

Academic Staff Promotion Guidelines - Supervisors, Committee Members and Administration

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The purpose of these Guidelines is:

- a. for supervisors of academic staff employed at Charles Sturt University(the University) to:
 - i. build an understanding of their role in the academic promotion process;
 - ii. embed the issue of academic promotion within a planned career management process;
 - iii. effectively review candidates' applications, providing support and feedback;
 - iv. prepare statements for applicants in relation to the University's standards for the academic level sought, as defined by [The CSU Academic](#);
 - v. select appropriate academic referees; and
 - vi. provide counselling and support to successful and unsuccessful applicants after the promotion process;
- b. to assist members of Academic Staff Promotion Committees in assessing applications; and
- c. to outline the role of the supervisor, formal mentor, Division of Human Resources and others in implementing the [Academic Staff Promotion Policy](#).

Scope

(2) These Guidelines apply to:

- a. supervisors of academic staff who are considering or applying for promotion;
- b. members of Academic Staff Promotion Committees; and
- c. staff involved in the administration of Academic Promotion applications and documentation.

References

(3) These Guidelines should be read in conjunction with:

- a. [The CSU Academic](#); and [Teaching and Professional Work Function Policy - Professional Activity](#).

(4) It is a basic assumption of these Guidelines that supervisors are fully aware and understand the contents of each of these documents and the information contained elsewhere in the [Academic Staff Promotion Policy](#), [Procedure](#), [Guidelines for Applicants](#) and Guidelines for Supervisors, Committee Members and Administration.

Section 2 - Glossary

(5) Refer to the [Academic Staff Promotion Policy](#) for the glossary.

Section 3 - Policy

(6) Refer to the [Academic Staff Promotion Policy](#).

Section 4 - Procedures

(7) Refer to the [Academic Staff Promotion Procedure](#).

Section 5 - Guidelines

(8) Refer to the [Academic Staff Promotion Guidelines for Applicants](#).

Part A - Guidelines for Supervisors

(9) Ideally, supervisors will have discussed the staff member's intention to apply for promotion during career development meetings such as the Employee Development and Review Scheme or probation at least two years in advance of an application. At this stage the applicant is given feedback about his/her readiness for promotion and guidance as to the process and content of any application.

(10) Supervisors will be invited to attend a briefing from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) to discuss the current expectations of their role in the promotion process. They will also be informed of any changes to the promotion process that may have occurred as a result of review of the previous year's process.

(11) The supervisor should engage in discussions with their direct line manager for advice in cases where there is uncertainty regarding the applicant's readiness for promotion.

(12) Applicants for promotion will submit their [applications](#) to their supervisor for comment. To review the application effectively, supervisors should:

- a. familiarise themselves with the [Academic Staff Promotion Policy](#), [Procedure](#), [Guidelines for Applicants](#) and [Guidelines for Supervisors](#), Committee Members and Administration as well as the [Teaching and Professional Work Function Policy - Professional Activity](#);
- b. familiarise themselves with the applicant's work, specifically achievements and capacities in relation to the requirements defined by [The CSU Academic](#) for the academic level sought;
- c. familiarise themselves with disciplinary expectations and/or standards relevant to the applicant;
- d. read the application carefully. Applications must adhere to the page limits and standard formats specified in the [Academic Staff Promotion Policy](#) and [Procedure](#).

(13) Note 1: There is no provision for attachments, although supervisors should view any documents that are referred to in the application.

(14) Note 2: Chances of success are limited if applications are poorly constructed, punctuated and/or written.

(15) The Supervisor Statement (Part 8 of the Application) must address how the applicant meets the University's standards as contained in [The CSU Academic](#). The statement:

- a. should verify the currency of the work function description;
- b. must attest to the accuracy of factual claims made in the application. This includes but is not restricted to teaching duties, teaching surveys, peer reviews of teaching, and the role of the applicant in collaborative

outputs.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to show the supervisor supporting documentation to facilitate this process (e.g. documented citation indices, contact details for co-authors). The supervisor may contact co-authors of research outputs and co-awardees of research grants where necessary to establish the applicant's role in the process. Whilst it is the responsibility of the candidate to contextualise their achievements, establish the case for promotion and provide supporting evidence, the supervisor should alert the Academic Staff Promotion Committee to discipline norms (ascertained from the Discipline Report) and get Academic Staff Promotion Committees across what the data mean when comparing matters such as teaching scores.

- c. should be both current and prospective, and refer to:
- i. the applicant's capacity to meet the standards for the academic level sought;
 - ii. the evidence provided, such as probation reports, examiner's reports, teaching portfolios, teaching evaluation reports, referee reports, citation indices, research/creative works and/or professional activity records, and outcomes from administrative, committee or leadership activities (including mentoring or collaboration); and
 - iii. any additional information which may help the committee assess the application.

(16) The supervisor must state whether the applicant is recommended for promotion.

(17) The Supervisor Statement should indicate whether and how the applicant provides leadership, and support for developing scholarship in the School or Research Centre. The supervisor is not required to comment on the applicant's contribution to their discipline area including matters such as journal ranking. The latter will be established by [nominated referees](#) and the Discipline Report.

(18) The Supervisor Statement should be discussed with the applicant and appropriate feedback given. The statement must be included with the application when submitted by the applicant to the Secretary, Academic Staff Promotion Committees (Secretary, ASPC) by the advertised closing date.

(19) In all instances, the candidate may submit a response to the Supervisor Statement using the relevant section of the application template.

(20) A situation may arise in which the supervisor supports the candidate for promotion but feels that the application is inadequate. This should be noted in the Supervisor Statement. In this connection, the supervisor assesses the applicant against relevant standards. In all other instances in the promotion process, it is the application that is being measured against relevant standards.

(21) A candidate retains the right to submit a promotion application in the event that the supervisor does not support the application.

(22) In nominating referees, supervisors should consider the following advice in the selection of appropriate referees.

- a. The most important considerations in choosing referees are credibility, independence and objectivity. What is the status of the referee and what is their ability to provide independent, knowledgeable or informed and unbiased commentary on the applicant's work?
- b. Two questions are worth considering: Is there any way in which this person might appear to bring bias to his/her report? Answers such as occupying the next door office, member of the same School, power imbalance in favour of the applicant, etc could indicate potential bias. The second question is simply a re-wording of the first: Is there any way in which the credibility of this referee could be questioned? If the answer is yes, due for example to close collaboration, then in both cases the person should only be chosen where a good case can be mounted for using this particular referee.
- c. The choice of three referees from a single country with which an applicant has a close association would not

necessarily demonstrate international standing.

- d. In the case of referees chosen for professional expertise or their role in industry or in government, the referee will need to clearly establish their standing in the report. It is important that referees falling into this category have an appreciation and understanding of academia and the academic framework with the need for their report to be analytic and not a simple letter of support.

(23) Supervisors should ensure that the relevant Academic Staff Promotion Committee is notified of any achievements advised and deemed significant by the applicant between the time of the application submission and the relevant committee meeting.

(24) The supervisor plays a key role in assisting all Academic Staff Promotion Committees in their deliberations. It is important that the supervisor and candidate are aware of the distinct roles of the supervisor. Whilst the supervisor is responsible for provision of advice to the candidate in the preparation of the application, the supervisor does not play an advocacy role in reporting to the Academic Staff Promotion Committee. The role of the supervisor in relation to Academic Staff Promotion Committees is to assist the committee in reaching a fair and equitable decision.

(25) The supervisor will be involved in the provision of feedback to both successful and unsuccessful applicants and in assisting applicants to implement any actions from the feedback.

- a. Applicants need to understand that, regardless of the outcome, their work is valued.
- b. Applicants who are unsuccessful should be supported. They may be very disappointed, and will need clear feedback and assistance about how to:
 - i. improve their application — therefore, consideration might be given to linking the unsuccessful applicant with a mentor to review the quality and composition of their application; and/or
 - ii. identify where further development is needed to demonstrate capacity to meet the next level's standards. Plans should be made by the supervisor to assist with career objectives and professional development.

Part B - Guidelines for Members of Promotion Committees

(26) In assessing applications, committee members must allow for the differences in percentage weightings assigned to the three domains recognised by the University. For example, an applicant who assigns an 80% weighting to the Creating Knowledge domain, and is supported by his/her supervisor, must be held to a higher standard than an individual assigning a 30% weighting to the same domain.

(27) Committee members must also be aware of the importance of disciplinary context.

Part C - Guidelines for Staff Involved in the Implementation of the Policy

(28) The role of the supervisor, formal mentor and others is crucial to the success of this policy. The Division of Human Resources must take a pro-active role in assuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and equipped for the various duties that they must perform. This will require both formal and informal training, as specified elsewhere in this policy, but the provision of guidance is not restricted to these formal requirements. Supervisors play a dual role in advising and supporting staff (before and after the process) and in providing non-advocacy advice to Academic Staff Promotion Committees. They must be equipped to handle this dual and possibly conflicting role.

(29) In most cases, the Head of School will be the supervisor. Head of Schools and Executive Deans have formal roles in the promotion process relating to Academic Staff Promotion Committees and feedback to applicants. The Division of Human Resources must formalise the communication strategy between these staff to ensure that they are well

informed about individual applicants. This requirement does not release the applicant from the onus to keep their supervisor informed of the progress of their application.

(30) The Division of Human Resources must make arrangements to provide applicants with advice of the outcome of their application at the earliest possible opportunity. Timing of the advice to applicants should be formally programmed into the promotion schedule and advised to applicants as follows:

- a. Date of the relevant Academic Staff Promotion Committee meeting
- b. Date and time of advice of outcome to applicants: this must allow for reporting of Academic Staff Promotion Committee recommendations.
- c. Date of formal feedback to successful and unsuccessful applicants: two dates to be arranged, one within three days of the formal advice above and the other within three weeks, and the applicant to select which date they prefer.

(31) Applicants to Level E may require special advice, for example, where their supervisor holds a substantive appointment below this level. The Division of Human Resources should monitor what is happening, particularly for such applicants where there has been a significant turnover in supervisory staff with several acting supervisors.

(32) The Division of Human Resources, in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research, Development and Industry), will develop a package for provision to staff applying for promotion to level D or Level E about the requirements for the presentation to be given to the Academic Staff Promotion Committee.

Status and Details

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