

Academic Promotions Policy

Fact box

- **Policy owner:** Vice President & Provost
- **Policy category:** Academic: Academic Board
- **Policy status:** Approved
- **Approval body:** Council
- **Endorsement body:** Academic Board
- **Related policies:**
 - [Higher Education Faculty Register Policy](#)
 - [Staff Conditions of Employment Policy](#)
 - [Staff Grievance Resolution Policy](#)
- **Last amended:** 6th Dec. 2024
- **Relevant HESF:**

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) Set out the principles underlying academic classifications and promotions at Alphacrucis University College (AC).
- b) Provide for the fair and consistent application of indicators of academic performance, benchmarked across disciplines within AC taking into account relevant practices of similar institutions.
- c) Ensure that academic promotion occurs in relation to the standards for academic classification which should be seen as the minimum for a particular level.

Scope

All academic staff employed by AC on a continuing, or fixed-term contract basis who wish to apply for promotion to a higher grade of academic classification.

Policy

PRINCIPLES OF ACADEMIC PROMOTION

Academic standards

AC's promotion process will recognise and reward sustained excellence. The standard is measured by external peer review by senior academics familiar with processes and standards at Australian Universities, noting the special characteristics of AC as an institution. The emphasis will be on achievements since appointment or previous promotion.

- a. Applicants for promotion will demonstrate they have maintained active and effective scholarship in their disciplines by contributions to teaching, research, or service to their discipline/profession, AC, and the community.
- b. Applicants will verify their increasing role in the advancement of scholarship.
- c. Applicants will verify their increasing qualitative impact to their discipline/profession.
- d. Applicants will validate increasing leadership in their discipline/profession, AC and the community.

Merit

- a. Promotion to all levels will be on the basis of the merit of the case presented without reference to staffing profiles, quotas or resources.
- b. Consideration will be given to performance relative to opportunity to ensure that the limits imposed on opportunity by additional responsibilities or other relevant factors is acknowledged in assessing achievements.
- c. The outcome of previous applications for promotion will have no relevance in the current promotion round aside from the “two year wait rule” (see Promotions Procedure).

Equal Opportunity

The promotion process will have regard for the principles of equal opportunity, fairness and social justice. These principles require that there be no discrimination against any individual on the basis of personal characteristics such as sex, ethnicity, age, and disability.

Other

- a. All academic staff are eligible to apply for promotion when they believe they can demonstrate a quality of performance appropriate to the level sought;
- b. Promotion applications and associated documents must be kept confidential at all times. All involved in the process should be particularly aware of the consequences for staff of breaches of confidentiality;
- c. Anyone involved in the promotion process must identify any conflict or potential conflict of interest to the Chair of the Academic Promotions Committee who will then consider whether the circumstances are likely to influence substantially the promotion outcome and determine the appropriate action in consultation with senior AC staff;
- d. While the emphasis of this process is on academic levels rather than salary, AC will guarantee any necessary salary increases to meet award rates appropriate to the new level of promotion. This increase (if required) will commence from the date on which the promotion takes effect. Any other salary discussions are not a part of this process.

PROMOTION ON THE BASIS OF A SPECIFIC FOCUS

While applicants may demonstrate engagement with all three criteria to support an application for promotion at a level appropriate for the applicant’s academic career, it is understood that different roles within AC will necessarily emphasise different criteria and this will be taken into account:

1. Research, including engaged research.
2. Learning and Teaching, including engaged teaching, and/or curriculum development and/or educational leadership and/or student learning development.
3. Leadership and Administration, including institutional leadership at AC, contributions to higher education and the relevant profession or academic discipline. Community engagement that is directly relevant to the disciplinary expertise of the faculty member may also be considered.

Staff applying for promotion on the basis of a focus on learning and teaching are expected to:

- a. demonstrate excellence in, and substantial contribution to, teaching;
- b. contribute to supervision of research students;
- c. contribute to research and scholarship in either their discipline or the pedagogy of their discipline;
- d. be building (at junior levels) and to have achieved (at senior levels) national and international reputations for their contributions to pedagogical issues within their discipline and more broadly.

Staff applying for promotion on the basis of a focus on research are expected to:

- a. demonstrate a substantial contribution to research in their discipline;
- b. participate in teaching through supervision and instruction of postgraduate students, supervision of research students, or general teaching;
- c. be building (at junior levels) and to have achieved (at senior levels) national and international reputations for their research.

Staff applying for promotion on the basis of a focus on leadership and administration are expected to:

- a. demonstrate a substantial contribution to leadership, administration, governance, and engagement activities of AC;
- b. demonstrate sustained engagement over a substantial period of time in governance and significant leadership roles within AC or their broader discipline or the community;
- c. demonstrate meaningful quality outcomes from these activities that provide benefit to AC;
- d. provide evidence of the impact these activities have had in limiting outcomes within their teaching and research portfolios.

PRINCIPLES OF ACADEMIC RANK

Academic rank is differentiated by level of complexity, degree of autonomy, and level of achievement of the academic. The responsibilities of academic staff may vary according to the specific requirements of AC to meet its objectives and/or may vary according to individual staff development.

It is expected that all staff:

- a. will carry out the duties assigned to them under their faculty workload provisions, as appropriate to their academic level;
- b. will disseminate their knowledge and expertise in education and their research skills as appropriate to their role and academic level;
- c. will engage in continuing professional development;
- d. will be institutionally engaged as a member of AC through participation in committees, administrative duties and governance, as appropriate to their role and academic level;
- e. will interact with staff and students in a professional and collegial manner;

- f. will seek to engage with the wider community.

The general standards for each level of academic classification are outlined below:

1. Level A staff: Associate Lecturer

- a. will normally have completed a relevant higher degree or equivalent qualifications and experience;
- b. will undertake administration primarily relating to their activities at AC;
- c. will normally contribute to teaching at AC, at a level appropriate to their skills and experience;
- d. may supervise research students at undergraduate level;
- e. will normally work under supervision of staff at Level B or above, with an increasing degree of autonomy as they gain skills and experience;
- f. will normally conduct research or scholarly activities under limited supervision either independently or as a member of a team;
- g. may be mentored in a formal AC mentoring program.

2. Level B staff: Lecturer

- a. will normally have completed a PhD or professional equivalent;
- b. will contribute to research, scholarship, teaching, or academic leadership, either independently or as part of a team, through professional practice and expertise;
- c. will coordinate or lead the activities of other staff as appropriate to their discipline;
- d. will be involved in evaluating learning and teaching, both at the course level and in relation to their own practice;
- e. will engage in scholarly development and engagement in their discipline area;
- f. may have experience in education-related scholarly activities, which have resulted in demonstrated improvements in teaching quality or education outcomes, or successful outcomes in research supervision;
- g. may be required to perform the full academic responsibilities, and related administration, of coordination of a subject;
- h. may be a mentor for staff at Level A
- a. will normally contribute to teaching at Higher Degree Research (HDR), postgraduate and undergraduate levels in subjects or through research supervision.

3. Level C staff: Senior Lecturer

- a. will have completed a PhD or equivalent;
- b. will make independent and original contributions to scholarship within their discipline and will disseminate these among colleagues to promote good practice in their faculty and AC;
- c. will be acknowledged within the institution as influential in:

- a. expanding knowledge within their discipline through research; or
- b. pedagogical and curriculum issues in learning and teaching; or
- c. academic leadership, administration and related community engagement.
- d. will be able to demonstrate a strong record of:
 - a. research and scholarly activities relating to their discipline, such as contributing to leading academic and professional publications on issues relevant to their discipline, supervision of HDR students; or
 - b. teaching and learning practices; or
 - c. senior academic administration, leadership and related community engagement.
- e. may be required to perform the full academic responsibilities, and related administration, of coordination of a course of study;
- f. may be a mentor for staff at Level B or below;
- g. may contribute their expertise and knowledge to broader forums of public debate, consistent with AC policy;
- h. will normally play a major role or provide a significant degree of leadership in scholarly, research or administrative activities relevant to any or all of their profession, discipline or community.

4. Level D staff: Associate Professor

- a. will have completed a PhD or equivalent;
- b. will have attained national or international recognition and impact through original, innovative and distinguished contributions to research, or learning and teaching, or leadership and administration;
- c. if research:
 - a. will make original and innovative contributions to their field of study or research, which are recognised as outstanding nationally or internationally, including engagement in publications and scholarly dissemination appropriate to their discipline;
 - b. will have a sustained record of effective leadership of research (in fostering the research activities of others, and in research training);
 - c. will demonstrate evidence of capability to lead developments in research which enhance the reputation of the faculty or AC;
- d. if learning and teaching:
 - a. will have a sustained record of effective leadership of teaching teams (in curriculum design, implementation and innovations leading to improvements in student learning);

- b. will make original contributions to teaching, such as contributions to national efforts to enhance curriculum and providing high quality learning experiences in their discipline;
 - c. will demonstrate evidence of capability to lead developments in education quality, which enhance major aspects of the faculty's operations through course management, curriculum development, faculty and institutional teaching roles.
- e. if leadership and administration:
 - a. will make significant contributions to academic leadership e.g. senior governance positions at AC or externally; positions on external advisory boards or academic committees; involvement in industry groups and organisations;
 - b. will have a sustained record of effective leadership of other senior academic leaders in administrative roles;
 - c. may have evidence of achievement in community engagement relevant to their disciplinary expertise (e.g. on the basis of their expertise, hold official community positions, participate in community consultancies, initiate community projects, or contribute in other areas).
 - d. will demonstrate evidence of capability to lead developments in academic leadership which contribute significantly to the vision of the institution.
- f. may be a mentor for staff at Level C or below;
- g. will normally make an outstanding contribution to governance and collegial life within AC;
- h. will, where appropriate, contribute to AC's work of community engagement;
- i. will, where appropriate, contribute their expertise and knowledge to broader forums of public debate, consistent with AC policy;
- j. will, where appropriate, assist AC in its development work;

5. Level E staff: Professor

- a. will have achieved and maintained significant international recognition and impact through original, innovative and distinguished contributions to research, or learning and teaching, or leadership and administration;
- b. if research:
 - a. will usually have a track record of competitive research grants;
 - b. will make original and innovative contributions to their field of study or research, which are recognised as outstanding nationally or internationally, including engagement in publications and scholarly dissemination appropriate to their discipline;
 - c. will have evidence of capability to lead development which enhances major aspects of AC's operations and its international reputation in research;

- d. may, where appropriate, be involved in transnational research with a view to external collaboration and establishing strong partnerships with outputs such as commercialisation, improved practice and policy;
 - e. will have a strong record of leadership in research.
- c. if learning and teaching:
 - a. will make original contributions to teaching, such as contributions to national efforts to enhance curriculum and providing high quality learning experiences in their discipline;
 - b. will have evidence of capability to lead development which enhances major aspects of AC's operations and its international reputation in learning and teaching;
 - c. will have a strong record of leadership in learning and teaching.
- d. if leadership and administration:
 - a. will make highly significant contributions to academic leadership over a substantial period of time in governance and significant leadership roles within AC or their broader discipline or the community e.g. senior governance positions at AC or externally; positions on external advisory boards or academic committees; involvement in industry groups and organisations;
 - b. may have substantial evidence of achievement in community engagement relevant to their disciplinary expertise (e.g. on the basis of their expertise, hold official community positions, participate in community consultancies, initiate community projects, or contribute in other areas).
 - c. will have evidence of capability to lead development which enhances major aspects of AC's operations and its international reputation in academic leadership and administration.
- e. will have evidence of recognition within the broader academic or higher education community, such as membership or editorship of journals, membership of national or international consultative bodies, membership of specialist committees or advisory boards;
- f. will have evidence of mentoring colleagues to leadership positions;
- g. will usually have a record of supervising Higher Degree Research students successfully to completion as principal supervisor;
- h. will make an outstanding contribution to governance and collegial life within and outside AC, for example by chairing faculty committees, undertaking significant administrative positions, or participating in or chairing AC-level committees;
- a. may be a mentor for staff at Levels D or below;
- j. will, where appropriate, contribute their expertise and knowledge to broader forums of public debate, consistent with AC policy;
- k. will, where appropriate, assist AC in its development work;

Responsible for implementation

Vice President & Provost

Key stakeholders

All staff

Related documents

[AC Academic Promotion – Referee Report](#)

[AC Academic Promotion Form](#)

Procedures

Academic Promotions Procedures

APPLICATIONS

The President will appoint a Chair of the Academic Promotions Committee (APC) from amongst the senior academic staff of AC. The Chair will then invite applications for promotion annually at least two months in advance of the closing date for applications. This invitation will include a timetable for completion of the promotion process. Applicants should initially discuss promotion with their Head of School or supervisor and advise their intent to apply for promotion well before the deadline for applications.

Applications need to make a compelling evidence based case for promotion on the AC Academic Promotion Application Form. The application should not exceed 20 pages, including supporting evidence.

Unsuccessful Applications: the “Two Year Wait” Rule

Unsuccessful applicants for promotion will be required to wait *two years* before submitting a further application.

In exceptional circumstances, an application may be accepted after only one year. Intending applicants who have not met the two year requirement may make a written submission to the Head of School (or supervisor if not part of a Faculty) requesting an exemption.

If the Chair of the Academic Promotions Committee and Head of School (or supervisor if not part of a Faculty) are satisfied that there are compelling reasons to support the case for an exemption they will forward the applicant’s request, and a written recommendation for the application to proceed, to the Vice President & Provost for determination. If the Vice President & Provost is the applicant’s supervisor, the written recommendation will be forwarded to the President for determination.

Newly appointed staff within the last two years would not normally have sufficient evidence to make a case for promotion. They can only apply in exceptional circumstances, with the support of their Head of School (supervisor) and Vice President & Provost.

Submission of Application

Prior to submission, the Head of School or relevant supervisor is required to read the application in full and sign the endorsement section. The Head of School’s or supervisor’s comments must also be read and signed by the applicant. If the applicant concludes that the comments require explanation or qualification, the applicant can provide additional information in writing. That information must

be signed by both the applicant and the supervisor and attached to the application form. The Head of School or supervisor may not provide a counter response to the applicant's comments.

The applicant must submit the online AC Academic Promotions Application Form and other documents to the Chair of the Academic Promotions Committee by the due date. All applications will be acknowledged by the Chair of the Academic Promotions Committee within one week of receipt of the application.

Referees

Applicants will provide the Chair of the APC a list of suggested referees with some comment as to their suitability and standing in the area where the applicant claims to demonstrate sustained excellence. It is advisable to consult with your Head or School and other senior colleagues about appropriateness of referees.

- a. Applicants for promotion to Lecturer and Senior Lecturer must have a minimum of two (2) and maximum of four (4) suggested referees, one of which is external to AC.
- b. Applicants for promotion to Associate Professor and Professor must have four (4) suggested referees. At least two (2) of the referees must be referees of international standing who are external to AC.

Requests for Referee Reports

The Chair of the APC shall write to the nominated referees and invite them to provide a reference, and will attach the AC Promotions Referee template to that request.

Referee reports will be provided by the referee directly to the Chair of the APC.

Applicants must not request their own referee reports but may approach potential referees to ask them if they will act as referees if nominated.

Viewing of Referee Reports

Reports from referees will be requested in confidence, and only those directly concerned with the processing and assessment of applications may view the reports.

Referee reports will not be made available to the applicant.

Testimonials and references, aside from those requested by AC with respect to an application, should not be included, and will not be considered in any application.

ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE:

- a. Members will assess applications for academic promotion;
- b. Members will not act as advocates for applicants;
- c. Having assessed the applications submitted, members (including the Chair) will vote on each application and recommend successful candidates for promotion.

Members of Academic Promotions Committee:

- Chair: Appointed by the President (*ex officio*);
- Vice President & Provost or appointed delegate (*ex officio*);

- Three external members appointed by the Chair.

Applicants for promotion should not be members of the APC. If any *ex officio* members of the APC are applying for promotion they should appoint a delegate.

All members are expected to be present for meetings of the Academic Promotions Committees. The Chair will where possible nominate an appropriate replacement if a committee member is unable to attend or continue to serve once the consideration of applications has commenced (e.g., owing to illness or other unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances).

The APC will provide a written report, recommending for promotion applicants who are successful in meeting the promotion criteria and identifying applicants who do not meet the criteria.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Promotion will be based on the assessment by the Academic Promotions Committee of the merit of the case presented by each applicant.

The Academic Promotions Committee decision will be based on open discussion. Committee members must vote either for or against a promotion for an applicant and provide reasons for and against the recommendation. For promotion an applicant must receive at least three out of five votes in favour of promotion.

Applicants must not contact a member of a Promotions Committee to discuss their application, except to receive official feedback from the Chair after results have been notified.

Each applicant will be notified by the Chair in writing of the outcome of his or her application as soon as possible of the Committee's decision. The voting names or numbers shall not be disclosed. The Chair will provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants on the strengths and weakness of their application, with a view to assisting the applicant's future development and decisions about applying in future rounds of the promotion process.

To facilitate staff development it may be helpful for the Chair to communicate with the applicant's Head of School.

If the application for promotion is successful, the promotion and new academic classification will normally take effect from the 1st July following the decision.

At the completion of the annual promotions process, the Chair of the Promotions Committee will report the following to Academic Board:

1. the number of applicants in the round;
2. the number of promotions approved;
3. the names (and positions held) of the members of the Academic Promotions Committee;
and
4. names of successful applicants and their level of promotion.

The Chair of Academic Board will then make a report to Council.

APPEALS

If an applicant wishes to appeal an unsuccessful application on the grounds that the promotion procedure was not adhered to and that this resulted in a serious defect in the assessment of merit,

the applicant must do so within 21 days of notification of the decision. Appeals will follow the AC grievance procedures. No appeal should be submitted before feedback from the Chair has been received. Where there is conflict of interest with the Authorised Officer defined in the grievance procedures, the Authorised Officer should refer the appeal to a neutral third party such as the Chair of Academic Board or Head of School to which the applicant does not belong.
