



Policy and Procedures for the Promotion of Academic Staff

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Changes made	Change to reflect changes to academic titles and also the change from VPA to Provost/DP.
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A POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 The promotion policy for academic grades at the University aims to enable the University to develop and recognise the best talent available within the organisation so that the University will be in a position to:

- a) Ensure the holders of academic posts have appropriate expertise;
- b) Provide academic staff with the opportunity to advance their careers within the organisation, in accordance with their own strengths and the priorities of the university as set out in the strategic plan. Promotions will reflect the positive contribution made by the individuals within the organisation;
- c) The Promotions Policy will have the following primary principles:
 - To reward excellence and to recognise potential and ability;
 - To provide an incentive towards higher quality performance and achievement;
 - To foster good morale amongst academic staff;
 - To foster and encourage academic staff development;
 - To promote on the basis of performance and merit relevant to the applicant's discipline;
 - To provide transparency in criteria, procedural processes, and decision making;
 - To ensure as far as possible, balance in the ratio of staff at different grades across the different Faculties, Departments and Disciplines (See 3.2);
 - To support the principle of diversity.

1.2 This Policy covers promotion of academic staff from Associate Professor B to Associate Professor A and from Associate Professor A to Professor.

1.3 Promotion from Associate Professor B to Associate Professor A and from Associate Professor A to Professor will be based on individual performance assessed against the criteria and benchmarks set out below, relative to relevant disciplinary norms and outputs. Promotion will be based on achievement of academic standards relevant to the promotional grade.

2. Equality of Opportunity

2.1 The University of Limerick is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to selection on merit. Consequently, the policy and procedures for promotion will be equitable and transparent and will seek to treat people in similar circumstances equally and fairly.

2.2 Individuals will not be discriminated against in promotion on the basis of disability, gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief or lack of religious belief, age, race or membership of the Traveller community.

3. Ratios

3.1 The policy will have as an underlying principle the attainment of a senior to junior ratio, which will have regard to national norms and the strategy established by the University from time to time.

3.2 Nonetheless the University should try to achieve the following ratios:

Grade	% of Full Time Permanent and Contract Staff
Full Professors, Professors and Associate Professors	40.0
Assistant Professor and Associate Professor B	60.0

3.3 It is envisaged that posts at Associate Professor A and Professor grades are primarily promotional posts.

4. Availability of Sample Portfolios

4.1 The University expects that portfolios of successful applicants will be made available to prospective applicants for viewing. The University will provide applicants with the opportunity to indicate this upon application.

5. Membership of University Promotions Board

5.1 Except for ex officio members, members of the University Promotions Board must be at or above the level to which the promotion applies.

6. University Promotions Board

6.1 The University Promotions Board will consist of:

- President (Chair);
- Provost/Deputy President;
- Vice President Research;
- All Faculty Deans;
- One elected nominee of each Faculty Board (at or above the level to which the promotion applies). Each faculty will also be required to nominate an alternate, taking into account an appropriate mix of diversity and discipline when they do so;
- Two external academics nominated by the President;
- One member of Governing Authority (non-voting) who is not an employee or student of the University;
- A HR representative will be present at meetings.

6.2 The two members nominated by the President will be chosen to ensure, where possible and practicable, a range of diverse disciplines and will take into account the principle of diversity.

- 6.3 An applicant may not be a member of the University Promotions Board and will be replaced by a nominee of the President.

7. Gender Balance

- 7.1 Due regard will be given to the requirement for appropriate gender balance when nominating/appointing members to the University Promotions Board. To ensure appropriate gender balance on the University Promotions Board, the President may co-opt additional members (internal or external) to the Board.

8. Unavailability of University Promotions Board Member(s)

- 8.1 In the event of a University Promotions Board member(s) becoming unavailable, it will be open to the President to nominate a replacement(s) or to determine whether the promotions process proceeds or not.

9. Procedural Review

- 9.1 An applicant may request the Governing Authority to review a recommendation of a University Promotions Board on grounds of manifest departure from this policy and procedures, which affected the outcome for the applicant.
- 9.2 To seek such a review, the applicant will indicate in writing to the Corporate Secretary his/her intention to seek a review within five (5) working days of the date of the notification letter advising applicants of the outcome of their application.
- 9.3 The applicant will make a written submission setting out the entire grounds for his/her review request to the Corporate Secretary within twenty (20) working days of the date of the notification letter advising applicants of the outcome of their application.
- 9.4 Upon notification of a request for a review, the Governing Authority will appoint a Review Committee comprising three of its members (none of whom will be a senior officer of the University), one of whom will chair the Committee. The members of the Committee will exclude themselves from a Governing Authority decision on a promotion that has been subject to a review by them.
- 9.5 The Review Committee, if satisfied that the application falls within the terms of the review as set out above, will determine the conduct of the review. Any such review will be completed within twenty (20) working days. The reasoned determination of the Review Committee will be submitted to the Governing Authority and will be provided subsequently to the applicant.
- 9.6 Following receipt of the determination of the Review Committee, the Governing Authority will decide whether or not to approve a promotion on the basis of the reasoned determination of the Review Committee, and its decision on this matter is final.
- 9.7 Subject to any statutory or other legal remedy available to the applicants, the result of this review will be final. It will be the responsibility of the Human

Resources Division to ensure that no employee shall be subsequently disadvantaged or victimised for exercising their right to seek a review.

10. Replacement

- 10.1 When a member of Academic Staff resigns or retires, the norm will be that such vacancies revert to their original establishment level. Under exceptional circumstances, the assignment of and the level at which a replacement will be made will be at the discretion of the President in consultation with the Executive Committee as appropriate.

PROCEDURES

B1 Promotion from Associate Professor B to Associate Professor A.

11. Eligibility

- 11.1 All Associate Professor B may apply for promotion to Associate Professor A.
- 11.2 Normally, unsuccessful applicants at Associate Professor B to Associate Professor A may not resubmit for promotion for a period of two years except with the approval of the Dean.

12. Criteria

- 12.1 The criteria for promotion are as set out hereunder.
- 12.2 In considering the candidature of applicants for promotion from Associate Professor B to Associate Professor A, applicants will be assessed under each of three broad headings (see promotion portfolio for Associate Professor B to Associate Professor A for more detail):
- Scholarship and research output;
 - Teaching and curriculum development;
 - Academic leadership and service.
- 12.3 Qualitative and quantitative evidence will be used to assess each criterion.

13. Standards for Promotion

- 13.1 Applicants must achieve a minimum overall score of **200** out of 300 subject to the minimum scores for each category as outlined in Table 1 below.

13.2 Table 1

	Research (100)	Teaching (100)	Leadership & Service (100)
Min. standard in each category	60	60	50

14. Process

- 14.1 The Associate Professor B to Associate Professor A promotion process will normally be conducted each year and will be initiated and completed in Semester 2 of the academic year.
- 14.2 The HR Division will invite applications from all eligible Associate Professors B. All those expressing an interest in applying will be requested to submit an application form and supporting documentation.
- 14.3 Applications, including a completed promotion portfolio, should be submitted electronically via the UL e-recruitment portal.
- 14.4 Applicants must nominate an external assessor to submit a report in support of their application. Applicants can find guidance on the external assessor in the External Assessor template. Applications must be supported by one external assessor report nominated by the applicant, who is recognized in the general discipline of the applicant. External assessor reports should be submitted directly and in confidence to the HR Division, either electronically or in hard copy.
- 14.5 Applicants will be notified of the closing date for the receipt of applications.
- 14.6 Additional external assessors may be consulted by the committee, as may other appropriate academic referees. In the latter case, the applicant will be notified in advance of the names of the referees to be consulted.
- 14.7 The Head of Department will be invited to review the applicant's application and submit an assessment in writing to the University Promotion's Board of the applicant's contribution to the department. The Head of Department will provide their assessment to the applicant prior to submission to the HR Division.

Applicants whose Head of Department is also an applicant for promotion may choose to obtain their assessment from either their Head of Department or their Dean.

Applicants whose Dean is also an applicant for promotion may choose to obtain their assessment from either their Dean or Provost/Deputy President.

Where an applicant is either a Head of Department or Dean, they will obtain their assessment from their Dean/President as appropriate.

If an academic staff member has concerns with a Head of Department assessment of their contribution to the department, the academic staff member may raise the matter either informally with their Dean or in accordance with the University Grievance Procedure. Concerns regarding the assessment must be raised in advance of the University Promotions Board meeting.

- 14.8 The accuracy of information given in the application must be verifiable. Guidelines regarding verifiability may be found in the Promotions Portfolio.
- 14.9 The HR Division will forward a complete file with all applications and supporting documentation to the University Promotions Board.
- 14.10 The University Promotions Board will convene to evaluate the applications and recommend applicants for promotion. If the University Promotions Board considers it necessary to do so, it may choose to interview all the applicants.
- 14.11 The HR Division will forward the recommendations of the University Promotions Board to the Governing Authority for ratification.

15. Feedback

- 15.1 Where promotion is not recommended, the applicant will be informed of the decision in writing within two weeks. The decision letter will include the applicant's scores. Applicants may seek a meeting with the Chairperson of the University Promotions Board to discuss the basis for the decision. Applicants may seek further information on their individual scores from HR.
- 15.2 Separate to the Policy and Procedures for the Promotion of Academic Staff, applicants may choose to discuss appropriate staff development requirements with their Dean/Head of Department.

B2. Promotion from Associate Professor A to Professor

16. Eligibility

- 16.1 All Associate Professors A may apply for promotion to Professor.

16.2 Normally, unsuccessful applicants at *Associate Professor A to Professor* may not resubmit for promotion for a period of two years except with the approval of the Dean.

17. Criteria

17.1 The criteria for promotion are as set out hereunder.

17.2 In considering the candidature of applicants for promotion from *Associate Professor A to Professor*, applicants will be assessed under each of three broad headings (see promotion portfolio from *Associate Professor A to Professor* for more detail):

- Scholarship and research output;
- Teaching and curriculum development;
- Academic leadership and service.

17.3 Qualitative and quantitative evidence will be used to assess each criterion.

18. Standards for Promotion

18.1 Applicants must achieve a minimum overall score of **210** out of 300 subject to the minimum scores for each category as outlined in table 2 below.

18.2 Table 2

	Research (100)	Teaching (100)	Leadership & Service (100)
Min. Standard in each category	60	60	60

19. Process

19.1 The *Associate Professor A to Professor* promotion process will normally be conducted each year and will be initiated and completed in Semester 2 of the academic year.

19.2 The HR Division will invite applications from all eligible *Associate Professors A*. All those expressing an interest in applying will be requested to submit an application form and supporting documentation.

19.3 Applications, including a completed promotion portfolio, should be submitted electronically via the UL e-recruitment portal.

- 19.4 Applicants must nominate an external assessor to submit a report in support of their application. Applicants can find guidance on the external assessor in the External Assessor template. Applications must be supported by one external assessor report nominated by the applicant, who is recognized in the general discipline of the applicant. External assessor reports should be submitted directly and in confidence to the HR Division, either electronically or in hard copy.
- 19.5 Applicants will be notified of the closing date for the receipt of applications.
- 19.6 Additional external assessors may be consulted by the committee, as may other appropriate academic referees. In the latter case, the applicant will be notified in advance of the names of the referees to be consulted.
- 19.7 The Head of Department will be invited to review the applicant's application and submit an assessment in writing to the University Promotion's Board of the applicant's contribution to the department. The Head of Department will provide their assessment to the applicant prior to submission to the HR Division.
- Applicants whose Head of Department is also an applicant for promotion may choose to obtain their assessment from either their Head of Department or their Dean.
- Applicants whose Dean is also an applicant for promotion may choose to obtain their assessment from either their Dean or Provost/Deputy President.
- Where an applicant is either a Head of Department or Dean, they will obtain their assessment from their Dean/President as appropriate.
- If an academic staff member has concerns with a Head of Department assessment of their contribution to the department, the academic staff member may raise the matter either informally with their Dean or in accordance with the University Grievance Procedure. Concerns regarding the assessment must be raised in advance of the University Promotions Board meeting.
- 19.8 The accuracy of information given in the application must be verifiable. Guidelines regarding verifiability may be found in the Promotions Portfolio.
- 19.9 The HR Division will forward a complete file with all applications and supporting documentation to the University Promotions Board.
- 19.10 The University Promotions Board will convene to evaluate the applications and recommend applicants for promotion. If the University Promotions Board considers it necessary to do so, it may choose to interview all the applicants.
- 19.11 The HR Division will forward the recommendations of the University Promotions Board to the Governing Authority for ratification.

20. Feedback

- 20.1 Where promotion is not recommended, the applicant will be informed of the decision in writing within two weeks. The decision letter will include the applicant's scores. Applicants may seek a meeting with the Chairperson of the University Promotions Board to discuss the basis for the decision. Applicants may seek further information on their individual scores from HR.
- 20.2 Separate to the Policy and Procedures for the Promotion of Academic Staff, applicants may choose to discuss appropriate staff development requirements with their Dean/Head of Department.

21. Policy Review

- 21.1 This policy and procedures document will be reviewed biennially with UNITE in accordance with the policy approval process.