Academic Promotions Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) Academic promotion recognises and rewards achievements and identifies career progression opportunities for academic staff. Promotion demonstrates that a staff member has achieved the standard for their current academic level that warrants promotion to the next academic level.

(2) This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Academic Promotions Procedure and Schedules 1, 2 and 3.

Section 2 - Scope / Eligibility

(3) This Policy applies to continuing and fixed-term academic staff members employed at ACU seeking promotion to Lecturer/Research Fellow (Level B), Senior Lecturer/Research Fellow (Level C), Associate Professor/Principal Research Fellow (Level D), and Professor (Level E).

(4) Promotions for successful applicants are to the Step 1 increment of the new level and are effective on 1 January of the following year.

(5) Fixed-term staff members do not have their employment type, nor the specified term, varied as a result of a successful promotion outcome.

(6) An academic staff member who is promoted while on probation is deemed to have met the probationary requirements of their appointment.

Workplace Behaviour and Performance Requirements

(7) Consistent with the ACU Mission, Identity and Values, all academic staff are expected to exemplify high standards of professional behaviour (see the Code of Conduct for Staff) and performance. Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide outlines circumstances in which staff are not eligible to apply for promotion due to investigations related to the Misconduct and Serious Misconduct Policy and / or the Managing Unsatisfactory Performance Policy.

Minimum Qualification Requirement

(8) Applicants for promotion must demonstrate that they meet the minimum qualification requirements relevant to their academic level, as described in Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide.

Section 3 - Timing of Rounds

(9) An academic promotion round will be conducted annually (refer to the Academic Promotions Timeline).

Out of Round Promotions

(10) At the discretion of the Governing Authority, an out of rounds promotions process will be considered (e.g., as a retention mechanism for high performing staff or where a recently appointed staff member has a significant

achievement that was not considered during their recruitment). To ensure that there is an appropriate assessment and approval process, an out-of-round promotion application will follow the steps outlined in the Academic Promotions Procedure.

Section 4 - Principles

(11) As academic staff progress through the promotion levels, it is expected that:

a. the quality of their work will increase;
b. the impact of their activities will expand; and
c. their leadership and / or development of others will grow.

(12) The specific criteria and standards for promotion to each academic level are detailed in Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide.

(13) The Academic Promotions process:

a. aligns with the ACU Mission, Identity and Values to ensure each applicant is treated with courtesy, dignity, and respect;
b. considers the context of the ACU Strategic Plan and relevant internal and external factors, such as changes to the ACU Enterprise Agreement and legislation that impacts the higher education sector;
c. embeds equity and inclusion by identifying and acknowledging potential barriers and the diverse challenges individuals may experience that can impact their working life. This requires consideration of an applicant's personal circumstances in the relevant context by decision makers when assessing an application.
    i. Examples of factors that could apply include gender, age, cultural background, First Peoples cultural background and responsibilities, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, career interruptions relating to family responsibilities, and health and wellbeing issues.
    ii. Where an applicant elects to have achievements assessed in the context of First Nations Ways of Knowing, Doing and Being, the University will draw on guidance and culturally informed academic expertise to support consistent interpretation of evidence, without altering the promotion criteria or achievement standards. Refer to Schedule 4: Recognition of First Nations Ways of Knowing, Doing and Being in Academic Promotions for further information.
d. accounts for achievement relative to opportunity as it relates to the above equity and inclusion considerations, as well as the applicant's career pathway, stage of career (e.g., early career researchers) and the profile of work allocation (and any corresponding opportunities afforded) over the promotion application period. Refer to the Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARtO) Guide for more information;
e. uses an evidence-based assessment process encompassing fairness, transparency, and consistency with sector standard s based on the approved criteria and standards outlined in Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide;
f. incorporates flexibility by considering how the options for both the timing and presentation of the case for promotion might be adjusted and / or expanded to optimise applicants' opportunities for success without any negative impact on the efficacy and transparency of the process;
g. applies terminologies and success measures across areas of academic work that support consistency between requirements for appointment, promotion, and (research) workload allocation; and
h. considers the efficiency of the process and resource intensity for all parties, including applicants, Heads of School/Institute Directors, supervisors, assessors, senior leaders, and Academic Promotions Committee members.

Section 5 - Applications

(14) Applicants seeking promotion are required to provide evidence to support their case from within the promotion assessment period, which includes:

a. the past five complete calendar years plus the portion of the current year (i.e., the year of application); or
b. the time period following the submission of their most recent successful promotion application or appointment at ACU (whichever is the shortest period).

> Note 1: Where the period of assessment begins with a successful promotion application or appointment at ACU, achievements from that entire year may be included in the application for promotion.

> Note 2: The period of assessment may be extended due to circumstances that have influenced the applicant's opportunities to achieve during the period of assessment (see the Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARtO) Guide).

(15) An applicant may only apply for promotion to the level immediately above their current level.

(16) Applications must be submitted via the Academic Promotions Portal by the closing date prescribed in the Academic Promotions Timeline.

Section 6 - Academic Promotions Committee

(17) Academic Promotions Committees are established in accordance with the Academic Promotions Procedure and Schedule 1: Academic Promotions Committees.

Section 7 - Appeals

(18) An unsuccessful applicant may only lodge an appeal on the basis of process, as outlined in the Staff Appeals Policy.

Section 8 - Review

(19) The Academic Promotions Committee conducts an annual review of the process to promote continuous improvement and ensure equitable outcomes. Any proposed changes to policy, procedure and / or associated Academic Promotions materials are subject to consultation through the ACU Staff Consultative Committee and are submitted to the Vice-Chancellor and President for consideration and approval.

Section 9 - Revisions made to this Policy

(20) The revision table includes revisions up until this document was migrated into the current policy platform. Any later changes will show in the Status and Details tab.

Date	Major, Minor or Editorial	Description
23 March 2020	Major	• Introduced a new section to clearly articulate the application period for promotion and included sub-headings (section 2). • Introduced one closing date for all promotions applications from 2021 (section 2.2). • Updated section 2.3 to clearly articulate the items to be included as part of a promotion application • Updated section 3 to align with the Participation of Staff in University Employment Related Committees Guidelines.
23 March 2020	Editorial	• Updated wording in section 5 for consistency. • Editorial changes to assist with readability.
February 2021	Editorial	• Updated wording in section 1 to reflect intent. • Updated wording in section 2.2 for the current year.
February 2022	Major	• Restructure of policy format and content to align with the major review of the Promotions Process. • Streamlining of policy content already included in the Academic Promotions Procedure and Academic Promotions Criteria. • Introduced a new section outlining the principles applicable to the promotion process.
March 2023	Major	• Changes to the purpose that reflect the University's approach to academic promotions. • Expanded guidance regarding out of rounds promotions. • Inclusion of the Code of Conduct for Staff and minimum qualification requirements.
April 2023	Major	• Clarification regarding the purpose of promotions and changes to Section 2 Scope / Eligibility to include workplace behaviour and performance expectations. • Addition of principles regarding expectations as staff progress through the academic levels (refer Section 4). • Addition of extended period of assessment, where appropriate to ensure equity (refer Section 5).

Section 10 - Further Assistance

(21) Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this Policy should first consult their supervisor who is responsible for the implementation and operation of these arrangements in their work area. Should further information or advice be required staff should contact the Executive Officer, Academic Promotions (ACUAcademic.Promotions@acu.edu.au).

Section 11 - Associated Information

(22) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources please refer to the Associated Information tab.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	12th March 2026
Review Date	12th March 2031
Approval Authority	Governance Officer
Approval Date	9th March 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Julie Cogin Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Responsible Manager	Angelle Laurence Chief People Officer
Enquiries Contact	Sarah Lye HR Consultant, Workplace Experience --- People and Capability