

Policy and Procedures on Professorial Titles

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 the mission of the University of Worcester, including responsibilities towards students, the University and the external community. The title of Professor shall be available for conferment on teaching or research staff or academic leaders employed by the University who meet the criteria stated below.
2. The role of Professor shall be to support the mission of the institution and its implementation through the Strategic Plan and the University's policies and procedures. In particular, a Professor shall seek to enhance the quality of the University's academic provision within its taught research and knowledge transfer programmes.
3. Professors must have records of achievements which ensure that on conferment 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.
4. The University's definition of research, advanced scholarship and knowledge transfer includes original investigation in its disciplines, applied, professional and practice-based research reflecting its mission, and commitment to achieving effective synergy between scholarship, research, learning, teaching, knowledge transfer and enterprise and includes:-
 - Original investigation and academic research addressing fundamental questions in appropriate disciplines which is effectively shared through publication in peer-reviewed journals or other equivalent national or international output;
 - Enquiry which refocuses critical opinion or re-orientates professional practice;
 - Creative and practice based endeavor resulting in public output (exhibitions, performances, etc)
 - Knowledge transfer activity, including consultancy, which generates new knowledge and understanding, technologies or methodologies and meets the needs of government, voluntary or public sector bodies, local communities; and commerce or industry;
 - Work-based, action research, evidence-based research and pedagogic evaluation that contribute to the enhancement, innovation

and effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment in higher education and other educational contexts;

- Applied investigative or evaluative work which leads to improvement in service delivery, professional practice and/or policy development;
- Integration or synthesis of existing knowledge to develop understanding (e.g. the writing of textbooks, review articles, development of e-learning resources etc)

5. The term “academic leadership” has two dimensions: participation in various external networks, and internal leadership of an academic department, subject group or research activity.

6. **Professorships**

6.1 **Criteria**

The title of Professor is awarded by the Professorial Titles sub-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:

- i) **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 Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy.
- ii) **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 to creativity or other innovation in teaching and learning
- iii) **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.

6.2 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 application, 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 field of interests.

6.4 Selection

The award of professor is made by Academic Board on the recommendation of the Professorial Titles sub-committee.

The composition of the sub-committee shall include:

Vice Chancellor (Chair)

Deputy Vice Chancellor (Deputy Chair)

Two members of UW staff taken from a pool of 6, as nominated by the Academic Board

Two external members of professorial standing
Registrar and Secretary (Secretary)

6.5 Applications

6.5.1. Advertised Posts

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

6.5.2 Internal Applications

- i) Applications are normally invited on an annual basis in January. Anyone contemplating an application should discuss a possible application with their Head of Institute (or in the case of a Head of Institute with the Deputy Vice Chancellor) at least 6 months before the scheduled date of the application. The Head of Institute will then discuss with the Deputy Vice Chancellor the appointment of a member of the professoriate whose role will be to support the applicant in formulating their application.
- ii) Applications should be submitted to the **Registrar and Secretary**, as secretary of the sub-committee.
- iii) All applications will be considered by the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Registrar and Secretary who will establish

whether a *prima facie* case has been made by an applicant against the criteria stated. This will usually be done by correspondence.

- iv) Where the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Registrar and Secretary are satisfied that a *prima facie* 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 applicant, including independent experts.
- v) Confidential comment will also be sought from the Head of Academic Department or the Deputy Vice Chancellor, if the Head is a candidate for consideration.
- vi) The sub-committee will meet to consider all relevant information and to agree or otherwise the conferment of the professorial title. A report will be made to the Academic Board who shall receive an abbreviated copy of the relevant curriculum vitae. The professorial title shall not be used until after the meeting of Academic Board to which the award has been reported.
- vii) All applications will be considered in confidence.
- viii) Each Professor will undertake an appropriate inaugural activity (lecture, exhibition, presentation) to mark the award of the title.

6.6. Submissions

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

- A statement which outlines their candidacy against the criteria (of no more than 6 sides of A4). It is important that the statement indicates by which criterion or criteria the applicant 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 artifacts, 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 department or within the Institution; 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.

6.6.2 A copy of their curriculum vitae - but it is the responsibility of the candidate to draw attention to relevant aspects thereof.

6.6.3 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.

6.6.4 The names, addresses and full titles of not less 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 applicant's expertise, standing and achievements

6.6.5 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

7. Honorary Professors

7.1 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 department or the University over a period of time. At the discretion of the Vice Chancellor, Honorary Professors will be accorded rights (such as library borrowing rights). Nominations for consideration will be made through a Head of Institute.

8. **Visiting Professors**

- 8.1 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:
- o In employment or self-employment that generates a direct input to research, scholarship or professional interests of the University.
 - o Retired academics making a direct input to research, scholarship or other academic activity of the University.
 - o Academics visiting the University from another institution.
- 8.2 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:
- o Professional achievement
 - o Research management and leadership
 - o Innovative work within the individual's own institution or organisation
 - o National policy/strategy development
- 8.3 Nominations will be made through a Head of Institute
Appointments will not normally run for more than 3 years.

Note: In the case of nominations for the award of Honorary or Visiting Professorships, applications will be considered in the first instance by the internal members of the sub-committee and only where it is requested by one or more members will applications be referred externally.

9. **Emeritus Professor**

- 9.1 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 shall be at the discretion of the Professorial Titles Sub-Committee, following nomination by the Vice Chancellor and a report to Academic Board, and shall normally be made in perpetuity.
- 9.2 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.

9.3 Eligibility

Staff who retire and who have previously held the title of Professor for at least five years shall be eligible for the title of Emeritus Professor. Nominations of eligible staff are sought by the Registrar and Secretary on an annual basis and individual eligible retiring professors are able to put forward their own names to the Vice Chancellor. All nominations should be submitted through the clerk to the committee.

9.4 Criteria

The Professorial Titles Committee will consider the following criteria:

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