

Academic Staff Promotion Guidelines - Applicants

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide assistance to academic staff who are preparing an application for promotion.

(2) These Guidelines apply to academic staff of Charles Sturt University (the University) who hold a fixed-term or continuing appointment in a full-time or fractional capacity at level A, B, C, or D.

Section 2 - Glossary

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

Section 3 - Policy

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

Section 4 - Procedures

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

Section 5 - Guidelines

(6) Refer to the [Academic Staff Promotion Guidelines for Supervisors, Committee Members and Administration](#).

Background

(7) The Academic Staff Promotion Committee will have three sources of information — the [application](#), Supervisor Statement and reports of referees (and, in the case of staff applying for promotion to Level D or E, an oral presentation). The application will be assessed on demonstrated performance and evidence, using these sources. The application must establish the case for promotion (i.e. my performance at my current level is outstanding or, putting it another way, I am currently performing consistently at the level to which I seek promotion) and provide the evidence that supports this case. An applicant must understand what constitutes excellent performance in their discipline and build the case for promotion by providing context to their achievements. It is good practice for the candidate to assume that no member of the Academic Staff Promotion Committee will be familiar with his/her work and issues of discipline norms (publication venues, quality measures, teaching approaches and measures, and service/engagement expectations and standards). This means that all information in the application must be contextualised.

(8) All claims and assertions must be supported by suitable evidence, and achievements must not be cited more than once. If publications are confidential due to commercial constraints, then the applicant should ask the University for a Confidential Assessment.

(9) Applicants are to provide commentary and context for evidence provided, which, together with referee reports, should assist the committee with understanding and assessing the relative importance of the achievements and capacity of the applicant in their work function and in their disciplinary context. Applicants to Levels C, D or E must show that their contributions demonstrate national or international significance beyond the University context.

(10) The case must be easy to follow and use clear sign-posting, including headings, to provide the committee with a sense of current academic achievements and future capacity to contribute at the academic level to which promotion is sought.

(11) The principal basis for assessing the written application for promotion will be the applicant's achievements and performance in the position currently held, although Academic Staff Promotion Committees will be looking for evidence of a career trajectory and so other career achievements will be taken into account.

(12) In the [Academic Staff Promotion Procedure](#), clause 8 states that promotion recognises and rewards sustained outstanding performance at the existing level of appointment whereas clause 45 states that "Applicants must demonstrate how they currently meet the standards for academic promotion ... of the level to which they seek promotion." This frequently leads to confusion and applicants query whether their performance must be outstanding for their current level or must they perform at the level sought. The answer is that applicants must demonstrate outstanding performance at the current level with a demonstrated ability to perform at the level sought. The easiest and most satisfactory (possibly the only) way to demonstrate the latter is to show that one is already performing at that level.

(13) Continued and outstanding retrospective performance that contributes to the University's mission and that demonstrates a prospective trajectory is rewarded in promotion processes. Promotion is not recognised as a prospective opportunity to demonstrate future capability following a successful promotion.

(14) Applicants for promotion must demonstrate using suitable evidence that they:

- a. possess relevant qualifications or establish equivalent standing;
- b. demonstrate commitment to the University's core values and core strategies;
- c. meet the academic achievement levels appropriate to the academic level to which promotion is sought; and
- d. have a reputation appropriate to the academic level to which promotion is sought by their contributions to the domains of influencing university, profession and/or community; promoting learning; and ceating knowledge.

(15) The domains describe the work activities in which staff engage. The diversity of staff contributions to the achievement of the University's mission and strategies is recognised by allowing staff to vary percentages assigned to the three domains within certain limits (See Part 1 of the [Application Form](#)). Note that these percentages should align with workload allocations but that staff are allowed flexibility and are provided the opportunity to comment on the reasons for choosing the percentages. Note also that the applicant's supervisor is required to comment on this aspect of the application.

(16) Rather than defining in precise terms the meaning of each domain, the alternative approach of providing dimensionality and context to the domains has been adopted. These dimensions refer to the areas of activity that might be undertaken by participants in each of the three domains. With the exception of leadership and professional development, which must be addressed by all applicants as appropriate to the level of promotion sought, an applicant is not required to address each and every dimension.

(17) [The CSU Academic Evidence Guide](#) provides a framework for bringing together scope of activity, sphere of influence and source of evidence in each domain but is not intended as a checklist. Keywords in the process are academic performance, academic reputation, and academic leadership relevant to the level sought and supported by appropriate evidence both quantitative and qualitative. Applicants must demonstrate a balance between numbers and narrative. There is no set formula for success in promotion. Committees judge each application on its merits, weighing

up the mix of achievements and evidence each candidate puts forward and the coherent case each candidate makes based on this evidence.

Application: Part 1

(18) Applicants for promotion must satisfy qualification requirements or demonstrate equivalence to be promoted. This is the only absolute standard. With this exception all other standards must be considered holistically and interpreted in light of the applicant's assigned percentages to the three domains recognised by the University.

Application: Part 4

(19) In completing this section of the application, [The CSU Academic Evidence Guide](#) should be consulted. This Evidence Guide is based on The CSU Academic, the framework for describing academic work at the University. A range of evidence can be used to support applications for recruitment, probation or promotion.

(20) Clear evidence/documentation must be provided to support every claim that is presented in the application. [The CSU Academic Evidence Guide](#) maps evidence and standards against the three domains and the levels of appointment, Level A to E, giving examples of the types of evidence that can be used to demonstrate that the appropriate standard has been met. It is provided as a tool to assist applicants.

(21) The examples in the Evidence Guide are illustrative of the type of evidence that might be included, but these are certainly not definitive or exhaustive of all tasks in academic employment, which is by its nature both diverse and multi-skilled, involving an overlap of duties between levels. There will be a wide variety in the mix of activities undertaken and contributions made and there is no expectation that an individual staff member will make contributions in all of the areas listed.

(22) The guide is not a checklist of what must be done to be promoted but rather an indicative guide to activities an academic might usefully reflect upon. The guide provides a firm basis for assessing performance and for stating and assessing claims for promotion. In assessing performance, what matters is what contribution has been made and what outcomes have been achieved. In all instances, performance must be contextualised by the applicant. The fact that an applicant appears to satisfy several performance standards does not necessarily mean that a case for promotion has been established; the assessment process is holistic.

(23) Some activities could be considered under different domains; the applicant needs to make a decision in terms of best presentation of their case but evidence can only be used once.

Application: Part 6

(24) One approach to setting standards is to define quantitative measures for grant income, publications, student assessments, higher degree supervision, etc with due allowance for differences in disciplinary expectations. The alternative approach has been adopted by the University in which staff can use an evidence guide to assist in demonstrating that they meet the expected standard for a given level based on the Minimum Standards for Academic Performance and Academic Reputation, as defined in the [Academic Staff Promotion Policy](#). These standards are derived from the [Minimum Standards for Academic Levels](#) used by many institutions in Australia.

Application: Part 7

(25) Other sections of the application have emphasised activities and achievements in the current position. This section, the curriculum vitae, addresses the whole career. Applications will be assessed on an all-of-career basis, looking for a career trajectory but with a strong emphasis on the achievements in the position currently held.

(26) In the case of professional experience outside the academic environment, applicants should refer particularly to experience that is relevant to promotion.

(27) A full publication list covering the applicant's entire career should be included in the curriculum vitae. In the case of work not yet published, it should be included under the relevant heading with its current status (the latter must be verified by the supervisor).

(28) Research outputs (such as publications and creative works) over the last 10 years or since appointment (whichever is more recent) included in this list will only be recognised where they are included in the material registered with the Research Office.

(29) For non-research outputs (publications, creative works, commissioned reports, etc) not included in the material registered with the Research Office, the applicant should contextualise the work (what establishes its importance and its acceptance by the academy or profession, etc). For example, a work of art commissioned by the National Gallery probably says more about the artist than an artwork commissioned by the applicant's mother.

(30) Whilst the curriculum vitae is free-form, applicants are advised to relate their activities and achievements to the three domains. The curriculum vitae should demonstrate any and all links between these domains.

(31) In the Promoting Learning domain, applicants should establish their approach and philosophy of learning at all levels (undergraduate and postgraduate).

(32) In the Creating Knowledge domain, a clear focus should be identified and how this has developed during the applicant's career, including a research strategy for the future. Applicants must create a clear line of sight between the grants they receive and the outcomes of these grants (publications and further grants). Applicants should not focus on internal University grants as this is not an indication of national or international standing.

(33) In the Influencing University, Profession, Community domain, a list of activities is not particularly useful but rather a clear outline of contributions and their impact.

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