

# RTE Academic Staff Promotion Processes

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document and associated flow charts (Appendix I) provide guidance to candidates and Schools on the processes and criteria against which all RTE academic promotion submissions will be assessed. These processes and criteria are intended to
- provide greater flexibility to recognise academic contributions to research, teaching, enterprise, citizenship, and leadership via various pathways
  - recognise that staff may have experienced societal barriers and discrimination as a result of their protected characteristics
  - encourage staff to discuss how their personal circumstances and protected characteristics have affected their career histories and the forms of evidence that can be presented to show how the criteria have been met
  - produce equitable outcomes, in which staff promoted to senior grades are representative of the diversity of the whole population of RTE academics at Loughborough
- 1.2 Cases for promotion to Senior Lecturer and Reader and Professor will be considered by one of the committees (referred to below as the Committee) shown below, with the following memberships.

Senior Lecturer Promotions Committee	Reader and Professor Promotions Committee
Provost — Chair PVC (E&SE) PVC (R&I) PVC (EDI) Deans of all Schools	Provost — Chair PVC (E&SE) PVC (R&I) PVC (EDI) Three senior professors from across the University. Two Deans on a rotational basis Plus, up to three co-opted members to ensure that the diversity of the academic staff population is appropriately reflected in the committee membership
Secretary from HR	Secretary from HR

- 1.3 Deadlines for submission of promotions paperwork will be set by HR, with timings that follow the PDR and interim PDR periods, about 6 months apart. Dates of Committee meetings will be included in the University Calendar and deadlines for submission will be publicised on the HR webpages.
- 1.4 Successful promotions will take effect from the first day of the month following the date of the committee meeting where promotion was first approved.

1.5 The processes described below refer to

- “the Dean”, which should be interpreted as the Dean of the School, or their delegated member of academic staff, e.g. Director of Staffing, Director of People and Culture, etc.
- The “School Promotions Committee”, which should be an identified group of senior staff, led by “the Dean” and comprising for example, members of the SLT, the School HR advisory or staffing group and other representatives from the School, to ensure appropriate diversity. Deans are expected to take promotions decisions in consultation with their School Promotions Committee and should not act as a single gatekeeper.

## 2. General principles

- 2.1 An application for the title of Senior Lecturer, Reader or Professor may be made by any *full-time* or *part-time* member of RTE academic staff, following the processes in sections 4-7 and the pathways and criteria for promotion presented in section 9.
- 2.2 The promotion process is intended to recognise the development of an individual's academic profile and reputation and their contribution to delivering the University's [values, vision](#) and [strategy](#).
- 2.3 Successful applications will be based on peer-review of evidence, presented by the candidate, showing how the criteria have been met, as well as future plans and ambitions. Applications based principally on promise will be rejected.
- 2.4 The assessment of all application cases against the criteria for the selected pathway, will be based primarily on the *quality* of contribution, and not simply on the quantity.
- 2.5 The University's [EDI principles](#) and [Code of Practice on Equal Opportunities](#) are central to the effective operation of these promotion processes, which have been designed to ensure consistency, transparency and fairness in decision-making.

## 3. Inclusivity

- 3.1 The University recognises and celebrates the diversity of its academic staff. These promotion processes and criteria have been developed in an inclusive way to enable greater flexibility to recognise academic contributions to research, teaching, enterprise, citizenship, and leadership via various pathways.
- 3.2 The University recognises that all staff have different personal circumstances and career histories, which may affect the forms and quantity of evidence that can be presented to show how the criteria have been met. The University also acknowledges that societal barriers and discrimination impact on people with certain personal or protected characteristics more than other individuals. The University seeks to ensure that no candidate is placed at a disadvantage because of their particular characteristics or circumstances.
- 3.3 As a standard part of their application, all candidates are encouraged to provide additional contextual information about how their personal circumstances and / or protected characteristics have impacted on the development of their career, academic profile and volume of contributions. Some examples of these personal circumstances include, *but are not limited to*
- Changes of career path, e.g. moving between non-academic and academic roles

- Commercially sensitive research activities which have reduced the opportunity to publish in the open literature
- Time away from work, e.g. maternity, paternity, parental or adoption leave
- Part-time work or other flexible working arrangements
- Periods of absence or limitations on speed of working arising from caring responsibilities, a disability, ill-health or injury
- Periods of absence arising from the impact and consequences of gender re-assignment
- Personal or familial circumstances that have interrupted, restricted, or delayed their career
- Discrimination related to any protected characteristic

All information received will be viewed positively and confidentially in support of an application. Contextual information may be shared:

- within the application, using a standard section of the CV template (not counted within the page limit). Where possible, submissions should be evidence-based, e.g. including %FTE, dates and arrangements for flexible working or return to work.
- or the candidate may choose to discuss such information in confidence with a Committee member of their choice and agree what can be reported orally to the Committee.

3.4 The Committee will use this contextual information to take account of a reduced volume of contributions, applying the principle that for all applications the assessment against the criteria will be based primarily on the *quality* of the candidate's contributions. Evidence of contribution or standing in the field or discipline will also be assessed in the light of this contextual information.

## 4. Routes through the promotion processes

There are two routes by which promotion may be considered:

- 4.1 **Route 1** is the standard route and will follow the two-stage process described in section 5 below. A Dean may submit a Route 1 promotion application from a member of RTE staff at any time but should be mindful that each promotions Committee currently meets twice a year.
- 4.2 **Route 2\*** is exceptional, where it may be necessary to consider a case for promotion outside of the Route 1 process, e.g. when a member of staff has been offered an academic position at a higher grade by another institution. Deans wishing to initiate a Route 2 process should make a recommendation to the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor application for a promotion to be considered. Other cases could be considered if they were deemed appropriate by the Vice-Chancellor.

## 5. Route 1 (standard process)

In Route 1, applications for all academic promotions will pass through two stages:

- an internal process within the School, and
- applications supported by the School, will be considered by the relevant Committee (see section 1).

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\* Subject to review within the EDI Core Plan

### (A) Internal process within the School

- 5.1 Staff are strongly recommended to begin informal discussions with their Dean, PDR reviewer, line manager, if they are interested in applying for promotion. Deans may wish to nominate members of the School Promotions Committee to act as mentors for promotions cases.
- 5.2 Schools will have a clear, fair, and transparent process in place for stage (A), to determine which cases are taken forward to stage (B). Deans will ensure that the School Promotions Committee complies with the University's [EDI principles](#) and [Code of Practice on Equal Opportunities](#).
- 5.3 School Promotions Committee will establish the discipline norms referred to in the pathways and criteria for promotion presented in section 9.
- 5.4 Deans and their School Promotions Committee will carry out an annual review of potential candidates for promotion and will pro-actively support and encourage eligible staff to apply for promotion at the right time. Discussions related to promotions should also take place as a part of the annual Performance and Development Review (PDR) and should be discussed by the Senior Review Group.
- 5.5 Prior to each deadline, Deans and their School Promotions Committee will: (1) make an open call to all relevant RTE staff, inviting them to apply for promotion and (2) proactively identify candidates who may be ready for promotion but who do not put themselves forward. For example, the latter may be achieved by considering recommended actions from a PDR reviewer, or from the annual review described above.
- 5.6 Staff wishing to be formally considered should prepare draft paperwork for submission to their Dean, who will record the applications received and provide that information to HR. The required forms of application are specified in section 7 and the pathways and criteria for promotion are described in section 9.
- 5.7 Deans or other members of the School Promotions Committee will offer to meet candidates to discuss their application, and provide support, feedback, and advice about submission through one of the pathways.
- 5.8 The Dean and School Promotions Committee will assess each promotion case by
  - reviewing the evidence presented in the draft paperwork against the criteria for the selected pathway;
  - using internal peer review processes to gain information about the research quality of a selection of the candidate's outputs.
- 5.9 Based on the above assessment the Dean and School Promotions Committee will take the decision to support the application, or not. In cases where the application is
  - **not supported:** the Dean will provide a written statement explaining the reasons for that decision. An individual who is dissatisfied with the outcome of their application has the right to appeal (see section 8).
  - **supported:** the candidate will prepare the final version of their paperwork, having received feedback from the Dean. It is the responsibility of the Dean to submit the application for consideration of the Committee in stage (B). *For all cases*, the Dean will write a supporting statement (see section 7) to accompany the paperwork prepared by the candidate.

- 5.10 All Route 1 submissions must adhere to the publicised Committee's deadlines. Late applications will not be accepted and will be deferred to the next meeting. Incomplete applications, or those that do not comply with the paperwork requirements, will be rejected.

### **(B) Consideration by the University Committee**

- 5.11 Cases will be considered by the relevant Committee (see section 1).
- 5.12 The Chair will ensure that the Committee complies with the University's [EDI principles](#) and [Code of Practice on Equal Opportunities](#).
- 5.13 When an application is first considered, the Committee will evaluate the application against the criteria and selected pathway and will judge whether the case is worthy of promotion. If a decision is made that the application is unsuccessful:
- For *Senior Lecturer* applications: the Dean will meet the candidate to give verbal feedback from discussions at the Committee, followed up with a written communication from HR.
  - For *Reader and Professor* applications, candidates and their Dean will receive feedback from a member of the Committee, followed up with a written communication from HR.
  - In both cases, the feedback will provide an explanation of why the submission was unsuccessful and advice on how to address these issues. It is then the responsibility of the candidate to devise a plan to improve a future application, with support from their Dean, line manager or mentor.
  - If a case is rejected by the Committee, a revised application will not normally be accepted for consideration until 12 months have passed since the date on which the rejected case was submitted. The exception would be when a resubmission is invited by the Committee.
  - An individual who is dissatisfied with the outcome of their application has the right to appeal (see section 8).

#### *For Professor applications only*

- 5.14 If the Committee determines that a promotion is justified, then four external referees will be approached by HR, to validate the initial decision. Reports from referees will be kept confidential to the Committee and the appropriate Dean.
- 5.15 While referees' reports are being gathered: the candidate will be invited to attend an interview panel, comprising a chair from the Committee and two senior members of the University (not from the candidate's School). The purpose of the panel meeting will be to explore academic leadership and collegiality more generally, to ensure that the candidate understands the expectations associated with being promoted to the title of Professor. The Chair of the interview panel will provide a short summary of the panel's reflections on the candidate.
- 5.16 At a subsequent meeting, the Committee will review cases, when at least three external references and the interview panel reflections have been received and will then make a decision on the available evidence. Where the references all support the promotion and the interview panel feedback is positive, the Chair of the Committee may approve the promotion by Chair's action. Any such promotions will be reported at the next meeting of the Committee.
- 5.17 Applicants and their Deans will be advised of progress after each meeting.

### *For all applications*

- 5.18 All successful candidates will be informed by their Dean, followed up with a written communication from HR. Feedback and advice to successful candidates will be provided by Deans and will be specific and based on the Committee discussions and / or referees' comments.
- 5.19 The Committee will report its decisions to HRC. A statistical record will be retained of all staff formally entering the academic promotion process at stage (A), to gain a better understanding of the success rate of different groups of people. HRC will review the statistics of the promotions processes at School and University level and will propose actions if required. Statistics of the applications made, and the success rates will be reported annually to Senate and will be presented on the RTE Promotion website.

## **6. Route 2 (exceptional cases)**

- 6.1 An Appointment Committee will be constituted in the same way as for an equivalently graded established post, in accordance with the [Appointment Committees Code of Practice](#) (Academic Schools). The Appointment Committee will be chaired by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Reader or Professor promotions) or by a Pro Vice-Chancellor (Senior Lecturer promotions).
- 6.2 Candidates will submit the same paperwork as is required for Route 1. The Appointment Committee will assess the candidate based on written evidence, applying the criteria and pathways of section 9, in the same way as in Route 1.
- 6.3 In addition, the candidate will be interviewed by the Appointment Committee, following the same format as for external appointments at an equivalent grade. The Appointment Committee will decide to offer a promotion, or not. The Appointment Committee shall have authority to offer a promotion as it sees fit with immediate effect and will report its decision to Senate and Council via the Committee and HRC.
- 6.4 All candidates will be informed of the outcome of their Route 2 application by their Dean, followed up with a written communication from HR. Feedback and advice to successful and unsuccessful candidates will be provided by their Dean.

## **7. Application paperwork**

- 7.1 An application for consideration through Route 1 or 2 should consist of:
- (1) A templated CV, which requires the candidate to supply a defined and restricted set of information, allowing assessment against the criteria for the selected pathway.
  - (2) A templated promotion statement prepared in support of their case which identifies the promotions pathway being followed and sets out how the candidate meets the necessary criteria, in terms of the required and additional activities for
    - Research and Innovation
    - Education and Student Experience
    - Citizenship and Leadership

The statement should emphasise but is not restricted to what has been achieved since the candidate's appointment or last promotion. Candidates should describe their vision for development of their profile in the chosen pathway.

- (3) A statement from the Dean to indicate why they support the application. This should include an assessment of how the criteria have been met and confirmation that the candidate has
- Completed a PDR in the preceding 12 months and details of the PDR ratings for the preceding 5 years, where available
  - Demonstrated and maintained good practice in learning and teaching as reflected in the [University Framework](#)
  - Obtained formal recognition of their professional standing in teaching in accordance with the Professional Standards Framework (at least FHEA or equivalent), and, where appropriate, continued 'good standing' as specified by the accrediting body.
  - Contributed to the collegiality of the School and University by assuming and effectively discharging leadership/management responsibilities.

#### 7.2 *For Professor applications only (Route 1 only)*

- (4) A list of four external referees, none of whom should have been employed by the University within the last 5 years.

Candidates should be consulted, but the Dean is responsible for the final selection of referees, all of whom should have a sound knowledge of the UK HE system. Across the four referees, a mix of national and international referees is preferred, and the referees should ideally be based in the most prestigious institutions for the appropriate subject area. The Committee reserves the right to contact additional or alternative referees if it so chooses.

The list of referees should include contact details and evidence of how the referees meet the criteria listed above.

## 8. Appeals

- 8.1 Unsuccessful candidates have the right to appeal, on the grounds of a substantial defect in the procedure, prejudice, or demonstrable error, which affected the decision reached at Stage (A) by the Dean and School Promotions Committee, or at Stage (B) by the University Committee. A disagreement with the academic judgement and decision of the Dean and School Promotions Committee, or the University Committee, is not in itself a ground for appeal.
- 8.2 A candidate wishing to appeal should write to the Director of Human Resources setting out their grounds for appeal, within 14 days of receiving written notification of the decision.
- 8.3 Before convening an appeal hearing, the Director of Human Resources will consult the chair of the relevant committee on the eligibility of the appeal.
- 8.4 If the appeal proceeds, it will be heard by the following Appeal Committee as set out below.

School level decisions	University level decisions
DVC or PVC	COO or CFO
Dean or Associate Dean from another school	Dean from another school

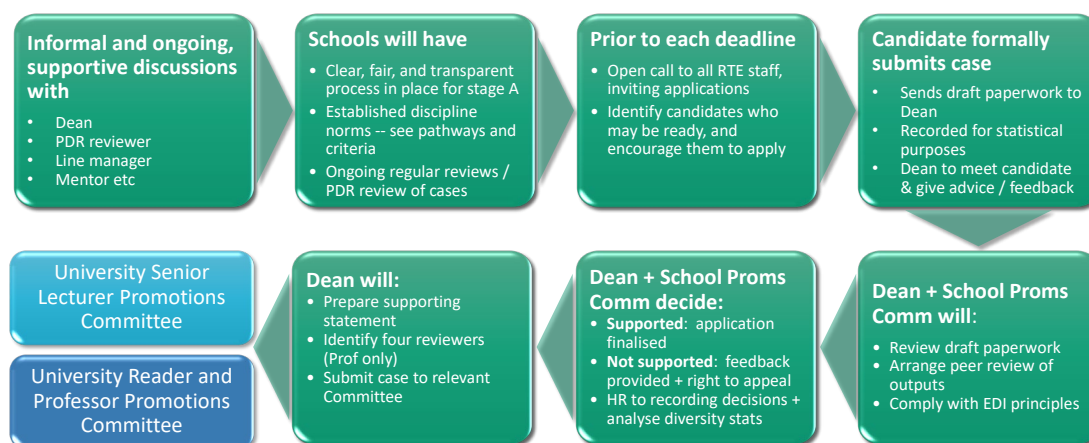
- 8.5 The relevant Chair of the Committee which made the decision will have the opportunity to provide a written response to the grounds for appeal and both documents will be shared with the Appeal Committee at least five days prior to the hearing date.
- 8.6 The employee will have the right to be accompanied at the hearing by a trade union representative or workplace colleague.
- 8.7 The format of the appeal hearing is set out in paragraphs 4.1 – 4.8 of Ordinance XXXVI (<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/governance/ordinances/36/>).
- 8.8 The Appeal Committee is able to:
- Reject the appeal
  - Uphold the appeal, and in the case of decision taken at
    - Stage (A): to progress the application to the Committee Stage (B)
    - Stage (B): to refer the case back to the Committee with a recommendation the case is sent for external review
- 8.9 The decision of the Appeal Committee is final.

## 9. Promotion Pathways and Criteria

See: [Research Teaching and Enterprise \(RTE\) promotion criteria and processes](#)

### Appendix I

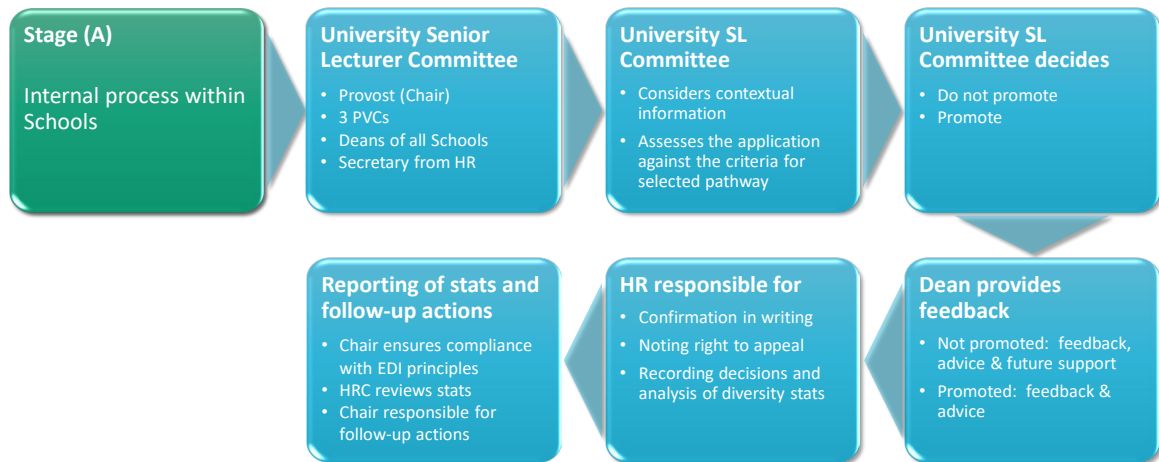
#### Stage (A) Internal processes within Schools



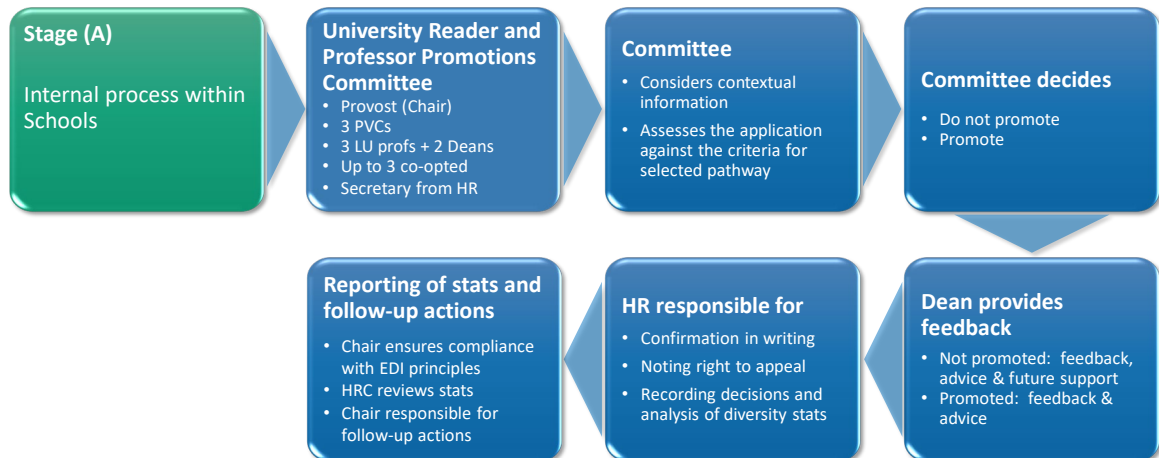
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 “School Promotions Committee”: an identified group of senior staff, led by “the Dean” and comprising for example, members of the SLT, the School HR advisory or staffing group and other representatives from the School, to ensure appropriate diversity



## Stage (B) Senior Lecturer Promotion



## Stage (B) Reader promotions



## Stage (B) Professor Promotions

