Academic Promotions Procedure

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) The principles that apply to academic promotion across the University are outlined in the Academic Promotions Policy. In accordance with the Policy, academic promotion at ACU is evidence-based and is not constrained by quota.

(2) These Procedures, which outline the process and requirements that apply to the University's annual academic promotion round (and any out-of-round promotions), support the Academic Promotions Policy.

(3) For a promotion application to be successful, the applicant must demonstrate that they have reached the required standards for the academic level, as outlined in Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide.

Section 2 - Eligibility

(4) Eligibility criteria are outlined in the Academic Promotions Policy.

Section 3 - Timing of Rounds

Annual Promotion Round

(5) An academic promotion round will be conducted annually. Applications will be invited through notifications that provide details of the current year's Academic Promotions Timeline.

Out-of-round Promotions

(6) An out-of-round promotion process can be initiated to support the retention of high-achieving staff. Justification for an out-of-round promotion must include:

a. a credible employment offer from another institution, or
b. evidence of a significant achievement, such as a grant, award, or fellowship of high standing that creates a retention risk.

(7) The relevant Executive Dean initiates an out-of-round promotions process for Faculty-based academic staff and keeps the relevant Head of School (or equivalent) informed throughout the process. For academic staff not based in a Faculty, the Senior Executive for the portfolio initiates the process. The Executive Dean (or the Senior Executive) is responsible for providing a business case to the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) that outlines the specific circumstances and the recommended level of promotion. The business case should address the criteria in the relevant domains of academic achievement.

(8) Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) endorsement is required to convene an out-of-round promotions committee, which consists of at least three members of the relevant Academic Promotions Committee, including the Chair (or nominee).

(9) The staff member being considered for promotion provides their current curriculum vitae, which should include

details of their relevant roles, responsibilities, and the quality and impact of their activities and/or achievements. The staff member should also include their Achievement Summary for Promotion that incorporates evidence from University databases.

(10) The Committee reviews these documents and determines if the staff member meets the criteria and standards for promotion described in Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide. If the Committee determines that the threshold is not met, consideration of whether other mechanisms will be offered to assist in retaining the staff member may occur.

(11) Approval of out-of-rounds promotions are consistent with the Delegations of Authority Policy and Register (refer Delegation 6.16).

Section 4 - Achievement relative to opportunity

(12) The University recognises that staff experience a range of personal, professional, and other circumstances that may influence their career and seeks to create an environment where all staff can flourish.

(13) Consideration of Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARtO) facilitates fair and equitable decision making in University employment-related processes. It ensures performance-based evaluation that considers each staff member's achievements in the context of their career and personal circumstances.

(14) Applicants for promotion may provide information about circumstances that have impacted their opportunity to achieve. ARtO information is provided for consideration by the ARtO Committee (as constituted for the current promotions round) and is not shared with assessors. The ARtO Committee will determine how ARtO is to be applied in the assessment process (ARtO decision). Further information is available in the Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARtO) Guide.

(15) Committee members and assessors will consider the ARtO decision (and any optional ARtO statement, if provided) when evaluating the applicant's achievements against the criteria and standards, and will document how this has been taken into account (see Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide).

(16) A fractional appointment is treated as an employment arrangement circumstance for the purposes of ARtO. Information about fractional FTE is not otherwise used to adjust the assessment period or achievement standards outside of an ARtO determination.

Section 5 - Promotion criteria

(17) Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide outlines the requirements regarding workplace behaviour and performance requirements, and minimum qualifications. Schedule 3 also provides criteria and standards related to staff achievement for promotion to each academic level.

(18) The applicant is recommended for promotion if the Academic Promotions Committee determines the requirements have been met and their achievements meet the required threshold, as specified in Schedule 3.

(19) Where the Committee determines achievements do not meet the required threshold, the applicant is not recommended for promotion.

Section 6 - Academic Promotions Application

Process

(20) The key steps which applicants for promotion must follow are summarised below.

Preliminary Considerations

(21) The decision to apply for promotion rests entirely with the applicant; however, it is important that a staff member who is considering an application for promotion discusses their 'readiness for promotion' with their supervisor. This conversation most often occurs during regular progress plan discussions.

Eligibility Check

(22) Applicants should review the Workplace Behaviour and Performance Requirements and Minimum Qualifications Requirements outlined in Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide to establish whether they expect to meet these requirements in the year they intend to apply for promotion. These requirements include expectations under the ACU Code of Conduct and a requirement for applicants who have been recommended for promotion to provide a gender-based violence declaration for consideration prior to the relevant approval stage.

Information Session

(23) Applicants and their supervisors are encouraged to attend an information session(s) in the year of intended application for promotion to ensure they are clear about the process and the criteria and standards for each domain of acadmic activity.

(24) Refer to the Academic Promotions website for session information.

Mandatory Notice of Intent to Apply for Promotion

(25) Applicants must provide their Notice of Intent (NOI) to apply for promotion via the Academic Promotions Portal. Required information will include, but may not be limited to:

a. a statement describing their contribution and alignment with the ACU Mission, Identity and Values (see Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide)
b. evidence of Qualifications or confirmation that the University already has this evidence (see Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide)
c. circumstances that have influenced their achievements and will enable the Committee to appropriately assess these Achievements Relative toOpportunity (ARtO);
d. the academic discipline(s) most strongly related to their work; or
e. Confirming that they understand ACU's obligations under the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence, and that applicants recommended for promotion will be required to provide a gender-based violence declaration prior to the relevant approval stage.

(26) Where an applicant seeks to have the impact of a fractional appointment taken into account in assessment, they must indicate this through the ARtO process as part of their NOI.

(27) The NOI must be lodged by the due date listed on the Academic Promotions Timeline.

(28) A staff member who anticipates being absent from the University in the period before the due date may lodge their NOI in advance. Applicants may also request in advance an extension of the NOI due date. Only in exceptional circumstances, and at their absolute discretion, does the Chair, Academic Promotions Committee accept a late NOI.

Invitation to apply for promotion

(29) Where the prospective applicant is deemed to have met the requirements for (i) contribution and alignment with Mission (see Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide) and (ii) qualifications (see Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide), the Office of the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) invites the staff member to apply for promotion. This invitation includes any decision the Committee has made about the applicant's ARtO circumstances.

Feedback Meetings

(30) Prior to submission, applicants:

a. send a draft of their application to their Head of School / Institute Director (or delegate approved by the Chair, Academic Promotions Committee), and their supervisor. There is no prescribed length for this draft, but applicants should provide enough detail to allow the reader to provide meaningful feedback. Academic staff not based in a Faculty must contact the Executive Officer, Academic Promotions (ACUAcademic.Promotions@acu.edu.au) who advises the Chair's decision regarding appropriate arrangements for distribution of this draft and the associated feedback meetings;
b. attend a feedback meeting about their draft with their supervisor and Head of School / Institute Director (or delegate approved by the Chair, Academic Promotions Committee).

(31) Further information, including timelines for these meetings, is available in Schedule 2: Academic Promotions Reports and Feedback Meeting and is listed in the Academic Promotions Timeline.

Application Submission – Mandatory Elements

(32) The promotion application must include the following:

a. Narrative statements
    i. Using the Academic Promotions Portal, applicants must submit a narrative statement for each relevant domain of academic activity. NB: It is not expected that staff will provide evidence of achievements in all domains of academic activity.
    ii. Each narrative statement must not exceed 4000 characters. Other requirements for these narrative statements vary by domain (see details in Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide).
b. Achievement Summary for Promotions
    i. The University provides applicants with an Achievements Summary for Promotions that includes relevant metrics. Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide provides details of the data in this report.
    ii. Applicants must carefully check the completeness and accuracy of the data in the Achievement Summaries prior to submission of their application and as per any deadlines provided. Where applicants identify an issue, they can submit a request to have the data updated in the relevant University database. Requests must be made using the template provided with the Achievement Summary. The completed request template must be submitted in the Academic Promotions Portal.
    iii. Changes by the data caretakers will make it possible to generate an updated Achievements Summary. If an omission or error in the database(s) cannot be rectified by the data caretaker prior to the prescribed closing date for applications, the applicant may describe the omission or error in the narrative statement(s) in their application.
    iv. When the staff member submits an application, the Achievement Summaries for Promotion relevant to the assessment period are downloaded and attached to the application and sent to the applicant, under

the oversight of the Executive Officer, Academic Promotions. Additional extracts may be requested where a summary does not fully display an extensive list of records. The Promotions team will generate and attach the extract.

c. Promotions Self-rating Form
    i. Applicants must submit a Promotions Self-rating Form that indicates the standard of achievement they believe they have demonstrated in each relevant domain of academic activity. The applicant's Promotions Self-rating Form data is held by the Executive Officer, Academic Promotions and is not distributed to Academic Promotions Committee members (see details in Schedule 1 – Academic Promotions Committees).

Application Submission – Optional Elements

(33) The promotion application may include the following:

a. details of recently accepted outputs. Applicants may upload to the Academic Promotions Portal details of research and scholarship outputs that have been accepted for publication but not yet been verified in Orion and, therefore, do not appear in the Achievements Summary for Promotions. A persistent identifier (e.g., digital object identifier [doi]) should be provided for each output. Where a persistent identifier is not available, a PDF copy of an acceptance email (or similar) would normally be included in the 10-page optional evidence file.
b. a PDF file with evidence supporting claims of achievement in the narrative statements (see Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide for examples of evidence for each domain). Applicants may upload one 10-page (maximum) PDF file for the entire application. The file must be less than 100MB. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that evidence in the PDF file is clearly displayed and can be easily viewed at 100% magnification. NB: Applicants use the narrative statements to describe their achievements and must not use this 10-page file to provide additional text-based descriptions. This file may only be used to:
    i. provide evidence that verifies the claims made in the narrative statements; or
    ii. display information graphically (e.g., figure or table).

Section 7 - Reports

Internal assessor report

(34) The Head of School / Institute Director (or delegate approved by the Chair, Academic Promotions Committee) writes a final Internal Assessor Report which:

a. confirms or seeks clarification regarding the accuracy of claims the applicant has made regarding achievements in each relevant domain;
b. provides ratings of achievement against the criteria and standards in each relevant domain (see Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide). an explanation of how they considered ARtO decisions in their assessment (if applicable)an explanation of how they considered First Nations Ways of Knowing, Doing and Being (if applicable), and a brief rationale for each of their ratings.

(35) Further information is provided in Schedule 2: Academic Promotions Reports and Feedback Meeting.

External assessor reports

(36) Applications for promotion are typically assessed by two Professors (Level E academics) from outside the University with expertise in the applicant's academic discipline(s). The Chair typically assigns assessors from the ACU External Assessor Panels.

a. Where an applicant chooses to have their application assessed in the context of First Nations Ways of Knowing, Doing and Being, they may also request that one of the two external assessors be a First Nations academic. All external assessors, including First Nations academics, are appointed using the same eligibility criteria and standard selection process, subject to availability

(37) The external assessors provide ratings of achievement against the criteria and standards in each relevant domain (see Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide), a brief rationale for each rating, an explanation of how they considered ARtO decisions in their assessment (if applicable), an explanation of how they considered First Nations Ways of Knowing, Doing and Being (if applicable), and an overall assessment indicating whether the applicant should be recommended for promotion.

(38) Further information is provided in Schedule 2: Academic Promotions Reports and Feedback Meeting.

Section 8 - Submitting the application

(39) To ensure they meet all application requirements, applicants should refer to the Information for Applicants section of the Academic Promotions website.

(40) Applicants must submit all documentation via the Academic Promotions Portal by 11:59 pm (AEST) on the prescribed closing date of the promotion round as detailed in the Academic Promotions Timeline. Applicants must submit all submission documentation at one time, via the portal. If multiple submissions are made, the Committee will only consider the most recent submission.

(41) A staff member who anticipates being absent from the University in the period before the closing date may lodge their application in advance. Applicants may also request an extension in advance of the prescribed promotions closing date. Only in exceptional circumstances, and at their absolute discretion, does the Chair, Academic Promotions Committee accept a late application.

(42) Applications received after the closing date without prior approval are deemed ineligible. In such cases, applicants receive written advice of ineligibility.

(43) Any queries about the submission process should be directed to the Executive Officer, Academic Promotions (email to: ACUAcademic.Promotions@acu.edu.au).

Section 9 - Post-submission

Applicant Response to the Internal Assessor Report

(44) The applicant receives a copy of the Confirmation section of the Internal Assessor Report (see clause 35) and has the right to submit a written response to the portion of the report that relates to the accuracy of claims. Further information is provided in Schedule 2: Academic Promotions Reports and Feedback Meeting.

(45) Applicants' written responses are due by the date specified in the Academic Promotions Timeline. Applicants may request an extension from the Chair, Academic Promotions Committee, via the Executive Officer, Academic Promotions (ACUAcademic.Promotions@acu.edu.au).

Post-submission Evidence

(46) The Committee may ask applicants to provide further information and / or supporting evidence. Other than a response to an Internal Assessor Report, a request from the Committee is the only circumstance that provides an opportunity for an applicant to provide the Committee with evidence after the submission due date.

Section 10 - Application outcome

(47) The Executive Officer, Academic Promotions, on behalf of the Chair, Academic Promotions Committee, contacts all applicants in writing (with copies to the supervisor, Head of School/Institute Director and Executive Dean) to communicate the result of the promotion application. Applicants are contacted no later than ten working days following the delegated authority's approval of the Committee's recommendations.

(48) As a condition of progressing to final approval and/or the promotion taking effect, the applicant will be required to complete a gender-based violence declaration.

(49) The applicant will be given 5 business days to complete and return the declaration. If the declaration is not completed within the required timeframe, progression to final steps will be delayed.

(50) Declarations will be stored securely with restricted access and will be reviewed only by authorised staff in accordance with ACU privacy, confidentiality and records management requirements. Where a declaration contains information requiring follow-up, ACU may undertake a risk assessment and/or seek advice through the relevant governance pathway to determine what if any actions are required and whether the application can progress to final approval. The applicant will be advised of any material process steps that relate to their declaration.

(51) Where an applicant's promotion has been approved, the applicant will receive formal written notification confirming advancement from the effective date of promotion.

(52) Applicants who are not recommended for promotion receive the Committee's feedback and areas to consider strengthening to support a future application. They also have an opportunity to meet with the Chair, Academic Promotions Committee to discuss the reasons for the Committee's decision. This information is provided to help the applicant and their supervisor revise progress plans and/or identify activities to support the development of a future application.

(53) The Vice-Chancellor and President reports annually to Senate on promotions outcomes.

Section 11 - Committees

(54) Information about the Academic Promotions Committees and their process for assessment is detailed in Schedule 1: Academic Promotions Committees and is undertaken in accordance with Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide.

Section 12 - Appeals

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

Section 13 - Definitions

Term	Definition
Academic Career Pathway	An academic staff member's career pathway is established through the appointment process and / or as an outcome of the Progress Plan. There are five academic career pathways set out in the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025.

Term	Definition
Academic Promotions Committee	The committee that is responsible for assessing promotion applications.
Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARtO)	An evaluative framework that ensures fair and equitable evaluation of a person's achievements based on the opportunities available to them.
Achievements	Outcomes that are the result of academic staff activities. Achievements are demonstrated by the quality and/or the impact of the staff member's activities.
Activities	The work academic staff undertake in in the nine domains, aligned with the ACU Mission, Identity and Values and supporting its strategic priorities.
Agreement	Refers to the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025.
Commercialisation	Consultancy and other commercial activity that involves the provision of professional services requiring the application of existing knowledge and expertise in exchange for a fee. Activities may include, but are not limited to, the review of a program or service, development of a framework, providing an expert opinion, development and / or licensing of a product (including educational products and professional learning tools), development and delivery of workshops and short courses that are not part of normal teaching activities, and responding to commercial tenders. See Consultancy and Commercial Activity Guidelines 2023).
Consumed EFTSL Level	EFTSL = equivalent full-time student load. A measure of a full-time student's annual study load. Consumed EFTSL for Higher Degree Research students refers to the number of full-time years (or equivalent) needed to complete the degree.
Domain	The criteria for promotion are specified under five domains of achievement. 1. Education 2. Outputs 3. Research Capacity Building 4. External Engagement and Impact 5. Service (See also 'relevant domain' in these Definitions.)
End-user	An individual, community or organisation external to academia that will directly use or directly benefit from the output, outcome or result of the research (see ARC, 2019, Engagement and Impact (EI) Assessment)
Evidence	Information that verifies the applicant's achievements. When evaluating a staff member's achievements against the criteria, the Committee will consider the quality and the impact of the work, along with the strength of the evidence that has been supplied. Thus, a case for promotion with more robust evidence will be considered stronger than a case with evidence that is less clear.
External Assessor	An expert in the discipline / field (typically a Level E Professor) who can offer the Academic Promotions Committee a balanced and confidential assessment of a promotion application. Assessors are external to ACU.
FWCI	Field Weighted Citation Impact (see Elsevier, 2023, What is Field-weighted Citation Impact?)
High Quality Research Output	A research output that meets at least one of the output quality benchmarks established by the University.
Non-Traditional Research Output	Some research outputs do not take the form of published books, book chapters, journal articles or conference publications. These are referred to as non-traditional research outputs (see ARC, 2019, Non-Traditional Research Outputs (NTROs)). Examples include: • original creative works • live performance of creative works • recorded/rendered creative works • curated or produced substantial public exhibitions and events • research reports for an external body • portfolio.
Orion	The University's research management system software which provides information for staff on their research outputs and achievements.

Term	Definition
Professional Experience (ProfEx)	A survey instrument used to assist in the evaluation of learning and teaching for coursework units identified by the relevant Faculty as having significant work integrated learning components. Refer to the Evaluation of Learning and Teaching Policy and the Student Evaluation of Learning and Teaching Survey Procedure.
Progress Plan	A plan that documents work goals, career aspirations and development goals for staff and the specific targets and progress towards achieving those goals. See Progress Plan for Academic Staff Policy.
Promotion	Advancement to a higher level of appointment from the current substantive position.
Prestigious Research Grant	A research grant from a highly respected Australian or international organisation. These grants are often funded by a federal government agency or a large philanthropic foundation. Examples can be viewed here.
Publication Points	Publication points = 5 points for a research book (A1), 1 point for other research outputs (e.g., B1 and C1). See explanation of publication categories here.
Relevant Domain	Applicants choose the domains in which they provide evidence of their achievements. They are not required or expected to provide evidence of achievements in all domains of academic activity. A relevant domain is one in which the applicant has chosen to provide evidence of their achievements for consideration against the criteria and standards.
Research	The creation of new knowledge and / or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions, and understandings. This could include the synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative (see ARC, 2018).
Research Income	Research income must be reportable to Higher Education Research Data Collection and includes Category 1-4 grants (defined by the Department of Education, Higher Education Research Data Collection Specifications for the Collection of 2022 Data). Achievements that do not qualify as research income (but could be reported in Domain 9 External Service) include research commercialisation (see 'Commercialisation' in these Definitions).
Research impact	Research that contributes to the economy, society, environment, or culture, beyond its contribution to academic research (ARC, 2022, Research Impact Principles and Framework).
Research Training	A formal course of graduate study leading to the acquisition of advanced skills, techniques, and knowledge in the conduct of research (see TEQSA, 2022, Guidance Note: Research and Research Training).
Student Evaluation of Learning & Teaching (SELT)	A survey instrument used to assist in the data collection process for unit and teaching evaluation. Refer to the Evaluation of Learning and Teaching Policy and the Student Evaluation of Learning and Teaching Survey Procedure.

Section 14 - Review

(56) In line with the Policy Development and Review Policy, this Procedure will be reviewed in line with the governing policy and is scheduled for review every five years or more frequently if appropriate.

Section 15 - Further Assistance

(57) Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this procedure 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 16 - Associated Information

(58) 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