

Quality Research

The Award Guide

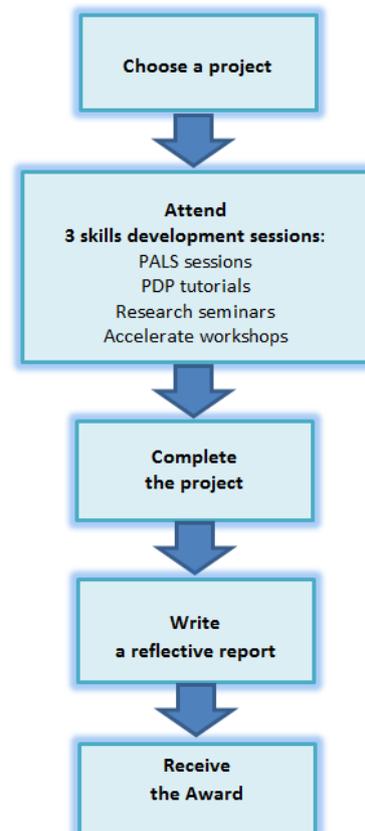
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The skills you're building in this Award



Here's how it works



The Quality Research Award Projects:

Choose ONE project from the selection listed below.

Choice of Projects:

PROJECT 1: A student manual

Develop a set of instructions for a first year History or Art History student on how to approach a selected element of the historian's toolkit. The instruction manual should have an accessible and visually appealing form. Details can be found on p. 3.

PROJECT 2: A pedagogic study

Conduct a research project designed to trial a new teaching/learning method for the purposes of understanding one of the themes in the core module (e.g. 'What is History'). Details can be found on p. 4.

PROJECT 3: A visual display

Conduct a 'disruptive' project of representing Plymouth in historical documents and images or own photographs. Details can be found on p. 5.

PROJECT 1: A student manual

Rationale:

Becoming a professional historian involves a range of discipline-specific skills but mastering a well-functioning professional toolkit can be difficult without clarity as to what it entails. Learning how to write a book review or conduct archival work is often a trial-and-error process.

Task:

Based on a specific example (e.g. related to your own research experience or ambition), develop a set of step-by-step instructions for a first year History or Art History student on how to approach a selected element of the historian's toolkit (e.g. archival work, historiographic research, book review, journal article, etc.).

Approach:

The instruction manual should have an accessible and visually appealing form (consider posters, screenshots, photographs, graphs and tables, screencasts, podcasts, videos, etc.).

Presentation:

Choose the most effective way of presenting your completed project. It could be a document explaining how you developed the manual or an oral presentation of the manual itself.



Have you ever struggled with understanding how to do things in history and then suddenly something 'clicked' and you knew? Have you found a good and simple strategy to approach a historical methodology?



This project is a great opportunity to share your knowledge of historical methodologies and your experience of successfully conducting a specific form of historical research.

PROJECT 2: A pedagogic study.

Rationale:

Grasping the basic historical concepts, schools of ideas, theories and processes, as well as threshold concepts can be a challenge and many students struggle with understanding *longue durée* versus microhistory, differentiating between ontology and epistemology, or grasping the illusion of inevitability and objectivity.

Task:

Conduct a research project designed to trial a new teaching or learning method for the purposes of learning and understanding one of the themes in the 'What is History' module.

Approach:

This should involve at least **two** of the below actions:

- ↳ conducting an informal survey of student learning preferences and analysing responses,
- ↳ applying the findings to the design,
- ↳ creating a plan for a session that would use the designed teaching/learning method,
- ↳ discussing the plan for a session in an informal focus group.

Presentation:

Document all the elements of the research project and present them in your chosen format: written, oral or visual.



Have you ever wished there were different ways of learning difficult things? Have you found your own tried and tested method of grasping complex ideas? Have you ever wondered how others learn and what works for them? Have you ever wanted to design a teaching session around a particular concept or idea?



This project is a great opportunity to share your knowledge of historical concepts and demonstrate your passion for teaching.

Please note that this task does not require you to actually run a session with other students. The aim of the project is to consider the most effective or innovative ways of explaining complex theoretical problems and think about how they could be implemented in a classroom setting.

PROJECT 3: A visual display

Rationale:

Plymouth is a city with many fascinating aspects and looking at it 'differently', beyond the standard messages promoted by the tourism industry, can reveal a different face of the place.

Task:

Conduct a 'disruptive' project of representing Plymouth in historical documents and images or own photographs.

Approach:

For inspiration, check out Oliver Curtis photographing the world's monuments 'the wrong way round' (<http://www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/technique/interviews/oliver-curtis-volte-face-92287>) but don't be limited by his approach. There are many ways of engaging with 'overlooked' aspects of a place and its history. Be creative.

Presentation:

Put together an album or a virtual exhibition that presents your intellectual journey with commentaries on the meaning behind your choices.



Do you have a particular interest in visual history? Perhaps you like to think of yourself as an amateur photographer? Are you interested in non-traditional and creative forms of presenting research? Are you creative and artistically inclined?



This project is a great opportunity to demonstrate your visual analytic skills and immerse yourself in a creative activity.

Reflective report:

Your reflective report needs to fulfil the following criteria:

- ↳ It must be up to **500 words** in length
- ↳ It must identify **3 skills** you developed in the process of completing the project and demonstrate how they enhance your employability.
- ↳ For guidelines on reflective writing, please see the Study Guide on Reflective Writing at the Learning Development website www.plymouth.ac.uk/learn.

Checklist:

Start date of the project: _____

Element	Date	Evidence/ signature
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PALS session

PDP meeting

Research seminar

Accelerate workshop

Peninsula Arts event

Project completed

Reflective essay

LD Coordinator meeting

Project approved

FAQs

Who can I contact if I have questions regarding the Awards?

If at any point you have questions about Stand Out, please contact your LD Coordinator, Dr Alicja Syska (alicja.syska@plymouth.ac.uk). Alternatively, you can discuss the scheme with your PALS leaders during PALS sessions or with your personal tutor in PDP tutorials.

What are the benefits of the Awards?

The tasks involved in completing the projects not only illuminate the essential graduate attributes you are expected to develop over the course of study but also allow you to demonstrate concrete examples of mastering these skills to future employers. The Awards recognise and celebrate your extracurricular achievements and will contribute to improving your chances for employment in a subject-related field.

Additional benefits:

The Awards will be displayed in your **Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)** upon graduation.

You will be automatically enrolled in the prestigious **Plymouth Award**, so you can extend your achievements even further.

What help can I expect?

All the projects (with the exception of the Successful Collaboration Award) are individual and you're expected to work on them in your own time and at your own pace. Nonetheless, you can expect to receive support:

From your Personal Tutor: You can discuss your ideas with your personal tutor who may offer you advice and feedback on your progress. On completion, you will present the project to them and they will award you a certificate.

From Learning Development: Your LD coordinator, Dr Alicja Syska, holds open hours for consultation (Fridays 10-12 in the Learning Gateway) and you can drop in for a project-orientated meeting.

From the PALS leaders: PALS sessions might help you to explore ideas for the projects. There are multiple sessions to choose from in each term. Please contact your PALS leaders for scheduling details.

Will my project be marked?

No. You are solely responsible for the quality of your project and it will be checked only to the extent that it achieves its objectives. If it doesn't, it will not pass.

Can I work with another student on an Award?

Only if you're working on the Successful Collaboration Award. Projects for all other Awards have to be completed individually.

Is there a deadline for any project?

No, but they must be completed before you receive your final marks in the final year of your study.

What if my tutor cannot meet me to sign off the project?

You can meet with the LD Coordinator instead (Dr Alicja Syska). She will act on behalf of your tutor.

Can I pursue my own project instead of the ones listed in the guidebooks?

You are encouraged to initiate your own project if none of the existing tasks appeal to you and you have a good idea for your own. However, you must be able to demonstrate that your proposed project will involve the skills listed under the particular Award. Please feel free to contact your LD coordinator or personal tutor if you would like to discuss your own ideas.

How will I know when PALS sessions, Accelerate workshops, research seminars and PenArts talks take place?

Please contact your PALS Leaders for details about the PALS sessions.

You can find the details about Accelerate workshops on their website [here](#).

For information about the research seminars, please check with the programme.

Peninsula Arts events can be accessed [here](#).

Do the skills development sessions have to be all different or can I go to three PALS sessions only?

Each session has to be of a different type, e.g. one research seminar, one personal tutorial and one PALS session.

Can I attend a different type of event, not listed here, for example a job fair or an exhibition?

Yes, as long as it takes place on the University campus and you have evidence of your attendance.

What kind of evidence will be accepted?

It can be a ticket, a signature of the person running the event, a confirmation note, even a photograph – there are many ways of confirming your participation. Please check with your LD coordinator.

Do I have to complete the Plymouth Award?

No, it's entirely up to you. Initiating a Stand Out Award will automatically enrol you in the Plymouth Award but you'll need to take other steps to complete the scheme. Please follow this link for details <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/plymouth-award>.