

# Conferring Academic Titles Policy

## Purpose

This policy covers the conferring of all academic titles other than those through the academic appointment and promotion processes, including the:

- types of academic titles that may be conferred
- criteria for use of each title
- general conditions and privileges which may be associated with using an academic title at UNSW.

## Scope

This policy replaces previous University policy in relation to the awarding of visiting and conjoint titles at UNSW. It should be read in conjunction with the [Conferring Academic Titles Procedure](#).

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## Introduction

UNSW may confer an academic title to an individual whose contribution to the University's teaching, research or knowledge exchange is such that it deserves recognition, or otherwise where a formal academic association is desirable for UNSW.

The award or conferral of an academic title by the University is a privilege, and there should be no expectation that any particular academic title will be awarded or conferred, nor that any conferred title will remain for the period of conferral or indefinitely.

## Principles and objectives

### 1. Award of an Academic Title

The University may confer one of the following academic titles on a person in recognition of their contribution to the teaching, research or knowledge exchange activities of the University or otherwise where a formal academic association is desirable for UNSW.

Other than in exceptional circumstances, the award of all academic titles (except for Emeritus Professor) will not normally be for a period of less than 3 months and must be for not more than 3 years (5 years in the case of conjoint titles in the Faculty of Medicine) without a formal review in accordance with Section 5 below. The conferral of the academic title of Emeritus Professor will generally be for life, subject to the University's right in Section 6 below to withdraw the academic title in certain circumstances.

Conferred title holders should not generally hold concurrent conferred academic titles from other universities.

The process for conferring each type of academic title is described in the [Conferring Academic Titles Procedure](#).

| TITLE                               | SUB-TITLE  | BACKGROUND OF RECIPIENT  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Junior Visiting Research Fellow     | a. Junior Visiting Research Fellow   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A postgraduate student from another university (or organisation) who is visiting UNSW for up to a maximum period of three months. The purpose of the visit must be exclusively to undertake research or related activities to meet course requirements for their overseas qualification.</li> </ul> |
| Visiting Academic                   | a - c. Visiting Fellow<br>d. Senior Visiting Fellow<br>e. Visiting Professorial Fellow   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic staff from another university (or organisation) who is visiting UNSW (staff employed in home institution or organisation).</li> </ul>  |
| Conjoint Academic                   | a. Conjoint Associate Lecturer<br>b. Conjoint Lecturer<br>c. Conjoint Senior Lecturer<br>d. Conjoint Associate Professor<br>e. Conjoint Professor  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff from Australian Research Institutes which have a formal affiliation with UNSW</li> <li>Medical or other health professionals from teaching hospitals or area health services which have a formal affiliation with UNSW who contribute to teaching and/or research.</li> </ul>                 |
| Adjunct Academic/<br>Adjunct Fellow | a. Adjunct Associate Lecturer, Adjunct Fellow<br>b. Adjunct Lecturer, Adjunct Fellow<br>c. Adjunct Senior Lecturer, Adjunct Fellow<br>d. Adjunct Associate Professor<br>e. Adjunct Professor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally expert in appropriate field from professional practice/industry, including current UNSW Professional staff</li> <li>Not necessarily academic background</li> <li>An academic from another university who is to have a continuing relationship with UNSW.</li> </ul>                       |

| TITLE                     | SUB-TITLE   | BACKGROUND OF RECIPIENT   |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Honorary Academic         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Honorary Associate Lecturer</li> <li>b. Honorary Lecturer</li> <li>c. Honorary Senior Lecturer</li> <li>d. Honorary Associate Professor</li> <li>e. Honorary Professor</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retired member of staff of UNSW or another university with whom UNSW wishes to continue to further develop a significant academic association.</li> </ul>  |
| Research Academic         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Associate Lecturer</li> <li>b. Lecturer</li> <li>c. Senior Lecturer</li> <li>d. Associate Professor</li> <li>e. Professor</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A person who holds a UNSW externally funded fellowship may use the academic title equivalent to their level of appointment.</li> </ul>   |
| Emeritus Professor        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emeritus Professor</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNSW employed Professor retiring or retired, recognised for significant period of distinguished service and eminent contribution</li> </ul>  |
| Senior Executive Academic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professor</li> <li>Other approved by Vice-Chancellor and President or Chancellor</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May be conferred on non-professorial staff who hold any of the following positions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Deputy Vice-Chancellor</li> <li>b. Pro Vice-Chancellor</li> <li>c. Dean</li> <li>d. other senior executive positions</li> </ul> </li> <li>The title is conferred at the time and for the period of the appointment to the position</li> </ul> |

## 2. General conditions and privileges

The award of an academic title is not an appointment to a position and in no way establishes any employment relationship between the University and the recipient, nor does it alter any existing employment relationship. The award of an academic title does not entitle the recipient to any salary payments or alter any existing salary payments.

When using the conferred title, the full title must be used. The appropriate format for the use of titles is set out in the Conferring Academic Titles Procedure.

The title holder will enjoy the precedence and courtesy due to academic staff of the University at the designated academic level. The Head of School (or equivalent) and Dean (or Deputy Vice-Chancellor for conferral of titles within a Division) will determine any other privileges applying to the title holder.

These may include:

- the use of space, including office space and access to research facilities
- access to UNSW IT resources, including computer, email and telephone
- the right to participate in School/Centre and Faculty meetings and other activities
- the right to apply through the University to research funding bodies
- the right to apply for Faculty or other internal UNSW funds
- approval to supervise research students in accordance with the *Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy*
- access to administrative support where the title holder is engaged in knowledge exchange
- access to UNSW legal advice where the matter is related to an Industry & Innovation activity
- the title holder will be covered under UNSW's general insurances whilst engaged in authorized UNSW activities.

A title holder is not recognised for the purpose of Academic Board or Council elections. The title holder is responsible to the designated Head of School (or equivalent).

The Vice-Chancellor & President will determine the privileges applying to Senior Executive Positions which carry the title of Professor.

A title holder is required to comply with the UNSW Code of Conduct & Values, the Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy, the UNSW Intellectual Property Policy (to the extent permitted by a visiting academic's home institution) and other relevant University policies (as amended or replaced from time to time).

### **3. Level of academic title**

Recommendations for the level of an academic title must be consistent with the levels expected for paid academic appointments at UNSW. The Conferring Academic Titles Procedure describes the processes for justifying the level of academic title and for changing the level of an existing academic title.

### **4. Renewal and extension of title**

Before the end of 3 years (or 5 years in the case of conjoint title in the Faculty of Medicine), the conferral of an academic title other than for Emeritus Professor must be reviewed formally to determine whether, on an exceptional basis, it should be extended. The process for the review is set out in the Conferring Academic Titles Procedure.

Whilst the conferral of the academic title of Emeritus Professor will generally be for life (subject to the University's right to withdraw the academic title in certain circumstances), any Emeritus Professor title which was previously awarded for a defined period will be subject to the same review process set out in the Conferring Academic Titles Procedure. The final decision on whether to renew or extend a title of Emeritus Professor conferred for a defined period will be made by the Vice Chancellor & President.

### **5. Withdrawal of title**

The University reserves the right in its absolute discretion to withdraw at any time the academic title and any associated conditions and privileges. The University may do so if the Dean, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) or the Vice-Chancellor & President considers that the title holder is no longer suitable to hold the relevant title, for reasons including (but not limited to), that the title holder:

- a) is no longer contributing sufficiently to the teaching, research, knowledge exchange and/or community engagement activities of the University; or
- b) has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the priorities set out in the *UNSW 2025 Strategy* (as amended or replaced from time to time); or
- c) has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the *UNSW Code of Conduct & Values*, the *UNSW Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy*, the *UNSW Intellectual Property Policy* or another relevant University policy (as amended or replaced from time to time); or
- d) has changed or ceased their external employment situation justifying the withdrawal of

- the academic title; or
- e) has acted in a way that is otherwise considered to impact the University's reputation and good standing, or any other matter.

In exercising the discretion available under this section, the University, the Dean, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) or the Vice-Chancellor & President, may take into account any relevant matters or circumstances, including (but not limited to):

- a) the title holder's public or private conduct or publications, including whether they are consistent with the promotion of the University's reputation as an institution of scholarly teaching and research;
- b) the original case in favour of conferring the title;
- c) the nature and extent of the title holder's contribution in the previous three years;
- d) any matters flagged or raised by the University's Conduct & Integrity Office or Human Resources department, any external agency or reported in the media;
- e) any view or matter raised by the University's Philanthropy team. The University's Philanthropy team may review a title holder's media and social media activity, and any other media publications or reports, for the purposes of raising a view or matter;
- f) any view expressed by the person, faculty or area who originally proposed the conferral of the relevant title; and
- g) any view expressed by the leadership of the area with which the title holder is associated.

Further details about the process for withdrawing an academic title are described in the *Conferring Academic Titles Procedure*.

In instances where the title holder's (external or internal) employment situation changes or ceases, the title holder will be reviewed by the Dean or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) as appropriate to determine whether the conferral of the academic title should also be withdrawn. This will be undertaken with appropriate reference to the contribution of the academic title holder to UNSW and the title holder will be advised accordingly.

An academic title conferred on a Professional staff member of the University will automatically cease on termination of their employment with UNSW.

There is no appeal process for any decision made by the University to withdraw an academic title.

## 6. Implementation

### 6.1. Roles and responsibilities

The Dean in each Faculty is responsible for ensuring that the awarding of academic titles in the Faculty is consistent with this policy. The approving authority for each case rests with either the Dean, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) (or relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor) or the Vice-Chancellor & President as is set out in the *Conferring Academic Titles Procedure*.

### 6.2. Support and advice

Ongoing advice on the application of this policy and the *Conferring Academic Titles Procedure* may be sought from the Human Resources Consultant in each Faculty or Division.

### 6.3. Communication

UNSW staff and affiliates will be informed of this policy via myUNSW and Inside UNSW, as well as through the Academic Board. Deans, Heads of Schools and other senior academic staff will be advised of this policy by relevant staff in Human Resources.

## Appendix 1

### Supporting documents

- [HR20 – Request to Confer an Academic Title](#)
- [For a Conferral of a Conjoint Academic Title in the Faculty of Medicine and Health: refer to <https://med.unsw.edu.au/conjoints>](#)
- Faculty of Medicine and Health [Standard to Confer Conjoint Titles in the Faculty of Medicine and Health](#)
- Faculty of Medicine and Health [The Conferring of Medicine Conjoint Titles - Procedure](#)
- [UNSW Code of Conduct and Values](#)
- [Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy](#)
- [Intellectual Property \(IP\) Policy](#)
- [Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Management Policy](#)

#### Definitions and acronyms

| Definitions and acronyms |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Academic Title</b>    | An academic title includes the use of the terms Associate Lecturer, Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor or Professor. |