

We sat down with this year's winners of the Vice-Chancellor's Outstanding Teacher Award for both Early Career Teacher and Established Teacher to hear their thoughts and experiences about winning.

Helen Merrin, the winner of the Established Teacher Award, told us that she felt *"speechless, quietly overwhelmed and enormously grateful"* to both the students and fellow colleagues that nominated her and felt very lucky to work in a team of people she both respects and admires.

Helen is in her 28th year of teaching Graphic Design and has a particular interest in printing and the *"smell of ink on paper"*, something she intends to explore further with her £2,000 award. She is no stranger to awards, having won the Student Led Teaching Awards in the very same week—proof that alumni, staff and current students value the impact Helen has on learning and teaching!



Our Early Career Teacher award winner, Laurence Shaw, is a Mathematics Lecturer at Clifton Campus, currently in only his third year of teaching. He sees the award as a great stepping stone for his career but is also stunned as he was initially *"only in it for the experience"*. On the nomination process Laurence told us that he found it really straight forward and the colleague and student who came to observe his teaching were unobtrusive.

Laurence believes that all students deserve a good learning experience, no matter their skill level and incorporates this into all his teaching. This perfectly encapsulates what the Vice-Chancellor's Teaching Awards celebrate; individuals who go above and beyond to ensure that their students' experiences are profoundly positive and deliver impact.

When asking both winners their secrets to great teaching Helen says she tries to ensure that her teaching is exciting, *"I imagine it like a box-set where you give students an idea of the end but not how to get there and get them hooked from the first episode or session"*.

Laurence speaks highly of his Department, and his mentor, James Hind: they trusted his experimental ideas, even though he's at an early stage in his career. This award has contributed to his hunger to improve and he will be using his award funding to attend conferences and write papers to disseminate his work and ideas further.

On where there will be displaying their awards, Laurence told us that it will take pride of place in his home. Helen plans to keep hers in the art studio which overlooks the countryside.

To find out more about nominating a colleague please visit the [TILT website](#).