

Building a Case for Professorial Promotion

A Guide to Writing the Case for Promotion to Professor

This document has been designed to assist you in presenting a compelling case for promotion at the Professorial level. It provides guidance on how to think about and present your case in a way that encapsulates your professional achievements, contributions and leadership attributes. This guide is a supplementary document to the Policy, PPL 5.70.17a Criteria for Academic Performance.

Your application for promotion will include the completion of Form G – Case for Promotion to Professor. The Case for Promotion to Professor consists of a one page Executive Summary followed by no more than two pages of career narrative presenting your case in a concise format in the context of your last five year's academic performance.

The role of Professor at The University of Queensland (UQ) signifies an international reputation for academic excellence and leadership and a promise for significant future leadership. The University requires its Professors to demonstrate outstanding achievement in their field, to be internationally recognised for their contributions and to increase their leadership role within and outside the University through constructive influence. Professorial promotion recognises excellent past performance and is a vehicle for you to advance your discipline, University and contribution to society.

The Case for Promotion to Professor is your opportunity to provide to the Professorial Confirmation and Promotions Committee an organised, well-balanced, concise career summary that clearly demonstrates your case for promotion and potential for future achievement.

1. Section 1 - The Executive Summary

The Executive Summary consists of a Summary Statement and Supporting Statements and must not exceed one page in total (please do not adjust fonts and margins in the template).

The Summary Statement should provide a concise summary of the context in which you work and your compelling case for promotion highlighting your contributions across the key academic performance areas (Teaching & Learning, Research & Creative Work, and/or Scholarship of Teaching, Service & Engagement). The Summary Statement should be no more than three paragraphs. Please note that the Committee will be reading all of your submission documents in detail, this Summary is an opportunity to highlight to the Committee your compelling case in a concise form.

The Supporting Statements are to outline in point form the key indicators that support your Summary Statement. This is an opportunity to highlight your highest quality, most impactful academic achievements over the past 5 years.

Here is some practical advice which you may find helpful:

- As a starting point in your application, write a brief overview of your achievements since your last promotion or your appointment at UQ as a Level D academic. Consider how the Executive Summary Statement can best narrow these into three leading paragraphs with a focus on 5 years. The narrative in Section 2 will allow you to bring all the components together and expand on this Summary.
- Read the Criteria for Academic Performance Policy (PPL5.70.15) for Level E in your category first, refer back to the Section introduction for your category for a broad overview.
- Reflect on the Guidelines for Evidencing Academic Achievement.
- You may wish to focus on one or two major stand-out achievements which have consolidated your position as a world leader in your field in your Executive Summary. Your supporting documentation ie the following pages and your Academic Portfolio of Achievement will provide more evidence.
- Prepare well in advance, and ask others to read your summary.

2. Section 2 – Career Narrative

The purpose of Section 2 of the Case for Promotion to Professor is to tell the Committee who you are by providing in no more than two pages, the context of your achievements predominantly over the past five years. The Committee does **not** want an activity statement. Your portfolio and other associated documents in the submission include your activities, which the Committee will reference for supportive evidence.

[The Criteria for Academic Performance](#) (PPL 5.70.17a) outlines the criteria for academic promotion. The Committee is looking for evidence of

- Leadership, reputation and outstanding service to your discipline and wider community, both locally, nationally and internationally
- Engagement and/or service that results in productive collaborations that may solve or influence the debate on complex national and/or global issues
- The outstanding impact of your work on your discipline and the wider community and beyond
- Your vision, passion and commitment to excellence in academic leadership, particularly as it relates to the mission, values and strategic direction of UQ.

The [Guidelines on Evidencing Academic Achievement](#) provides an overview of the types of evidence you can draw on to develop your letter and application.

Section 2 is a narrative of who you are as an academic leader. Your narrative needs to not only highlight your academic, research and leadership contribution to date but detail the impact of what you do. You should clearly articulate your plans and ambitions for your role in terms of the University, your discipline and society. Your narrative should be an engaging summary that is authentic and evidence based. It must be concise, honest, self-reflective and influential. It should encapsulate your greatest career contributions. You may find it useful to review University documents such as the UQ Strategic Plan, your unit's strategic plan and other University documents relating to student and research strategy, goals and objectives.

Writing a career narrative requires self-reflection and forward thinking. The result will be a thoughtful account of how the various components of your career come together to be a substantial contribution that has impact. It should be summarised into a case that is academically rigorous and highlights your international standing, while clearly demonstrating your leadership acumen. Particular focus should be given to your plans for your future contribution to your field and to UQ.

To be successful in promotion to Professor, you will need to demonstrate that you are already performing at this level and will continue to provide high level contributions to the University. Therefore the discussion of your exceptional leadership within your field, University and wider community is a critical component of your application.

3. Content

It is recommended that your narrative includes:

- Your vision and plans for your role in your discipline, taking into account:
 - o How the various components of your career to date are brought together to tell a compelling and logical account of your academic trajectory, and
 - o Your outstanding academic achievements to date and the outcomes and impact of your work
- Evidence of academic leadership
- Performance Relative to Opportunity Principle (if appropriate)
- Conclusion

3.1 Vision and Plans for Future

The Committee is seeking demonstrable evidence of your vision, core values and ambitions. They are looking for evidence to support your leadership in a promoted role. They want to be inspired and energised by you and your plans. They want to know that you are a leader.

In this section, describe your vision for your future Professorial role. Outline what you aspire to become, achieve or create in your research, teaching and/or collaborations and engagement. Describe how you plan to achieve your vision. This section needs to be innovative, realistic and described with conviction. Your vision is seeded in your past, is future focused and acknowledges current circumstances.

To build your case for promotion you will need to determine your most outstanding academic achievements to date and their outcomes. You may consider identifying the key events and turning points in your career and the impact of these on you and your work. This will bring cohesion to your case.

You will need to provide evidence of your outstanding academic achievement in the context of your specific academic category. You should draw examples from your academic role to further support your application and focus on the work that you have done in the last 5 years. The following suggestions may help you refine and consolidate your achievements, evidence your claims and provide depth and academic rigor to your case.

Teaching

Provide evidence of your contribution and commitment to excellence in teaching and your leadership role in the maintenance of academic standards and innovations. Examples may include the number of PhD candidates you have supervised, their completion rate and destinations. Innovative approaches to student learning may be summarised, including pedagogies, teaching practice and methods, student engagement, and curriculum development that you have created or lead.

Research and creative work

Present a brief description of your most significant contribution to knowledge which is readily understandable to the interdisciplinary committee. Your Portfolio document will contain the details of your research career and will be available to the committee for reference.

Weave into your case your top five works over the past five years. This may be presented as a series of graphs/tables summarizing the following:

- Number and value of grants by category
- Number of publications by category
- Plenaries – define keynote, fully funded presentations etc.
- Include a statement (50 words) explaining and justifying the impact or significance of each publication/presentation.
- H index (Google scholar/ Web of Science)

Scholarship of teaching and learning

Focus on all aspects of teaching including engaged teaching, and/or Curriculum Development and/or Educational Leadership that supports your claims. Drawing specific attention to your international collaborations, innovations and research outcomes, interdisciplinary partnership and your contribution to the research/scholarly productivity (or creative output) of others.

Service and engagement

Include your service contribution to UQ, your students, your industry partners and external stakeholders. This should demonstrate how you enrich society with knowledge and new understanding and how your work provides real solutions to global problems. Your service to the community based on your expertise and/or as a representative of UQ (media, links and partnership with industry and government, external reviews, policy development) should also be discussed.

Impact of your work

Incorporate the significance and outcomes/impact of your key academic achievements in your narrative. What difference has your work made, and to whom?

Describe how recognised peers and others external to the University and the impact of your influence have acknowledged your work. Evidence of the impact of your achievement may be drawn from impact statements in ARC, NHMRC grant completion reports, citations, contribution to policy development, guidelines for practice, international committees of influence, contribution to your profession, achievement of boards, government committees/taskforces.

Include details of recognised original research, innovations and entrepreneurial activities that achieve commercialisation outcomes, which are valuable for UQ and profound for business, the environment, global communities and society as a whole. Your sponsorship and mentoring of high achieving students should also be included.

3.2 Evidence of Academic Leadership

This part of your narrative should clearly describe how your leadership attributes have and will enable you to achieve the vision you have of yourself in the Professorial role.

What significant leadership contributions have you made to your field/your discipline over the past 5 years?

Consider the major national and international leadership roles you have undertaken in your discipline area, at the University and beyond. Detail how your leadership has directly contributed to the success of research teams or centres, attracting external funding and/or sponsors and/or research students. Describe your leadership of collaborations involving external research/consultancy teams (eg industry, regional/community groups, other universities) and your future research/scholarly leadership strategy.

3.3 Performance Relative to Opportunity

The University is committed to providing an equal opportunity environment for its staff in the promotion process through the principle of 'performance relative to opportunity' (Refer PPL5.80.14a Promotion to Professor Section 8).

If you wish the Committee to assess your achievements relative to opportunity you should include in your career narrative:

- a positive acknowledgement of what has been achieved given the opportunities available during the time period being considered in the application (past 5 years)
- any relevant information about your fractional employment arrangement, periods of absence and/ or personal circumstances as part of your career narrative.

3.4 Conclusion

The conclusion to your letter should leave a lasting impression of you as a forward-thinking accomplished and outstanding academic leader that exemplifies the UQ standards of excellence, innovation and endeavour.

4. Feedback

When you have drafted your case, seek feedback from a variety of sources including your Head of School, a collaborator, and a Professor from another discipline. Feedback is the most effective way to evaluate whether you are getting your message across.

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