Promotion of Academics Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 This policy and associated procedures set out the University’s arrangements in respect of academic promotions.

2 Principles

2.1 The criteria and standards governing promotion in the University of Manchester are founded on the acquisition and maintenance of a high level of scholarship throughout the institution, and will reflect those maintained at comparable levels of academic seniority by the leading research-intensive universities in the world; and

2.2 Access to promotion will normally fall within one or more of four broad categories: (i) research; (ii) knowledge and technology transfer, (iii) teaching and teaching-related activities; and (iv) service and leadership. In practice, these categories are refined into a number of criteria in the guidance documents governing academic promotions; and

2.3 As a research-led university, Manchester expects that its outstanding researchers will continually push forward the frontiers of education in every discipline; and

2.4 Staff holding teaching-only positions will be required to bring to their teaching a high level of scholarly awareness of cognate research and current research trends and a demonstrable grasp of relevant pedagogic principles and issues; and

2.5 Service and leadership alone will not constitute a primary basis for promotion in the University, but may be accorded considerable importance in augmenting an otherwise marginal application based primarily on research, knowledge and technology transfer and/or teaching; and

2.6 An applicant’s curriculum vitae or evidence about related professional achievements are relevant as important indicators of current professional standing and future potential, but the length of a professional career alone is not in itself a relevant consideration; and

2.7 The procedures are intended to ensure the application of rigorous standards as specified and maintained by the University Promotion Committee (UPC), but with no unnecessary bureaucracy to delay or obstruct recognition of individuals or the attainment of relevant criteria; and
2.8 The flexibility of approach within the broad framework established by this Policy is designed to reflect and intended to accommodate the variety of size and composition of Schools within the University’s constituent faculties; and

2.9 The University is committed to equality of opportunity and will ensure that all members of academic staff have equal access to this policy, including part-time employees.

3 Processes

3.1 Primary decision-making in relation to promotion is at faculty level for promotion to Senior Lecturer/Senior Research Fellow and above, and at school level for promotion to the grades below that with provision for central oversight to ensure consistency across the University in relation to promotion opportunities and attainment; and

3.2 Promotion processes and procedures will respect peer-judgement and value professional discretion, and will seek to direct decision-making through concise criteria and clear guidelines; and

3.3 Decisions will reflect evidence-based judgements about current professional standing and well-informed, peer-based evaluations of scholarly potential; and

3.4 As far as practicable, promotion recommendations and/or decisions will be taken by committees whose composition in respect of gender and ethnicity is representative of the wider academic community.

4 Routes to promotion

4.1 Research

The University will expect candidates and their Heads of School to make the strongest possible case based on commonly-adduced criteria of research reputation and performance in their particular field/s of research. The University will seek to recognise and reward both fundamental research and discovery, on the one hand, and on the other, the transfer of knowledge and technology into the cultural and economic life of the wider society. The University expects all of its researchers to contribute significantly to the supervision of doctoral students. Candidates for promotion will be expected, where appropriate to their discipline, to have a record of successful doctoral supervisions, completed within the appropriate registration period. In evaluating cases for promotion, the University will place great weight on peer judgements and objective criteria relating to research output. Such criteria evidently vary from discipline to discipline. For example, the significance of citations varies considerably from one discipline to another, as does
the relative importance of monographs and journal articles. This variance is in itself good reason to rely on faculty-specific processes established within the framework specified by UPC and, within faculties, to rely primarily on peer adjudication.

4.2 Knowledge and Technology Transfer

In evaluating a case for promotion based on research activity the University will give equal weight to fundamental research and applied research and development including the transfer of intellectual property into the wider economy; the translation of research findings into clinical solutions; the development of innovation; research and consulting relationships with companies, government departments and other public bodies; and the enrichment of the wider culture through creativity in the social sciences, humanities and the visual and performing arts.

4.3 Teaching and Teaching-Related Activities

The University normally expects its researchers to contribute significantly to teaching at the undergraduate and/or taught postgraduate levels. Applicants for promotion will normally be required to demonstrate satisfactory student outcomes and good levels of student satisfaction from their teaching practice. Their applications will be strengthened by evidence of innovative teaching, contributions to the advancement of pedagogy and/or exceptional levels of student and peer approval for their contributions to teaching and learning.

4.4 Service and Leadership

Service and leadership will not constitute a primary basis for promotion in the University, but may be accorded considerable importance in augmenting an otherwise marginal application based primarily on research, teaching or knowledge and technology transfer.

Service and leadership refers to significant contributions to the management of the University at School, Faculty or University level, e.g. Admissions Tutor, Head of Section.

4.5 Promotion based wholly on Research and/or Knowledge and Technology Transfer

4.5.1 Promotion to sub-Professorial levels

The University recognises that some academic staff may make their greatest professional contributions in a wholly research based capacity. Such staff seeking promotion to a sub-professorial position will be required to demonstrate that the exclusivity of their research role is augmented by a commensurate contribution to service and administration.

4.5.2 Promotion to Professor

There are circumstances in which the University may be willing to promote to the level of Professor, staff whose career route follows a dedicated and exclusive research path, rather than
one which incorporates the more conventional elements of teaching and service (the details of which will be determined by reference to the current criteria for promotion to a Chair, as amended for relevant application)

4.6 Promotion based primarily or wholly on Teaching

4.6.1 Promotion to sub-Professorial levels

The University recognises that some academic staff may make their greatest professional contributions as teachers. Such staff seeking promotion to a sub-professorial position will have to demonstrate that their teaching (and the student learning that they facilitate) is informed by relevant research findings, exhibits scholarly excellence in the relevant discipline or field, is based on a sound grasp of relevant pedagogies and educational technologies, is innovative, where appropriate, in teaching, and consistently wins appropriate levels of student satisfaction.

4.6.2 Promotion to Professor

Where appropriate, the University will promote to the level of Professor, staff who contribute essentially as teachers. Such circumstances will arise only when the staff concerned are able to demonstrate an outstanding ability to enrich their teaching (and the student learning that it facilitates) through a current, scholarly grasp of relevant research findings. In addition, successful applicants at this level will need to demonstrate distinguished scholarship in the relevant discipline or field, an outstanding contribution to the development of pedagogy and/or educational technologies and consistently high levels of student satisfaction.

5. The Role of the University Promotions Committee (UPC)

5.1 Promotion will involve faculty-based and school-based processes overseen by the University Promotions Committee, and normally be conducted annually. The further role of UPC will be to monitor the conduct of the promotions process at Faculty level in order to confirm that good practice has been observed and timetables met.

5.2 The UPC will comprise the President & Vice-Chancellor (Chair), the policy Vice-Presidents for Research, Teaching and Learning and Knowledge and Technology Transfer and four professorial members of the Senate elected by Senate. Professorial members of the Senate, elected by the Senate to UPC, should serve for a term of four years before being rotated.

5.3 For consideration of applications for promotion to the status of, senior lecturer, senior research fellow and senior teaching fellow, UPC will be supplemented by the addition of two non-professorial members, elected by the Senate.
5.4 Vice-President/Deans will attend UPC meetings to speak to submissions from their Faculty, in order to differentiate between successful candidates at the margin, and also to satisfy the UPC that equitable arrangements were in place throughout Faculties/Schools. Vice-Presidents/Deans are also entitled to attend as observers throughout the entire meeting if they so wish.

5.5 The Director of Human Resources will submit final determinations to the President for report to the Board of Governors on behalf of UPC. In the interests of consistency and quality assurance, whilst UPC will not interfere with the ranking submitted by FPC, it might limit the cohort, without referring back to the FPC.

5.6 Successful candidates will be promoted with effect from August 1st following the year of application, with the exception of fast track candidates.

5.7 Where the UPC decides that a marginal candidate should not be promoted, the feedback of advice will be undertaken orally, with confirmation in writing, in a timely manner, by one of the policy Vice-Presidents, together with the relevant Vice-President & Dean.

6. The Role of Faculty Promotions Committee (FPC)

The following points provide an outline of the promotion process:

6.1 A schedule will be published by the Director of Human Resources at the commencement of the academic year, specifying the final date by when Faculty Promotions Committees are required to have completed their consideration of cases for submission to UPC. UPC will not meet until all faculties have submitted proposals.

6.2 Each Faculty will have a Faculty Promotions Committee chaired by the relevant Vice-President & Dean, together with Associate Deans for Teaching; and Research, two professors, one non-professorial member, and one relevant Associate Dean from another Faculty. The Faculty Promotions Committee will consider cases for promotion to Senior Lecturer/Senior Research Fellow and above.

6.3 In making its decisions each FPC will require a fully documented case for each candidate submitted by the School. External references, where appropriate, will be obtained prior to FPC consideration for promotion candidates submitting an application who have established a *prima facie* case. Where the School does not consider a candidate to be promotable, the member of staff will accordingly be informed orally in the first instance and be provided with appropriate advice by the Head of School or his/her nominee in a timely manner. This oral feedback will then be confirmed in writing. Advice should also be provided in writing on the procedure for making a personal case to the FPC should the candidate wish to do so.
6.4 Where FPC determine that a candidate satisfies criteria for promotion, but where this view is contrary to the findings of the relevant school, FPC may refer the case back to the School for further consideration. FPC may, however, determine that a case recommended by the School should not be submitted to UPC.

6.5 Each FPC will be required to present submissions of its recommendations to the UPC through the Director of Human Resources, who acts as Secretary to UPC, in a manner which will allow meaningful comparison between submissions. Recommendations for promotion must be submitted for each category in rank order of desirability to promote, with care taken to differentiate between each applicant submitted, wherever possible. Recommendations should state for each case what the relative importance is of Research, Knowledge and Technology Transfer and Teaching in the balance of the case.

6.5.1 Where a case is representative of the category of knowledge and technology transfer, comments on individuals should be submitted in a manner which will allow the maintenance of a systematised record of the contribution which warrants promotion.

6.5.2 Presentation of submissions should be accompanied by a profile of constituent schools and appropriate statistics, including metrics of ethnicity, gender and age; size of school; total number of applications for promotion for each category, and the proportion of the total cohort they represent; and the number of unsuccessful applicants at each stage.

6.6 Where the FPC does not consider a candidate to be promotable, the member of staff will accordingly be informed orally and provided with appropriate advice by the Chair of the relevant FPC, or his/her nominee in a timely manner. This will then be confirmed in writing and details of his/her right to appeal as set out in 8.1 will also be provided.

7. The Role of Schools

7.1 Where Schools (or appropriate organisational units) have promotion processes and procedures these will be reviewed and endorsed by the faculty to ensure consistency of approach within its constituency. Schools will be responsible for decisions on cases for promotion to grades 6 and 7 (Lecturer (teaching focused) grades 6 and 7, Research Associate and Research Fellow).

7.2 In making its decisions each School will require a fully documented case for each candidate. References will be obtained prior to consideration of the case. Where the School does not consider a candidate to be promotable, the member of staff will accordingly be informed orally and provided with appropriate advice by a member of the relevant Committee. This will then be confirmed in writing and details of his/her right to appeal as set out in 8.2 will also be provided.
8. **Appeals**

8.1 Candidates unsuccessful at UPC may appeal the decision not to promote them by writing to the Director of Human Resources within 10 working days of receiving written notification that their application has been unsuccessful. The Director of Human Resources will arrange an Appeal Panel which will comprise of the Deputy President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair) and the Vice-President and Deans who will not be part of the determination of appeals from their own Faculty. Appeals will only be considered on the grounds of procedural irregularity. Individuals should submit the grounds for their appeal in writing within the deadline as provided by the Director of Human Resources which will generally be four weeks after UPC meets. The decision of the Appeal Panel is final. The Chair of the Review Panel will be responsible for confirming the outcome of the review to both the individual and the Chair of the relevant FPC.

8.2 Candidates for promotion to grades 6 and 7 who are unsuccessful at School level may request a review of the recommendation not to promote them by writing to the Head of Faculty Human Resources who will arrange for the case to be considered by the FPC (or a subset of the FPC). The decision of the FPC will be final.

9. **Fast track application**

9.1 In cases of threatened loss of a key member of staff, where there is clear evidence that the member of staff has received or is likely to receive an offer from another university or organisation, and is considered to be qualified for promotion, the relevant Vice-President and Dean, having previously consulted members of a properly constituted FPC, may bring a recommendation forward to the UPC for immediate consideration for promotion. The UPC will, in considering FPC cases, have access to information on the number of cases fast tracked in the previous 12 months.