

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**REVIEW OF ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS SCHEME**

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1. **Background**

University of Galway values excellence and aims to create an environment in which all staff can achieve their full potential. We recognise that this requires a supportive environment in which excellence is fostered and equality, diversity and inclusion are cherished. The current Academic Promotions Scheme (APS) was introduced in 2019 based on an extensive revision to the previous promotions process. To date there have been eight separate promotions rounds since the introduction of the 2019 policy and procedure. Recognising that there is both an opportunity and a necessity to learn from the operationalisation and implementation of the Academic Promotions Scheme, the President, Deputy President and Registrar and the University Management Team would like to initiative a comprehensive review in accordance with good practice.

1. **Scope and Purpose of the Review**

The purpose of the review is to analyse the current Academic Promotions Scheme, considering all the component elements from application to completion for the posts of Senior Lecturer/Associate Professor, Professor in and Established Professor. This will include the perspectives of current and former members of the Academic Promotions Committee; staff who have been promoted under the current APS, and those who have been unsuccessful to date. The scope of the review will also incorporate the perceptions of academic staff who are eligible but have not yet applied for promotion.

* 1. **Review Aim and Objectives**

The aim of the review is to analyse and evaluate the process and criteria of the Academic Promotions Scheme.

The objectives of the review are as follows:

2.1.1: Engage with stakeholders using a multifaceted methodology including focus groups, written submissions, pulse surveys and participatory workshops.

2.1.2: Establish a comprehensive evidence base to inform analysis of the current Academic Promotions Scheme considering the Research and Scholarship; Teaching and Learning; and Academic Leadership and Contribution tracks.

2.1.3: Benchmark and analyse the University of Galway APS against the process in other HEIs in Ireland and a smaller relevant selection in the UK.

2.1.4: Analyse the Academic Promotions Scheme in relation to equality implications.

2.1.5: Provide recommendations regarding the Academic Promotions Scheme based on the findings of the review as appropriate.

2.1.6: Determine if there are any policy implications and proposed amendments required for the QA207 policy.

2.1.7: Present the findings to the University Management Team.

2.1.8: Compile a written report of the review for circulation to the University Management Team, Academic Council, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion – Human Resources Committee and Údarás na hOllscoile.

1. **Review Process and Methodology**

The review process and methodology incorporate the personnel involved, in addition to stakeholder engagement and the specific elements of the approach to the review.

**3.1. Lead Reviewer/Sponsor**

The Lead Reviewer is the Vice President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion who will take on the task of Chairing the Review Group and directing the process. The project sponsors are the President and Deputy President and Registrar.

**3.2. Review Group**

The members of the Review Group, as approved by the University Management Team, are:

* Deputy President and Registrar
* Vice President for Research and Innovation
* Vice President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
* Human Resources Director
* College Dean
* Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
* Internal Academic Representative
* Union Representative (Academic)

**3.3. Evidence Gathering and Stakeholder Engagement**

The Lead Reviewer is responsible for collecting the evidence in collaboration with the Review Group. The Review Group will require access to the current data on academic promotions, the number of applications, gender, and nationality where available, in addition to the outcomes and appeals data of the eight promotion rounds. The methodology will be based on desk research in addition to stakeholder engagement incorporating one-to-one interviews with the promotions committee, focus groups and/or workshops with academic staff and an invitation for written submissions using a template created for this purpose.

3.3.1: Phase 1: Data

Phase 1 will focus on a desk analysis and participatory approaches involving:

* Analysis of the design and operation of the current Academic Promotions Policy and Procedure.
* Consideration of the design and operation of academic promotion processes in Higher Education Institutions in Ireland and smaller relevant selection in the UK.
* Interviews with sample of Academic Promotions Committee members.
* Focus Groups and/or World Café with academic staff.
* Written submissions template.
* Pulse surveys.

3.3.2: Phase 2: Analysis

Phase 2 will analyse the data generated in Phase 1, identifying the key themes emerging and the potential implications or actions related to these themes. The preliminary findings and analysis will be presented to the project sponsors and UMT prior to finalisation of the report and recommendations.

3.3.3: Phase 3: Development of findings and recommendations

Phase 3 will conclude the review process with the finalisation of the review report incorporating recommendations for maintaining or for changing elements of the current model, the rationale for same, and the intended benefit. The report will be submitted to UMT, Academic Council, EDICC, EDI-HRC and Údarás na hOllscoile.

1. **Deliverable**

The deliverable is a final internal review report and recommendations on the Academic Promotions Scheme.

1. **Timeline**

The timeline for the review is 9 months, commencing in May 2024 with the report finalised by January 2025.

1. **Data Protection and Confidentiality**

The review process will be bound by the current legislative and regulatory basis for the protection of data subjects, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation. Participation in the review process will be confidential and the views of individuals will not be shared.