

Policy and Procedures on Promotion and Appointment to Professorial Title

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Individuals are awarded the title of Professor to recognise academic distinction relevant to the mission of the University, whether in learning and teaching or in research, knowledge exchange and scholarship, and/or to recognise excellence in academic leadership whether in an academic discipline or more broadly.
- 1.2 The title of Professor will be awarded to academic or research staff or to academic leaders employed by the University who meet the criteria as set out in this policy. The title of Professor will *not* be attached to any managerial or administrative post merely by virtue of the post.
- 1.3 Those awarded the title of Professor will be expected to support the University in its mission; particularly, in enhancing the quality of the University's academic provision, its research and its knowledge exchange and will be expected to continue to demonstrate the standards of excellence and distinction associated with their title and to continue to be active at the appropriate level.
- 1.4 The title of Professor is awarded by the *Professorial Promotions and Appointments Committee*, which is given delegated responsibility on behalf of Academic Board to award a Professorial Title to any candidate meeting the criteria as set out in this policy. Academic Board will receive a report of those awarded Professorial Titles from the *Professorial Promotions and Appointments Committee*.

2. CRITERIA FOR PROFESSORIAL TITLE

- 2.1 The University identifies three criteria against which applications for professorial title will be assessed. Candidates must demonstrate their achievements against all three criteria but must evidence an outstanding contribution against at least one of the criteria.
- 2.2 The criteria, which should be interpreted in the light of peer standards pertinent to the discipline or field of study, are as follows:
 - a) Significant Furtherance of Knowledge
To be deemed as outstanding against this criterion, applicants must be able to evidence a national or international reputation for research, scholarship, creative practice or knowledge exchange in their discipline or field of study.
They must demonstrate the significance of the contribution they have made through their research, scholarship, creative practice, or knowledge exchange to the furtherance of knowledge in their discipline or field of study and, where applicable, its application to society. This should be evidenced by: research outputs (including journal articles, books, chapters in books, conference papers, reports, patents, artefacts, exhibitions, performances and any other output appropriate to the discipline), where appropriate accompanied by citation metrics or other information indicative of quality; Research and Knowledge Exchange income; successful doctoral supervision; the impact of their research on economy, culture and society, for

example, through influencing and changing policy and practice and through increasing public understanding of research; esteem indicators such as keynote presentations at international conferences, acting as a referee or reviewer for a funding body, editorial roles for a journal or academic publisher.

b) Quality and Innovation in Learning and Teaching

To be deemed as outstanding against this criterion, applicants must be recognised nationally for their contribution to learning and teaching in Higher Education.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate the quality of their learning and teaching and student support through, for example, consistently excellent student feedback, student outcome metrics relating to their teaching, indicators of peer esteem, for example feedback from external examiners, internal *and* external recognition of teaching quality, invitations to present or collaborate, citations etc. They must also demonstrate innovation in their learning and teaching and student support and the outputs and outcomes of this innovation such as contributions to the development of subjects or fields of study and developments in pedagogy and student support. Evidence would include: funding for pedagogic and educational development projects; textbooks; outputs from pedagogic research; published case studies; presentations to major national and international conferences; web resources, including usage data.

c) Leading Academic Change and Development:

To be deemed as outstanding against this criterion, applicants must be recognised for their outstanding leadership within and beyond the University.

Applicants must demonstrate academic leadership which has led to School-level, institutional-level, subject-level or sector-level change and development. This can be in any area relevant to the University's vision, values and objectives but will include supporting and encouraging the professional development of teaching and research staff; facilitating and actively encouraging inspirational teaching and learning; developing and nurturing a research environment and culture; enabling and encouraging innovative curriculum development and design. This can be evidenced through internal leadership (either at the University of Worcester or in previous employment) of change and development processes, of cross-university initiatives and of leading applications for external recognition. It can further be evidenced by leadership roles at regional, national or international level within professional bodies, learned societies, subject associations or other such organizations, which have impacted on regional and national policy or practice, or the intellectual development of a discipline, profession or academic community:

3. PROMOTION TO PROFESSOR

3.1 Application Process

3.1.1 Applications are normally invited on an annual basis. Potential applicants are advised to discuss applications with their Head of School or, where an applicant is not based in an academic School, their Line Manager well in advance of this invitation. As set out below, the Head of School/Line Manager is required to provide a written assessment of any application and will be best placed to do so if they are included in the development of the application from an early stage.

3.1.2 Following this initial discussion, the Head of School or Line Manager will liaise with the Vice Chair of *Professorial Promotions and Appointments Committee* to identify a mentor for the

potential applicant. The mentor's role will be to support the applicant in formulating their application.

3.1.3 Applications should be submitted to the Secretary of the *Professorial Promotions and Appointments Committee* by the published deadline and must include:

- (a) A statement of no more than 2000 words which explicitly sets out how the applicant meets the criteria at 2.2 of this policy, specifying, as appropriate, against which criterion or criteria they claim to be outstanding. All criteria must be addressed. The application should focus on the 5 years immediately prior to the submission of the application, although it is appropriate for the application to include relevant experience and achievements for earlier periods. Professors are expected to have a record of achievement which ensures that they can maintain the standard of excellence and distinction associated with the title in the field of higher education. Therefore, they are expected to continue their activities in their sphere of interests. It is recognised that some activities and evidence might lend themselves to inclusion against more than one criterion. It is for the applicant to decide how they present activities and evidence but they should not use the same activity or piece of evidence under more than one criterion.
- (b) A full curriculum vitae
- (c) The names, addresses and full titles of three, appropriately senior and experienced external referees of professional standing, who should be in a position to offer a respected and informed assessment of the candidate's expertise, standing and achievements
- (d) A proposed Professorial Title.

3.1.4 Incomplete applications or applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

3.1.5 The Secretary of the *Professorial Promotions and Appointments Committee* will request a written assessment of any application from the applicant's Head of School or line manager. This assessment must make explicit if the Head of School/Line Manager is supportive of the application. It must also include the names of two external assessors of professorial or equivalent standing appropriate to the discipline or field of study of the applicant

3.2 Assessment of Applications – Stage 1

3.2.1 All applications will initially be considered by the internal membership of the *Professorial Promotions and Appointments Committee*, whose role is to establish whether a *prima facie* case has been made by the applicant that they meet the professorial title criteria.

3.2.2 Where the Committee is satisfied that a *prima facie* case has been made, the Secretary will write to successful applicants with the outcome at Stage 1, and will send the complete application to:

- (a) Three external referees as identified by the applicant
- (b) Two external assessors of professorial or equivalent standing appropriate to the focus of the application as identified by the Head of School or Line Manager

3.2.3 Where the Committee is not satisfied that a *prima facie* case has been made, the Secretary will write to the unsuccessful applicant with the outcome and offer opportunity for feedback to inform any future application.

3.3 Assessment of Applications – Stage 2

- 3.3.1 The fully constituted *Professorial Promotion and Appointments Committee*, including two independent External Experts of Professorial standing, will meet to consider all relevant information and to agree (or otherwise) the award of Professorial Title.
- 3.3.2 Where the Committee is satisfied that the case for Professorial Title has been made, the Secretary will write to successful applicants with the outcome and will advise of their appointment to a professorial contract. Following the award of Professorial Title, each Professor will undertake an appropriate inaugural activity to mark the award of Professorial Title.
- 3.3.3 Where the Committee is not satisfied that a case for Professorial Title has been made, the Secretary will write to the unsuccessful applicant with the outcome and offer opportunity for feedback to inform any future application.
- 3.3.4 Decisions of the Committee will be reported to the next meeting of Academic Board.

4. POSTS ADVERTISED AS SUITABLE FOR PROFESSORIAL APPOINTMENT

- 4.1 For academic and research posts which are advertised as being suitable for professorial appointment, the selection panel must include members of the *Professorial Promotion and Appointments Committee* as follows:
- The Chair and/or Vice Chair of the Committee
 - Director of HR or nominee
 - An independent external expert of professorial standing
- 4.2 The selection panel constituted as such is given delegated responsibility by Academic Board to award a Professorial title to any candidate deemed to meet the criteria as set out in these procedures.

5. HONORARY AND VISITING PROFESSORS

These appointments are dealt with under the *Honorary and Visiting Academic Appointments Policy and Procedures*.

6. EMERITUS PROFESSOR

- 6.1 Staff with Professorial Title who are about to retire or who have recently retired from the University may submit an application for the title of Emeritus Professor.
- 6.2 To be eligible for this title, the staff member must have held Professorial title for at least 5 years at the point of retirement and must make the application no more than 3 months before their retirement date and no more than 3 months after this date.
- 6.3 Applications must be made to the Secretary of the *Professorial Promotion and Appointments Committee* and must consist of:
- a letter from the applicant addressed to the Chair of the Committee setting out the outstanding contribution they have made to the University as a Professor *and* outlining

how they will continue to contribute to the University through, for example, doctoral supervision, research collaboration, external representation, mentoring

- a letter of support from their current/former Head of School or Line Manager which provides confirmation of their continuing contribution

6.4 Applications will be considered by the internal membership of the *Professorial Promotion and Appointments Committee*. The Secretary will write to the applicant with the outcomes and details of successful applicants will be reported to Academic Board.

6.5 The award of this title will allow Professors of the University of Worcester to continue to use their professorial title in retirement in perpetuity.

6.6 Emeritus Professors are expected to uphold the values and standards of the University and be a role model for academic staff.

6.7 The University (via its Academic Board) reserves the right to revoke the title of Emeritus Professor at any time on reasonable grounds, for example, in the event of conduct likely to bring the University into disrepute.

6.8 An Emeritus Professor will be entitled to certain benefits, the details of which be included in a letter confirming the award of Emeritus Professor. These benefits will be subject to review every 3 years.

7. AMENDMENT TO PROFESSORIAL TITLE

7.1 In exceptional circumstances the holder of a professorial title may make an application to have the title reviewed. Such an amendment to a professorial title would only be approved when the individual can demonstrate that the focus of their research and/or academic activity has moved substantially away from the area of their original title.

7.2 To apply for an amendment to a professorial title the applicant should submit the following documentation to the Secretary of the Professorial Promotion and Appointments Committee:

- (a) The proposed new title
- (b) A statement of no more than 500 words setting out the justification for the change
- (c) Their CV
- (d) A letter from their Head of School in support of the change in title.

7.3 The application will be considered by the Committee and the Secretary will write to the candidate with its decision.

7.4 Where the Committee has approved the amendment, the applicant may begin using the amended title from the date of the letter.

7.5 Any change to a professorial title will be reported to Academic Board.

Revision History

Committee	Date	Change
Academic Board v.2.0	27 April 2022	Major revisions [AB21-48]
Academic Board v1.6	29 January 2020	Minor revision [AB19-29]
Academic Board v1.5	17 October 2018	Minor revisions [AB18-09]
Academic Board v1.4	25 April 2018	Major revisions [AB17-54]
Academic Board v1.3	26 January 2011	Minor changes [AB10-20]
Academic Board v1.2	27 June 2006	Criteria expanded to allow academic leaders to apply as well as teaching and research staff
Academic Board	8 October 2003	New Procedure Approved