

Academic Promotions - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Process queries:

Who considers my promotion case?

All Professorial promotion applications will be considered by the University's Professorial Promotions Committee (UPPC), and all other proposed Academic promotions will be considered by the Academic Staff Committee (ASC).

Memberships of both these Committees are available on the intranet

(<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/humanresources/internal/academicprocesses/academicpromotion>)

Will the Committee membership of both ASC and UPPC be comprised of R&T, T focussed and R focussed academics?

The University is currently reviewing the membership of both committees with a view to possibly increasing membership. The vast majority of current members are R&T academics, however, as such, the University considers that they are suitably placed to consider all applications for promotion, regardless of career pathway.

What documents do I need to provide for my promotion application?

You will need to provide a completed promotion application and your CV. Templates are available on the [Academic Promotions](#) webpage.

How should I present my CV?

Please present your CV in the standard format available on the [Academic Promotions](#) webpage.

Will evidence of work done outside of the University (eg volunteering) be relevant to my application?

It depends but if you can make a good case that the volunteering work is evidence of relevant criteria in the framework and that there is some connection with your broader academic work then we would encourage you to make sure that it is included in your application.

Can I use work from before I started at Warwick in my promotion case?

In making your promotion case, what is important is that you demonstrate how you meet the criteria specified for the level of promotion for which you are applying. However, the Committee will be keen to see that you are continuing to develop and are sustaining your performance over time and so they will wish to see that there has been genuine progress since your last promotion or since your appointment at Warwick, whichever is the latter.

Can bullet point structures can be used in place of formal prose in word-limited sections?

Yes – you can present your case in whatever way you believe will be most effective. The important point is to make your claim and the supporting evidence very clear and explicit. We use the word limit to ensure that every

candidate has a comparable opportunity to make their case. And don't forget that you can cross reference to your CV.

Can I see an example of a successful promotion application?

Due to confidentiality it is not possible for HR to provide copies of previous applications. However you could speak to your Head of Department to ascertain if there are any colleagues willing to share their promotion experience with you.

How can I find out further information about the promotions process?

You can speak to your Head of Department or alternatively, please visit the [Academic Promotions](#) webpage, or contact a member of the Academic Processes team within HR.

My Head of Department doesn't support my application, can I still apply?

Yes you can still apply for promotion, however, your Head of Department will still need to complete their comments on your application, irrespective of whether they support your application or not.

Promotion Criteria

I think I meet the minimum Band thresholds in the criteria, but do not meet the minimum total required for promotion. Can I still apply?

No, it is important that both the minimum Band thresholds are met, together with the overall total required for promotion, as specified in the matrix document. The matrix has been structured in such a way to allow a degree of flexibility for individuals to structure their case for promotion and therefore whilst minimum thresholds have been set for each area of academic activity, it is expected that individuals will be able to demonstrate where they exceed the minimums required in meeting the overall minimum score for promotion. This approach allows the promotions process to recognise diversity of activity and achievement both within and across career pathways.

I'm a Research/Teaching focussed applicant. Why do I need to evidence achievement in Teaching/Research if this is not my area of expertise?

The criteria have been designed in such a way as to introduce a common theme of four areas of academic activity across all academic career pathways. As is demonstrated in the matrix document, the band thresholds have been weighted according to the focus of the role, i.e. for Teaching focussed roles, the Band threshold expectation is significantly reduced for Research and Scholarship as opposed to Teaching and Learning. However, there is an expectation across all career pathways that there is evidence of achievement across the four areas of academic activity.

Does there need to be a vacancy in order for me to apply for promotion?

No, there does not need to be a vacancy in order for you to apply for promotion. Promotion is based on merit and meeting the required level of criteria as specified in the matrix and criteria documents.

Deadlines

When do I need to submit my application?

The deadline for submitting applications to the Academic Processes team within HR is 30 September, however your Department may have internal deadlines which are earlier than this date and therefore you are advised to check the internal deadline date with your Department.

Referees

Can I contact my referees, prior to submitting my application?

You may contact your referees as a matter of courtesy to let them know that you have listed them as a referee and to notify that they may be contacted by the University.

Will referees be informed about the revised criteria?

Yes, referees will be notified that the criteria for promotion have been revised and that further information is available should the referee require more detail.

Notification of decisions

When will I find out if my application has been successful?

We aim to inform individuals of the outcome of their promotion application in the Spring/Summer term, with the promotion usually being effective from 1 June.

How will I find out if my application has been successful?

You will receive a letter both electronically and in the internal mail during the Spring/Summer term to let you know the outcome of your application. Your Head of Department will also be notified of the decision in advance.

Unsuccessful applications

If my application has been unsuccessful, what happens? Is there an appeal process?

There is no appeal process against an unsuccessful promotion application. However, if your application is unsuccessful, you will be offered a feedback meeting with a member of the Committee who considered your application. Your Head of Department will also be invited to attend this meeting.

How many promotion applications are usually successful?

On average approximately 80% of all promotion applications are successful each year.

Moving career pathways

I'm currently a Senior Research Fellow/Senior Teaching Fellow, how do I move across to a Teaching and Research contract?

You can either apply to move sideways (i.e. at the same grade) or diagonally, (i.e. promotion to a different career pathway). However, either move would need to be supported by a clear business case from the Head of Department and of course you would need to demonstrate that you meet the criteria for appointment at the role being applied for, as specified in the criteria and matrix documents.

What is required for an application to change career pathways?

Clear Departmental support for a proposed move across pathways is required, as well as demonstrating that you meet the criteria for the relevant role. Your department will be expected to accommodate an approved change in pathways within their existing budget. It is therefore important that Departments carefully consider any requests on the potential impact on their resource allocation/workload model.

Academic probation

I'm currently an Assistant Professor, can I apply for promotion to Associate Professor?

Assistant Professors are normally on a 5 year probation period, with automatic promotion to Associate Professor on successful completion of probation. However, your Head of Department can recommend to the Probation Review Group (a sub group of ASC) that you complete probation early (subject to you meeting the probation criteria).

On completing probation you will automatically be promoted to Associate Professor (link to probation), there is no need for you to apply for promotion to this role.

Other queries

I'm currently a Research Assistant (FA5) and have completed my PhD, do I automatically get promoted to Research Fellow?

Yes, you will need to provide evidence of the attainment of your PhD to your Department who in turn will need to inform HR. On receipt of confirmation that you have been awarded your PhD, you will receive a letter from HR confirming your promotion to Research Fellow.

I am currently an Associate Professor, do I have to apply for promotion to Reader or can I apply for promotion to Professor?

You can apply either for promotion to Reader or to Professor. You will need to meet the criteria for promotion to the role that you apply for. If you successfully apply for promotion to Reader, a future promotion case to Professor should not focus on the same material.

When will the new job titles be effective from?

The new job titles will be effective from the new academic year. Further communication regarding this will be disseminated during the summer.

How are clinical academics impacted by the revised promotions criteria?

The University will be looking separately at the promotions criteria and probation requirements for clinical academics. Therefore status quo will be maintained in the meantime.

Is there the possibility of an appeal against an unsuccessful application in the first year of operation of the revised criteria?

There is no appeal mechanism against an unsuccessful application. However, if either Committee have any doubts over any aspect of an individual's application, they will ask further questions of the applicant/Head of Department to ensure that the Committee have the information they require in order to fully assess the application.

Academic Promotions in regard to the Pandemic

- How are you going to take Covid-19 impacts into account in the promotions process (I've been home schooling and had childcare responsibilities and not worked my usual hours, or I've worked excessive hours but with constant interruptions)**

We will seek to judge each case on its merits paying attention to the quality of the work that is being done and the nature of the challenges that the individual has experienced. It will be in everyone's interest that we work with the normal standards but that we recognise mitigating circumstances.

- Do I still have to fulfil all the criteria for promotion if my work has been impacted by Covid-19?**

Yes – we need to retain the requirement that those promoted meet the expected standards to ensure fairness and comparability. And for those promoted this year, it will be important that they are assured that their promotion is genuinely warranted.

- Will you be changing the minimum scores for promotion to take Covid-19 into account?**

Again, in the interests of fairness and consistency and the interests of ensuring that a promotion is genuinely warranted, we will be working with the same scores as in previous years; what we will try to do is to ensure that we recognise and contextualise the achievements of individuals.

- Will you require evidence from me that my work has been impacted by Covid-19 and what type of evidence will be considered?**

We will ask for a short statement from you about the extent to which you believe that your application has been impacted by the pandemic and the disruption to teaching and research. We understand everyone will have been affected by the impact of the pandemic and we would ask you to focus on providing us with clear and specific

indications of what has been affected (as far as you possibly can). If you have been able to work with minimal material impact then we won't require information from you.

- **What sort of impacts would you consider as potentially “mitigating circumstances”?**
It is difficult to be prescriptive, but the sort of factors that we might expect see being cited would include significant difficulties of working from home, additional caring responsibilities, the need to rapidly develop new teaching and learning approaches, limited access to research facilities or research sites (labs, field stations, archives, focus groups, overseas locations etc), limitations on research funding, research resources being directed to other activity, events or activities being cancelled.
- **Is it better to wait until next year to go for promotion and just accept this year has been very difficult?**
This must be an individual decision; we are keen to ensure that individuals are not disadvantaged by the consequences of the pandemic and lockdown. So, if you feel you have a good case, then do not feel that you need to delay. And do ask for advice if you are not sure.
- **Some people have been able to be more productive than usual (papers, grants, outreach, teaching) during Covid-19. How will you deal with this when reviewing promotion cases?**
Promotion is not competitive – we promote all of those who deserve promotion so the fact that some individuals may have been very productive will not adversely impact others who have been less productive. You cannot lose out because someone else has been very successful.
- **Do I need a commentary in my promotion documents that explains why I have fewer (publication, grants, teaching, outreach activities) than normal? Will additional word-count be available for this, or will it be at the expense of showcasing my contributions? Will this commentary be seen by my external reviewers?**
We will ask for a short statement about the impact of the pandemic and lockdown on you and your work. This will be an opportunity for you to explain to us how your application has been affected by the current crisis.
- **Should I include in the CV I submit that I haven't been able to work full time (including if there was no process to recognise this in my department?), much like I would put maternity/paternity leave breaks?**
You don't need to include this in your CV, but please make sure you comment on this matter in the pro-forma. There will be an explicit opportunity for you to provide us with a statement about the way in which the pandemic has materially impacted on your work.
- **The promotions criteria say “*The promotions process will be expected to give due consideration to individual circumstances which may impact on ability to present certain types of evidence (e.g.***

(family/caring responsibilities) or the ability to provide a particular volume of evidence (periods of parental leave, fractional contracts etc.)". How will you do this? How do I know that what I've done is enough in these circumstances?

This is always a challenge for any promotion application – and it's the job of the relevant committee and the close readers to judge whether you have done enough (and for some promotions we also rely on advice from referees). We draw on the evidence you provide for us in your submission, we consider the information on individual circumstances and we discuss each case carefully. What we need you to do is focus on providing clear evidence of how you meet the various criteria. And remember, if you don't succeed in this round, there is nothing to stop you reapplying as soon as you think you have met the promotions requirements.

- I think I have demonstrated a new level of collegiality, leadership and management during the pandemic. Will you take this into account?**

Absolutely – we must recognise some of the exceptional contributions that individuals have made during the current difficult circumstances. We would encourage you to use evidence of [your activity during lockdown](#) to demonstrate collegiality, outreach and engagement – and indeed to demonstrate your contributions in other areas.

- I am on the Research + Teaching pathway, but I postponed seeking funding or publishing because I needed to help with urgent development and implementation of new teaching systems for delivery and assessment in response to Covid-19. Does this undermine my R+T case?**

No, it would not necessarily undermine your case. The framework we have created requires a certain threshold performance to be met in each area of activity; so provided that you can make a clear case for having achieved the relevant threshold, you can then argue that your additional required points have been delivered by other activity, most probably in teaching and learning but possibly also in Leadership, Collegiality and Management or Impact, Outreach and Engagement.