



**UNIVERSITY
OF WARWICK**

Academic Promotion

Guidance for Heads of
Departments



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General Information

1.1 These guidelines are intended to provide Heads of Schools/Departments with advice and guidance when considering applications for promotion and should be read in conjunction with the [Academic Promotions Guidelines](#).

Schedule

2.1. Heads of School/Department should notify the Academic Progression Team in People Team of any promotion cases from their Department by 1 December 2026. The promotion's submission form found at the end of this guidance should be used to do this.

2.2. Promotion cases should be submitted electronically by the applicant, copying in the Head of School/Department, to the Academic Progression Team (academicprogression@warwick.ac.uk) by 25 January 2027.

2.3. Promotion cases are considered during the Spring and Summer Terms. Decisions will formally be communicated directly to the applicant and copied to the Head of School/Department, as soon as possible thereafter, however, it is likely to be towards the end of the Summer term. Vice Provosts/Chairs of Faculties will provide updates on progress with an application (i.e. has it progressed to review by referees and has it been approved) which you are encouraged to share with the individual concerned.

2.4. Promotions will take effect from 1 August.

2.5 Individuals on fixed term contracts may apply for promotion, however promotion is subject to their fixed term contract being extended or made indefinite. Academic promotion does not rescind the original fixed term end date.

2.6. Individuals can usually expect to see some salary progression as the result of a successful promotion application. Successful applicants would normally move to the first point on the relevant salary scale. Given the overlap between the salary scales for Associate Professor and Reader, individuals appointed to Reader can reasonably expect an additional increment as a result of a successful promotion application. Any applicants that are currently in the extended area will be reviewed on a case by case basis. For Professorial promotions, salaries will be reviewed on a case by case basis with the aim of ensuring some salary progression; in most cases this means that the salary will be set at the entry level of the professorial salary scale.

2.7. There is no right of appeal against a decision made by the University Professorial Promotions Committee (UPPC) or Academic Staff Committee (ASC) not to support a case for promotion.

Departmental Promotions Process

3.1. Departments must communicate a process which outlines the mechanism by which promotion cases are considered for Head of School/Department support, to their academic staff. It is a requirement that Heads of School/Department will seek advice from other senior colleagues when considering applications for promotion. Good practice will include some or all of the following:

- Explicitly inviting members of the department to consider putting themselves forward for promotion. (Essential).
- Forming a Promotions Committee within the Department to review cases for promotion. (Desirable).
- Using senior management meetings as a mechanism to review cases for promotion. (As a minimum).
- Involvement of one representative from outside of the Department (this may be particularly helpful for small Departments).

Making an Application

4.1. The promotion case should focus on the applicant's achievements in relation to the evidence and criteria for promotion. Candidates can make use of outputs and achievements prior to their last appointment/promotion and their case should be evaluated based on their overall profile of activity and achievement.

4.2. Where a candidate is being considered for promotion in a relatively short time since their previous appointment, ASC and UPPC are asked to assure themselves that the individual has been able to sustain the required level of performance since their previous promotion/appointment. The meaning of "sustained" in this context will vary across disciplines and cases and it is difficult to offer detailed guidance. However, you would be encouraged to look for the candidate to be providing evidence of continued delivery at the band level that they are claiming but perhaps with greater evidence on the level than the quantum.

4.3. For Teaching focused applications, ASC or UPPC may request to see an applicant's teaching profile of evidence if considered necessary.

4.4. Where the Head of School/Department decides not to support a promotion case, they should complete their comments on the application form detailing the reasons why they are not supportive and return this to the individual. Individuals can then decide if they still want to apply for promotion and should submit the application form as detailed in sections 2.1 and 2.2.

4.5. Generally, unpublished work will not count as evidence of an applicant's research output, although it may provide information relating to a continued trajectory. Work that has been

clearly accepted for publication may be counted provide that UPPC/ASC can be assured of its standing. Heads of Schools/Departments should clarify the position relating to unpublished work when submitting their comments, including an explanation of whether work that is not yet published has been definitively accepted for publication. Evidence submitted by the applicant should not rely on anticipation of forthcoming work.

4.6. Any member of staff that considers that they have special circumstances which may impact on their promotion submission should declare these on their application form. Such information will be kept confidential and will only be seen by members of staff involved in the promotion process and if appropriate, may be seen by referees.

4.7. Where an individual applying for promotion is currently undertaking a fixed-term research-focused fellowship (typically up to five years), flexibility in the standard promotion thresholds may be applied. Applications submitted during the fellowship will normally be assessed against the research-focused banding and criteria.

In such cases, flexibility may be applied by the Committee to agree adjusted thresholds between the Research & Scholarship and Teaching & Learning categories. Recognising the research-focused nature of the role, this may be considered sufficient, provided that the application is supported by the department and requested by the applicant, and is accompanied by appropriate evidence.

All such cases must be clearly identified and justified within the 'adjusted thresholds' section of the application form.

Head of School/Department Statement

5.1. The statement should clearly state whether or not the Head of School/Department is supportive of the application.

5.2. The Head of School/Department should indicate whether or not the scores claimed by the applicant are appropriate and provide comprehensive but succinct commentary on each of the four areas of activity.

5.3 Where you think the claimed score is justified, it is important to give a brief statement to support the score and highlight particular strengths. Where you do not support the claimed score, please give an explanation as to why and identify areas of concern. You do not have to provide an alternative score if you prefer not to but you do need to ensure that ASC or UPPC can understand why you think the claimed score is not justified.

5.4. If the candidate has previously applied for promotion but been unsuccessful, it is important to comment on how the profile has changed since the previous application and the extent to which you believe that candidate has appropriately responded to previous feedback.

5.5. Please ensure that applicants understand that they should respect the stated word limits and that where they do not, ASC and UPPC may ask for the submission to be rewritten.

References

6.1. The Head of School/Department is asked to nominate referees in line with the specifications below and should do so in consultation with the candidate. Full contact details of all referees should be provided where appropriate. Supporting statements are also required on the standing and relevance of each of the chosen referees. The Head of School/Department or the applicant may contact referees to notify them that they have been listed as a referee and that they may be contacted by the University.

6.2. Please ensure that nominated referees are of an appropriate status and standing in relation to the grade that an individual is applying for. Please do not use multiple referees from the same institution.

6.3. In order to ensure that the views of referees are given appropriate weight in deliberations, please can you also ensure that potential conflicts of interest are avoided. The selected referees will be asked to serve as neutral external assessors of the application and not as formal advocates for the individual applicant.

6.4 Details of references required for each level of promotion are outlined below.

Promotion to:	Number of Referees required	Notes
Professor	8	All referees must be external (and at least 2 must be from international institutions). <u>Only 3 referees from a previous promotion/appointment can be named.</u>
Reader	6	All referees must be external (and at least 2 must be from international institutions). <u>Only 2 referees from a previous promotion/appointment can be named.</u>
Associate Professor	4	At least 2 referees should be external.

Assistant Professor (Teaching, Research focused) (formerly Senior Teaching Fellow/ Senior Research Fellow)	None	
Teaching Fellow/ Research Fellow	None	

6.4. Heads of Schools/Departments are reminded that referees should be able to provide an independent and considered assessment of an applicant's academic standing.

6.5. It should also be noted for the levels of Reader and Professor, that any referees who have recently left the University of Warwick (usually within 3 years), will not normally be approached.

6.6. Those referees that are judged by the Committees to be too close to the applicant (e.g. former PhD supervisor, Line Manager or close collaborators) may be rejected and the Head of School/Department and applicant may be asked to provide alternative names.

6.7. The Committees reserve the right to identify their own referees or assessors in addition to those nominated by the applicant and/or Department.

6.8. Applicants should be aware that personal details from their application form and CV will be shared with referees.

6.9. We would normally require responses from a majority of the referees contacted and the Committee will make its decision based on the strength and valence of the analysis provided by the referees.

Out of Cycle Cases

7.1. In exceptional cases, the Provost has discretion to consider promotion cases outside the annual promotions cycle. In such cases, applicants would normally be expected to provide the same paperwork as that required for an 'in cycle' promotion, together with a rationale detailing why the case should be considered out of cycle.

Feedback

8.1. Feedback meetings are offered to unsuccessful applicants and their Head of School/Department by a nominated member of the Committee. It is strongly advised that these feedback meetings are taken up and that individuals are accompanied by their Head of School/Department or a representative. There may also be a HR representative at the meeting.

8.2. Unsuccessful applicants may reapply for promotion at any time, providing they are able to demonstrate that they have acted on the feedback and have addressed the areas of shortfall against the criteria.

Data Retention

9.1 Any personal data collected or retained in relation to the academic promotions' procedure will be in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Further information is detailed in the University's [Privacy Notice and Record Retention Schedule](#).

Restrictions on Applying

10.1. Where an employee is subject to a disciplinary sanction they may be restricted from being promoted.

Specifically:

- If a member of staff is the subject of an investigation, then the promotion is suspended until the investigation or any subsequent disciplinary process is completed.
- Anyone with a final written warning cannot be considered for promotion that year.
- If a member of staff has received a first written warning, then the nature of the warning is considered by the Provost, taking advice from HR.

Appendix A – Promotion Submission Form

This form should be completed by the Head of School/Department with the names of all potential promotion applicants and submitted by email to the Academic Progression Team at academicprogression@warwick.ac.uk by 1 December.

This can be amended up until 25 January 2027 and any amendments must be sent to the Academic Progression Team.

Department/School _____

Name of Candidate	Current Position	Applying for promotion to (indicate the job title which is being applied for)