Academic Promotions Procedure

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Next full review
2.5	Vice-Chancellor	23 February 2022	23 February 2022	February 2023

Procedure Statement	
Purpose	This procedure sets out the application process to be followed in relation to academic promotion at UNSW.
Scope	All academic staff eligible to apply for promotion
Are Local Documents on this subject permitted?	☐ Yes, however Local Documents must be consistent with this University-wide Document ☐ No
Procedure Processes and Actions	

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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 ensure that a copy of the application and all other relevant documentation is given to the Head of School prior to submitting an application so as to provide the Head of School with 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 Head of School report will be submitted to Human Resources as a confidential document and in line 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.

Heads of School are required to submit their report via the online academic promotions portal. The report is expected to address the following areas:

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, commercialisation, industry support and engagement
- 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

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- 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. Social Engagement and Leadership

- The applicant's achievements and contributions in social engagement 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 engagement in the governance of professional bodies; editing, refereeing, evaluation of research or other activities and/or through contribution of professional or disciplinary expertise to the community
- Contribution to the learning and teaching environment within UNSW, nationally and internationally
- Specific contributions to the UNSW 2025 Strategy, in areas including knowledge transfer, thought leadership, social justice, and partnership etc
- Contributions to School, Faculty and University "citizenship" through committee membership, taking on executive roles, contributions to working parties, contributing to and driving Open Days and outreach activities; industry engagement; community engagement etc.

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

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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) referee external to UNSW.
- Applicants for promotion to Associate Professor (Level D) are able to nominate four (4) referees which should include a mix of both national and international referees. However, all referees nominated by the applicant must be external to UNSW.
- Applicants for promotion to Professor (Level E) are able to nominate four (4) referees which should include a mix of both national and international referees. However, all referees nominated by the applicant must be external 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 Promotion Committee meeting
- The referee reports will be made available to the Head of School by the Academic Promotions Manager
- Copies of the reports will again be made available to the Head of School at the interview.
- 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

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 10 page 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 by the official closing date relevant to the level of promotion. No late applications will be accepted.
- The application must be submitted via the Unihire online process.
- It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide a copy of their application to their nominated referees.
- Form A of the application is a data entry form which can be completed online.
- Form B (Research and Education Activities) is located on the HR Hub and once completed needs to be attached to the online application as a readable PDF.
- The written case for promotion (10 page maximum of which the Executive Summary page is the first page) once completed needs to be to be attached to the online application as a readable PDF. The Executive Summary Page pro forma is located on the HR Hub.

  The case for promotion will include a research, education, social engagement and leadership case.

  Applicants should clearly outline the context in which they work and the balance of their contributions across the three key pillars of research, education, social engagement, and leadership.

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Academic staff who have formal teaching responsibilities may wish to include in their promotion application a summative peer review report of their teaching.

Evidence should be provided within the body of the application to substantiate claims of quality and impact of contributions made.

Form A, 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 10 page limit.

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

5. Decision-Making Process

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

5.1. Faculty Promotion Committees (FPC)

In the case of applications for promotion to Lecturer and Senior Lecturer, the FPC is required to make recommendations, with justification, to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic & Student Life as to which applicants should be promoted and which applicants should not be promoted.

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 Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic & Student Life 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

Faculty Promotion Committees (FPC) shall have the following membership:

- Dean (Presiding Member) *ex officio.*
- Up to five (5) committee members from the Faculty nominated by the Dean.
- The composition of all Faculty Promotion Committees will be published on the HR Hub Intranet

The term of office for these members is three (3) years.

- At least two members should have expertise in reviewing contributions to education.
- At least one (1) member from another Faculty or from another University and approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic & Student Life, whose term of office is for a maximum of two (2) years.
- All members must hold at least the same rank 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.
- 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 Faculty committee 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.
- Typically members of an 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.
- The Presiding member of the FPC must indicate if any FPC member has a real or perceived

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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).

Terms of Reference

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.

Process

- All applicants are provided with the opportunity to be interviewed by the FPC.
- 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.
- 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 observer.
    - a nominated referee is not permitted to act as an observer. The Head of School and observer are not advocates; they are not permitted to introduce new information nor make personal comments on the application
    - The Head of School and the observer will meet with the Faculty Promotions Committee 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.
- 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 other than face-to-face in person.
- 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.
- 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 Faculty Promotion Committee convenes, they may present an update of no more than one page to the Presiding Member of the promotion committee at the time of the interview.
- Applicants who are off campus or otherwise unable to attend a prearranged interview have the option of:
    - agreeing to be considered *in absentia*
    - returning to UNSW for the interview at their own expense
    - being interviewed by conference telephone or video conference at the expense of the Faculty

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- deferring their application until a new round when they are available for interview.

- 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.
- 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

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.
- Particularly 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 faculty committee took into account the circumstances outlined in the ROPE statement in making their recommendation for that particular application.
- The report must be signed by all members of the FPC. Members may have a dissenting report attached if they wish.

5.2. University Promotions Committee (UPC)

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 FPCs, and to make a recommendation to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic 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.

There is an expectation that the standards required for promotion to Associate Professor and Professor are applied uniformly across the University.

Composition

- 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.
- 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

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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 male and female members. At least one-third of the FPC should be female and at least one-third of the FPC 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 or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic & Student Life, a member or members may be appointed for 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).
- The Presiding member of the UPC must indicate if any UPC member has a 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 University Promotions Committee will be published on the HR Hub Intranet.

Terms of Reference

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; and
- confidential reports from referees.

Process

- Deans may be interviewed by the committee, individually. The purpose is specifically to clarify issues and respond to questions by the Committee members.
- Applicants are not interviewed by the Committee.
- 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.
- 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.
- If the UPC's resolutions differ from the recommendations of a Faculty Promotion Committee, the Presiding Member of the UPC will provide feedback to the Presiding Member of the FPC.
- The University Promotions Committee reserves the right to consider other data or relevant information from sources beyond the application *e.g.* the outcomes of recent competitive grant applications.

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6. Approvals and Effective Date of Promotion

All promotions up to the level of Associate Professor will be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic & Student Life and promotions to the level of Professor will be approved by the Vice-Chancellor.

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

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.

7. Feedback to Unsuccessful Candidates

If requested, feedback will be provided by the Presiding Member of the FPC to applicants who unsuccessfully applied for promotion to Lecturer or Senior Lecturer, and by the Presiding Member of the UPC to applicants who unsuccessfully applied for promotion to Associate Professor or Professor. Such feedback normally would also be conveyed to the Head of School (for applicants for Lecturer and Senior Lecturer and to Deans for applicants for Associate Professor and Professor).

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

8. Appeals

There is no provision for an appeal against unsuccessful application other than in cases where the applicant has reason to believe there has been a significant procedural irregularity.

An appeal on procedural grounds must be made within ten (10) working days of the notification of the results of an application for promotion.

Appeals must be in writing and directed to the Chief Human Resources Officer. The appeal must specify the alleged breach of procedures and indicate how it is perceived that the alleged breach may have influenced the promotion outcome.

The Chief Human Resources Officer, in consultation with the relevant Dean and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic & Student Life 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 has been dismissed; or
- that there was procedural irregularity but that there is no 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.

The Chief Human Resources Officer shall advise the appellant of the outcome of the appeal in writing.

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:

1. **Faculty of Law** – Faculty specific guidelines for promotion.
2. **Faculty of Medicine** – Faculty specific guidelines for Applied Biostatistician

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Accountabilities	
Responsible Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic & Student Life
Contact Officer	Manager, Academic Promotions
Supporting Information	
Legislative Compliance	This procedure supports the University's compliance with the following legislation: Nil
Parent Document (Policy)	Academic Promotions Policy
Supporting Documents	Promotion Forms Academic Promotion Toolkit Academic Performance Expectations Application of achievement relative to opportunity and performance evidence in academic promotions.
Related Documents	Nil
Superseded Documents	Academic Promotions Procedure, v2.4
File Number	2017/21852
Definitions and Acronyms	
No terms have been defined	

Revision History

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
1.0	President and Vice-Chancellor	13 April 2017	13 April 2017	Full review for 2017
1.1	Administrative update by the Director of Governance	20 April 2017	20 April 2017	Update to Faculty Specific Guidelines section
1.2	Administrative update by the Director of Governance	8 August 2017	15 August 2017	Updated to remove Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor
2.0	President and Vice-Chancellor	2 February 2018	2 February 2018	Full review and separation of policy from procedure
2.1	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic	21 January 2019	21 January 2019	Amendment to section 2.2 and 4
2.2	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic	5 March 2019	5 March 2019	Section 1 amended to align with Academic Promotions Policy
2.3	President and Vice-Chancellor	18 February 2020	18 February 2020	Amendment to sections 1 to 7
2.4	President and Vice-Chancellor	8 February 2021	8 February 2021	Amendments to sections 4, 5, 6, and 8
2.5	Vice-Chancellor	23 February 2022	23 February 2022	Amendments to sections 1,2,4, and 5

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