

# Academic Promotions Policy

## Section 1 - Definitions

(1) For the purposes of this Policy 'promotion' means advancement to a higher level of appointment from the current substantive position as approved by the Vice Chancellor.

## Section 2 - Policy Statement

### Policy Declaration

(2) The Academic Promotions Policy sets down a framework and principles within which the University's academic promotions processes are to be implemented.

### Objectives

(3) The University provides a fair, equitable and transparent promotion system for academic staff that:

- a. recognises and rewards academic employees who contribute to outcomes which advance the University's strategic plan and standing;
- b. recognises the achievement of high levels of professional standards and conduct, contribution and performance in line with the University's [Code of Conduct](#), the University's Values of collegiality and integrity, and demonstration of the principles of equity and diversity;
- c. fosters the development of the skills and performance excellence of academic staff; and
- d. provides an identifiable career pathway for academic staff.

### Scope

(4) This Policy applies to academic employees seeking promotion to Lecturer (Level B), Senior Lecturer (Level C), Associate Professor (Level D) and Professor (Level E).

(5) This Policy should be read together with the [Academic Promotion Procedures](#).

## Section 3 - Content and Implementation

### Eligibility to Apply for Promotion

(6) Normally there will be an annual promotions round, as determined by the Vice Chancellor. Fixed-term and continuing academic employees will normally be eligible to apply for promotion provided that:

- a. by the date of closure of applications the equivalent of two years full-time continuous service to the University has been completed since their appointment to the University at their current level or promotion to their current level, except in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Vice Chancellor;
- b. the employee has fulfilled the requirements of the University's [Performance Review and Planning Policy](#) and

participated in the annual process in a positive, respectful and constructive manner; and

- c. at the date of closure of applications, the employee must not be in the final year of their appointment, except in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Vice Chancellor.

(7) Applications to the Vice Chancellor to waive the requirements in Clause 6(a) or 6(c) must be submitted in writing, detailing the exceptional circumstances.

(8) An unsuccessful applicant in one year is not eligible to apply again in the round of the year following their unsuccessful application, except in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Vice Chancellor.

(9) An applicant who wishes to make an application for exceptional circumstances under Clause 7 or Clause 8 must first consult with the Executive Dean or College Dean. Following this consultation if the applicant wishes to proceed, they will forward a written application to the Executive Dean or College Dean, who will forward the application to the relevant Executive member inclusive of their comment. The relevant Executive member will make a recommendation to the Vice Chancellor for their consideration.

(10) Employees wishing to apply for promotion must consult with their supervisor and their Executive Dean or College Dean to submission of an application, and evidence of this having been done is to be provided with the application.

## **Criteria for Promotion**

(11) There are three bases for promotion: academic qualifications; performance; and professional standards and conduct. Applicants must demonstrate:

- a. appropriate academic qualifications for the level sought (Part A);
- b. performance at a level of merit relative to their current level of appointment and meet the minimum standards for the academic level being sought (Part B);and
- c. professional standards and conduct appropriate to the level of their current appointment (Part C).

(12) The University's Promotions Committee (Promotions Committee) is principally concerned with: evidence of significant achievements since appointment to the University.

(13) No University quotas for promotion apply. Promotion is based solely on merit.

(14) Applicants must respond to the criteria outlined in the following academic promotion framework documents:

- a. [Academic Promotion – Minimum Levels of Achievement](#)
- b. [Academic Promotion - Levels of Performance](#)
- c. [Academic Promotion – Evidence to Demonstrate Impact](#)

## **Part A - Academic Qualifications**

(15) The following academic qualifications are required:

- a. Lecturer (Level B)
  - i. doctoral or masters qualification in the relevant discipline area or the applicant must be able to demonstrate equivalent accreditation or standing; or
- b. Senior Lecturer (Level C), Associate Professor (Level D), and Professor (Level E)
  - i. doctoral qualification in the relevant discipline area, or the applicant must be able to demonstrate equivalent accreditation or standing. Equivalent standing is demonstrated by comparison of achievement in scholarship with the standard attained in a doctoral qualification in the relevant discipline.

(16) The onus of demonstrating equivalence rests with the applicant.

(17) Prospective applicants for promotion who wish to present a case to demonstrate equivalent accreditation or standing are required to seek a determination on the matter from a panel comprising: the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Academic Capability) (Chair); the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Innovation); and the Chair, Academic Board, as early as possible and at least one month before applications close. The Panel will make a determination for or against equivalence on the basis of the evidence presented, and this will be conveyed to the applicant and to the Vice Chancellor. If the panel finds that equivalence has not been established, the application will not proceed.

(18) Applications for equivalent accreditation will not be considered unless evidence is provided that establishes that the alternate qualifications being presented are accepted within the discipline as equivalent.

## **Part B - Performance**

(19) Performance is indicated by levels of achievement in the following areas:

- a. Teaching and Research Scholar:
  - i. Scholarship of Teaching;
  - ii. Scholarship of Research; and
  - iii. Service and Engagement.
- b. Teaching Scholar:
  - i. Scholarship of Teaching; and
  - ii. Service and Engagement.
- c. Research Scholar:
  - i. Scholarship of Research; and
  - ii. Service and Engagement.

(20) The levels of achievement in these areas are 'satisfactory', 'commendable', 'meritorious' and 'distinguished'. These four levels apply to achievement across all academic levels of appointment.

(21) Assessment of achievement as being 'satisfactory', 'commendable', 'meritorious' and 'distinguished' will be made on the criteria specified in the Academic Promotion - Minimum Levels of Achievement, regardless of the current level of appointment.

(22) Achievements in postgraduate supervision may be included in either Scholarship of Teaching or one of the Research Scholarship categories, depending on the type of appointment held by the applicant.

### **Scholarship of Teaching**

(23) Teaching is a scholarly activity that demonstrates teaching excellence. It is informed and revitalised by scholarship, research, consultancy and/or professional practice. In the Southern Cross University context teaching aims to ensure that students are provided with innovative, evidence-based approaches to learning and teaching across the University.

(24) The Scholarship of Teaching is a process involving:

- a. the collection and collation of evidence of one's teaching excellence;
- b. reflection on one's teaching practice and the learning of students within the context of a particular discipline;
- c. engagement with the scholarly contributions of others on teaching and learning; and
- d. communication and dissemination of aspects of practice and/or theoretical ideas about teaching within a

discipline/faculty or more generally.

(25) Levels of performance in Scholarship of Teaching are set out in the [Academic Promotion – Levels of Performance](#).

### **Scholarship of Research**

(26) Scholarly activity in the area loosely described as Research can occur in gaining new knowledge, applying expertise to the solving of problems and synthesizing facts into an integrated work. Academics may confine their activities to one of these areas or they may work across one or more of the boundaries. All three areas are legitimate forms of Scholarship and valued by the University.

(27) In assessing an application the University will consider both impact and quality of research. Applicants must demonstrate the significant achievements in research since their last promotion (or appointment at the University) and clearly articulate future research performance and trajectory goals.

(28) Levels of promotion in the Scholarship of Research are indicated in the [Academic Promotion – Levels of Performance](#).

### **Service and Engagement**

(29) Service and Engagement refers to the role of an employee as a citizen of the University, the community and relevant profession. For Service and Engagement to be recognised for promotion purposes, it must be relevant to the applicant's scholarship, discipline, Faculty and the University's strategic plan.

(30) Levels of performance in Service and Engagement are indicated in the [Academic Promotion – Levels of Performance](#).

## **Part C - Professional Standards and Conduct**

(31) The applicant must conform to the professional standards and conduct that could be reasonably expected of a person at their current level of appointment. Applicants will be asked to provide a statement in response to the following two criteria to demonstrate your achievement of high levels of professional standards and conduct, contribution and performance in line with the University's Code of Conduct and the University's Values of collegiality and integrity. Applicants must demonstrate:

- a. proven capacity to work and contribute as part of a multi-disciplinary team and to build and maintain effective working relationships positively impact the University's reputation; and
- b. strong leadership skills with demonstrated contribution to and leadership focused on high quality outcomes, innovation and alignment with the University's strategic direction.

### **Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARtO)**

(32) Applicants may address the impact of persona, work or other circumstances on the scope of their application. Further information about ARtO can be found in the [Achievement Relative to Opportunity Guidelines](#).

### **Responsibility of Applicants**

(33) Applicants for promotion who are found to have presented false or misleading information in support of an application will automatically be excluded from the promotion process for the following two years, and are subject to misconduct procedures.

## Promotions Committees

(34) There are normally two Promotions Committees. One Committee will consider applications for promotion to Lecturer (Level B) and Senior Lecturer (Level C). The other Committee will consider applications for promotion to Associate Professor (Level D) and Professor (Level E).

(35) All members of a Promotions Committee will normally hold at least the level of appointment to which promotion is being considered by that Committee unless approved otherwise by the Vice Chancellor.

(36) In formulating the composition of committees, the Vice Chancellor will aim to ensure an appropriate representation of gender.

(37) Where an application is submitted by an employee who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, the Vice Chancellor may invite an additional member who also identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander to join the relevant Committee for consideration of that particular application.

(38) The Promotions Committee for Lecturer (Level B) and Senior Lecturer (Level C) normally has the following membership:

- a. Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Innovation) (Chair);
- b. Chair, Academic Board or a nominee of the Chair;
- c. Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Academic Capability); and
- d. Teaching and Learning nominee of the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Innovation)

(39) The Promotions Committee for Associate Professor (Level D) and Professor (Level E) normally has the following membership:

- a. Vice Chancellor (Chair);
- b. Chair, Academic Board;
- c. Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Innovation);
- d. Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Academic Capability);
- e. two Professors of the University, nominated by the Vice Chancellor;
- f. one additional member may be nominated by the Vice Chancellor if deemed appropriate to allow for equity and/or discipline balance and/or benchmarking purposes; and
- g. two external members nominated by the Vice Chancellor.

(40) In all matters relating to the membership of Promotions Committees as specified above, the Vice Chancellor's interpretation and decision are final, including the appointment of alternative members when necessary.

## Committee Membership Eligibility

(41) A Dean/Executive Dean who is required to provide a report on an application in that year will not be eligible for membership of the relevant Promotions Committee in that year.

(42) Employees who have applied unsuccessfully for promotion in the previous year are ineligible for membership of a Promotions Committee.

(43) Employees applying for promotion at any level in the current promotions round are ineligible for membership of a Promotions Committee.

(44) Members of a Promotions Committee are ineligible to serve as an independent expert for any application considered by that Promotions Committee.

(45) The final composition of a Promotions Committee is approved by the Vice Chancellor, or the Chair of the Committee acting on behalf of the Vice Chancellor.

## **Conflict of Interest**

(46) Committee members must comply with the [Independent Commission Against Corruption Act](#) (ICAC Act) and ensure that there is no actual or potential conflict of interest between their personal interests and their responsibilities as a committee member.

(47) Should committee members have either a personal relationship with an applicant, or consider that there is an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, they should draw this to the attention of the relevant Chair of the Committee, no less than two weeks prior to the committee meeting, who will determine if alternative arrangements are necessary or what action is to be taken.

(48) For further information, refer to the University's [Code of Conduct](#) and, where clarification or additional advice is needed, to the Director, Human Resources.

## **Role of the Promotions Committees**

(49) The role of each Promotions Committee is to decide which applications for promotion are deemed to have met the relevant criteria for promotion and to forward its recommendations for approval by the Vice Chancellor. The Vice Chancellor's decision is final.

(50) Except for applications for promotion to Level B, the Committee will refer an application for confidential and independent expert comment and assessment. The Chair of the Committee will select the assessor(s) with advice from the Executive Dean or College Dean. As part of their application, employees may provide the name/s of any persons they do not wish the Chair of the Committee to approach for independent expert comment and assessment. The reasons for their request must be provided with the application when submitted.

(51) In reaching its recommendation, each Promotions Committee normally considers the original application, independent expert comment and assessment, the report from the relevant supervisor (which will include reference to the most recent performance development and review reports), interview with the applicant, and may consider any other information it deems appropriate in relation to the criteria. The Promotions Committee will consider the application in totality against the criteria for promotion and levels of achievement.

(52) When making judgement on the level of performance, the Promotions Committee will consider the quality and quantity of the employee's activity and output in the context of their appointment i.e. Teaching and Research, Teaching Scholar or Research Scholar and the applicant's workload profile.

(53) The University values the varied roles of academic employees and recognises that not all academic employees work within the same teaching contexts or have the same research opportunities. Therefore, when forming an overall judgement on the extent and quality of performance, in addition to the criteria and levels of performance, the Promotions Committee may consider the applicant's performance outcomes that contribute to the achievement of specific objectives of the University.

(54) Where a Promotions Committee unanimously considers an applicant's achievements warrant accelerated promotion, the Vice Chancellor may approve promotion to two levels higher than the applicant's current level of appointment. Accelerated promotion is considered on a case by case basis by the appropriate Promotions Committee (for example, promotion from Level A to Level C must be referred to the Level D and E Committee) and the Committee's recommendation referred to the Vice Chancellor for consideration.

## **Quorum and Voting**

(55) A quorum for meetings of the Lecturer (Level B) and Senior Lecturer (Level C) Promotions Committee will be three members. A quorum for meetings of the Associate Professor (Level D) and Professor (Level E) Promotions Committee will be five members, including two external members.

(56) An application for promotion will normally be recommended for promotion if it receives a majority of the votes cast. The Chair of each Promotions Committee will have both a deliberative and, if required, a casting vote.

## **Confidentiality**

(57) All matters discussed by or presented to the Committee remain strictly confidential, and all Committee Members, any relevant support employees involved in the procedures, and the supervisor will be required to maintain confidentiality.

## **Equity**

(58) All persons with responsibilities under this policy are required to act in accordance with state and federal legislation and University policies on discrimination and equal employment opportunity.

## **Procedural Review**

(59) An employee who is an unsuccessful applicant for academic promotion will have the right to request a procedural review of the promotion process.

(60) A request for review may only be lodged on the grounds of procedural irregularity, leading to a material disadvantage. A review will not, for instance, be based on matters considered as arguments of merit, a claimed prior precedent, or the fact that the timetable for the promotion round has not been adhered to.

(61) It is expected that unsuccessful candidates attend the feedback session prior to submitting a request for review.

(62) An application for a procedural review must be made in writing and be lodged with the Vice Chancellor within 15 working days of the date the employee is notified of the outcome of the academic promotion process. The Director, Human Resources and a nominee of the Vice Chancellor will conduct a review of the procedures as expeditiously as possible. A recommendation arising from the procedural review will be made to the Vice Chancellor.

(63) The Vice Chancellor will make a decision and that decision will be final.

## **Review of the Policy**

(64) The Vice Chancellor may initiate a review of this policy at any time. The policy must be reviewed every five years.

## Status and Details

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| <b>Status</b>                | Historic  |
| <b>Effective Date</b>        | 4th May 2021                                      |
| <b>Review Date</b>           | 4th May 2022                                      |
| <b>Approval Authority</b>    | Director, Human Resources                         |
| <b>Approval Date</b>         | 4th May 2021                                      |
| <b>Expiry Date</b>           | 23rd July 2023                                    |
| <b>Responsible Executive</b> | Kim Franks<br>Vice President (People and Culture) |
| <b>Head of Work Unit</b>     | Kath Drew<br>Director, Human Resources            |
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