

Policy and Procedures on Professorial Titles

Yellow highlighted text identifies the most recent revisions to the regulations. If you require these revisions to be identified in an alternative format, please contact the Secretary to Academic Board.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The title Professor is designated in order to give public recognition to individual academic distinction and leadership achieved in a field of learning relevant to and support the mission of the University of Worcester, including responsibilities towards students, the University and the external community. The title of Professor will be awarded to teaching or research staff or academic leaders employed by the University who meet the criteria stated below. The title of Professor will not be attached to any managerial or administrative post merely by virtue of the post.
- 1.2 The role of Professor will be to support the mission of the University and its implementation through the Strategic Plan and the University's policies and procedures. In particular, a Professor will seek to enhance the quality of the University's academic provision within its taught research and knowledge transfer programmes.
- 1.3 Professors must have records of achievements which ensure that when awarded the title they demonstrate the standards of excellence and distinction associated with their respective titles in Higher Education and that they continue to be active at the appropriate level.

2. Professorships

2.1 Criteria

The title of Professor is awarded by the Professorial Titles Committee acting under delegated authority from the Academic Board. The criteria should be interpreted in the light of peer standards applicable in the candidate's area of expertise. Candidates are judged against the following criteria:

- a) Significant Furtherance of Knowledge: A national or international contribution – by scholarship, research, consultancy or creative achievement – to the furtherance of knowledge or its application to society; as defined in the relevant Strategy.
- b) Excellence in Teaching: A national or international reputation as a teacher or educator as exemplified by contribution to the development of subjects or fields of study; to pioneering developments in pedagogy; or other innovation in teaching and learning
- c) Excellence in Academic Leadership: substantial academic leadership externally at a regional, national or international level; national or international standing of the individual in his or her profession, Learned Societies, subject associations or other such organizations; qualities of academic leadership relevant to the vision, values and strategic objectives of the University, leading academic change and development.

A candidate must be excellent in at least one of the criteria and be able to demonstrate substantial strengths in at least one other. Applications should address all three areas. All applications will be expected to include reference to significant published work or equivalent output achieved.

2.2 Applications must be current and will need to demonstrate a significant level of achievement, including publications/creative works, in the 5 years immediately prior to the submission, although it is appropriate for the application to include relevant experience and achievements for earlier periods. Professors are expected to have a record of achievement which ensures that they can maintain the standard of excellence and distinction associated with the title in the field of higher education. Therefore they are expected to continue their activities in their sphere of interests.

2.3 Selection

The award of professor is made by the Professorial Titles Committee and is given delegated responsibility on behalf of Academic Board to award a Professorial title to any candidate meeting the criteria detailed above. Academic Board will receive a report of those awarded Professorial titles from the Professorial Titles Committee.

2.4 Applications

2.4.1. Externally Advertised Posts

For academic and research posts which are advertised as being suitable for professorial appointment, the selection panel will Professorial Titles Committee and be given delegated responsibility on behalf of Academic Board to award a Professorial title to any candidate meeting the criteria detailed above.

2.4.2 Internal Applications

- a) Applications are normally invited on an annual basis in January. Anyone considering applying should have an initial discussion with their Head of School (or in the case of a Head of School with the Deputy Vice Chancellor) at least 6 months before the scheduled date of the application. The Head of School will then discuss with the Deputy Vice Chancellor the appointment of a member of the University Professors group whose role will be to support the candidate in formulating their application.
- b) Applications should be submitted to the Director of Human Resources.
- c) All applications will be considered by the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor Research who will establish whether a case has been made by a candidate against the criteria stated. This will usually be done by correspondence.
- d) Where the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor Research are satisfied that a case has been made, the application will be sent to a minimum of two external assessors of professorial or equivalent standing appropriate to the field of work of the candidate, including independent experts.
- e) Confidential comment will also be sought from the Head of School or the Deputy Vice Chancellor, if the Head is a candidate for consideration.
- f) The Committee will meet to consider all relevant information and to agree (or otherwise) the award of the professorial title. A report will be made to the Academic

Board. The professorial title will not be used until after the meeting of Academic Board to which the award has been reported.

- g) All applications will be considered in confidence.

2.5 Submissions

2.5.1 Candidates should put forward a submission comprising the following elements; all applications will need to be supported by published work:

- a) A statement which outlines their candidacy against the criteria (of no more than 2,000 words). It is important that the statement indicates by which criterion or criteria the candidate is claiming to be excellent. Similarly, the candidate must make explicit the nature of the high level of achievement claimed in respect of any other criteria. Dependent on which key criterion is selected, the statement should include some of the following:

- i) Furtherance of knowledge may be evidenced through a list of publications and/or other research output as follows: Books: single authored or co-authored; Chapters in books: single authored or co-authored; papers/articles in refereed journals; refereed papers presented to conferences; non-refereed papers/articles in journals, other publications or conferences; research reports; research income; creative achievement may be evidenced through other than traditional research or scholarly publication; this might include artefacts, texts, exhibitions, performance or some other form, but must demonstrate how knowledge and its application in the field concerned has been furthered.

- ii) Excellence in Teaching may be evidenced through: teaching profile/portfolio; work as a mentor; research into teaching (e.g. Action research); student feedback results (e.g. institutional questionnaires); on-going and reflective continuous improvement in teaching through self-assessment and evaluation; innovation in teaching and learning; activities aimed at improving the student experience (e.g. learner support, working with students with disabilities and from different cultural backgrounds); external recognition of involvement in improving teaching (e.g. funded projects, consultancy work, contribution to conferences); QAA reports or external examiner's reports.

- iii) Excellence in Academic Leadership:

External Academic Leadership may be evidenced through: high profile public engagement, e.g. significant contribution to shaping regional and national policy; high level involvement in the intellectual development of a discipline or profession; significant contribution to the development of the academic community:

Internal Academic Leadership may be evidenced through: innovative work within an academic school or within the University; supporting and encouraging personal and professional development of teaching and research staff; facilitating and actively encouraging inspirational teaching and learning; developing and nurturing a research environment and culture; enabling and encouraging innovative curriculum development and design.

- 2.5.2 A copy of their curriculum vitae - it is the responsibility of the candidate to draw attention to relevant aspects thereof.
- 2.5.3 Candidates are advised that the application should address explicitly the criteria for the award of a professorial title and indicate those aspects of their work which they believe qualify them for the appointment.
- 2.5.4 The names, addresses and full titles of no more than three, appropriately senior and experienced external referees of professional standing who should be in a position to offer a respected and informed assessment of the candidate's expertise, standing and achievements
- 2.5.5 An indication of the title they would wish to be associated with the Chair should they be successful. This title should be discussed with the relevant Head of School.
- 2.5.6 Following the award of the Professorial Title, each Professor will undertake an appropriate inaugural activity (lecture, exhibition, presentation) to mark the award of the title.

2.6 Amendment to Professorial Title

- 2.6.1 In exceptional circumstances the holder of a professorial title may make an application to have the title reviewed. Such an amendment to a professorial title would only be approved when the individual can demonstrate that their research focus has moved substantially away from the area of their original title.
- 2.6.2 To apply for an amendment to a professorial title the individual is required to submit a new application under the criteria of the Policy as identified above. In addition to the statement required, candidates should supply the following:
 - a) An updated c.v. which demonstrates a change of focus since the award of the title currently held
 - b) A statement justifying the change in focus, and the request for a new title, and how this will be sustained.
 - c) An indication of the new title being requested.
 - d) Confirmation from the Head of School that they approve the change in title.

It is not necessary for a candidate to provide the names and addresses of personal referees.

- 2.6.3 The application should be submitted to the Secretary of the Professorial Titles Committee.

3. Honorary Professors

- 3.1 At the discretion of the Professorial Titles Committee, the title of Honorary Professor may be awarded to persons of outstanding academic distinction who meet the criteria above and have been associated with the work of a School or the University over a period of time.
- 3.2 At the discretion of the Vice Chancellor, Honorary Professors will be accorded rights (such as library borrowing rights).

- 3.3 Nominations for consideration will be made through a Head of School.
- 3.4 Appointments will normally be made for 3 years at which point they will be reviewed
- 3.5 Applications will be considered and approved by the internal members of the Committee with guidance sought from external members when required.

4. Visiting Professors

- 4.1 At the discretion of the Professorial Titles Committee, the title of Visiting Professor may be awarded to individuals of high academic standing who are closely involved with the work of the University but not permanent employees. Candidates should be either:
 - a) In employment or self-employment that generates a direct input to research, scholarship or professional interests of the University.
 - b) Retired academics making a direct input to research, scholarship or other academic activity of the University.
 - c) Academics visiting the University from another institution.
- 4.2 The same criteria for appointment are to be used for Visiting Professors as for professorial candidates where the potential Visiting Professor is an academic. For those outside the academic world it may be appropriate to consider additional factors, such as:
 - a) Professional achievement
 - b) Research management and leadership
 - c) Innovative work within the individual's own institution or organisation
 - d) National policy/strategy development
- 4.3 Nominations will be made through a Head of School.
- 4.4 Appointments normally run for three years at which point they will be reviewed.
- 4.5 Applications will be considered and approved by the internal members of the Committee with guidance sought from external members when required.

5. Emeritus Professor

- 5.1 At the discretion of the Professorial Titles Committee, the title of Emeritus Professor may be awarded to those holding the title of Professor who are to retire from the University or, exceptionally, those who have retired. Award of the title will be at the discretion of the Professorial Titles Committee and a report made to Academic Board. **The Award will normally be made for a period of 5 years in the first instance, at which point it will be reviewed.**
- 5.2 The establishment of this title will allow Professors of the University of Worcester to continue to use their professorial title after their retirement; they will also be able to enjoy the same benefits as holders of Honorary Research titles.
- 5.3 Eligibility

Staff who retire and who have previously held the title of Professor for at least five years will be eligible for the title of Emeritus Professor. Individual eligible retiring professors are able to put forward their own names to the Vice Chancellor. All nominations should be submitted through the Secretary to the Professorial Titles Committee.

5.4 Criteria

The Professorial Titles Committee will consider the following criteria:

- a) Evidence of an outstanding contribution to the University
- b) Promise or delivery of a continuing commitment to the University, for example, through research supervision or collaborative ventures or liaison with other bodies.

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Revision History

Committee	Date	Change
Academic Board v1.6	29 January 2020	Minor revision [AB19-29]
Academic Board v1.5	17 October 2018	Minor revisions [AB18-09]
Academic Board v1.4	25 April 2018	Major revisions [AB17-54]
Academic Board v1.3	26 January 2011	Minor changes [AB10-20]
Academic Board v1.2	27 June 2006	Criteria expanded to allow academic leaders to apply as well as teaching and research staff
Academic Board	8 October 2003	New Procedure Approved