

Academic Promotions Policy

Purpose

This policy details how academic staff who can demonstrate sustained excellence in contributing to UNSW through research, education, collegiality, engagement and/or leadership may be promoted. The [Academic Promotions Procedure](#) outlines the process governing academic promotion at UNSW.

Scope

All academic staff eligible to apply for promotion.

Principles and objectives

1. Expectations for academic promotion

- 1.1. The academic promotions system aims to recognise and reward sustained achievements and contributions to the UNSW Strategy, rather than just to recognise the talent of individual staff. Appointments made on the basis of talent and the level of appointments should align with the standards set in promotions. The titles associated with each promotion also serves to indicate staff who have the right stature and experience to be able to serve effectively in leadership and mentoring roles of increasing importance and complexity.
- 1.2. As academic staff progress through the promotion levels there is an expectation that:
 - there will be an increase in the quality and impact of their core research outputs and/or core educational practices
 - their contributions and service within the UNSW community will further enhance collegiality
 - their engagement with, and contribution to, their discipline will increase
 - they will demonstrate increasing leadership within the University, nationally and internationally
 - their engagement with the social justice, thought leadership, knowledge transfer, partnership and global impact agendas of the UNSW strategy will expand and
 - they will contribute to society via: the generation and dissemination of knowledge; and through partnerships and activities, that might include innovation, entrepreneurship, commercialisation, support for industry, companies, non-profit organisations, and others who are capable of transforming society for the better.

2. Principles

- 2.1. The *Academic Promotions Policy* is designed to align with the vision and priorities set out in UNSW's Strategy. In pursuing these objectives, all staff are expected to demonstrate the following values:
 - Excellence – integrity, professionalism, transparency and ethical decision making, inspiring openness, courage and trust
 - Respect – listening to and engaging with each other and with our communities
 - Embracing Diversity – promoting inclusion and valuing the contribution of all people
 - Collaboration – working in teams and collaborating to best serve our communities and
 - Innovations – creativity and implementing improvements.

Further information on the values and behaviours we expect in our staff can be found at:

[About the Values in Action: Our UNSW Behaviours.](#)

- 2.2. The Provost or any Deputy Vice-Chancellor (for promotions up to the level of Associate Professor) and the Vice-Chancellor (for promotion to the level of Professor) will ensure that all applicants recommended for promotion have worked in a way that is consistent with the values of the University and that they have adhered at all times to the University's [Code of Conduct and Values](#).
- 2.3. Academic promotion is based solely on the merit of the case presented.
- 2.4. Assessment of applications for promotion is made by a committee of peers through a process designed to enable a fair and consistent application of standards.
- 2.5. The University is committed to the principles of equity and a process conducted in a manner that upholds the principles of fairness and is free from direct and indirect discrimination.

3. Eligibility

- 3.1. A promotion round will normally be conducted every year for all four promotion levels (Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor).
- 3.2. The Chief People Officer will submit an annual Academic Promotion Timetable to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Quality for approval. The timetable for academic promotion will be available on the HR Hub at: <https://unsw.sharepoint.com/sites/unsw-capability-development/SitePages/Academic-Promotion.aspx>.
- 3.3. Applicants should refer to the section on Approvals and Effective Dates of Promotion in the *Academic Promotions Procedure* ([section 6](#)) for details regarding the effective dates of promotion. Applicants have a responsibility to be aware of the eligibility criteria before submitting an application.
- 3.4. For a promotion committee to be able to assess an applicant's case for sustained performance the applicant would need to have served at least two years at their current level since the effective date of their last promotion or appointment at UNSW. This means in effect that an applicant will be in their third year of their current level before being eligible to submit an application for promotion to the next level.
- 3.5. An exemption to this two year rule may under special circumstances be granted by the University's Out of Rounds Promotion Committee. The Dean of the relevant faculty will be required to submit a case to the Out of Rounds Promotion Committee as to why an exemption should be granted. A case for an exemption should be submitted to the University's Out of Rounds Committee before the official submission date for applications (refer to the Out of Rounds Policy on the [HR Hub](#)).
- 3.6. Unsuccessful applicants may not re-apply in the year following an unsuccessful application but may re-apply in the subsequent year.
- 3.7. Each application for promotion is considered on its own merits – the outcome of any previous applications for promotion has no relevance in a current promotion round. Section 4 of the [Academic Promotions Procedure](#) provides guidance regarding content to submit in your application.
- 3.8. Any academic staff member who has provided notice of their resignation, retirement or has entered into a pre-retirement contract or whose position has been made redundant by UNSW, including by voluntary redundancy, will be ineligible to apply for promotion.
- 3.9. Late academic promotion applications (after the published deadlines) will not be accepted.

4. Definitions

- 4.1. Four performance category definitions, and the additional assessment of 'not applicable', apply for the purpose of this policy and the Academic Promotions Procedure:
 - **Acceptable performance** – performance at a standard that is expected at the current level of appointment.

- **Superior performance** – performance clearly within the standard expected at the level above the current level of appointment.
 - **Excellent performance** – performance well above the midpoint of the standard expected at the level above the current level of appointment.
 - **Not satisfactory performance** – performance at a standard that is below expected level at the current level of appointment.
 - **Not applicable performance** – will apply in circumstances where an applicant is not required to be assessed in either the Research or Education pillars due to their current position description and responsibilities.
- 4.2. For each of these categories, performance at a particular level will be assessed by consideration of:
- a. Comparison of the performance of the applicant with that expected of a member of the academic staff in like disciplines in universities matching the strategic aspiration of UNSW; and
 - b. Overall performance sustained over a number of years and recent trajectory and
 - c. Relative to opportunity performance evaluation (defined in 4.3).

4.3. **Relative to Opportunity Performance Evaluation (ROPE)**

In line with UNSW's commitment to providing opportunities for all staff irrespective of their personal circumstances and recognising that a pattern of full-time work and uninterrupted linear careers does not match the profile of many staff, the principle of performance relative to opportunity will be taken into consideration in the promotion procedure. Such an approach acknowledges what has been achieved by an applicant, given the opportunities that have been available to them. It is important to note that candidates are assessed individually and not on a head-to-head comparative basis with other individuals.

In making their assessment, promotion committees will take into account any information provided on the circumstances related to a staff member's achievements. Nevertheless, it is also acknowledged that the promotion committee has a responsibility to ensure that globally relevant academic performance standards have been met by all applicants who are awarded promotion to a particular level.

Circumstances where the principle of performance relative to opportunity may be relevant include:

- ill health, disability or misadventure
- caring responsibilities
- part-time or flexible working arrangements
- parental leave and
- the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters.

However, specific career strategies such as different balances of research, teaching and engagement are considered separately and not under Relative to Opportunity Performance Evaluation (ROPE).

5. Criteria for academic promotion

- 5.1. The application will be assessed on a portfolio of evidence presented by the applicant describing their performance in each of up to three pillars of academic performance:
 - Research
 - Education and
 - Collegiality, Engagement and Leadership.
- 5.2. In many instances, applicants will have made some contribution under each of the three pillars of academic performance. However, applicants may also be promoted on the basis of an impressive contribution in any two of the three pillars of academic performance.
- 5.3. Applicants are required to provide evidence of their contributions and achievements under only

those pillars of academic performance contained in their position description. But an applicant is not precluded from electing to list contributions and achievements in a pillar that is not contained in their position description where they feel this is warranted and wish to draw attention to the material in support of their application (for instance, an academic in a research focused position may choose to discuss contributions in education)

- 5.4. In terms of research performance there is an expectation that the applicant's research performance in their discipline will be consistent with that expected amongst our peers, the top universities in Australia and globally.
- 5.5. In terms of contributions to Collegiality, Engagement and Leadership the applicant must demonstrate how their contributions have added value to the institution, to the discipline, sector or community in the context of UNSW's Strategy.
- 5.6. Applicants for promotion at all levels should highlight any leadership contributions they have made. Particularly for the higher levels of promotion (Level D and Level E), there is a requirement for increasing external recognition and demonstrated leadership in the discipline extending beyond UNSW.
- 5.7. In assessing a case for promotion, promotion committees will focus first on the achievements since the applicant's last promotion or current appointment at UNSW. Total career performance (including at other institutions) is also taken into account.
- 5.8. Where appropriate, present quantifiable evidence to support their claims for promotion, for example, a graphical representation of research productivity or some measure of research quality over time.
- 5.9. Evidence should be provided to substantiate claims of the quality and impact of the contributions made.
- 5.10. In all three pillars, applicants are encouraged to focus on two or three characteristic examples that best illustrate what they have achieved and its impact rather than catalogue every possible example.
- 5.11. Contributions to Honours supervision, the supervision of Masters coursework student projects, guest lectures, and contributions to tutorials or practical classes for coursework students should be listed as teaching achievements. But the supervision of Higher Degree Research (HDR) students and Post-doctoral trainee supervision (which is a key determinant of the quality of 'research focussed' and 'research and teaching' staff achievements but not 'education focussed' staff) should be listed among the research achievements.
- 5.12. Applicants should appropriately cross-reference linkages in the application rather than repeat evidence.
- 5.13. **Specific Standards of Contribution**

Applicants should refer to Schedule 3 of the [UNSW \(Academic Staff\) Enterprise Agreement \(2023\)](#) which specifies position classification standards.

The Academic Expectations Framework may also be helpful for an understanding of performance expectations for each level of promotion.

<https://unsw.sharepoint.com/sites/academic-excellence-exec/SitePages/Academic-Expectations-Framework-Tool.aspx>

6. Principles of assessment against each of the pillars of academic performance

- 6.1. The University acknowledges that academic staff make important and valuable contributions across the three key pillars of academic performance, namely Research, Education and Collegiality, Engagement and Leadership.
- 6.2. The process of promotion is fundamentally based upon peer review of performance. The peers include the Head of School, the Referees, the Faculty Promotion Committee and, for promotion to Associate Professor and Professor, the University Promotion Committee.

- 6.3. The process is designed to allow a holistic judgement as to whether the portfolio of performance justifies promotion within UNSW. Performance with respect to the three pillars of Education, Research, Collegiality, Engagement and Leadership will be considered against expectations of both the academic level and the balance of the individual's responsibilities.
- 6.4. The University recognises that there are academic staff members who specialise in one of these academic performance pillars and make excellent contributions in this specific area along with other valuable contributions in some of the other key pillars while there are also other academic staff members who make superior contributions across all three key pillars of academic performance.
- 6.5. The University's academic promotions policy provides a pathway for all academic staff to be able to apply for promotion with consideration to the contributions that they have made in the relevant pillars within the context of their current academic position.
- 6.6. In each of the 3 pillars for assessment (Education, Research, Collegiality, Engagement and Leadership), performance will be assessed either as "acceptable", "superior", "excellent", "not satisfactory" or "not applicable"
- 6.7. **Academic Promotion Pathways**

An applicant can be recommended for promotion to a higher academic level by meeting eligibility, University values and behaviours via any of the pathways outlined below;

- a. Demonstration of a sustained Excellent level of performance in any one of the academic pillars along with a sustained Superior level of performance in either of the other two academic pillars when the third pillar is not applicable given the applicant's position description.
- b. Demonstration of a sustained Excellent level of performance in any one of the academic pillars along with a sustained Acceptable level of performance in the other two academic pillars
- c. Demonstration of a sustained Superior level of performance across all three pillars of academic performance.

An assessment of "not satisfactory" in any pillar of academic performance relevant to the applicant's position description will result in a recommendation not to promote regardless of the assessment ratings in the other pillars.

Effective: 28 January 2025 **Responsible:** Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Quality
Lead: Manager, Academic Promotions

Academic Promotions Procedure

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1. Consultation with the Dean and Head of school

As a matter of courtesy it is expected that academic staff should seek advice from their Head of School before initiating an application for promotion.

Applicants may also find it helpful to discuss their application with their respective Dean, especially for promotion applications to the higher levels. This is particularly useful if an applicant believes that special circumstances are relevant to their case.

Deans and Heads of School cannot withhold an application for promotion.

2. Head of School Report

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide a copy of the application including all other relevant documentation to the Head of School or the Director of a Research Centre prior to submitting their application. This will ensure that the Head of School/Director has sufficient time to complete their report before the Faculty Promotions Committee is convened. In unusual circumstances (e.g. the applicant is the Head of School, or the Head of School is a recent appointee), it may be more appropriate for someone else (such as the previous Head of School) to write the report.

The confidential Head of School report will be submitted to Human Resources together with the confidential referee reports. The Head of School report is made available only to those who are directly involved in the decision making process.

The Head of School report will not be made available to referees or the applicant.

The report is expected to address the following areas as appropriate:

2.1. Research

- What would be expected in the discipline in terms of quality and quantity of publications and how the applicant has performed within the context of the nature of the role (the expected core activities)

- What would be expected in the discipline in terms of Higher Degree Research supervision and how the applicant has performed
- What would be expected in the discipline in terms of research grant funding and how the applicant has performed
- What would be expected in the discipline in terms of translation of research, including commercialisation, entrepreneurship, industry support, linkage with companies (including not-for-profit organisations) and engagement beyond the university sector
- Information concerning an applicant's role in joint publications, research grants and Higher Degree Research student supervision and if relevant an applicant's individual contribution to collaborative team efforts
- The evidence of impact, recognition and leadership within UNSW
- The evidence of impact, recognition and leadership at the national and international level.

2.2. **Education**

- What would be expected within the School in terms of teaching and how does the applicant's contributions compare to expectations in the School and globally – this might include the range and amount of teaching including, whether they are teaching courses judged to be difficult or challenging
- What is the standard of the applicant's teaching? This might include comments about course design and assessment, innovation, use of technology
- The effectiveness of the applicant's teaching, for example, as shown through student feedback, peer review, and in terms of student achievement
- What action the applicant has taken to develop their teaching in response to this feedback, as well as through involvement in development activities
- Evidence of impact, recognition and leadership within UNSW
- Evidence of impact, recognition and leadership at the national and international level. Although it should be recognised that the visibility of achievements in Education can be different from achievements in Research.

2.3. **Collegiality, Engagement and Leadership**

- The applicant's achievements and contributions in collegiality and leadership roles
- There is an expectation that all applicants for promotion (irrespective of the level) will have made a contribution to the governance, strategic direction and planning, capacity building and/or development of inclusive cultures within UNSW
- Community engagement through contributions to local, national or global communities and/or through building partnerships with industries, with Government or with other organisations
- Contribution to the profession and or discipline through academic society roles, engagement in the governance of professional bodies; editing, refereeing, evaluation of research or other activities and/or through contribution of professional and/or disciplinary expertise to the community
- Contribution to the learning and teaching environment within UNSW, nationally and internationally
- Specific contributions to UNSW's Strategy, in areas including knowledge transfer, thought leadership, social justice, and partnership etc
- Contributions to society via partnerships with organisations that can make use of knowledge and implement strategies for the public good, be they for profit companies and industries, or not-for-profit organisations
- Contributions to School, Faculty and University "citizenship" including committee membership, taking on executive roles, contributions to working parties, contributing to and driving Open Days and outreach activities; industry engagement; and community engagement.

2.4. **The Standing of the Referees**

As part of the Head of School report, the Head of School is asked to provide a brief written summary on the standing of the referees nominated by the applicant.

2.5. **Supplementary Head of School Report (optional)**

Having read confidential referee reports solicited by Human Resources, the Head of School may present a written supplementary report to the Faculty Promotions Committee if they wish to comment on any issues raised in the confidential referee reports.

3. **Referees reports**

3.1. **Applicant Referees**

- Applicants for promotion to Lecturer and Senior Lecturer are strongly advised to discuss with their Head of School the referees that they propose to nominate.
- Applicants for promotion to Associate Professor and Professor are strongly advised to discuss their selection of referees with both their Head of School and their Dean.
- As a guide it is important to consider selecting appropriate referees who are from comparable institutions or from institutions which have a higher standing than UNSW.
- Where appropriate or relevant referees from outside of traditional academic institutions can also be nominated.
- Applicants should seek the concurrence of referees before confirming the nomination of referees and should provide their nominated referees with a copy of their application.
- The Head of School, Dean or anyone directly involved in the assessment process may not be nominated as a referee.
- Applicants for promotion to Lecturer (Level B) are able to nominate two (2) referees with at least one (1) referee external to UNSW.
- Applicants for promotion to Senior Lecturer (Level C) are able to nominate three (3) referees with at least two (2) referees external to UNSW.
- Applicants for promotion to Associate Professor (Level D) and to Professor (Level E) are able to nominate four (4) referees which should include a mix of both national and international referees. Referees nominated by the applicant should not hold a UNSW appointment with the exception that one referee can be internal to UNSW provided they are from another faculty outside of the applicant's home faculty. Alternatively, applicants can select one referee with an Emeritus, Adjunct, Conjoint, Visiting or Honorary appointment but in this case there is no restriction on the faculty in which the appointment is held. Applicants cannot name more than one referee connected to UNSW.

3.2. **Viewing of Referees Reports**

- Reports from referees will be requested in confidence.
- The Head of School may view all referee reports prior to attending a Faculty Promotions Committee meeting.
- The referee reports will be made available to the Head of School by the Academic Promotions Manager.
- Referee Reports are strictly confidential and members of promotion committees, as well as others who have the right to view such reports are bound by confidentiality. Under no circumstances should the contents of confidential referee reports be discussed or made available to applicants.

3.3. **Testimonials**

Unsolicited personal references and letters of support, aside from those references specifically requested by the University, will not be considered. Including additional unsolicited letters of support in an application may detract from the overall assessment of the portfolio and is not recommended.

4. Submission of the application

Content of the application

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide a copy of their application and all other relevant documentation to their Head of School prior to submitting a formal application. The documentation would include the applicant's written case for promotion, a copy of Form B (Research and Activities Form) and a list of their nominated referees.

- The application must be submitted via the Unihire online process by the official closing date relevant to the level of promotion. No late applications will be accepted.
- It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide a copy of their application to their nominated referees.

The formal application includes:

4.1. **Form A**, a data entry form which can be completed in Unihire online.

4.2. The **written case for promotion** comprised of:

- An overall career context page in which an applicant clearly outlines the context in which they work, their career path and the balance of their contributions across the pillars of academic performance relevant to their current academic position. This career context page is limited to just one page and the Pro Forma is available on the HR Hub.
- An executive summary page. Applicants are required to use the Executive Summary Pro Forma which is available on the HR Hub.
- The remaining application can be up to, but no more than 9 additional pages with an Arial font size no smaller than 10.

The remaining application should provide further details of the case for promotion across the pillars of academic performance that are relevant to the applicant's academic position. Evidence should be provided within the body of the application to substantiate claims of quality and impact of contributions made.

4.3. **Form B (Research and Education Activities)** is located on the HR Hub and once completed needs to be attached to the online application in Unihire online as a readable PDF.

4.4. A statement regarding Relative to Opportunity Performance Evaluation (ROPE) is an optional inclusion in the formal application.

Form A, the career context page, the executive summary, Form B and a statement regarding Relative to Opportunity Performance Evaluation (ROPE) if submitted, along with any peer reports of teaching are not included in the page limit.

The Head of School report and the confidential referee reports are automatically managed by the Unihire online process and the Manager of Academic Promotions.

Additional University Checks

- 4.5. Upon submission of the application, the Manager, Academic Promotions will conduct a check of University records, including records held by Human Resources and the Conduct and Integrity Office, with respect to any current or completed assessments or investigations relevant to the applicant.
- Where an investigation remains current, the application will be considered on its merits by the relevant Faculty or University Promotions Committee, but any final decision may be paused pending the completion of the matter, including any appeal. The decision to pause the process will be made by the Provost, relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor or the Vice-Chancellor.

- Where a final decision is paused, and at the completion of the matter no breach or misconduct has been found, the promotion commencement date will be backdated to ensure that there is no disadvantage.
- Where any recorded breach or misconduct is found during the previous five years of the applicant being employed (whether at UNSW or elsewhere), the Provost, relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor or the Vice-Chancellor will be advised and the applicant will be invited to make written submissions regarding the matter prior to any final decision being made regarding the application.

5. Decision-Making Process

This section sets out the Faculty and University decision-making process followed in relation to academic promotions at UNSW.

Delegations for promotion are set out in [Schedule 4: Employment delegations](#) under Remuneration and conditions of employment.

Faculty Promotions Committee

- 5.1. In the case of applications for promotion to Lecturer and Senior Lecturer, the FPC is required to make recommendations, with justification, to the relevant delegate with authority as to which applicants should be promoted and which applicants should not be promoted.
- 5.2. In the case of applications for promotion to Associate Professor and Professor, the FPC is required to make recommendations which will be further considered by a University Promotions Committee that will make recommendations, with justification, to the Provost or relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor in the case of Associate Professor and to the Vice-Chancellor in the case of Professor as to which applicants should be promoted and which applicants should not be promoted.

Composition of FPC

- 5.3. Faculty Promotions Committees (FPC) shall have six (6) members consisting of the following:
 - Dean (Presiding Member) *ex officio*.
 - Five (5) committee members from the faculty nominated by the Dean.
 - One (1) member from another faculty or from another University and approved by the Provost or relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor, whose term of office is for a maximum of two (2) years.
 - All members must hold at least the same rank/seniority as that for which candidates are being considered. With the exception of *ex-officio* members, the Dean should make every effort to ensure that representation is included from an applicant's broad subject area including 'Education Focused' expertise where applicable.
 - The Presiding Member may co-opt to the committee one further member to ensure representation from the applicant's broad subject area, where this is not achieved through the normal membership.
 - It may not be possible to constitute a FPC where all applicants' broad subject areas are represented, but in special cases where an applicant believes that this is necessary, then prior consultation with the Dean should be undertaken.
 - All committees must include a mix of genders. At least one-third of the FPC should be female and at least one-third of the FPC should be male.
 - The term of office for these members is three (3) years except for the external member whose term of office is two (2) years.
 - Typically members of a FPC may not serve consecutive terms except for the Dean. However, at the discretion of the Dean, a member (or members) may be appointed to serve an additional term in order to maintain a degree of continuity within the committee membership.

- Members of the FPC must indicate if any FPC member has a potential, real or perceived conflict of interest with any applicant. The Presiding Member must appropriately manage that conflict of interest and document how the conflict of interest is managed.
- A quorum for an FPC is five (5).
- The composition of all FPCs will be published on the HR Hub Intranet.

FPC Terms of Reference

5.4. The FPC will take into account:

- the application documents and any additional materials referred to and made available by the applicant
- the Head of School report and
- confidential reports from referees.

FPC Process

5.5. All applicants are provided with the opportunity to be interviewed by the FPC.

5.6. Members of FPC must provide advance notice of the need to view evidence or specific questions that they may have for candidates.

- This is particularly important when some facts in the application need to be clarified e.g. the number of citations or number of students in a course.
- Both the Head of School and the applicant will receive these questions at least one day prior to the interview.

5.7. Applicants may nominate another member of the academic staff of the University, who has knowledge and expertise relevant to the application, to attend the interview with the Head of School as an advisory non-voting member.

- The Head of School and the advisory non-voting member are not advocates; they are not permitted to introduce new information nor make personal comments on the application. The advisory non-voting member may assist the committee, if called upon, to help clarify relevant issues or context in cases where an applicant is from a diverse cultural background.
- The Head of School and the advisory non-voting member will meet with the FPC before, during and after the interview and may take part in the committee discussion but must not be present when voting on applicants is conducted.

5.8. Where an applicant has nominated a colleague to attend the interview, then the nominated colleague must be available to attend the applicant's scheduled interview in person. No provision will be made for a nominated colleague to be involved in the interview process if they are unable to attend at the scheduled interview time.

5.9. The interview provides applicants with an opportunity to further their claims for promotion and for members of the promotion committees with an opportunity to seek explanations or clarifications on matters within a promotion application from the applicant and /or Head of School.

5.10. In the event that applicants receive significant information that they believe is relevant to their application, after they have submitted their application but before the FPC convenes, they may present an update of no more than one page to the Presiding Member of the FPC at the time of the interview.

5.11. Applicants who are off campus or otherwise unable to attend a prearranged interview have the option of:

- agreeing to have their application considered *in absentia*
- returning to UNSW for the interview at their own expense
- being interviewed by telephone or video conference
- deferring their application until a new round when they are available for interview.

- 5.12. All FPC members must vote either for or against a promotion for each applicant. The vote is by secret ballot but the outcome must be known and recorded.
- For applicants to Lecturer and Senior Lecturer, no more than one member of the FPC may vote against promotion for the FPC to recommend promotion.
 - For applicants to Associate Professor or Professor, no more than two members may vote against promotion if the FPC is to recommend promotion.
- 5.13. The FPC reserves the right to consider other data or relevant information beyond the application, such as, the outcome of grant applications, recent teaching evaluations or the assessment of a relevant Faculty Tenure Appointment Committee.

The FPC Report

- 5.14. The Presiding Member, on behalf of the FPC, must prepare a list of applicants and indicate those recommended for promotion and those not recommended for promotion with the voting numbers included.
- It is the responsibility of the Presiding Member to provide a justification for the recommendations, with reference to the relevant criteria.
 - The FPC report should clearly spell out the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the application to justify the FPC recommendation.
 - If the vote is not unanimous, the reason(s) for the divided opinions should be made clear.
 - In cases where an applicant has submitted a ROPE statement as part of their application, the FPC report should provide details as to how the FPC took into account the circumstances outlined in the ROPE statement in making their recommendation for that particular application.
 - The report must be agreed to by all members of the FPC. Members may have a dissenting report attached if they wish.
 - The FPC report, including the committee's assessment of applicants, voting results and recommendations are confidential and are not made available to the applicants.

University Promotions Committee (UPC)

- 5.15. The primary role of the UPC is to consider the applications for promotion to Associate Professor and to Professor, together with the recommendations from the corresponding FPC, and to make a recommendation to the Provost or relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor for promotion to the level of Associate Professor and to the Vice-Chancellor for promotion to the level of Professor as to which applicants should be promoted and which applicants should not be promoted.
- 5.16. There is an expectation that the standards required for promotion to Associate Professor and Professor are applied uniformly across the University.

Composition

- 5.17. The University Promotion Committee (UPC) shall have the following membership:
- A Deputy Vice-Chancellor, nominated by the Vice-Chancellor – Presiding Member (*ex officio*).
 - President, or a Deputy President, Academic Board (*ex officio*).
 - Eight (8) members appointed by the Vice-Chancellor including two (2) members of the professoriate chosen in consultation with the President of the Academic Board.
 - One member who is a senior member of the academic staff from another university.
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- All members of the UPC must be at least at the level for which applications are under consideration (except for ex-officio members). However, members of the academic staff from outside the University whose rank may be below that of the level for which candidates are being considered, but who possess relevant special knowledge, may be included in the Committee membership.

- Except for *ex officio* and external members, the term of office of members of the UPC is three (3) years.
- The term of office of the external member is two (2) years.
- All committees must include a mix of genders. At least one-third of the UPC should be female and at least one-third of the UPC should be male.
- Except for *ex officio* members, no member of the UPC may serve for two (2) consecutive terms. However, at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor, Provost or the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor, a member or members may be appointed to serve an additional term in order to maintain a degree of continuity within the committee membership.
- A staff member may not be a member of an FPC and a UPC for the same promotion level.
- Deans are not eligible for membership for the UPC.
- A quorum for a UPC is ten (10).
- Members of the UPC must indicate if they have a potential, real or perceived conflict of interest with any applicant. The Presiding Member must appropriately manage that conflict of interest and document how the conflict of interest is managed.
- The composition of The UPC will be published on the HR Hub Intranet.

UPC Terms of Reference

- 5.18. There will be two (2) UPC meetings each year: One to consider applications for promotion to Associate Professor, and a second to consider applications for promotion to Professor. The UPC will take into account:
- the application.
 - documents and materials referred to and made available by the applicant.
 - the Head of School report.
 - confidential reports submitted by the applicant's nominated referees.
 - the report and recommendations of the faculty promotions committee

UPC Process

- 5.19. Deans may be interviewed by the committee, individually. The purpose is to clarify issues and respond to questions by the Committee members.
- 5.20. Applicants are not interviewed by the Committee.
- 5.21. A vote will be taken as to whether each applicant should be promoted. If there are more than two negative votes amongst the UPC members, the applicant will not be promoted.
- 5.22. In the event that a committee member is unable to attend the committee meeting on the date scheduled for whatever reason, then their preliminary voting results submitted prior to the meeting will not be considered and taken into account when the committee determines its final recommendations for all applicants.
- 5.23. If the UPC's resolutions differ from the recommendations of a FPC, the Presiding Member of the UPC will provide feedback to the Presiding Member of the FPC.
- 5.24. The UPC reserves the right to consider other data or relevant information from sources beyond the application e.g. the outcomes of recent competitive grant applications.
- 5.25. The deliberations of the committee, including the assessment and voting results are confidential and are not made available to the applicants

6. Approvals and Effective Date of Promotion

- 6.1. All promotions up to the level of Associate Professor will be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Quality and promotions to the level of Professor will be approved by the Vice-Chancellor.
- 6.2. When applicants are considering applying for promotion to a higher level it is important for applicants to understand that the two year qualifying period in respect to eligibility commences from

the effective date of their last promotion. The effective date of promotion is the same date as when the salary adjustment is made for a successful application.

- 6.3. The effective dates of promotion for the various levels of promotion are set out below:
- Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor: 1 January of the following year at which time the title may be used formally when the salary adjustment is made.
 - Senior Lecturer: 1 July of the current year in which an application was submitted.
- 6.4. Where a decision regarding promotion is delayed due to the process of additional checks referenced in section 4.5 above and a decision is then made to promote the applicant, any effective date of promotion will be backdated to the relevant date above.

7. Feedback to Unsuccessful Candidates

Feedback is available to unsuccessful candidates for promotion. For applicants who unsuccessfully applied for promotion to Lecturer or Senior Lecturer, feedback is available from the Presiding Member of the FPC on request.

For applicants who unsuccessfully applied for promotion to Associate Professor or Professor, feedback is available on request in the first instance to the Presiding Member of the FPC. Applicants at these levels may also seek feedback from the Presiding Member of the UPC.

Feedback to unsuccessful candidates is for professional development purposes and may not be used as grounds for appeal.

8. Appeals

- 8.1. Appeals are limited to the grounds of a lack of procedural fairness.
- 8.2. An appeal on procedural fairness grounds must be made within ten (10) working days of the notification of the results of an application for promotion.
- 8.3. Appeals must be in writing and directed to the Chief People Officer. The appeal must specify the alleged breach of procedures and provide substantiation.
- 8.4. The Chief People Officer, in consultation with the relevant Dean and Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor, will ensure that the appeal is investigated and on the basis of that investigation, may determine either:
- that there was no procedural irregularity and that the appeal will be dismissed; or
 - that there was procedural irregularity but that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that it would have materially affected the outcome of the application; or
 - that there was procedural irregularity and that it may have materially affected the outcome of the application. In such cases, the application will be referred back to the appropriate Promotion Committee for reconsideration, or alternative and appropriate action taken.
- 8.5. The Chief People Officer shall advise the appellant of the outcome of the appeal in writing.
- 8.6. There is no further avenue of appeal within the University.

9. Faculty Specific Guidelines for promotion

A number of Faculties have provided additional discipline-specific guides to promotion and these are available on the [HR Hub](#):

Faculty of Law & Justice – Faculty specific guidelines for promotion.

Faculty of Medicine & Health – Faculty specific guidelines for Applied Biostatistician.

Effective: 28 January 2025 **Responsible:** Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Quality
Lead: Manager, Academic Promotions

Appendix 1

Authority for procedures and instructions

The following UNSW officers are authorised to maintain and change the procedure sections of this policy in accordance with the *Policy Framework Policy*:

1. Deputy Vice-Chancellor
2. Manager, Academic Promotions (for minor change).

Related documents

[Code of Conduct and Values](#)

Supporting documents

- [Delegations Policy](#)
- [Promotion Forms](#)
- [Academic Promotion Toolkit](#)
- [Academic Expectations Framework](#)
- Application of achievement relative to opportunity and performance evidence in academic promotions.

Definitions and acronyms

Refer to [section 4](#) of the policy principles.

Revision history

Academic Promotions Policy and Procedure

Version 1.0 approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President on 28 January 2025, effective 28 January 2025. The Academic Promotions Policy version 3.1 and Academic Promotions Procedure version 3.1 have been combined into a single policy document. Changes to policy:

- Section 4: definitions refined to provide clarity around the terms 'not acceptable' and 'not applicable' performance.
- Section 5: an additional point included to clarify what applicants are expected to present in respect to their current position description
- Section 6:
 - principles of assessment: clarification regarding the appropriate use of the term 'not applicable'
 - academic promotion pathways: clarification regarding the use of the definition of 'not acceptable'.

Changes to procedure:

- Minor change to applicant referees (section 3) for promotion of both Associate Professor and Professor.

- Faculty Promotion Committees and the University Promotion Committee: current practice regarding confidentiality of assessment of applicants and deliberations clarified
- The process for feedback for unsuccessful applicants clarified.

Academic Promotions Policy revision history

Version 1.0 approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President on 13 April 2017, effective 13 April 2017. Full review for 2017.

Version 1.1 administrative update approved by the Director of Governance on 20 April 2017, effective 20 April 2017. Update to Faculty Specific Guidelines section

Version 1.2 administrative update approved by the Director of Governance on 8 August 2017, effective 15 August 2017. Updated to remove Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

Version 2.0 approved by the President and Vice-Chancellor on 2 February 2018, effective 2 February 2017. Full review and separation of policy from procedure.

Version 2.1 approved by the President and Vice-Chancellor on 13 March 2018, effective 13 March 2018. Updated Level D and Level E promotion criteria to include very strong Superior performance.

Version 2.2 approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President on 18 February 2020, effective 18 February 2020. Amendment of Sections 2 to 6.

Version 2.3 approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President on 8 February 2021, effective 8 February 2021. Updated the section on the Eligibility criteria. Clarification of the two year rule, exemptions to be approved by the university's Out of Rounds Promotion Committee and included a new clause which specified that academic staff who have entered into a pre-retirement contract or a redundancy arrangement are not eligible to apply for promotion.

Version 2.4 approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President on 23 February 2022, effective 23 February 2022. Further clarification provided in the Eligibility criteria regarding the two year rule. Additional clause added in respect to the issue of exemptions from the two year rule, namely that an application for exemption should be submitted to the Out of Rounds Promotion Committee before the official submission date for applications

Version 3.0 approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President on 9 November 2023, effective 1 January 2024. Full review including: a statement of purpose; removed duplication of content; revision of third pillar including term 'collegiality' to emphasise the importance of contributions to colleagues at UNSW; principles of assessment have been amended including the use of terminology rather than points; updated references to UNSW's Strategy and the *UNSW (Academic Staff) Enterprise Agreement (2023)*; and revised logical ordering of eligibility clauses.

Version 3.1 approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Quality on 29 April 2024, effective 29 April 2024. Minor change including reference to guidelines for Assessing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Applicants for Promotion in section 2.4.

Academic Promotions Procedure revision history

Version 1.0 approved by Vice-Chancellor and president on 13 April 2017, effective 13 April 2017. Full review.

Version 1.1 administrative update approved by the Director of Governance on 20 April 2017, effective 20 April 2017. Update to Faculty Specific Guidelines section.

Version 1.2 administrative update approved by the Director of Governance on 8 August 2017, effective 15 August 2017. Updated to remove Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

Version 2.0 approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President on 2 February 2018, effective 2018. Full review and separation of policy from procedure.

Version 2.1 approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic on 21 January 2019, effective 21 January 2019. Amendment to sections 2.2 and 4.

Version 2.2 approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic on 5 March 2019, effective 5 March 2019. Section 1 amended to align with Academic Promotions Policy.

Version 2.3 approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President on 18 February 2020, effective 18 February 2020. Amendment to sections 1-7.

Version 2.4 approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President on 8 February 2021, effective 8 February 2021. Amendments to sections 4, 5, 6, and 8.

Version 2.5 approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President on 23 February 2022, effective 23 February 2022. Amendments to sections 1, 2, 4, and 5.

Version 2.6 approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Quality on 25 January 2023, effective 25 January 2023. Section 3.1: Change to referees for Level D and E promotions and administrative updates to DVC title.

Version 3.0 approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President on 9 November 2023, effective 1 January 2024. Full review including: adjustment to format for the career context page and executive summary requirements of the application; minor edits for consistency and to reflect current practice; addition to 2.3 to reflect the value of partnerships for social impact; additional University Checks stated to reflect current practice in section 4.2; minor revisions to composition and term of office for FPCs. Inclusion of a non-voting member rather than an observer; and reference to procedural fairness in section 8.

Version 3.1 approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Quality on 29 April 2024, effective 29 April 2024. Minor change including reference to guidelines for Assessing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Applicants for Promotion in section 9.

Archived document