

Conferring Academic Titles Procedure

Purpose

This procedure supports the Conferring Academic Titles Policy and describes the process for conferring academic titles outside the scope of the UNSW academic appointment and promotion processes.

Scope

This procedure applies to all requests for, and decisions about, the conferral of an academic title at UNSW.

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1. Overview of Procedure for Conferring Academic Titles

- 1.1. This Procedure supports the *Conferring Academic Titles Policy* which identifies the following approved academic titles:

- a) Senior Executive Academic
- b) Emeritus Professor
- c) Adjunct Academic / Adjunct Fellow
- d) Conjoint Academic
- e) Honorary Academic
- f) Visiting Academic
- g) Research Academic
- h) Junior Visiting Research Fellow.

Requirements in relation to the conferral of a Conjoint Academic Title in the Faculty of Medicine and Health are set out at <https://med.unsw.edu.au/conjoints>.

- 1.2. The appropriate title, sub-title and the approving authority for the conferral of all academic titles other than those through the academic appointment and promotion processes is set out in [Appendix 2](#).
- 1.3. Academic title holders will be expected to use one of the following formats:

[First Name] [Surname], [Conferred Academic Title] UNSW

OR

[Conferred Academic Title] [First Name] [Surname], UNSW

Example: Conjoint Associate Professor

Dr Jane Smith, Conjoint Associate Professor UNSW

OR

Conjoint Associate Professor Jane Smith, UNSW

Where a person holds more than one title (for example Emeritus Professor and Adjunct), they should use one or the other title as they consider appropriate, not both titles.

2. Initial Conferral of Academic Title

- 2.1. A request for the conferral of an academic title will normally be submitted to the Faculty Dean by the relevant Head of School/Centre Director or divisional unit manager via a [HR20 Request to Confer an Academic Title Form](#). For the conferral of a conjoint academic title in the Faculty of Medicine and Health, application is made online via the Faculty of Medicine and Health [Conjoints webpage](#). The Faculty Dean will either make a decision on the proposal (for titles at Level A – C) or provide a recommendation (for titles at Level D – E) to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) who will make a final determination. The Vice-Chancellor & President is required to approve all proposals for conferral of the title of Professor on senior executive employees of the University and on conferral of the title of Emeritus Professor.
- 2.2. A request via the relevant Faculty / Division for the conferral of a Knowledge Exchange academic title will normally be submitted by the relevant Divisional unit manager via a [HR20 Request to Confer an Academic Title Form](#).
- 2.3. Recommendations for the conferral of title and the level of academic title must be consistent with the levels expected for academic appointments at UNSW. The conferral of the title and level of title needs to be justified and determined on the basis of:
 - a) work history;
 - b) achievements;
 - c) the total combination of contributions made, and expected to be made, to the School/Centre, Faculty and to the University; and
 - d) demonstrated commitment to the Code of Conduct and Values and to the 2025 Strategy (as amended or replaced from time to time). The Conduct & Integrity Office and Human Resources must be consulted during the appointment process, and consideration must be given to whether the individual is, or has been, the subject of any complaints or allegations and the outcome of those matters.
- 2.4. Appropriate referees should be nominated except where the proposed title holder holds or has recently held an academic appointment at a Go8 or comparable overseas University.
- 2.5. Where it is recommended that an existing or potential UNSW Professional staff member (excluding senior executive employees) be conferred an academic title, a recommendation from the Head of School/Centre Director or divisional unit manager should be submitted to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality), via the Faculty Dean or other Deputy Vice-Chancellor, who will make a final determination. For senior executive employees, the final determination will be made by the Vice-Chancellor & President (or by the Chancellor if the title is to be conferred on the Vice-Chancellor & President).
- 2.6. Retrospective proposals for the conferral of an academic title will not be considered by the University.
- 2.7. Academic titles conferred by other Universities must be disclosed in writing during the appointment process conducted by UNSW, as part of the [HR20 Request to Confer an Academic Title Form or the written proposal for conferral of academic title](#).

3. Review and Extension for an academic title other than Emeritus Professor

- 3.1. Before the end of 3 years (or 5 years in the case of conjoint titles 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.

- 3.2. The process for conferring an academic title for a further period will be the same as set out in section 2 above. Any recommendation or decision to extend the period of conferral of an academic title must include justification based on:
- a) the individual's contribution to the School/Centre, Faculty and/or to the University during the period of holding the academic title;
 - b) the individual's projected future contribution;
 - c) the individual's demonstrated commitment to the University's Code of Conduct and Values and to the 2025 Strategy (as amended or replaced from time to time). The Conduct & Integrity Office and Human Resources must be consulted during the appointment process, and consideration must be given to whether the individual is, or has been, the subject of any complaints or allegations and the outcome of those matters; and
 - d) any resource implications on the School/Centre, Faculty or University.
- 3.3. Any recommendation or decision to extend the period of conferral of an academic title must take into account any matters which may, in the absolute discretion of the appropriate approving authority be considered:
- a) to be inconsistent with the University's Code of Conduct and Values and/or the UNSW 2025 Strategy (as amended or replaced from time to time). Consideration must be had to whether the individual is, or has been, the subject of any complaints, and the outcome of those matters;
 - b) to impact on the University's reputation and good standing.
- 3.4. Requests for changes to the level of academic title can only be made at the time of review set out in 3.1 above (with the exception of conjoint title holders in the Faculty of Medicine). The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) may in their absolute discretion change the level of academic title outside the time for review set out in 3.1 above.
- 3.5. Conjoint title holders in the Faculty of Medicine can be promoted to a higher level via the UNSW academic promotion track. In this situation, the timing of application for promotion will be determined by the UNSW timetable.
- 3.6. With the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research & Enterprise, the level of an academic title may be altered to the relevant equivalent level in recognition of any promotion arising from rigorous processes undertaken by a relevant external body such as NH&MRC or in accordance with Faculty and/or UNSW policy.
- 3.7. 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 (subject to the matters referred to in this section) be subject to the same review process set out above, prior to the end of the defined period. In addition to the matters referred to in section 3.2 and 3.3 above, a recommendation or decision whether to extend the period of conferral of an Emeritus Professor title may also take into account the following:
- 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) any matters flagged or raised by the University's Conduct Integrity Office or Human Resources department, any external agency or reported in the media;
 - c) any view or matter raised by the University's Philanthropy team. The University's Philanthropy team may review an Emeritus Professor title holder's media and social media activity, and any other media publications or reports, for the purposes of raising a view or matter;
 - d) any view expressed by the person, faculty or area who originally proposed the conferral of the Emeritus Professor title.
- 3.8. The final decision on whether or not to renew or extend a title of Emeritus Professor conferred for a defined period will be made by the Vice Chancellor & President. Any decision not to renew or extend a conferred title of Emeritus Professor will be final, no reasons for the decision are required to be provided and the decision will not be subject to appeal.

4. Withdrawal of Title

- 4.1. The award or conferral of an academic title by the University is a privilege. The University reserves the right, in its absolute discretion, to withdraw at any time the academic title and any associated conditions and privileges in accordance with the [Conferring Academic Titles Policy](#).
- 4.2. Any decision made to withdraw the academic title and any associated conditions and privileges will be made in accordance with the procedure outlined below.
- 4.3. The University may withdraw an academic title if the relevant 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.
- 4.4. In exercising the discretion available under this section, the University, the relevant Dean, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) or the Vice-Chancellor & President, may take into account any circumstances or matters which they consider to be relevant, 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 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;
 - g) any view expressed by the leadership of the area with which the title holder is associated.
- 4.5. If concerns arise based on the above criteria, the University, the Dean, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) or the Vice-Chancellor & President may provide the title holder with an opportunity to provide a concise written response to those concerns. However, there is no requirement to do so and no requirement to delay the making of a final decision if:
 - a) the title holder fails to provide a response within a reasonable time frame, or
 - b) the circumstances warrant the making of a final decision based on the available information.
- 4.6. As soon as reasonably practicable after the decision is made, the University, the Dean, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) or the Vice-Chancellor & President will provide the title holder with written notice of the outcome. The University may, but is not obligated to, give reasons for withdrawing an academic title.

5. Visa Requirements for International Academics Visiting Australia

- 5.1. All international academics visiting Australia are required to obtain a valid visa prior to entering Australia and will also need to make their own arrangements for suitable health and travel insurance.
- 5.2. Guidance on the most appropriate visa for each Visitor's situation should be obtained from the Australian Government Department of Human Affairs website <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/> or the Australian Consulate office in the Visitor's home country. A tourist visa is not suitable and is not recommended for visiting academics.
- 5.3. The suggested visa type for each period of visiting Australia is contained in the following table:

Period of time in Australia (continuous)	Visa	Documentation required by Visitor for Department of Home Affairs
< 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subclass 408 "Invited Participant in an event" activity. This option allows recognised overseas academics (not research students) to engage in a brief lecture, workshop or research activity at the invitation of a tertiary institution. The stay in Australia must not be more than 3 months. No work is permitted. A letter of invitation will be required. Subclass 400 ("Highly Specialised Work" stream). This option allows for recognised overseas academics (not research students) to undertake research, guest lecture or any other type of work for a higher education institution on a short term, non-ongoing basis. The stay in Australia must not be more than 3 months (although up to 6 months might be possible if a "good business case can be made out"). A letter of invitation will be required. Subclass 600 (Tourist or Business Entrant stream) or subclass 601 (ETA "business visitor activity") or subclass 651 (eVisitor "business visitor activity"). Immigration policy suggests that this visa could accommodate "overseas academics and overseas students wishing to visit Australia to conduct research in relation to a project or qualification they are undertaking overseas". The stay in Australia must not be more than 3 months. No work is permitted. No remuneration is permitted, other than travel or living allowance. A letter of invitation will be required. 	Letter of Conferral of an Academic Title from UNSW
3 months - 2 yrs	Temporary Activity (subclass 408) visa (Research Activity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter of Conferral of an Academic Title from UNSW Completed visa Application form

It should be noted that it is the period of time to be spent in Australia that determines the visa required, not the length of time for which the visiting academic title is conferred. Therefore, a person conferred the title of Visiting Fellow for 2 years may only require the ETA or Temporary work visa (subclass 400) if they only intend to actually visit Australia for less than three months.

As soon as the possible conferral of a visiting academic title for an academic from an overseas institution is considered, information regarding Visa options should be sought from the Faculty HR Consultant. Seeking early assistance will minimise delays in visa processing.

- 5.4. The Department of Home Affairs places restrictions on the type of work that can be undertaken by visiting international academics who hold the above visa types. There are industrial relations and employment issues and potential risk of breaching visa regulations surrounding Visiting Academics undertaking activities other than as described in the Home Affairs policy.
- 5.5. The Department of Home Affairs policy permits visiting academics on 408 visas to teach on an informal basis (e.g. one-off guest lectures) during their visit provided it is not the main purpose of their stay and it remains an incidental component of their observing, or participating in, research.
- 5.6. Under Home Affairs guidelines, the main purpose of a visiting international academic's stay is to be

'observing, or taking part in, research', which generally implies that the research project:

- has already been established;
- is being carried on by the inviting institution; and therefore
- already involves other academics at the inviting institution as well as the visiting academic.

- 5.7. Generally, it may be expected that Visiting Academics from overseas will be persons on sabbatical (or similar) leave from their current academic appointment. A Department of Home Affairs Officer may request evidence of such leave from the Visiting Academic's home institution.
- 5.8. For information, advice or assistance with the visa application process, please contact a Department of Home Affairs Officer or the nearest Australian Embassy. Please note that UNSW staff members are not qualified to provide immigration advice or assistance. For the contact details of a Department of Home Affairs Officer please visit the Department of Home Affairs website: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/help-and-support/contact-us>.

Effective: 28 August 2024

Responsible: Chief People Officer

Lead: Chief People Officer

Appendix 1

Supporting documents

- [Conferring Academic Titles Policy](#)
- [HR20 – Request to Confer an Academic Title \(Adjunct / Visiting / Honorary / Conjoint\)](#)
- For a Conferral of a Conjoint Academic Title in the Faculty of Medicine; 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 and Health Conjoint Titles - Procedure](#)
- [Code of Conduct & Values](#)
- [Intellectual Property Policy](#)
- [Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Management Policy](#)

Definitions and acronyms	
Academic Title	An academic title includes the use of the terms Associate Lecturer, Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor or Professor.

Appendix 2

TITLE	SUB-TITLE	BACKGROUND OF RECIPIENT	APPROVING AUTHORITY	EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP TO UNSW	FORM
Junior Visiting Research Fellow	A. Junior Visiting Research Fellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. No extensions of Title will be granted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No employment relationship with UNSW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR20 Updated CV Confirmation of enrollment in a postgraduate program at home institution. Confirmation that the activity they will conduct during their visit to UNSW is a requirement of their postgraduate study program.
Visiting Academic	A. – C. Visiting Fellow D. Senior Visiting Fellow E. Visiting Professorial Fellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic staff from another university (or organisation) who is visiting UNSW (staff employed in home institution or organisation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dean (for levels A – C) Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) (for levels D – E) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No employment relationship with UNSW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR20 Updated CV Confirmation of Employment to home institute
Conjoint Academic	A. Conjoint Associate Lecturer B. Conjoint Lecturer C. Conjoint Senior Lecturer D. Conjoint Associate Professor E. Conjoint Professor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff from Australian Research Institutes which have a formal affiliation with UNSW Medical and other Health Professional staff from teaching hospitals or area health services which have a formal affiliation with UNSW who contribute to teaching and/or research Medical and other Health Professionals who support teaching needs on a regular basis or contributes to research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dean (for levels A – C) Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) (for levels D – E) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No employment relationship with UNSW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR20 Updated CV Confirmation of Employment Conjoint applications to the Faculty of Medicine; details are available at https://med.unsw.edu.au/conjoints Faculty of Medicine Conjoints Online Application Portal

TITLE	SUB-TITLE	BACKGROUND OF RECIPIENT	APPROVING AUTHORITY	EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP TO UNSW	FORM
<i>Adjunct Academic / Industry Fellow</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. <i>Adjunct Associate Lecturer or Fellow</i> B. <i>Adjunct Lecturer or Fellow</i> C. <i>Adjunct Senior Lecturer or Fellow</i> D. <i>Adjunct Associate Professor</i> E. <i>Adjunct Professor</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Generally expert in appropriate field from professional practice/industry, including current UNSW Professional staff</i> • <i>Not necessarily academic background</i> • <i>An academic from another university who is to have a continuing relationship with UNSW</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dean (for levels A – C)</i> • <i>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) (for levels D – E or for any UNSW Professional staff)</i> • <i>Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research & Enterprise (for Knowledge Exchange Fellowships)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No employment relationship with UNSW (except for Professional staff with a conferred title)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>HR20</i> • <i>Updated CV</i> • <i>Confirmation of Employment</i>
<i>Honorary Academic</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. <i>Honorary Associate Lecturer</i> B. <i>Honorary Lecturer</i> C. <i>Honorary Senior Lecturer</i> D. <i>Honorary Associate Professor</i> E. <i>Honorary Professor</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Retired member of staff of UNSW or another university with whom UNSW wishes to continue to further develop a significant academic association</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dean (for levels A – C)</i> • <i>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) (for levels D – E)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No employment relationship with UNSW</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>HR20</i>
<i>Research Academic</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. <i>Associate Lecturer</i> B. <i>Lecturer</i> C. <i>Senior Lecturer</i> D. <i>Associate Professor</i> E. <i>Professor</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A person who holds a UNSW externally funded fellowship may use the academic title equivalent to their level of appointment</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dean (for levels A – C)</i> • <i>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) (for levels D – E)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Employee of UNSW</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Written proposal</i>
<i>Emeritus Professor</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Emeritus Professor</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>UNSW employed Professor retiring or retired, recognised for significant period of distinguished service and eminent contribution</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Vice- Chancellor and President</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No employment relationship with UNSW</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Written proposal</i>
<i>Senior Executive Academic</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Professor</i> • <i>Other approved by Vice-Chancellor & President or Chancellor</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>May be conferred on non-professorial staff who hold any of the following positions</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Deputy Vice-Chancellor</i> • <i>Pro-Vice-Chancellor</i> • <i>Dean</i> • <i>other senior executive positions</i> • <i>The title is conferred at the time and for the period of the appointment to the position</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Vice- Chancellor & President</i> • <i>Chancellor (if title is to be conferred on the President and Vice-Chancellor)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Employed by UNSW in senior executive position</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Written proposal</i>