Academic Promotion Policy

1. Purpose

1.1 The Academic Promotion Policy (the policy) outlines the process and criteria for promotion to senior lecturer, associate professor and professor.

1.2 The purpose of this policy is to:

- recognise and reward academic staff who contribute to achieving the university's strategic priorities
- recognise and reward academic staff whose workplace behaviour reflects the university’s values, equity principles, collaborative community, ethical standards, respect for others and personal accountability
- provide an identifiable career pathway for academic staff
- foster a culture of performance excellence.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to eligible full-time, part-time and sessional staff, including academic managers in the senior staff group who hold substantive academic staff positions.

3. Principles

3.1 Academic promotion at UTS is based on the following principles:

- **Strategic alignment**: Promotion criteria are aligned with UTS strategy and reward activity that makes a sustained contribution to the achievement of the university’s strategic vision and outcomes.

- **Excellence**: UTS strives for excellence in learning and teaching, research with impact and industry engagement. The promotion process recognises and rewards staff who demonstrate and are committed to excellence.

- **Fairness**: The university is committed to a fair and transparent promotion process that incorporates evidence-based decision making.

- **Equal opportunity**: UTS is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all staff, factoring in an academic’s contribution relative to opportunity when assessing promotion applications.

- **Flexibility**: UTS aims to accommodate a range of academic contributions across different career paths, roles and disciplines that align with our vision and new ways of working.
• **Impact**: Promotion decisions are evidence based, focusing on the outcomes of an academic’s work.

• **Equivalence**: Academic performance is expected to be equivalent to that at comparable or more highly ranked universities to ensure the academic excellence and mobility of our academic staff.

4. **Policy statements**

**Eligibility and assessments**

4.1 Full-time, part-time or sessional academic staff are eligible to apply for academic promotion under this policy where they have completed two years’ aggregated service at UTS (excluding casual service and leave without pay) following appointment. Academics who fit this criterion are eligible to apply for promotion twice in any four-year period.

4.2 Suitability for promotion will be assessed against the three key areas of academic performance:

- teaching and learning
- research and innovation
- service and engagement.

4.3 Applicants must demonstrate contribution and impact in these key areas according to work allocation averaged over the previous four years. UTS also expects that applicants have, and be able to demonstrate, high personal standing in terms of workplace behaviour, including ethical and collaborative behaviour, respect for others and personal accountability.

4.4 Performance will be assessed against faculty academic benchmarks (Staff Connect). Applicants must meet expectations in the key areas at their current academic level. Where the average percentage of work allocation exceeds 40 per cent in a key area, applicants must demonstrate that they have exceeded expectations at their current level. Applicants must also demonstrate how they will progress to the requested promotion level and how they are meeting (or will meet) expectations for that level. Further information is in the guidelines for writing a case for promotion (PDF, Staff Connect).

**Promotion applications**

4.5 Applications for promotion to senior lecturer will be called twice per year, and must be submitted by 31 May or 30 November in line with the advice provided by Human Resources Unit (HRU) on apply for academic promotion (Staff Connect).

4.6 Applications for promotion to associate professor and professor will be called once per year, and must be submitted by 31 July in line with the advice provided by HRU on Staff Connect.

4.7 An application for academic promotion must include:

- an academic CV, including a list of publications and research income/grants
• a case for promotion not exceeding six pages in length. Applicants for promotion to
professor must also submit a one-page outline of their future objectives (resulting
in a total promotion case of seven pages in length)

• an assessment of the statements outlined in the case for promotion by the applicants
and report from head of school, discipline group or director (as appropriate)

• the names and contact details of advisor nominees (see section below on advisors)
who can provide an assessment of, and recommendation on, the application.

4.8 The completed application should be submitted before or on the relevant deadline. In
exceptional circumstances, applicants may request approval (prior to the submission
deadline) from the Chair of the Promotion Panel (the panel) to lodge a late application.

Preparing a case for promotion

4.9 It is the applicant’s responsibility to clearly present and explain their case for promotion
within the context of their discipline to the panel. A case for promotion should outline
and assess the applicant’s performance against the promotion criteria for the relevant
level of promotion. In making their case for promotion, applicants should:

• refer to the guidelines on writing a case for promotion (PDF, Staff Connect)

• refer to the relevant faculty academic benchmarks in drafting their case

• describe any discipline specific contextual factors (as necessary)

• include supporting evidence to justify the achievements claimed.

4.10 While due consideration will be given to an applicant's whole career (particularly for
promotion to professor), primary consideration will be given to achievements since the
applicants last promotion or commencement of employment at UTS (whichever is
relevant).

4.11 Where applicable, applicants must outline their response to feedback provided as part
of any previous unsuccessful promotion application, specifically indicating their
development since the last application. It should be noted, however, that the case for
promotion must stand on its own merit and not rely on material provided in previous
applications.

4.12 A case for promotion should provide comment on learning and teaching and other
education-related activities, overall research activities and outcomes, and the applicant’s
most significant work(s) for the relevant period, providing explanations and evidence for
these choices (eg results of teaching evaluations, impact and citation data).

4.13 Where relevant, the case for promotion should outline circumstances that may have
restricted or delayed the development of the applicant’s professional career (see
contribution relative to opportunity in definitions).

Head of school, head of discipline group or director report

4.14 Prior to submitting a promotion application for assessment, applicants must provide
their application to their head of school (or dean in faculties without heads of school),
head of discipline group or director (hereafter collectively termed ‘head of school’) for their assessment and review of claims.

4.15 The head of school will provide a report on the application, including a validation of achievements and claims and any other comments relevant to the case for promotion.

4.16 Where the head of school is an applicant for promotion, the Provost will nominate a UTS academic of senior standing to provide the endorsement.

4.17 Where an academic has been on secondment to another faculty or area for longer than six months, the area to which they are seconded should also be consulted on their achievements and claims in the preparation of the head of school report.

4.18 The head of school should be provided sufficient time in advance of the submission deadline to review the application, provide feedback and for the applicant to make changes to their application if necessary.

4.19 Where the applicant believes (for whatever reason) that their head of school is not the best person to make a recommendation on the promotion application, the applicant may request that the chair of the panel appoint an alternate senior academic to fulfil this duty. This request should be made well in advance of the application deadline and should clearly state the reasons for the request. The decision to appoint an alternate is at the discretion of the chair, who may seek advice from the faculty or elsewhere.

4.20 Where an applicant disagrees with the head of school report, the applicant may:

- indicate why and how there is disagreement between the applicant and the head of school report in an additional attachment to the promotion application for consideration by the panel (who may seek further information and/or clarification on the contents of the application), and/or

- seek advice from their dean or the chair prior to submitting their application.

4.21 Advice can also be sought from the Equity and Diversity Unit and/or HRU.

Advisors

4.22 Faculty deans and applicants will each be requested to provide the names and contact details of advisors — individuals who can provide an independent assessment of, and recommendation on, the promotion application (refer to the table below).

4.23 The dean’s nominees must be different to the applicant’s nominees. The dean will not consult the applicant in relation to their nominees. No more than one nominee in each category may be internal to UTS.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Applicant’s nominees</th>
<th>Dean’s nominees</th>
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<td>Promotion to senior lecturer</td>
<td>Two advisors, at least one external to UTS</td>
<td>One external advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promotion to associate professor and professor</td>
<td>Three advisors, at least two external to UTS</td>
<td>Three advisors, at least two external to UTS</td>
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4.24 In exceptional circumstances, applicants may also identify up to two individuals who should not be consulted as part of the application assessment. This is normally requested to avoid conflict of interest issues or for legitimate disagreement on academic matters. A brief explanation should be provided as part of this request.

4.25 The quality of nominated advisors is very important; they must be of high standing and capable of judging the impact of the academic’s achievements. When nominating advisors, applicants and deans are encouraged to select carefully, ensuring that the nominated advisors are in a position to provide relevant, in-depth comment.

4.26 Written reports addressing the promotion criteria will be sought from the nominated advisors. These reports are confidential to the panel and official observers. A minimum of three external advisor reports (two for promotion to senior lecturer) must be received for consideration by the panel. At least one of these external reports must be from a dean’s nominee.

Promotion panels

4.27 The chair of the panel should consider gender balance and diversity of members. Chairs may make substitutions to the panel membership to achieve gender balance.

Senior lecturer promotion panel membership

4.28 A promotion panel will be formed to consider applications to senior lecturer. The membership of the panel will be:

- one Deputy Vice-Chancellor nominated by the Vice-Chancellor (chair)
- three faculty deans nominated by the Provost
- one academic at the level of associate professor or above, nominated by Academic Board
- one external or internal member at the level of associate professor or above, appointed by the Vice-Chancellor.

4.29 A nominee of the Director, Equity and Diversity Unit or the Director, Human Resources may attend senior lecturer promotion panels as an official observer and to advise on appropriate matters of policy and procedure at the request of the Chair.

Associate professor and professor promotion panel membership

4.30 A panel will be formed to consider applications to associate professor and professor. The membership of the panel will be:

- Provost (chair)
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students)
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
- all faculty deans
- one academic at professor level, nominated by Academic Board
• one external member at professor level or equivalent, appointed by the Vice-Chancellor.

4.31 A nominee of the Director, Equity and Diversity Unit or the Director, Human Resources may attend associate professor or professor promotion panels as an observer and to advise on appropriate matters of policy and procedure at the request of the Chair.

Promotion panel process and executive approval of promotion

4.32 There are no quotas for any level of academic promotion and a promotion panel may recommend as many applicants for promotion that it considers meet the promotion criteria.

4.33 The promotion panels will assess applicants' suitability for promotion based on the written information provided in the promotion application.

4.34 Panels may request supplementary information and/or evidence from an applicant, head of school, head of discipline group or director. Any additional information provided will be made available to the applicant for comment.

4.35 Evidence provided in the applicant's case for promotion or the CV may be subject to validation or audit. In circumstances where evidence provided is found to be factually incorrect, the application for promotion may be rejected or, where an applicant is found to have deliberately falsified information, disciplinary action may be initiated.

4.36 Panels are not required to interview applicants, but may choose to do so if they believe that further information is required to clarify claims made or enable a complete assessment of the applicant's case for promotion.

4.37 The panel make a recommendation for promotion — they do not approve promotion. Each panel must document the outcome of its deliberations and its assessment of each applicant against the promotion criteria.

4.38 The chair of each panel will offer to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants for promotion.

4.39 The Provost approves promotion to senior lecturer upon recommendation of the promotion panel. The Vice-Chancellor approves promotion to associate professor and professor upon the recommendation of the panel.

4.40 Promotions will be effective at the nearest pay date after 1 July or 1 January, following approval by the Provost or Vice-Chancellor.

Appeals

4.41 Applicants may appeal to the Academic Promotions Appeals Committee (APAC) only on the ground of lack of due process. Appeals must be lodged within seven days of the applicant receiving advice of their unsuccessful application (refer to the Academic Promotion Appeals Guidelines for details).

4.42 A promotion panel's assessment on the academic merit of an application is final and will not be the subject of an appeal.
5. **Policy ownership and support**

5.1 **Policy owner**

The **Provost** is responsible for policy enforcement and compliance and initiating any review of the academic promotion process from time to time, as appropriate. The Provost is also responsible for the approval of any procedures and guidelines associated with this policy.

5.2 **Policy contact**

The **Director, Human Resources** is the primary point of contact for advice on implementing and administering this policy.

5.3 **Others**

**Heads of school, head of discipline group, directors** are responsible under this policy for ensuring that all relevant academic staff have annual workplans in place. Academic staff are expected to have an annual workplans in place for at least two years prior to any application for promotion. Annual workplans are the appropriate vehicle for discussions around performance and career development.

**Academic managers** are responsible for:

- providing guidance, support, feedback and information to their academic staff about their performance, career development, readiness for promotion and their application
- reviewing the promotion application and completing an assessment and promotion recommendation in a fair and transparent manner
- participating in the process of providing feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

**Chairs of promotion panels** are responsible for:

- ensuring that the promotion process is administered according to this policy
- ensuring that promotion applications are assessed fairly by the promotion panel and in accordance with this policy
- ensuring that any potential conflicts of interest are managed appropriately, and
- offering to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

**Members of promotion panels** are responsible for actively participating in the panel’s deliberations and assessing all applications fairly and in accordance with this policy. Panel members should declare to the chair any potential conflicts of interest, either professional or personal, that might arise due to their participation on a promotion panel.

The **Vice-Chancellor** and the **Provost** are responsible for approving academic promotions in line with the provisions outlined in this policy.

6. **Definitions**

The following definitions apply for this policy and all associated procedures and guidelines. These are in addition to the definitions outlined in **Schedule 1, Student Rules**.
**Academic manager** means an academic staff member who has an active role in the supervision and development of others, including providing guidance, support, feedback and information to the academic staff they supervise, about their performance, career development and readiness for promotion. An academic manager is responsible for reviewing the promotion application and completing an assessment and promotion recommendation in a fair and transparent manner as well as participating in the process of providing feedback to successful and unsuccessful applicants.

**Applicant** means the academic applying or considering application for promotion under the scope of this policy.

**Contribution relative to opportunity** means the circumstance(s) where an academic's career may have been impacted by personal, professional or other circumstances that may have restricted or delayed the development of a professional career path. These circumstances include, but are not limited to, caring responsibilities, illness, disability, part-time work or any other relevant circumstances. In reviewing a case for promotion, UTS makes an assessment based on whether the applicant's academic productivity and contribution is commensurate with the relative opportunities available to them, in light of these circumstances. The quality and impact of an academic's achievements are given more weight than the quantity or rate of achievements. More details are available in the [guidelines for considering academic promotion cases relative to opportunity](https://www.staffconnect.edu.au) (PDF, Staff Connect).

**Senior staff group** is defined in the university's enterprise agreement.

**Approval information**

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**Version history**

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<td>16/04/2020</td>
<td>Minor amendment – senior lecturer promotion panel.</td>
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**Web version**

[Academic Promotion Policy](https://www.staffconnect.edu.au)

**References**

[Academic promotion](https://www.staffconnect.edu.au) (Staff Connect)
Apply for academic promotion (Staff Connect)

Enterprise agreements

Equity, Inclusion and Respect Policy

Faculty academic benchmarks (Staff Connect)

Guidelines for considering academic promotion cases relative to opportunity (PDF, Staff Connect)

Guidelines for writing a case for promotion (PDF, Staff Connect)

UTS 2027 strategy