

Academic Promotions Guidance for Applicants

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1. Introduction and purpose

This document provides additional Guidance for Applicants for academic promotion.

Before reading this guidance, please familiarise yourself with the Queen Mary Academic Framework, which lays out expectations at different career stages for different academic career paths, and is available [here](#), and the description of the Academic Promotion Process and Governance. Having read this Guidance for Applicants, you may also wish to refer to the Guidance for Panellists, which will help you understand the expectations and responsibilities for those who will assess your application as it moves through the process.

[Guidance and documentation can be found here.](#)

2. Preparing to apply for promotion

As part of your annual appraisal process, or as part of your work with a mentor, explore the Academic Career Framework criteria for the career stage above the one you are currently on. You will be assessed against the primary areas of contribution for your career path – Teaching and Scholarship, Teaching and Research or Teaching and Professional Practice. Identify the relevant criteria from the Annual Career Framework, noting areas of existing strength and those where you might require additional development or experience. It is also worth looking beyond the next stage in your career in order to understand the criteria for future potential career stages. Note in particular the requirement for increasing effect, influence and significance at more advanced levels, and consider how you might need to develop these over time.

Whether or not you are considering applying for promotion in the next round, collect and keep evidence which demonstrates your achievement of excellence so that you can refer to it in a future application.

Remember that the ACF is indicative and explanatory. You **do** need to be able to demonstrate in at least three areas of contribution that you have gone beyond the threshold and can evidence excellence in development, delivery and leadership in each area of contribution. You **don't** need to have achieved all of the indicative criteria in the Framework. The volume of activity and outcomes will be assessed in line with the percentage of your time allocated to different Areas of Contribution during the period since appointment or the last promotion.

3. Meeting with your Head of School/Institute Director

Applications for academic promotion at Queen Mary are by self-nomination, with no requirement for approval for application by line manager or other senior member of staff.

If you are considering promotion, however, it is a good idea to request a meeting with your Head of School/Institute Director (or line manager where this responsibility is devolved). At this meeting you can expect verbal feedback on your readiness for promotion and any areas for development, and those aspects which you may wish to emphasise in an application. The Head's role in this meeting is not, however, to approve or reject any application, and you can choose to apply no matter what advice they give you.

4. Annual promotion round

You can start developing an application at any point in the year, and you may wish to start early in order to locate evidence and draft narratives. You can only submit your application, however, after

the formal opening of that year's academic promotion round. There is normally at least a month between the opening of the promotion round and the deadline for submission of applications for consideration by School Promotion Groups.

5. Completing your promotion application

[All relevant guidance and documentation can be found here.](#)

Your promotion application must consist of an Applicant's Statement and a CV matching the provided template, submitted to your Head of School by the deadline announced at the commencement of that promotion round. You may choose to submit a Personal Circumstances Statement to the Rewards and Benefits Team at the same time. No other documents should be submitted. Applications which are incomplete, which include CVs which do not match with the required format, or which include additional documents, will not be eligible for consideration.

It is your responsibility to demonstrate you meet the promotion criteria set out in the Academic Careers Framework in your Application Statement and CV. The emphasis is on clear evidence of the quality and significance of contribution, alignment with our [Strategy 2030 and our Values](#). You are advised to complete the Applicant's Statement and the CV simultaneously, to ensure you can show a full range of evidence and activity while avoiding repetition. In line with our Values, you must declare fully and transparently any joint activities including publication, giving an accurate percentage of the total activity or output that represented your contribution.

a) Completing the Application Statement

In the Applicant's Statement, you should set out your achievements and contribution since appointment to your current role or last promotion. You do this in a series of narratives, each aligned to an Area of Contribution in the Academic Careers Framework. You can sequence these narratives in any way you wish. Before composing your narratives, you should refer to the Academic Careers Framework to identify which evidenced achievements align with the appropriate Area of Contribution. Underneath each narrative box you are asked to specify which Area of Contribution the narrative relates to.

Within each narrative, you must provide clear evidence to demonstrate how you meet the criteria for the level of promotion you are applying for, showing how you have achieved excellence in delivery, development and leadership as indicated in the Academic Careers Framework. You should indicate explicitly which type of contribution (delivery, development or leadership) is being evidenced, with associated outcomes, at different points in each narrative. Descriptions of what is meant by delivery, development and leadership are in the Academic Promotions Process and Governance document. Throughout all your narratives, but particularly within Citizenship and Inclusion, you should demonstrate how you role-model our Values in Action. There may be occasions when a narrative supports more than one Area of Contribution. There is space under each Narrative to provide a brief commentary on any further Areas of Contribution that are relevant.

For a promotion to be successful, you must demonstrate excellence in delivery, development and leadership for at least three Areas of Contribution. Contributions will therefore need to have been sustained for a period long enough to show the results and reach of your activity.

You must complete at least three narratives, including the Areas of Contribution aligned with your contract (T&R, T&S, T&PP) and including Citizenship and Inclusion. Engagement with External Partners should also be included as a fourth area of contribution if your role is predominantly focussed on Knowledge Exchange, or leading research partnerships or education outreach activities. It is recognised that the opportunities for doing so may vary by discipline.

The narratives should be completed as free text: do not insert images or tables. Applicants are permitted 500 words per area of contribution. This word allocation can be distributed unevenly between areas if you wish to expand one area more than another. For example, if your Areas of

Contribution are Research, Education and Citizenship and Inclusion, then you would have a total allocation of 1,500 words, but you may wish to allocation more or less than 500 words per area provided the total number of words does not exceed 1,500. Applicant statements that do not meet these requirements will not be eligible for consideration.

In presenting an application, you should remember that the assessment will be made by an multi-disciplinary team and therefore you should avoid using abbreviations and explain anything that might be unclear to the reader, such as any specific indicators of excellence in the discipline.

b) Completing your CV

You are required to submit your CV as part of your application on the template document provided.

You need to complete:

- i) all sections of the CV relating to career, education and training, and
- ii) those sections of the form relevant to the Areas of Contribution referenced in your Application Form.

For sections or sub-sections of the CV which are not relevant to your Areas of Contribution, please give a 'Nil' return. It is your responsibility to ensure that those assessing your application can identify the evidence that shows that you have achieved excellence in development, delivery and leadership in the Areas of Contribution relevant to your contract type. Adding additional information to sections of the form which do not relate to your Areas of Contribution will not advantage your application. You should include all relevant publications, however you may wish to highlight those that have been published or accepted for publication since your last promotion, or since joining QMUL if you have not applied for promotion since then.

Your CV should be no more than 10 sides of A4 (with additional pages allowed for summarising publications and Research Grants). It should be presented in Arial, font size 11 with single spacing and should adhere to the template provided. Applications which do not abide by these requirements will not be eligible for consideration.

c) Personal Circumstances

The University recognises that you may have specific personal circumstances that may have affected or continue to affect your ability to contribute, whether by reduction in the volume or range of activities that you were/are able to undertake, or in other ways.

Circumstances that may be taken into account include:

- Absences on maternity, paternity, adoption or shared parental leave
- Periods of part time or other flexible working
- Breaks in employment due to non-consecutive fixed-term contracts
- Disability, injury or ill health (permanent or temporary)
- Absence from work whilst acting as a carer or undertaking domestic responsibilities
- Absence due to ill-health or injury
- Career breaks unconnected with academic responsibilities
- Substantive absences that the University is legally obliged to permit (including involvement as a representative of the workforce or for religious observance)
- Agreed special leave of absence on secondment to other organisations
- Impact of widescale national/international events such as a pandemic e.g. COVID-19
- Other personal circumstances having comparable impact on an individual's achievements to those listed above.

If you feel that such information needs to be considered in assessing your contribution, you should declare it on the Personal Circumstances Statement and submit this to the Reward

and Benefits team at the time you make their application to your Head of School/Institute Director.

Any personal information that is declared will remain confidential and will only be shared with the Personal Circumstances Panel. Information on the **impact of the circumstances** on your areas of contribution may however be shared with the promotion panels. Advice on declaring personal circumstances is available from the Reward and Benefits team.

You are not obliged to declare any circumstances on the Personal Circumstances Statement if you do not wish to do so. However, if not declared, such matters cannot be introduced at a later stage in the process, including in any subsequent appeal against the decision of the Promotion Panel or the Academic Promotions Group.

Details of the composition of the Personal Circumstances Panel, how they assess the impact of any such circumstances and what information is shared with the School/Institute Group and Faculty Promotion Panel can be found in the Academic Promotions – Process and Governance document.

[All relevant guidance and documentation can be found here.](#)

6. Assessment and Applicant Response

The process through which your application will be assessed is described in the Academic Promotions Process and Governance Document [insert link]. As this describes, when the School/Institute Promotions Group has considered your application, the Head of School/Institute will write a final statement summarising the Group's recommendation. A copy of this statement will be provided to you, and you may wish to respond to any comments via an Applicant Response for the Faculty Panel. Applicant Responses should be sent to the Reward and Benefits team at least two weeks before the Faculty Panel Meeting. Responses should be no more than one side of A4, with a minimum of 2cm margins and in Arial, font size 11.

7. External experts

If you are applying for the conferment of the title of Professor, your Head of School/Institute Director will provide the Reward and Benefits team with contact details for at least 6 external experts who could provide an opinion on your case for promotion.

You should not approach anyone you think might act as an external expert in relation to your application for promotion.

8. Outcome

After the University Academic Promotions Group has met, you will be contacted by the HR Reward and Benefits team on behalf of the Faculty Vice President and the Head of School/Institute Director to confirm the outcome of your application.

If your application is unsuccessful, the Rewards and Benefits team will provide a short statement from the Faculty Promotions Panel. You will also be provided with specific evidence-based feedback by your Head of School/Institute Director or delegate, based on the standards of excellence in the Academic Careers Framework, including advice on career development as appropriate.

You may wish to seek a further meeting(s) to discuss career development with your School Head/Institute Director and/or Line Manager.

Applicants confirmed for promotion and conferment of title by the Academic Promotions Group will be informed of the outcome in writing by the Reward and Benefits team, in accordance with the timetable.

9. Appeals

If you are not promoted or awarded a title by the Academic Promotion Group and remain dissatisfied, you have the right of appeal **only on the grounds of a defect in procedure** which would cast doubt on the conclusions reached by the promotion panel(s); therefore the right of appeal is only in situations where the processes set out in these guidelines have not been followed.

Appeals must be made within 4 weeks of the date of their final outcome letter to make an appeal. You may be accompanied by a trade union representative or a workplace colleague for the purpose of presenting their case. All parties at the hearing hear evidence from both sides; at no point shall oral evidence be presented behind closed doors.

The decision of the Committee will be final. There is no further right of appeal.

Further details on the appeals process can be found in the Academic Promotions – process and governance document.

[All relevant guidance and documentation can be found here.](#)