



Senior Academic Promotion Board Procedures Grade 8-9 or Grade 9-10

1. Introduction

This procedure describes the promotion process for all senior academic promotions, including to:

- Professor (Grade 10)
- Associate Professor (Grade 9)
- Senior Research Fellow (Grade 9)

The criteria for such promotions are set out in – [Senior Academic Promotions – Criteria for Assessment](#). These are based on role descriptions derived from the nationally recognised Role Profiles recommended by JNCHEs. All the level descriptors are available at <https://heriotwatt.sharepoint.com/sites/hr-yourcareeranddevelopment/SitePages/Level-Descriptors,-Academic-and-Professional-Services-Staff.aspx>

2. The University Senior Promotions (Academic) Board

The Review Board will normally be made up as follows:

- Principal, Chair
- Vice Principal and Provost
- Deputy Principal (Research and Innovation)
- Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching)
- Deans of the University
- Executive Deans of Schools
- Provost (or Deputy) from Malaysia and Dubai

The Board is clerked by the Reward and Wellbeing Consultant

This membership can be varied at the discretion of the Principal, who may also nominate an alternate senior colleague as Chair.

All members of the Board should have an awareness of HERA job evaluation scheme.

3. Promotions Nomination Process

As part of the PDR process all academic staff should discuss their career path and progression with their Reviewer, including the opportunities for developing their career and promotion prospects. Executive Deans shall, in consultation with the Management Team of the School, ensure that all academic staff, as far as possible, have access to development opportunities to allow them to achieve their career ambitions.

HR will write to Executive Deans in January of each year informing them of the relevant dates for submission of promotion cases.

Schools should convene a School Promotions Panel (SPP) to consider all cases within the School and make recommendations to the University Senior Promotions Board. Terms of Reference for SPPs are in Appendix A

3.1 Nominations from Executive Dean to the University Senior Promotions Board

The cases for promotion must include:

A. From the candidate

- The individual's case for promotion on no more than 2 sides of A4 which should be written with reference to the criteria for assessment and in particular how they match the relevant role profile.
- Full Curriculum Vitae in the University format and publications list where relevant
- Details of at least two external referees for Grade 9 promotion and four for Grade 10
- Special Circumstance Form (where relevant)

B. From the School

- Senior Promotions Board (SPB) form commenting on the case for promotion and including an assessment of the candidates' achievements and contribution against the criteria detailed in [Senior Academic Promotions Criteria for Assessment](#).
- The names of two independent assessors for Grade 9 promotion and three for Grade 10, who can provide comment on the candidate's standing in the discipline.

3.2 Self Nomination

Following the considerations of the School Promotions Panel, academic staff will be informed by their Executive Dean as to whether or not the SPP is supporting their case for promotion. If a case is not being supported, individuals will be advised of the reasons for that decision and will then have the option of making a personal case for promotion.

Personal cases for promotion must include the same information and documentation as listed at 3.1A above.

On receipt of a personal case, HR will pass a copy of the self-nomination papers to the Executive Dean with a request for a positive or negative recommendation, together with reasons for that recommendation. HR will then provide the member of staff with a copy of this recommendation and the member of staff will have the opportunity to provide a written response to that recommendation if they so wish.

3.3 Standard Documentation

In all submission cases, it is important, for consistency purposes that CVs and publication lists are fully completed in the standard formats, as shown on the [HR Hub](#). Incomplete submissions may not be considered.

4. References

The Board will consult external referees for all cases submitted for promotion.

An individual's CV must include the names of at least two referees, who are external to Heriot-Watt University. At least one reference should be from a respected academic in the appropriate discipline; references from relevant industry or professional bodies are also appropriate.

In cases of promotion to Professor, at least one internationally recognised referee at professorial level or equivalent should be included.

Referees' names, positions and affiliations, addresses, e-mail and phone contact points, should be included.

The School will be asked to identify 2 additional independent external assessors/specialists to provide written feedback on the promotion submission.

5. Initial Deliberations of the Senior Promotions Board

The Board will meet initially to review the submitted papers (all documents listed in section 3.1 A and B, above plus, for self nomination cases, the Executive Dean recommendation and any employee response received) for each nominee in order to establish if there are prima facie cases. The main supporting document will be reviewed against the [Senior Academic Promotions – Criteria for Assessment](#).

For promotions to Grade 9, the Board may make one of three recommendations based on the cases submitted and the referees' comments:

Promote*
Invite to interview
Not promote

*In cases (other than Professorial promotions) where the prima facie case is compelling, no further assessment will be required.

In accordance with the Ordinances, all candidates who demonstrate a prima facie case for promotion to Professor will be required to attend for interview.

6. Interviews

All candidates for Professorial promotion who meet the criteria and a prima facie case is made, will be interviewed by the Chair (or their representative), the relevant Dean, plus four professors of the University. [Ordinance 2](#)

For all other promotion cases, where it is considered that further information is required, an interview with representatives of the Board (usually the Chair or his or her representative, the relevant Dean, and the Executive Dean) will be arranged.

Each case will also be assessed in the context of the [Criteria for Assessment](#) taking into account both the extent to which these criteria are being satisfied and at what level.

The Chair of the interview panel will report the conclusions to the full Board. The final decision will be made on the basis of:

1. interview report
2. the original case papers
3. the available external references and independent assessor reports

7. Contribution Award

In exceptional cases, the Board may award a Bonus Payment or an Accelerated Increment / a Contribution Point within the current grade rather than promoting to a higher grade. This is only where eligibility for promotion cannot be fully justified but the Board consider it appropriate to recognise the individual's performance.

8. Ratification of Promotions

The Board shall send to Senate and Court, a brief summary of all promotion recommendations. Final appointment to senior academic positions requires the approval of Court on the recommendation of Senate.

Senate and Court should be invited to act quickly to allow the decisions to take effect from the appropriate date and to allow the member of staff to be informed in good time.

The effective date of promotion shall be 1 August.

9. Feedback to candidates

All unsuccessful candidates (whether nominated by their Executive Dean or self-nominated) shall be given reason(s) why they were not promoted. This will be in the form of a letter from the Chair of the Board and a discussion with the Executive Dean to explain what the individual would need to do to be successful in future. The responsibility for discussing the reasons for unsuccessful promotion with the candidate lies with the Executive Dean.

10. Appeals Process

Any candidate not promoted, or any Executive Dean whose nomination has been unsuccessful, may appeal only on the ground of a defect in procedure. Appeals against the nature of the promotion criteria will not be permitted.

11. Exceptional promotions

In exceptional circumstances, (such as retaining essential staff in key strategic areas) there may be the need to hold promotion interviews out with the normal cycle. In these circumstances the individual will be interviewed by an *ad hoc* Senior Promotions Board. This will be chaired by the Principal or nominee and will comprise membership corresponding to the panel as specified in Section 6, above.

Cases for consideration under an Exceptional Promotions procedure must be put forward by the relevant Executive Dean to the Principal in the normal format. The Principal will consider whether there is a *prima facie* case prior to the *ad hoc* panel being convened. The remaining process followed will be as detailed above.

12. Equality of Opportunity

We value and encourage each unique and positive contribution, acknowledging that our diversity enriches us. The University welcomes and supports applications for career progression from all members of the University Community.

To help us to ensure that our processes are fair, accessible and free from discrimination we will collect and use equality data for monitoring and evaluation purposes. This information will be held in accordance with Data Protection requirements.

13. Timetable (assuming an implementation date of 1st August).

	Date
Notification to Executive Deans/AC Staff	February
SPP panels to meet	March
Closing date for applicants	late March
Reference collection	April/May
Meetings of Board	April/May
Interviews	June (agree two week period)
Ratification of promotions	June/July
Applicants notified of results	July
Effective date of promotion	1 st August

14. Procedure Review

This procedure is effective from March 2014 and will be reviewed every three years.

School Senior Academic Promotions Review Panel

Terms of Reference & Membership

The School will convene a School Senior Academic Promotions Review Panel to consider all cases.

The Panel's specific responsibilities include:

1. To consider all cases for promotion across the school for senior academic promotions and to determine which cases will receive School support
2. To ensure quality and consistency across the school in all supported promotion applications being submitted to HWU Senior Promotions Committee
3. To assist with identification of suitable external assessors and support development of the school case for the application
4. To monitor the implementation of Equality and Diversity policies and Athena SWAN commitments in line with HWU Senior Promotions Policy
5. To coordinate feedback to all individuals. Where a case for promotion is considered premature, the panel will provide individuals and guidance for both applicant and their PDR reviewer regarding development opportunities
6. Any other business as appropriate

Individuals whose case is not supported by the School Senior Academic Promotions Review Panel may still submit a case to the HWU Senior Promotions Committee as outlined in the policy.

Membership

Executive Dean – Chair
Director of Research
Director of Learning and Teaching
Academic Heads of Discipline/Institute etc as appropriate.