participant in student life.*

A mature student is a student who was 23 years of age or older on or before 1st January on the year of their admission to college.

Describe the activities in which the applicant was engaged in 2018/2019 (100 words) - 40 marks

The most successful applicants will have demonstrated their work in helping other mature students to participate in student life - whether co-curricular or curricular. In this section, we are particularly interested to hear how the applicant has been involved in student life, and encouraged the participation, successful integration, academic success, wellbeing, or other success of other students. Applicants will be expected to have demonstrated that their activities have been orientated towards these objectives.

0-9 Marks	Insufficient attempt to outline how activities have been directed towards the success of other students
10-19	The applicant has participated in a range of activities in student life.
20-29	The applicant has participated in some initiatives aimed at ensuring the success of other students
30-39	The applicant has been an important part of student life and initiatives aimed at ensuring the success of other students
40-50	The applicant's work has been focussed on ensuring the success of other students AND/OR the applicant has led a number of initiatives to ensure the success of other students

What was the impact of their work on the student experience in their college? (200 words) - 60 marks

In this section, applicants are expected to outline how they have affected the mature student experience through their participation.

0-9 Marks	No evidence of impact.
10-19	The person who wrote the application clearly appreciates the virtue of hard work, but has failed to outline what effect it has had.
20-29	The applicant is an active member of the student community
30-45	The applicant has had a positive effect through initiatives, campaigns or events
46-60	Through their extraordinary participation in student life and their encouragement and/or assistance of other students, the applicant has improved the college experience and/or the experience of other students.

Class Representative of the Year

Blurb: *The recipient of this award will be the elected class representative who most effectively represents their fellow classmates inside the structures of the college and/or the Students' Union. Good class representatives should seek to engage their classmates with the Students' Union and its activities as well as represent and promote a broad range of interests.*

Class representatives are expected to represent a broad range of interests, particularly academic and welfare interests. They are also expected to ensure cohesive class bonding and to act as a communications channel between the class, the students' union and the college.

Describe the class representative activities in which the applicant was engaged in 2017/2018 (150 words) - 50 marks

The most successful applicants will have demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to representing their classmates. In this section, we are particularly interested to hear how the applicant has gone above and beyond to ensure that their classmates' interest is represented.

0-9 Marks	The applicant has not performed the duties of a class representative
10-19	The applicant has performed a narrow range of class representative duties
20-29	The applicant has been an effective representative but has not gone "above and beyond" what is expected of the role
30-39	The applicant has consistently and effectively represented the needs of their classmates.
40-50	Through their year-round, extraordinary commitment to representing their class, the applicant has achieved tangible results for their classmates. They have ensured that their classmates are well informed as to activities in the students' union and in college.

What was the impact of their work on the experience of their class? (200 words) - 50 marks

Extraordinary class representation involves making a difference to aspects of their class' student experience. Applicants are expected to outline how their work has had an impact on their class' experience and involved going "above and beyond" to do so.

0-9 Marks	The applicant has not exceeded the expectations of the role
10-19	The person who wrote the application clearly appreciates the virtue of hard work, but has failed to outline what effect it has had.
20-29	The applicant was a good class representative.
30-39	The applicant has had a positive effect through initiatives, campaigns or events
40-50	Through their hard work the applicant has improved the college experience for their classmates and has achieved tangible positive outcomes on their behalf

An Gradam Éacht ar son na Gaeilge

Blurb: Tuigean Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn tábhacht na Gaeilge i saol na mac léinn, agus mar sin, bronnfar an gradam seo ar eagraithe an fheachtais nó ócáid ab fhearr a reáchtáladh le linn na bliana maidir leis an teanga. Is féidir le Comhaltais/Aontais na Mac Léinn, cumainn, nó daoine aonair dul isteach san iomaíocht don ghradam seo.

The Union of Students in Ireland understands the importance of Irish in student life, and as a result, this award will be bestowed upon the organisers of the best campaign or event that was organized during the year regarding the language. Students' Unions, Societies, or individuals can put themselves forward for this award.

A "feachtas Gaeilge" can be a campaign on any aspect of Irish language and/or Irish culture.

Déan cur síos ar an bhfeachtas (150 focal) - 40 marks

The highest-scoring campaigns shall be those which demonstrate a clear focus on improving, promoting or protecting an aspect of academic interest. Campaigns should be assessed on their purpose, their messaging, their relevance to students, their promotion, their events, and their achievements.

0-9 Marks	The campaign did not have clear objectives with regards improving, promoting or protecting an aspect of Irish language or culture.
10-19	The campaign had clear and important objectives, but not all of its events and initiatives complemented these
20-29	The campaign had relevant objectives and a good programme to match
30-40	The campaign had clear and relevant objectives and its diverse events and initiatives brilliantly complemented these objectives.

Cén éifeacht a raibh ag an bhfeachtas (200 focal) - 60 marks

This award specifically seeks to recognise campaigns which made progress towards its stated objectives. Applicants will need to evidence prior consideration of what they wanted to achieve from the campaign, and to include an honest assessment of how successful they were. Campaigns should be student-focused and seek to engage as many students as possible within the target group.

0-9 Marks	The applicant fails to demonstrate that their campaign was goal-focused AND/OR the campaign did not engage students
10-19	The campaign did not have much success in achieving its objectives
20-34	The primary achievement of the campaign is that it has raised awareness of the issue in their college or community
34-49	The campaign is demonstrably on course to make progress on the issue(s) and engaged a moderate number of students
50-60	There is a tangible positive outcome resulting from the campaign AND/OR the campaign has achieved several of its primary objectives AND/OR the campaign has led to significant and demonstrable progress on the issue(s) AND the campaign engaged a relatively large number of students

Activist of the Year

Blurb: *This award will be presented to a student who has shown leadership in campaigning and advocating on a student issue or issues within their campus or wider community. It recognises the commitment of a student to an issue that matters to them or their peers, not limited to, but could include: advancing student rights, raising the student voice on or off campus, equality and social justice, encouraging more student involvement in campaigns or initiatives, or advancing and defending the quality of education.*

The award recognises activism without regard to whether or not that activism was campus-based. It is an award for a student who is an outstanding activist; it is not prescribed that only activism on student issues should be recognised.

Describe the activism in which the applicant was engaged in the 2018/19 academic year (150 words) - 10 marks

The shortlister may award marks on a discretionary basis where they are satisfied that the response represents relevant participation in activism.

Describe how this activism has demonstrated leadership in their campaigning (200 words) - 50 marks

The most successful applicants should be those who have assumed a leadership role in campaign on an issue or issues of equality. Leaders in activism will have demonstrated a diverse, systematic and goal-focused approach. Leaders in activism are a combination of lobbyists, protesters, social media activists, speakers and organisers. They have an idea of what they want to achieve and how they want to achieve it.

0-9 Marks	The applicant has not demonstrated a commitment to activism
10-19	The applicant has participated in activism
20-29	The applicant has consistently participated in activism without assuming a leadership or organisational role
30-39	The applicant has taken the lead in organising activism
40-50	The applicant has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to activism and has actively and properly organised & motivated others to participate

How was their activism contributed to change in their college or community? (100 words) - 40 marks

The most successful applicants are those whose activism has had a demonstrable positive impact on an issue. "Demonstrable" impact connotes a preference for something measurable (a policy change etc.), but a well-articulated explanation as to how activism has *significantly* raised awareness or brought an important issue to the fore is also acceptable.

0-9 Marks	The applicant fails to demonstrate that their activism was goal-focused.
10-19	The activism led by the applicant has made little to no progress AND/OR was not properly sustained

20-29	The primary outcome of the activism led by the applicant is that it has raised awareness of the issue in their college or community
30-39	The activism led by the applicant is demonstrably on course to make progress on the issue(s)
40-50	There is a tangible positive outcome resulting from the activism led by the applicant AND/OR the activism led by the applicant has achieved several of its primary objectives AND/OR the activism has led to significant and demonstrable progress on the issue(s)

Student Entrepreneur of the Year

Blurb: *The successful nominee will have initiated or developed innovative ideas benefiting themselves, a group of students, their college or the wider community. They will have demonstrated originality of thought, creativity and the requisite motivation to see a project through to its conclusion. Their work will be seen as an example of the ingenuity and dynamism that young people in Ireland possess.*

This award recognises “originality of thought, creativity and the requisite motivation to see a project through to its conclusion”. Applicants may be involved in commercial or social entrepreneurship. The emphasis in this award is on the application of entrepreneurial qualities to the process of developing an original concept. The most successful applicants shall be entrepreneurs who have developed a functioning product or service or significantly progressed an idea through the systematic application of entrepreneurial qualities. Shortlisters and judges should undertake research to ensure that the concept or approach is original.

Describe the entrepreneurial activity undertaken by the applicant in 2018/2019 (150 words) - 40 marks

Applicants should outline the project(s) in which they have been engaged and how they have applied entrepreneurial qualities to their work on the project(s).

0-9 Marks	The applicant has failed to demonstrate entrepreneurial qualities AND/OR the project being worked on is not sufficiently original
10-19	The applicant has participated in entrepreneurship projects
20-29	The applicant has demonstrated some good application of entrepreneurial qualities
30-40	The applicant has detailed exceptional originality of thought, creativity, and motivation AND the concept has the potential to be or is transformative

By what measure has their entrepreneurship been successful? (200 words) - 60 marks

For the purpose of judgment, “successful” entrepreneurship shall be defined in terms of progress. Progress can be demonstrated by the development of an idea by research, the acquisition of funding or other support, engagement with prospective users/stakeholders, and more - but exceptional entrepreneurship should involve many such examples of progress.

0-9 Marks	The applicant has failed to demonstrate progress
10-19	The applicant has a good idea but has not effectively applied entrepreneurial qualities to its development
20-34	The applicant has a good idea and has demonstrated a capacity to progress it
34-49	The applicant has demonstrated some progress on developing their concept
50-60	Through their application of originality of thought, creativity, and motivation, the applicant has significantly progressed their idea

Student Media Outlet of the Year

Blurb:-*The quality of content and the reach that student media has on and off campuses is an integral part to creating a sense of student life and community. This award recognises the student media outlet or platform that demonstrates high commitment to editorial, journalistic, or broadcast standards. It could go to an individual, group of individuals, organisation, society, or Students' Union. It could include a publication, journal, radio station, blog, podcast or any other form of media. The budget and other limitations of any outlet will be taken into consideration and should be clearly outlined on the entry form.*

There are no set questions for this application and applicants are instructed that the process involves a judgment on the overall quality of the applicant outlet. A "student media outlet" is not just a outlet managed, produced, or published by students, but also one which focuses on student issues and produces bespoke content for a third-level audience. The following marking scheme should aid this judgment:

Quality of layout and design - 20 marks

Positive marks should be awarded for:

Good use of photography or cinematography (where relevant)
High-quality content appropriate for the format
Variation within the medium of communication
Consistent brand and recognisable content
Original and engaging content

Negative marks should be awarded for:

Basic errors
Lack of originality in production
Excessive use of stock content or repetition

Quality of content - 20 marks

Positive marks should be awarded for:

Originality of news, analysis, and features
Well-articulated and original opinion pieces
Incisive, analytical content
Accuracy and evidence of research
Content that is current at the time of release/being aired
A variety of content focussed on a wide range of relevant issues
Content aligned with objectives of the outlet

Negative marks should be awarded for:

Misattribution of quotes or titles
Inaccuracies
Lack of research

Outdated content
Lack of originality
Excessive focus on particular subjects

Range of contributors - 10 marks

Positive marks should be awarded for:

Evidence that a relatively large number of students are involved in the outlet. This can include editors, broadcasters, designers, photographers, engineers, station managers, production directors, illustrators, writers.

Negative marks should be awarded for:

Unjustified lack of attribution for articles, layout, photography, editing, illustration, shows and other contributions.

Evidence of excessive reliance on particular individuals to perform multiple functions (e.g. a large proportion of the content submitted by one writer or a low number of presenters)

Evidence of high journalistic and editorial standards - 20 marks

Positive marks should be awarded for:

Evidence of ethical journalistic behaviour (e.g. right to respond offered where appropriate)

Consistency of style

Analytical and critical writing/reporting

Self-criticism

Accountability

Negative marks should be awarded for:

Regurgitation of press releases/shows

Plagiarism

Libellous content

Excessive use of sponsored content

Consistent spelling and/or grammar mistakes

Focus of content - 20 marks

Positive marks should be awarded for:

A focus on student issues

Negative marks should be awarded for:

Excessive use of student-unrelated content

Budget & other limitations - 10 marks

Please offer a discretionary mark out of 10 that represents your evaluation of how effectively the media outlet has made use of its resources. The point of this question is not to penalise campaigns

run by better-resourced groups. A well-funded media outlet that is highly successful should not be penalised. These marks can be rewarded on a discretionary basis.

In the case of student media outlets, resourcing has particular implications for staffing levels, layout and design capabilities, circulation, sponsored content, recording quality and related performance. It is less consequential for copy editing, journalistic, presenting and editing standards.

Outstanding Contribution to Student Media

Blurb: *Student media has a long and proud history in Ireland and in recent years it has become more important and prominent than ever. This award will go to an individual who has demonstrated a clear commitment to developing student media as a means to engaging the student population, whether that is as a journalist or broadcaster, or in a support capacity to a media outlet. This award recognises that there is a wide variety of ways in which an individual student can contribute to the success of student media.*

There are no set questions for this application and applicants are instructed that the process involves a judgment on the overall quality of the applicant. A “student journalist” or “student broadcaster” is not just a student who writes content or presents shows, but also one who focuses on student issues and produces bespoke content for a third-level audience. Similarly, those who work in a supporting capacity will do this through a variety of ways, and the application will need to demonstrate how those individuals have contributed to the success of student media. The following considerations should be part of this judgement:

100 marks considering:

- Quality of contribution to student media (30 marks)
- Quality of media content (20 marks)
- Evidence of ethical practice (10 marks)
- Critical and organisational approach (10 marks)
- Originality of content (10 marks)
- Relevance of content (10 marks)
- Discretionary (10 marks)

Outstanding Contribution to Student Life

Blurb: *This award will celebrate the work of a group or organisation and their lasting and outstanding contribution to student life in Ireland in 2018/2019. The award recognises clubs, societies, or other student-led organisations which have a positive impact on broader student life. An “outstanding” contributor to student life is a recognised group or organisation whose impact is felt beyond its membership and throughout the whole college community, or to the student experience in Ireland.*

Clubs, societies, and students’ unions make the student experience more enjoyable. This is a new award that seeks to recognise those groups whose contribution to the student experience goes far beyond their membership. For example, we are looking for the society whose collaborations consistently enhance the events of other societies, the sports club that also does very effective fundraising, or the students’ union that helps other students’ unions build and develop. Successful applicants will have to demonstrate how they have gone “above and beyond” to enhance the student experience. In other words, the award recognises groups that transcend their core purpose of serving their membership and contribute to student life in an outstanding way.

Describe the activity undertaken by the applicant in 2018/2019 (150 words) - 30 marks

Applicants should outline their “outstanding” contribution, which should go “above and beyond” its core purpose, (e.g. a GAA club that is very good at GAA is not “outstanding” in this regard). The highest marks should go to groups who have engaged beyond their membership throughout the year towards the enhancement of the student experience.

0-9 Marks	The group or organisation has not engaged in student life outside of its own membership/core
10-20	The group has been involved in a few initiatives aimed at enhancing the student experience beyond its own members
21-30	The group or organisation has consistently made an important contribution to collaborative initiatives aimed at enhancing the student experience AND/OR the group has regularly collaborated with groups in other colleges towards the enhancement of the student experience

Describe how the applicant's contribution to student life has been "outstanding" with a particular focus on their positive impact on student life (250 words) - 70 marks

Applicants should outline how effectively their engagement has contributed to the enhancement of the student experience. The emphasis on this section is in demonstrating impact.

0-20 Marks	The applicant has failed to demonstrate how its contribution to student life was “above and beyond” what is expected of the group or organisation
21-40	The applicant has detailed a particularly impressive programme of work but has failed to convincingly demonstrate broader impact
40-60	The applicant has demonstrated some positive impact on the student experience as a result of the group or organisation’s work
60-70	The applicant has outlined how the group or organisation has gone “above and beyond” its core purpose and demonstrably improved an aspect of the student experience

Charity Champions of the Year

Blurb: This award recognises charitable efforts organised by a USI member organisation, student, society or other group. Budget and other limitations will be taken into consideration and should be clearly outlined on the nomination submission form. The award recognises a year-round commitment to fundraising, volunteerism, outreach etc. An individual, groups of individuals, organisations, societies and Students' Unions may be nominated for the award.

This award recognises a sustained approach to charitable activities. Individuals or groups are welcome to apply for the award on the basis of a single charitable event but must demonstrate that organising the event consumed a significant portion of the year. A "charitable" activity is one with a benevolent purpose organised and enacted by volunteers. The most successful applicants will be those who demonstrate a sustained commitment to charitable activities and a high level of organisation, who have mobilised a large number of students, and have had a demonstrable impact.

Describe the activity undertaken by the applicant in 2018/2019 (150 words) - 40 marks

0-9 Marks	The applicant has failed to demonstrate a sustained, organised, or engaged approach to fundraising
10-19	The applicant has described a stand-alone event that, while important, does not qualify as a sustained approach
20-29	The applicant has worked impressively on charitable events throughout the year
30-40	The applicant has demonstrated high levels of organisation and a sustained commitment to charitable activities, involved a large number of students in their activities, and have had a demonstrable impact on the beneficiaries.

How successful were the charitable activities? What impact have they had? (250 words) - 50 marks

0-15 Marks	The applicant has failed to demonstrate how their efforts have had an impact
16-30	The applicant has detailed a particularly impressive programme of work but has failed to convincingly demonstrate broader impact
31-45	The applicant has demonstrated some positive impact on the beneficiaries as a result of the group or organisation's work
46-60	The applicant has demonstrated a high level of impact and has achieved multiple objectives

What was the campaign budget? - 10 marks

The point of this question is not to penalise initiatives run by better-resourced groups, but to evaluate the success of the initiative in relation to the available resources. A well-funded initiative that is highly successful should not be penalised. These marks can be rewarded on a discretionary basis.

Environmental and Sustainability Activism of the Year

Blurb: *This award recognises the contribution of an individual, group of individuals, society, or Students' Union to advancing the cause of environmentalism and sustainability. Increasingly important, both on and off campus, the student movement is now an integral part of the wider movement to ensuring a more sustainable planet. Initiatives, campaigns, and lobby efforts are ongoing across the country, and this award recognises that growing body of student activism.*

The award recognises environmental activism without regard to whether or not that activism was campus-based. It is an award for a student, group of students, society, or Students' Union who has demonstrated clear commitment to environmentalist activism and campaigning; it is not prescribed that their work should be specifically targeted at students.

Describe the environmental activism in which the applicant was engaged in the 2018/19 academic year (150 words) - 10 marks

The shortlister may award marks on a discretionary basis where they are satisfied that the response represents relevant participation in activism.

Describe how this activism has demonstrated leadership in campaigning (200 words) - 50 marks

The most successful applicants should be those who have assumed a leadership role in campaign on an issue or issues of equality. Leaders in activism will have demonstrated a diverse, systematic and goal-focused approach. Leaders in activism are a combination of lobbyists, protesters, social media activists, speakers and organisers. They have an idea of what they want to achieve and how they want to achieve it.

0-9 Marks	The applicant has not demonstrated a commitment to activism
10-19	The applicant has participated in activism
20-29	The applicant has consistently participated in activism without assuming a leadership or organisational role
30-39	The applicant has taken the lead in organising activism
40-50	The applicant has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to activism and has actively and properly organised & motivated others to participate

How was their activism contributed to change in their college or community? (100 words) - 40 marks

The most successful applicants are those whose activism has had a demonstrable positive impact on an issue. "Demonstrable" impact connotes a preference for something measurable (a policy change etc.), but a well-articulated explanation as to how activism has *significantly* raised awareness or brought an important issue to the fore is also acceptable.

0-9 Marks	The applicant fails to demonstrate that their activism was goal-focused.
10-19	The activism led by the applicant has made little to no progress AND/OR was not properly sustained
20-29	The primary outcome of the activism led by the applicant is that it has raised awareness of the issue in their college or community

30-39	The activism led by the applicant is demonstrably on course to make progress on the issue(s)
40-50	There is a tangible positive outcome resulting from the activism led by the applicant AND/OR the activism led by the applicant has achieved several of its primary objectives AND/OR the activism has led to significant and demonstrable progress on the issue(s)

Postgraduate Engagement

Blurb: USI as an organisation has been taking big steps to engage with our postgraduate community. These steps have been mirrored by many within the student movement. This award recognises outstanding contributions towards postgraduate engagement and celebrates those who have reached out to the postgraduate community.

The award recognises environmental activism without regard to whether or not that activism was campus-based. It is an award for a student, group of students, society, or Students' Union who has demonstrated clear commitment to environmentalist activism and campaigning; it is not prescribed that their work should be specifically targeted at students.

Describe the environmental activism in which the applicant was engaged in the 2018/19 academic year (150 words) - 10 marks

The shortlister may award marks on a discretionary basis where they are satisfied that the response represents relevant participation in activism.

Describe how this activism has demonstrated leadership in campaigning (200 words) - 50 marks

The most successful applicants should be those who have assumed a leadership role in campaign on an issue or issues of equality. Leaders in activism will have demonstrated a diverse, systematic and goal-focused approach. Leaders in activism are a combination of lobbyists, protesters, social media activists, speakers and organisers. They have an idea of what they want to achieve and how they want to achieve it.

0-9 Marks	The applicant has not demonstrated a commitment to activism
10-19	The applicant has participated in activism
20-29	The applicant has consistently participated in activism without assuming a leadership or organisational role
30-39	The applicant has taken the lead in organising activism
40-50	The applicant has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to activism and has actively and properly organised & motivated others to participate

How was their activism contributed to change in their college or community? (100 words) - 40 marks

The most successful applicants are those whose activism has had a demonstrable positive impact on an issue. "Demonstrable" impact connotes a preference for something measurable (a policy change etc.), but a well-articulated explanation as to how activism has *significantly* raised awareness or brought an important issue to the fore is also acceptable.

0-9 Marks	The applicant fails to demonstrate that their activism was goal-focused.
10-19	The activism led by the applicant has made little to no progress AND/OR was not properly sustained
20-29	The primary outcome of the activism led by the applicant is that it has raised awareness of the issue in their college or community
30-39	The activism led by the applicant is demonstrably on course to make progress on

	the issue(s)
40-50	There is a tangible positive outcome resulting from the activism led by the applicant AND/OR the activism led by the applicant has achieved several of its primary objectives AND/OR the activism has led to significant and demonstrable progress on the issue(s)

Fund the Future Award

Blurb:

The award recognises activism or other forms of advocacy for publicly funded Higher Education, without regard to whether or not that activism was campus-based. It is an award for a student, group of students, society, or Students' Union who has demonstrated clear commitment to campaigning on this issue; it is not prescribed that their work should be specifically targeted at students.

Describe the activities in which the applicant was engaged in the 2018/19 academic year (150 words) - 10 marks

The shortlister may award marks on a discretionary basis where they are satisfied that the response represents relevant participation in campaigning or advocacy on Higher Education funding.

Describe how this work has demonstrated leadership in campaigning for publicly funded Higher Education (200 words) - 50 marks

The most successful applicants should be those who have assumed leadership roles to campaign on an issue or issues related to Higher Education funding, access etc. They will have demonstrated a diverse, systematic and goal-focused approach. They have an idea of what they want to achieve and how they want to achieve it.

0-9 Marks	The applicant has not demonstrated a commitment to publicly funded HE
10-19	The applicant has participated in advocacy
20-29	The applicant has consistently participated in activism without assuming a leadership or organisational role
30-39	The applicant has taken the lead in organising activism/activities/campaigning
40-50	The applicant has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to campaigning/advocacy for publicly funded HE and has actively and properly organised & motivated others to participate

How was their advocacy contributed to change in their college or community? (100 words) - 40 marks

The most successful applicants are those whose work has had a demonstrable positive impact on the issue. "Demonstrable" impact connotes a preference for something measurable (a policy change etc.), but a well-articulated explanation as to how activism has *significantly* raised awareness or brought an important issue to the fore is also acceptable.

0-9 Marks	The applicant fails to demonstrate that their work was goal-focused.
10-19	The work led by the applicant has made little to no progress AND/OR was not properly sustained
20-29	The primary outcome of the work led by the applicant is that it has raised awareness of the issue in their college or community
30-39	The work or activism led by the applicant is demonstrably on course to make progress on the issue(s)

40-50

There is a tangible positive outcome resulting from the work/activism led by the applicant **AND/OR** the work of the applicant has achieved several of its primary objectives **AND/OR** has led to significant and demonstrable progress on the issue(s)

Students' Union Teams of the Year

Blurb: NOTE that there are 3 Awards in this category: Small SU, Medium-sized SU, and Large SU.

These Awards recognise the dedication of the elected Officer teams who lead and shape the direction of Students' Unions around the country. Each year teams of Sabbatical Officers and Part-Time Officers set the direction of their SUs and work on a plethora of campaigns and issues for the students they represent. Each Award recognises how these teams acted collectively and cohesively, that they identified things that needed to change, and that they sought to implement innovative and exciting new ideas so that they could represent students to the best of their ability.

A small SU represents less than 7000 students.

A medium SU represents between 7000 and 14000 students.

A large SU represents 14000 students or more.

Describe the ways in which this SU team worked together to achieve their aims and objectives (200 words)

The shortlister may award marks on a discretionary basis where they are satisfied that the response represents a team that has demonstrably worked together cohesively.

0-9 Marks	The applicants have not demonstrated any commitment to working together as a team
10-19	The applicants have worked together in some areas but have shown little consistency to their approach
20-29	The applicants have consistently worked together as a team
30-39	The applicants have used diverse approaches to their work and have collaborated across a range of issues, which have demonstrable outcomes
40-50	The applicants have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to working together as an SU team, ensuring that every member was included and supported to be an excellent representative

How did the SU team have impact on the lives of their students? Please describe what changes they introduced or innovative ways in which they worked. (200 words)

The most successful teams will have achieved tangible outcomes for their Students' Union and the students they represent, and will have been able to demonstrate that the work they have undertaken was creative, developing new approaches and ideas to achieve their aims.

0-9 Marks	The applicants have failed to demonstrate their work or of any outcomes for students
10-19	The work of the applicants has made little progress
20-29	The work of the applicants was primarily based on previous campaigns or ideas, but they did demonstrate an ability to rethink approaches and had some success
30-39	The work of the applicants has been demonstrably innovative and is on course to achieve outcomes for students

40-50

There is a tangible positive outcome resulting from the work of the applicants **AND/OR** the work led by the applicants has achieved several of its primary objectives **AND/OR** the team's new and exciting approaches have led to significant and demonstrable progress on the issue(s)