

Academic Promotion Guidelines

November 2024 - This guideline is expired. Its content is subsumed by the [Academic Promotion Procedure](#) and supporting information on the [Division of People and Culture's Academic Promotions website](#).

Section 1 - Purpose

- (1) These guidelines support the [Academic Promotion Policy](#) and [Academic Promotion Procedure](#) by:
 - a. providing advice to applicants for promotion, and
 - b. setting out the framework and criteria for academic promotion decisions at Charles Sturt University (the University).
- (2) These guidelines are intended for:
 - a. academic promotion decision-makers and evaluators, to guide them in assessing promotion applications, and
 - b. applicants for academic promotion, to guide them in preparing and (where relevant) speaking to their application.

Section 2 - Glossary

- (3) The terms used in this procedure are defined in the glossary sections of the [Academic Promotion Policy](#) and [Academic Promotion Procedure](#).

Section 3 - Policy

- (4) These guidelines support the [Academic Promotion Policy](#) and should be read alongside that policy.

Section 4 - Procedure

- (5) These guidelines support the [Academic Promotion Procedure](#) and should be read alongside that procedure.

Section 5 - Guidelines

Advice for applicants

- (6) Applicants should plan their promotion application well in advance (up to two years in advance is recommended), as this allows enough time to:
 - a. gain advice from others about how to construct a persuasive case for promotion,
 - b. identify and complete specific achievements that will strengthen the case, and

- c. gather evidence and/or data to demonstrate the extent of the achievements' effectiveness or influence.

(7) Applicants should read:

- a. the [Academic Promotion Policy](#) to understand the University's objectives and principles for the academic promotion process,
- b. the [Academic Promotion Procedure](#) to understand how the academic promotion process works, what it requires them to do and what other roles in the process do, and
- c. these guidelines to understand:
 - i. the criteria that will be used to assess the merits of their promotion application, and
 - ii. how to prepare for promotion.

(8) An applicant's preparation should involve:

- a. discussions with colleagues – in particular, with more senior colleagues, their supervisor and (once the promotion round has begun) their promotion mentor, of:
 - i. what the applicant needs to achieve to strengthen their case for promotion, and
 - ii. how to present these achievements persuasively in their application, and
- b. asking more senior colleagues familiar with academic promotion requirements to review their draft promotion application and suggest improvements. These reviewers may include:
 - i. a colleague in the same discipline who is familiar with the applicant's work,
 - ii. the applicant's promotion mentor, and
 - iii. if the applicant's promotion mentor is in the same discipline as the applicant, someone from a different discipline to advise whether the application is clear and persuasive for promotion committee members from disciplines other than the applicant's.

Assessing promotion applications

(9) Promotion decisions are complex and multi-factorial:

- a. Every applicant will present a unique individual set of achievements.
- b. Academic staff achievements occur in different discipline, industry and/or professional contexts.
- c. Applications will present different combinations of numbers of achievements and level/quality of some achievements.
- d. The activities required of applicants in their position, their employment fraction and personal circumstances will differ.
- e. Some applicants will be members of equity groups and may be from a background that needs to be well understood in order to assess their achievements, or may have personal circumstances that have restricted their time to achieve.

(10) These guidelines set out a framework and criteria to ensure consistency and fairness in promotion decisions, as far as possible.

(11) The [Academic Promotion Procedure](#) states that promotion decision-makers will apply these guidelines in assessing promotion applications and deciding whether to promote.

Promotion assessment criteria

(12) To be promoted, an applicant must have satisfied the decision-maker(s) that they are meeting:

- a. performance expectations for their current academic level in the activities required of their position, and
- b. at least the University's minimum expectations of performance for the academic level to which they are seeking promotion:
 - i. it will strengthen an application if the applicant demonstrates achievement at a higher level than their current one across all the workload areas of activity of their current position. However, this is not essential to promotion: outstanding performance in one or two workload areas may be sufficient.

(13) Promotion decision-makers' personal knowledge of the promotion applicant as a colleague should not be a factor in promotion decisions, as this would introduce a subjective element and risk inconsistency and unfairness.

(14) The following texts define the required qualification and expectations of performance for each academic level of position:

- a. Schedule VI to the [Enterprise Agreement](#) states the expected levels of performance.
- b. The [Academic Staff Qualifications and Expectations Procedure](#) states:
 - i. the level of qualification an academic staff member is expected to have for appointment or promotion to each academic level of position,
 - ii. how a staff member may be assessed as having a combination of qualification(s), achievements and experience equivalent to the expected level of qualification,
 - iii. criteria for such assessment, and
 - iv. the level of performance expected of staff at each academic level.

(15) In considering an academic promotion application, promotion decision-makers will:

- a. consider the applicant's career as a whole, but
- b. expect to see recent achievements (particularly since the applicant's appointment or last promotion) which demonstrate that the applicant's career trajectory has reached the academic level to which they are seeking promotion (and that the career trajectory is not level or downwards).
- c. Recent achievements are:
 - i. if the applicant has previously applied successfully for promotion at the University, achievements since their last promotion,
 - ii. if the applicant has joined the University more recently than five years ago, achievements since they joined, or
 - iii. where the applicant has been with the University for five years or more but has not been promoted in the past five years, achievements within the past five years.

(16) An applicant is expected to demonstrate that their achievements have had the scope of influence and breadth/depth of effect that is expected at the academic level to which they are seeking promotion:

- a. It is not sufficient to list achievements: the applicant must explain:
 - i. how the achievements have been influential, and
 - ii. provide evidence of their influence/effect.

(17) Promotion decision-makers will only expect an applicant to demonstrate achievements in proportion to their opportunity to achieve. They may accept fewer achievements as demonstrating the required standard where, for example, an applicant:

- a. has been working part-time,
- b. has had substantial carer responsibilities,

- c. has had substantial parental leave,
- d. has had a lengthy period of ill health or injury that has reduced their capacity to achieve, or
- e. is living with a disability that reduces their capacity to achieve.

Assessing promotion applications of First Nations academic staff

(18) In considering promotion applications from First Nations academic staff, supervisors, promotion decision-makers and evaluators are expected to bear the following contextual factors in mind:

- a. It may take longer for First Nations staff to develop an academic career trajectory and academic identity that is integrated with their First Nations identity.
- b. First Nations staff are likely to feel isolated in the institution.
- c. First Nations staff are likely to have a substantial, largely invisible, part of their academic workload which reduces their time for other academic achievements, of:
 - i. supporting and mentoring other First Nations staff and students to help them overcome the challenges of participating as an Indigenous person in a postcolonial university,
 - ii. being an adviser on Reconciliation and Indigenous cultural competence to other staff, students, committees and working parties,
 - iii. mediating between other staff and traditional First Nations communities.
 - iv. This part of their workload should be recognised as a valuable academic citizenship contribution to the University's strategic efforts to achieve Reconciliation and build its own Indigenous cultural competence.
- d. First Nations staff are likely to value collective outcomes and emphasise communal achievements, rather than claiming achievements as their own. They may not claim as much individual credit for an achievement as a non-Indigenous applicant would.

(19) Accordingly, supervisors, promotion decision-makers and evaluators should be asking themselves the following questions when considering the promotion application of a First Nations staff member:

- a. What has been the effect of the applicant being a First Nations person on the roles assigned to them, their workload and outcomes?
- b. How has the applicant helped develop relationships between their traditional community(ies) and the University?
- c. How has the University, faculty or school used their expertise, and what effect has this had on their performance/productivity?
- d. What additional roles have they played as a First Nations expert/representative?
- e. What effect has the nature or mode of their research had on its productivity and outcomes?
- f. Are they playing an important role in building a supportive First Nations academic community across the University?
- g. How have they constructed their career and roles? Should they be receiving credit for collective outcomes of partnerships that they have helped establish with First Nations communities?

Required qualifications or equivalent

(20) The [Academic Staff Qualifications and Expectations Procedure](#) states:

- a. the level of academic qualification required for appointment or promotion to each academic level, and
- b. the process and criteria for assessment of a staff member's combination of qualification(s), achievements and experience as equivalent to a higher qualification.

(21) Once an academic staff member has been assessed by the University's Qualifications and Equivalence Assessment Panel as having a qualification(s), achievements and experience equivalent to a higher qualification, they meet the qualification requirement for promotion to an academic level that requires that higher qualification and therefore the absence of the qualification will not be a factor in the promotion decision.

Supervisor's statement

(22) The statement(s) from the applicant's supervisor(s) will advise the committee whether the supervisor considers that:

- a. the applicant is meeting performance expectations, including agreed objectives and values-based behaviours, for their position at their current academic level, and
- b. the applicant's performance is consistent with the University's minimum expectations of performance at the level to which the applicant is seeking promotion.
- c. A supervisor is expected to apply a principle of 'no surprises' in raising concerns about unsatisfactory performance by a staff member. Performance concerns should be raised as they emerge and may be reinforced or monitored during EDRS conversations.
 - i. Management of unsatisfactory performance is a separate process from the EDRS process and requires a performance improvement plan.
- d. Accordingly, it is expected, though not absolutely required, that performance concerns expressed by the supervisor in their statement on the promotion application are consistent with the most recent EDRS performance review conversation and other more recent feedback to the staff member.
- e. The applicant may respond to the supervisor's statement and, if the applicant persuades the committee that the supervisor's view of their performance is not correct, the committee may recommend promotion despite a negative supervisor's report.
- f. There is risk of conflict of interest in a supervisor's evaluation of an applicant's merit for promotion to a higher academic level. The supervisory relationship can be challenging, and a supervisor may be biased in favour of an applicant or against them. Accordingly, promotion decision-makers should:
 - i. place more weight on evaluators' assessment of the applicant's achievements, and
 - ii. if a supervisor states that the applicant is not yet performing consistently with minimum expectations for the level to which promotion is sought, expect confirmation that the supervisor has discussed this view with their own supervisor, and that supervisor agrees with the assessment.

Areas of activity

(23) The University has four areas of academic activity, described in the following table:

- a. academic positions typically involve activities in only some of these categories, not all,
- b. an applicant is only expected to demonstrate achievements in areas of activity required of their position to be considered for promotion,
- c. an applicant may, however, claim an achievement in an area of activity not required of their position.

| Area of activity | Includes achievements such as |
|-------------------------|---|
| Teaching | Teaching Designing, developing and reviewing curriculum Quality assurance of curriculum delivery and of assessment Publishing learning materials and textbooks Scholarship of learning and teaching Professional development in learning and teaching Improving teaching practice, including by mentoring or peer review of teaching Supervising or examining research projects of coursework students (including HDR supervision) Student transition support activities Designing, organising, managing and supervising workplace learning activities The table of teaching achievements and evidence gives examples of achievements appropriate to each academic level and evidence of these. |
| Research | Planning, organising and carrying out research Publishing or disseminating research findings Exhibiting or performing creative works combined with critical commentary, evidence of reflection Mentoring other researchers Supervising or examining the research of higher degree by research candidates, or students' research for a research component of a coursework course Improving research practice Quality assurance of research The Research Productivity Index Guide provides further advice on achievements and evidence appropriate to the academic level sought. |
| Professional engagement | Maintaining professional registration Innovation in professional practice Providing professional development for other professionals Participating in professional bodies' standard setting for and quality assurance of the profession Participating in networking and events to maintain and improve professional practice Mentoring and supervising of other professionals Designing, organising, managing and supervising workplace learning activities The table of professional engagement achievements and evidence gives examples of achievements appropriate to each academic level and evidence of these. |
| Academic citizenship | Leading or participating in committees or working groups of the University Leading or participating in projects to improve academic quality, increase academic productivity or improve students' learning experience Career mentoring of staff or students Engagement and outreach to the wider community to recruit students, share knowledge, create partnerships for research, or raise awareness of the value of the University The table of academic citizenship achievements and evidence gives examples of achievements appropriate to each academic level and evidence of these. |

Levels of achievement

(24) Within an area of activity, promotion applicants must demonstrate achievements expected of the academic level to which they are seeking promotion. The [Academic Staff Qualifications and Expectations Procedure](#) states the expectations of performance for each academic level.

Status and Details

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| Status | Current |
| Effective Date | 17th April 2024 |
| Review Date | 31st January 2025 |
| Approval Authority | Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) |
| Approval Date | 17th April 2024 |
| Expiry Date | Not Applicable |
| Unit Head | Maria Crisante Executive Director, People and Culture |
| Author | Kerry Murnain Director, Strategy, Partnerships and Inclusion |
| Enquiries Contact | Division of People and Culture +61 2 63384884 |