

Academic Promotion Procedure

1. Overview

The University is committed to ensuring the recruitment, retention and promotion of high-quality academic staff. To enable this, the University has implemented the Academic Career Pathway which sets out the criteria for promotion to Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor.

2. Principles

The promotions process forms part of a wider performance review process, so that an individual receives clear guidance on the expectations of their role, identification of their training and development needs and feedback on their performance, as identified through the annual appraisal, research planning, workload distribution processes and allocated Academic Management Structure duties.

Opportunity should be taken during the appraisal process to discuss career progression with individuals and encourage suitable applications to be made to the Faculty/Institutes Promotions Committee.

Applicants should be aware of the Academic Career Pathway criteria, which provides the criteria against which an application will be assessed.

The grading/salary of an individual member of staff should not be less favourable than that of others on grounds of sex, marital status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, religion or belief, political belief, sexual orientation, transgender status, pregnancy or childbirth, membership of a trade union, fixed term or part-time working, or age.

Promotions committees should seek to ensure consistency of judgement from year to year. All promotions should be subject to review by HR to ensure that they meet our Diversity and Inclusivity agenda.

Only the decisions and recommendations of the Faculty/Institutes Promotions Committee can be appealed to the University Promotions Committee. Once promotions are subject to external review, (Associate Professor and Professor) appeals can only be raised in relation to procedural irregularity under the appeal stage of the grievance procedure.

Appropriate feedback will be given to unsuccessful candidates by the Faculty/Institutes Promotions Committee, along with advice on how to proceed with any future applications.

It should be understood that in addition to continuing to deliver highly effective teaching in all cases, someone promoted to Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor or Professor will be

expected to demonstrate continuing performance and achievement at this new level in teaching, research, enterprise & engagement or leadership. This will be monitored by assessing the staff member's performance against the criteria and relevant role profile, and reflected in the annual appraisal.

Should a staff member consistently fall below the expected standard for the role the University's performance capability procedure will apply. Promotion is seen not just as a mark of significant achievements to date, but also as an expectation of significant achievements in the future.

3. Application Process

3.1 Governance

Faculty / Institute Promotions Committee (F/IPC)

Each Faculty / Institute shall have a Faculty / Institute Promotions Committee (F/IPC), to make decisions on Senior Lecturer applications and make recommendations to the University Promotions Committee (UPC) on Associate Professor and Professor applications.

Membership: Executive Dean or Director of Institutes, Dean of Teaching & Learning, Director of Enterprise, Associate Deans, Lead HR Business Partner and Finance Partner.

Finance Partners may submit their comments and recommendations, by email in advance of the meeting, if required.

The Executive Dean / Director of Institute will chair the F/IPC, with the chair of the Institute Promotion Committee rotating during the meeting, so each Director chairs for the consideration of their staff.

St Mary's is committed to the Promotions Committees being diverse as part of our Diversity and Inclusion ambitions. Human Resources will provide summative statistical data on applications to the Committee Chair, monitoring Diversity and Inclusion.

If an Executive Dean, Director of an Institute or Dean of Learning and Teaching is applying for promotion their application should be considered by the UPC. If an Associate Dean is applying for promotion they should recuse themselves from the consideration of their case by the F/IPC.

Where academic colleagues sit outside of the normal Faculty / Institute structure, applications will be received by Faculty / Institute within which the majority of the duties are delivered, and thereafter considered in the same way.

University Promotions Committee (UPC)

The UPC should normally meet twice a year to make decisions on Associate Professor and Professor applications and appeals, and consider Senior Lecturer appeals.

Membership: Vice Chancellor (Chair); Provost; Nominated Professor; Director of Human Resources

3.2 Annual Promotion Round

- Applications for promotion to Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor will normally be invited in October, with a view to submission in November. Applications should be submitted to Academicpromotion@stmarys.ac.uk.

Faculty / Institutes Promotions Committee (F/IPC)

F/IPC should meet in December to consider all applications for promotion.

Following consideration of cases by the F/IPC, members of staff are entitled to know whether or not they are being recommended for promotion.

Feedback will be given by the F/IPC to individuals whose submission is not successful. This will usually be given verbally but may be requested in writing.

A member of staff for whom no recommendation is being made in relation to Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor may make an appeal to the UPC.

Appeals should be made in writing to the Director of Human Resources and statements should not be longer than two sides (Helvetica 11).

Appeals should be received no later than 5 working days after receipt of the F/IPC outcome.

University Promotions Committee (UPC)

UPC convenes for its first meeting (normally January) to consider recommendations and identify those applications requiring external review, based on the applications and reports received from F/IPC.

The UPC will consider appeals made by applicants who are not recommended by the Faculty Promotions Committee.

Where the UPC are satisfied that a prima facie case has been made against the criteria, the application will be sent to a minimum of three (Associate Professor) or (Professor) external assessors appropriate to the field of work of the applicant, including independent experts. UPC will choose alternative referees if in its academic judgement, those provided are not of adequate standing. Note all references are sought in confidence and are non-disclosable to the applicant.

The establishment of a prima facie case does not establish that the Academic Career Pathway Criteria have been met. It establishes that on first impression the case merits moving to the next stage in the academic promotion process.

- UPC convenes for its second meeting (normally Easter) and will consider the external reviews and all relevant information in making an academic judgement on Associate Professor roles and whether to proceed to interview stage for Professor roles.
- Applicants applying for Professorships will then be invited to interview with the UPC panel. The interview panel will consider all available information in reaching their academic judgement, including performance at interview.

The award of Associate Professor and Professor is made by Academic Board on the recommendation of the UPC.

- The title of Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor will, if approved, be taken up at the start of the following academic year.

Within twelve months of the award of a professorship, each Professor will undertake an appropriate inaugural activity (lecture, exhibition, presentation) to mark the award of the title.

- Where retention of a key individual is demonstrably at risk, an accelerated promotions process may, at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor, be considered.
- Where the appointment of a key individual is identified, amendments to the promotions process may be made with the approval of the Vice-Chancellor upon advice from the Provost and the Director of Human Resources.

3.3 Submission Guidance

Candidates are advised to discuss their applications in advance with their Head of Department or equivalent.

Applicants for the title of Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor should put forward a submission comprising the following elements:

- Complete and include the application checklist
- A statement, no longer than 6 pages (Helvetica 11), which outlines their candidacy against the Academic Career Pathway criteria
- Academic curriculum vitae
- Contact details of suggested external referees of national / international standing in the subject area (a minimum of two Senior Lecturer / three Associate Professor & Professor), who should be in a position to offer a respected and informed assessment of the applicant's expertise, standing and achievements.

Referees should be impartial/independent and should not include the immediate Head of Department, PhD supervisor, close active collaborators, friends or relatives. It is recommended that all academic references are from existing Professors, where possible.

To include name, address and full title.

- Applications should be in a single PDF document, with pages numbered and clearly stating the applicants name.
- Previous year's appraisal score should be included in the application
- Written reference from Head of Department (250 words max).
HoDs are asked to provide a reference which comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the application, illustrating how the applicant embeds St Mary's values in their work and behaviour.
- A promotions cycle is counted as starting at the beginning of each academic year.
- Applicants who are unsuccessful should agree a development plan with their line manager ahead of any future application.
- Colleagues who have been promoted in the preceding promotions cycle will not normally be considered the following academic year and should wait a period of two years before a further promotion application is made.
- Re-submissions for promotion should clearly outline changes from the previous application round and be supported by the line manager.

Applications not including the above steps will be returned to the candidate for editing.

Candidates are advised that the application should address explicitly the criteria for the award of a Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor or Professor and indicate those aspects of their work, which they believe qualify them for the appointment.

Evidence submitted by the candidate should focus on activity undertaken at St Mary's University. Activity undertaken at previous institutions will inform the promotion process, but balanced relative to activity undertaken at St Mary's.

Applications may be updated by exception, when important additional information becomes available during the application process e.g. inclusion in the REF submission, substantial grant application outcome or qualifications achieved.

Individuals subject to formal University procedures in the year of application will not be considered for promotion.

Dependent on the title for which an application is being made and the three career pathways identified, the statement should include some of the following:

- A list of publications and/or other research output as follows: books: single authored or co-authored; chapters in books: single authored or co-authored; edited collections; papers/articles in refereed journals refereed papers presented to conferences; non-refereed papers/articles in journals, monographs, other publications or conferences; research posts; research income.
- Evidence of commissions, exhibitions, including catalogues, guides etc.
- Teaching profile/portfolio; work as a mentor; pedagogic research; innovation in teaching and learning; activities aimed at improving the student experience (e.g. learner support, working with students with disabilities and from different cultural backgrounds); external recognition of involvement in improving teaching (e.g. funded projects, consultancy work, contribution to conferences); quotes from QAA reports or external examiner's reports.
- Evidence of demonstrable leadership and management of research and scholarship.
- Evidence of external standing in the relevant academic and professional communities.
- Evidence of track record in enterprise, innovation, practice and policy impact.
- Evidence of leadership and management in enterprise, innovation, practice and policy intervention.

3.4 Advertised Posts

For academic and research posts which are advertised as being suitable for Associate Professor or Professor, the selection panel will be constituted in line with the UPC and be given delegated responsibility on behalf of Academic Board to award an Associate Professor or Professorial title. On some occasions, external members of the selection panel may be asked to assess the suitability of applicants via correspondence.

Up-dated September 2022
University Promotions Committee