



# THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

## PROMOTION OF ACADEMIC STAFF TO LEVELS B, C AND D

### PROMOTION COMMITTEES PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES.

For the definitions of terms used in this policy document refer to the Delegations of Authority. As appropriate for the local nomenclature and reporting lines, when this document refers to Department read also School or Unit;  
to Faculty read also Graduate School of Business, Orange Agricultural College, Sydney College of the Arts, Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
or Administrative Unit; to Head read Head of Department/School/Unit; and to Dean read also Director or College Principal.  
This policy is an attachment to and should be read in conjunction with the Policy Document on the Promotion of Academic Staff to Levels B, C and D .  
Abbreviations are used throughout this document as follows: Faculty Promotion Committee (FPC), Central Promotion Committee (CPC)

**All involved in the promotions process should maintain an awareness of due process and equity. Failure to do so may result in appeals action.**

<p><b>EEO requirements</b></p> <p><b>Privacy and confidentiality</b></p>	<p>The University is committed to equal opportunity for all staff. This commitment includes ensuring the absence of discrimination in any employment practices (including promotion) on the grounds of sex, pregnancy, race (including colour, ethnic background or national identity), marital status, disability, sexual preference, transgender, political or religious belief and age. Discrimination on these grounds is in breach of University policy and in many of these areas is unlawful under Commonwealth and State legislation.</p> <p>Accordingly, members of promotion committees must ensure that they apply only the relevant promotion criteria and that they do not discriminate against any applicant on any of the grounds mentioned above.</p> <p>The names of applicants, information contained in applications and referees' reports, and the content of interviews and discussions within promotion committees shall be confidential.</p>
<p><b>Responsibility of the Head</b></p> <p><b>Responsibility of the Faculty Officer</b></p>	<p><b>RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEADS, FACULTIES, PERSONNEL SERVICES TEAMS</b></p> <p>The Head must complete a report on the applicant (<i>See Promotion of Academic Staff to Levels B, C and D - Head of Department Report, Attachment 3</i>). This report should accurately represent the views of all senior and other relevant staff in the department, including any divergent views. The report must be countersigned by the applicant who has the right to provide a written response. The Head may not comment on the written response of the applicant.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the Head to include comments on the standing of referees, and of the journals in which the applicant has published, in his/her report.</p> <p>The Head must sign the Teaching Activities Form.</p> <p>All copies of the application papers and publications are numbered by the Faculty Officer to allow for the identification of the set of papers allocated to each FPC member and thus ensuring the collection of the ordered and unmarked papers and return to Personnel Services (Corporate Group).</p> <p>The Faculty Officer is responsible for notifying applicants of the FPC membership and of the interview times.</p>

**Responsibility  
of the  
Personnel  
Services Teams**

The Personnel Services Teams (Colleges) will assume responsibility for

- calling for referees' reports
- receiving applications and referees' reports
- notifying applicants of the CPC membership
- notifying applicants of the outcome of their application
- retaining a list of applicants for each year.

The Personnel Services (Corporate Group) will assume responsibility for servicing the CPCs and reporting by the CPCs to the Academic Board.

## FACULTY PROMOTION COMMITTEES

The role of the FPC is to act as an assessor rather than as an advocate of faculty applications.

### Constitution of the FPC

The Dean, after consultation with the Head, forwards the recommendation for the FPC constitution to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (College) for approval on behalf of the Academic Board.

It is desirable that Faculties have separate committees for the consideration of applications for promotion to each academic level B, C and D.

Although Faculties may set up committees of different sizes and composition, it is considered that the FPCs should have the following constitution

- Core
  - A maximum of six and a minimum of four members (plus reserves) at least
    - three of whom must be members of the faculty
    - one of whom must be a member of another faculty
  - Note: FPCs for small Faculties should have at least two members from outside of the faculty.
- Additional members (plus reserves)
  - Up to three when the core is six and up to two when the core is four, including the Head and at least one other who will normally have expertise in the applicant's general field.

Centres that are outside the normal faculty structure will be assessed by the most relevant faculty as determined by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Staffing).

#### Note

Since the recommendation for the constitution of committees is no longer sent to the Academic Board, the committee membership will be available for viewing in the faculty office by all Academic Board members.

### Requirements of the FPC membership

The Chair of the FPC will normally be the Dean or a nominee of the Dean with the agreement of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (College).

The other members of staff serving on these committees should normally have academic rank not lower than that of the grade to which promotion is sought.

The additional non-core members may include people from outside the University.

FPC members should not be referees for any applicant to be considered by the committee.

Members of the FPC should not be members of the CPC.

The FPC must not include a person who has or has had a close personal relationship with any applicant, or may have any other personal interest in promoting or not promoting a particular applicant. Any apparent conflict of interest of a member of the FPC must be declared as soon as possible to the Chair of the FPC.

**Responsibility  
of the Chair of  
the FPC**

The FPC Chair or nominee will assume full responsibility for

- asking all members of the committee to declare a personal interest in any application, at the beginning of the meeting
- liaising with the Personnel Services Team who retain a list of applicants for each year: checking the eligibility for promotion of applicants; that they have an appointment extending for at least one semester beyond the effective date of promotion and have not applied in the previous year
- checking that FPC members are not referees of applicants considered by that FPC
- reporting recommendations for FPC membership, including reserves (and any subsequent changes) to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (College) for approval
- advising applicants of the initial membership of their FPC
- advising all applicants of any changes to FPC membership
- referring any objections from the applicants regarding a significant departure from the promotion procedures to the Chair of the relevant CPC
- the distribution of all papers to FPC members and collection for return after the procedures have been completed
- the arrangement of all FPC meetings and advice to all those attending
- notification of applicant of the time of interview at least one week prior to the interview
- preparing the FPC Report and obtaining the approval of the FPC core for the total report.  
*(refer to 'Format of the FPC Report', below)*
- sending to the additional members the comments relating to the particular applicant on whose committee they sat
- forwarding the FPC report directly to the Chair of the CPC
- ensuring all papers are unmarked, in the original state and in the appropriate order and forwarding them to the Personnel Services Corporate Group for forwarding to the CPC.

In addition, the FPC Chair or nominee

- is required to keep the whole day of the CPC meeting free and to be available to attend the CPC meeting (a specific time will be advised during the day) in order to answer any questions concerning applicants, the referees' reports or the FPC report
- if requested, will provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants about all aspects of their application (after the recommendations of the CPC have been approved by the Academic Board).

**Responsibility  
of FPC  
members**

The FPC members will take into account in their assessment

- the full application
- the referees' reports
- the report of the Head (countersigned by applicant) - and, where relevant, the response of the applicant
- the three publications submitted by the applicant
- the interview.

*(See Promotion of Academic Staff to Levels B, C and D - Applicant Information: Attachment 1.)*

Members of the FPC

- must declare a personal interest in any application, as soon as possible to the Chair of the FPC.
- must not write on or mark any application or additional papers
- may recommend that an application for Associate Professorship be transferred to one for a Readership (or vice versa) if that is deemed more appropriate, provided that the applicant agrees.

**Interviews by  
the FPC**

Interviews will be scheduled for up to 30 minutes.

Although absolutely standardised questioning is not required, it is important to have a consistency of approach and of outcome, in terms of the completeness of information upon which the FPCs judgements are to be made. Questions of applicants should therefore be directed to exploring elements of the application that other sources of information (eg: the written application, the various reports) have not addressed, that require clarification or that have given rise to concerns about the application.

Applicants may update their application only at the time of interview, by submitting up to one page of significant additional information (applicants must provide twelve copies of this information). Any such information will be attached to the FPC report.

**Assessment of  
applications  
by the FPC**

Applications are to be considered only on their merits in relation to the criteria for promotion.

*(See Criteria for Progression for Academic Levels A, B, C and D).*

In the case of applicants who have made a previous unsuccessful application for promotion, the FPC should pay particular attention to factors which the applicant considers have strengthened the application for promotion.

All FPC members will vote for or against promotion in each case. A majority of at least two-thirds is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for recommending promotion.

The FPC core committee will rank only those applicants who are recommended for promotion. Applicants may be equally ranked. The individual ranks given by each core member (to be identified only as member 1, member 2, etc) to each recommended applicant should be reported to the CPC, together with the consolidated ranking of the FPC, as separate tables attached to the report.

**Format of the  
FPC Report**

A full report of the recommendations of the FPC to the CPC is to be written by the Chair. All core members of the FPC must be given the opportunity to read and comment on, and must sign the report prior to its submission to the CPC.

The amount of detail in the report should be sufficient for both the CPC and applicants to understand why promotion was or was not recommended. Each unsuccessful applicant receives that section of the FPC report which relates to their application.

The report should include

- a report on the FPC procedures followed
- a table listing the recommendations for and against promotion, the voting of the FPC for each applicant (number for and against)
- a table of the ranking by the core committee (on a separate sheet)
- a commentary on each applicant (a separate page for each applicant) which addresses both the strengths and weaknesses of the application in relation to the criteria for promotion and which takes into account the referees' reports and information obtained in the interview
- comments on the standing of referees
- comments on the status of publications, and on the expectations regarding publications in the particular field of the applicant
- comments on the expectations regarding performance for the discipline in each of the four categories of promotion
- a declaration, signed by the core committee members that the procedures of the FPC were in accordance with the procedures and guidelines for FPCs and with University policies on the conduct of meetings in relation to equity and equal opportunity. Any variation from these procedures and policies in respect to any applicant should be reported to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Staffing).

**Forwarding the  
FPC report**

The FPC Report should be sent directly to the Chair of the CPC, who will examine the report immediately and bring any concerns to the attention of the FPC Chair.

## CENTRAL PROMOTION COMMITTEE

### Constitution of the CPC

The CPC is appointed by the Academic Board in December of the year preceding the round of promotions, with the following constitution

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Staffing), or nominee (Chair)
- Chair of the Academic Board
- one senior academic from another University (nominated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Staffing).)
- six members of the academic staff: comprising two from each college, one of whom shall be PVC or his/her nominee and the other will be nominated by the Chair of the Academic Board.

### Conditions of the CPC membership

Persons who are members of a CPC should not be referees for any applicant to be considered by the CPC.

CPC members should have academic rank not lower than that of the grade to which promotion is sought.

Members of the CPC should not have been members of the FPC in the same year.

The CPC must not include a person who has or has had a close personal relationship with any applicant, or may have any other personal interest in promoting or not promoting a particular applicant. Any apparent conflict of interest of a CPC member must be declared as soon as possible to the Chair of the CPC.

### Responsibility of the Chair of the CPC

The Chair of the CPC or nominee

- will examine the reports of the FPC as soon as they are received from the FPC Chair and raise any concerns about irregularities in procedures with the Chair of the FPC
- may ask for further reporting and if deemed necessary the reconvening of the FPC and the submission of a new report.
- will report on any concerns regarding FPC procedures to the membership of the CPC
- will review the preliminary voting prior to the CPC meeting
- will ask members of the committee to declare a personal interest in any application
- will prepare the statements on applicants whose promotion was recommended by the FPC but not by the CPC for distribution to the relevant FPC and to the unsuccessful applicant
- will ensure that the statements on the unsuccessful applicants are approved by all members of the CPC at the time of the meeting
- will endorse the list of applicants for promotion for reporting to the Academic Board
- will provide feedback to an unsuccessful applicant (following the applicant's consultation with the Head and Chair of the FPC).

**Responsibility  
of the CPC**

It is the task of the CPC to make the final recommendations for or against promotion to the Academic Staffing Committee for endorsement and to the Vice-Chancellor for approval and to the Academic Board for notification.

Each member of the CPC shall, in advance of the meeting

- receive all the applications and referees' reports and FPC reports
- provide a preliminary vote for each application.

The CPC members will take into account in their assessment

- the full application
- the referees' reports
- the report of the Head (countersigned by applicant) - and, where relevant, the response by the applicant
- the report of the FPC.

*(See Promotion of Academic Staff to Levels B, C and D - Applicant Information: Attachment 1.)*

The votes will be tabulated, and made available at the CPC meeting, as a set of independent but open judgements as the basis for discussion and decisions.

A recommendation for promotion requires a positive vote from at least seven of the nine members of the CPC.

The CPC must, at the time of the CPC meeting, agree to the statements for notification to those applicants who have been unsuccessful.

**Recommendation  
of the CPC**

The CPC will be guided by the advice of the faculties.

- Where the CPC cannot fully endorse the FPC recommendation while not varying the FPCs ranked order, the FPC Chair is consulted by the CPC before it makes its final decision on the recommendations.
- Where the CPC finds it necessary to vary the ranking order given by the FPC, with the result that the promotion of a lower ranked applicant will be recommended and higher ranked one will not, the CPC will discuss the matter with the FPC Chair, and other members of the FPC core at the FPC Chair's discretion, before reaching a final decision.
- Where the CPC does not endorse the FPC recommendation, the Chair will provide a short written statement outlining the reasons to the unsuccessful applicant and to the FPC Chair, who will be responsible for notifying the core members of the FPC.