

INTRODUCTION

Academic Board has responsibility for the establishment of regulations for the conferment of academic titles in recognition of an individual's academic achievements.

Changes to the Scheme in 2017:

In 2016 Academic Board approved the linking of the conferment of Professorial (and Associate Professor) title with a substantive role within the university. Human Resources created a "job family" for Professors and for Associate Professors. The latter category covered those who might have previously sought to apply for recognition as Readers and Principal Tutors. The role descriptors are held by Human Resources, who will oversee the appointments process.

However a Professorial title is conveyed in recognition of a level of academic achievement which must be articulated and demonstrated. The assessment of such claims sits with the relevant appointments panel, but is then overseen by the University's Conferments Committee for all external appointments. That committee continues to make recommendations to Academic Board, who are asked to ratify the decisions of the Committee.

It has approved the principle that the Professorial title should be awarded in conjunction with a Professorial role, or other suitable role as deemed by the University Executive, following an appointment process undertaken by an Appointment Panel. Academic Board will retain its role of ratifying the recommendations of the Chair of the Appointments Panel.

Externally advertised roles at Professor Level: These are dealt with by way of an applications process before an appointments panel. The panel is required to include Professorial (which may include Conferments Committee) representation.

Because the constitution of that panel will include significant senior academic representation, any appointments will come directly to Academic Board for ratification without requiring reference to Conferments Committee.

The membership of the committee is currently:

Chair: Professor Philip Plowden, Deputy Vice Chancellor

Senior academic representation:

Vice-Chancellor: Professor Kathryn Mitchell

Pro Vice-Chancellor: Research Nick Antonopoulos

Representation from the University's Professoriate:

Professor Dennis Hayes

Professor Aradhana Mehra

Professor Annmarie Ruston

Professor Chris White

Professor Paul Elliott

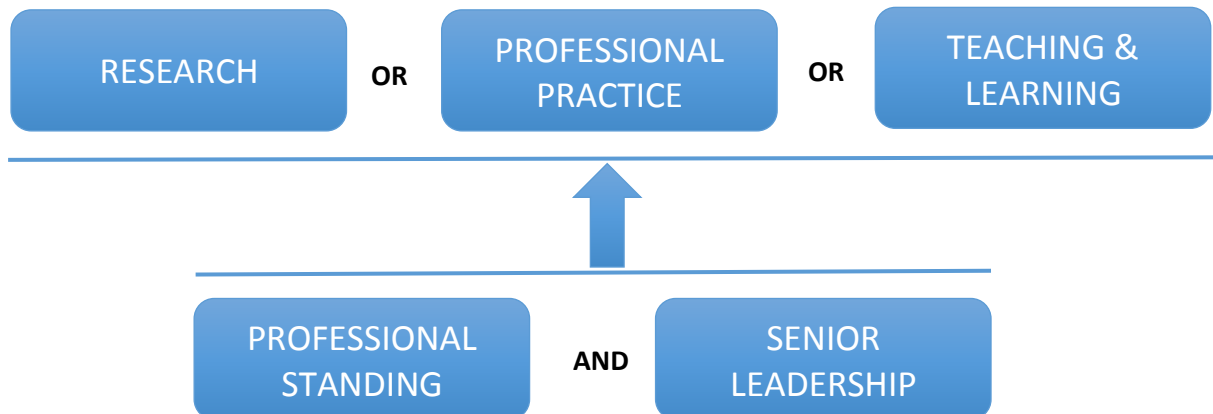
Professor Carley Foster

Professor:

The title of **Professor** may be conferred upon persons who hold an appointment in a substantive professorial level role, or in such other role as is deemed by the University Executive to be at an equivalent level. The appointment may be full time or fractional.

Professorial title is recognition of the individual's academic authority, demonstrated in accordance with the established criteria and confirmed by internal and external peer judgement. A professorship may be sponsored, in which case the sponsor's name will normally be part of the title.

1. Criteria for the award of the title of Professor



In order to meet the Professorial criteria the individual will need demonstrate proven achievement against two criteria:

(i) **Outstanding achievement** in

- Research or
- Professional Practice or
- Teaching & Learning

and must also demonstrate

(ii) **Very high level of achievement** in relation to both

- Professional Standing and
- Senior leadership.

RESEARCH:

Generation of significant national/international **impact to an academic discipline** through the sustained authorship or creation of research outputs (publications, patents, software, artistic works and others) that lead to new knowledge or practices and are recognised by peers as being of high quality. Evidence of ability to deliver income generation through research and/or commercial activities.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE:

Generation of significant national/international **impact to business/industry** through a sustained record of successful applications for funding to support enterprise, research or commercial activities; successful collaborations with external partners in industry, commerce and the public sector; successful delivery of new or enhanced and sustainable income streams.

TEACHING & LEARNING:

Generation of significant national/international **impact to the experience and achievement of students** through a sustained record of pedagogic innovation and/or the scholarship of teaching and learning that leads to new knowledge or practices and is recognised by peers as being of high quality.

PROFESSIONAL STANDING:

External indicators of the applicant's reputation and standing in the field in the context of research, teaching and learning or enterprise, through: professional and or industry/business recognition, citizenship and contribution to society, membership of significant national and or international committees and boards; awards and prizes, honorary and Visiting titles; other engagements that evidence the high external reputation of the individual.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP:

Research: management and leadership of individuals and research groups; substantial experience in the supervision of doctoral research, including as first supervisor; leadership in Research Excellence Framework; evidence of leadership roles in the dissemination of knowledge.

Teaching & Learning: management and leadership of individuals and groups in the enhancement of pedagogic practice; leadership in Teaching Excellence Framework; evidence of the dissemination of innovative teaching practices and the impact of this.

Professional Practice: management and leadership of individuals and groups in the delivery of enterprise projects; initiation of new enterprise projects and successful management of those projects to delivery; evidence of leadership roles in the dissemination of knowledge.

All: Contribution to the development, implementation and evolution of university or industry strategic plans; evidence of impact in supporting the development of others to enable them to deliver in the relevant context.

2. The professorial application process

3.1. External Appointments

Posts will be advertised in the normal way to a substantive underlying professorial level role or with the option for the award of professorial title for suitable candidates.

An applicant must meet:

- i. The criteria set out in the role descriptor and person specification; and
- ii. The Professorial criteria (see previous section).

Appointments panel – external appointments:

Appointments will be made by a Professorial appointments panel. This must include:

- DVC (Academic Portfolio) or appropriate nominee
- Director of HR or appropriate nominee
- Dean of College (who will normally Chair)
- Member of University's Professoriate (who may be a member of the University's Conferments Committee)
- External panel member of Professorial standing

If it is determined from the outset that there will be a two stage interview process as part of the appointment process, then the full appointment panel will not be required at both interview stages as long as the full appointment panel is represented over the two stages. The Chair should however, be consistent over the two stages.

Documentation required:

Applicants will be expected to apply for the role through the university's My Recruitment process and provide the following documentation:

- (i) An up to date curriculum vitae;
- (ii) A supporting covering letter outlining their suitability to the underlying role requirement; and
- (iii) The names of two employment referees (including ideally, the last line manager)

In addition, in order to meet the Professorial criteria the individual will need to provide:

- (iv) A written statement evidencing how s/he has met the criteria for the award of the title of Professor; and
- (v) Four appropriately qualified referees in relation to the Professorial title.

Further information in relation to both (iv) and (v) is set out below.

Requirements in respect of the written statement in support of a Professorial title:

- **Evidencing the categories:** The statement needs to clearly identify the criterion in which the requirement for outstanding achievement is met. The category descriptors in the Professorial criteria describe the widest interpretation of the terms research, professional practice, teaching & learning, professional standing and senior leadership. The individual's achievements must be supported by evidence in the public domain and corroborated by external peer review.
- **Peer review:** The underlying principle in assessing applications from candidates for the award of title of Professor will be that of peer review. Academic achievements that are tangible and are recognised on a national or international scale will normally carry more weight than small scale or purely local initiatives. Staff with an international reputation may represent a case that rests on a relatively narrow range of activities.
- **Supplementary materials:** The submission of supplementary materials is normally unnecessary and is discouraged. However, applicants for Professorships on the basis of professional practice and teaching and learning may submit carefully compiled documentation which evidences achievement that is not otherwise supported. Any supplementary material should be kept to the absolute minimum necessary.
- **Clarity of expression:** Statements in support of the Professorial title should be clear, cogent and well presented. It should be accurate, informative and written to a high standard of English.
- **Citation:**
 - The statement will normally need to cite published works in support of the case. These may include papers published in journals, conference papers, chapters in research volumes, student text books, general books, special reports, monographs, catalogues and reviews.
 - Artists may wish to cite public exhibitions which they have organised and other forms of creative works.
 - In the case of jointly published key papers, candidates are strongly advised to ensure that they annotate the citation indicating the status of the journal, whether the paper was refereed and explain clearly their part in the joint research and the significance of the findings.
 - The simple listing of works under these categories is **not** sufficient. Candidates are advised to group their publications in suitable categories such as research papers, special reports, conference papers, books, reviews. Artists are requested to group solo exhibitions and other exhibitions to which they have contributed.

Requirements in respect of referees

The candidate should provide the names, addresses and e-mail address of **four** Professorial referees.

- **Impartiality:** Impartiality is very important. The referees should be external to the institution and independent in the sense that they have not collaborated with the applicant on research or scholarship or consultancy projects in the last five years. It is also inadvisable for the candidate to cite the former supervisor of their doctoral thesis.
- **Status:** The referees should normally hold a Professorship in a discipline related to the field of work pursued by the applicant. However, occasionally it may be appropriate to cite

as a referee a distinguished individual in the field who does not hold a Professorship.

- **Communication with the referee:** The candidate does not need to be personally acquainted with the referees and does not need to approach the referees in advance. The University will assume that the candidate has not approached the referees.

In addition to the four referees nominated by the candidate, the Dean will be asked to nominate **one additional** independent external referee. Thus there will be five referees altogether. (Plus two employment references)

The role of the Professorial appointments panel:

The appointments panel will consider the applicant for both their suitability to the substantive post and the merit of the criteria to meet professorial title status.

The Chair of the appointments panel will need to check and satisfy him/herself of the suitability of the referees.

Following the formal interview process the appointment panel chair may conditionally offer the post and professorial title to the successful candidate. Confirmation to the post and title will be subject to the satisfactory clearance of the usual recruitment requirements, including eligibility to work in the UK, satisfaction as to the standing of the references and ratification by Academic Board of the title.

The Chair of the appointment panel will be responsible for providing feedback to the unsuccessful candidates.

The Chair of the appointment panel will be responsible for advising Academic Board of the proposed appointment and for seeking the ratification of Academic Board. Where the Board is not meeting for some time, it is acceptable to ask the Chair of Academic Board (the Vice-Chancellor) to take Chair's action in order to avoid delay to the appointments process.

The Chair of the Academic Board should ensure that the HR Department is aware of the conferment of the professorial title once this has been ratified by Academic Board.

Recognition of existing Professorial title:

Where an individual already holds the title of Professor, Academic Board may accept this as sufficient evidence of Professorial level achievement without further enquiry. However Professorial title may have different connotations in other universities, particularly those outside the United Kingdom, and the view of the Chair of Conferments Committee should be sought where it is proposed to recognise existing Professorial title in this way.

It should be noted that the award of Professorial title must still be reported to Academic Board for ratification in the usual way.

Policy on Referees

This policy summarises the position in relation to referees.

[1] Referees for professorial appointments:

Candidates for the title of **Professor** should nominate **four** appropriately qualified external, independent referees who, preferably, hold the rank of professor in a related discipline.

In addition the Dean is asked to nominate **one** further independent external referee. Therefore there should be **five** referees in all.

Note on terminology:

- **Independent** is taken to mean that the candidate and the referee have not collaborated significantly in the past and have not engaged in joint works at all in the last five years.
- **External** means external to the institution(s) where the candidate has worked in the last five years.
- Meaning of “appropriately qualified”: referees should be impartial and should have suitable status to deliver the element of peer review.
 - **Impartiality:** Impartiality is very important. The referees should be external to the institution and independent in the sense that they have not collaborated with the applicant on research or scholarship or consultancy projects in the last five years. It is also inadvisable for the candidate to cite the former supervisor of their doctoral thesis.
 - **Status:** The referees should normally hold a Professorship in a discipline related to the field of work pursued by the applicant. However, occasionally it may be appropriate to cite as a referee a distinguished individual in the field who does not hold a Professorship.

Communication with the referee:

The candidate does not need to be personally acquainted with the referees and does not need to approach the referees in advance. The University will assume that the candidate has not approached the referees.

The Chair of the appointments panel will check the suitability of the referees and decide which ones are to be approached for references.

Policy and procedure for the communication of the decisions of the University Conferments Committee

- (a) The proceedings of the University Conferments Committee are strictly confidential. Members are not permitted to divulge any information to people outside the Committee.

- (b) Following the meeting Academic Board, members of the Academic Board are free to inform colleagues of the conferments which have been ratified.

Associate Professor role:

Academic Board has agreed that Associate Professor (Research) and Associate Professor (Learning and Teaching) involves appointment to a role, rather than the conferment of a title. These roles are therefore covered by role descriptors in the normal way, and by a standard appointments process which will be overseen by HR. There is no Conferment's Committee involvement, and no requirement for ratification by Academic Board.