5.41.1 Probation and Confirmation of Continuing Appointment (Academic Staff) [This policy applies only to mid-term review in 2009. HUPP 5.41.5 applies to final review in 2009]

Policy Number: 5.41.5
Policy Name: Probation and Confirmation of Continuing Appointment (Academic Staff)
Contact Officer: Manager, Continuing Appointments and Promotion
Date Approved by Senate: 27/09/2007
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Related Policies: 5.41.12, 5.70.15, 5.80.12

Overview

1.1 The University is committed to sustaining high standards of performance in its academic staff and provides a selection of roles in which academics can perform their duties, viz. Teaching and Research appointments ("T&R"), Research-Only appointments ("RO") and Teaching-Focussed appointments ("TF"). Where academics in any of these types of roles commence continuing appointments with a probation period, the procedures and requirements of this policy will apply.

1.2 In accepting appointment, members of academic staff undertake to uphold and promote the aims of the University and adhere to the University’s Code of Conduct. The professional efforts of staff should be in line with the mix of duties appropriate to their appointment type as agreed initially at appointment and then from time to time, with their supervisor.

Description

2. General Statement

2.1 When the University approves the appointment of a person to the academic staff, the Executive Dean/Institute Director (up to Level D) or the Vice-Chancellor (Professorial appointments) will inform the appointee in writing in the Offer of Appointment letter of the terms and conditions of the appointment, including the date on which any probationary period of appointment will terminate and drawing attention to any specific expectations or requirements which the University may have of an individual appointee.

2.2 Staff members are expected to be effective academics in the particular role to which they are appointed or in which they subsequently work. They are expected to carry an appropriate share of the necessary administrative work of the University. The duties assigned to the appointee by the Head of School or Centre/Institute Director should reflect the balance appropriate to the type and level of appointment and should ensure that appointees have the opportunity to meet the criteria for confirmation of continuing appointment. Staff members are expected to perform their duties in accordance with the Code of Conduct.
2.3 All appointees are expected to discuss the expectations of their role and formulate and agree upon a staff development plan with the Head of School or Centre/Institute Director within the first three months of appointment. Any recommendation(s) of an appointment committee shall be given due consideration by the Head/Director and the staff member in agreeing to a plan. It will be the joint responsibility of the Head/Institute Director with the staff member to consider the implications of changing a staff member’s role while on probation and requirements for final review. For example confirmation for a T & R academic would normally require evidence of teaching effectiveness. If the staff member has a temporary variation of role as a Research Only academic he/she may be encouraged to undertake teaching evaluations on limited teaching responsibilities such as guest lecturing, if appropriate.

2.4 All staff on probationary appointments shall be reviewed annually (see policy 5.70.15) by the Head of School or Centre/Institute Director (or his or her delegate) who may consult a relevant discipline leader.

2.5 Staff on a probationary appointment will be reviewed by the relevant Committee(s) in the third year (mid-term review) and the first semester of the fifth year (final review) of their appointment. The dates for submission of applications for mid-term review and final confirmation are advised annually by the Human Resources Division.

2.6 A probationary period provides opportunities for the University to review the performance of the staff member and the staff member to assess the University. It does not imply automatic confirmation of continuing appointment on completion.

2.7 Consistent with The University of Queensland Discrimination and Harassment policy, and state and federal Acts, staff members should not be treated less favourably due to their sex, gender identity, parental status, family responsibilities, pregnancy, breastfeeding, age, race, and/or impairment, for example. These attributes may impact on a staff member’s capacity to work uninterrupted and/or full time.

The University is committed to providing an equal opportunity environment for its staff in its performance appraisal, continuing appointment and promotion processes through the principle of ‘performance relative to opportunity’. The quality of the staff member’s performance will be assessed against the standard for that level. In terms of expectations for activity and output, consideration will be given to the fraction at which they are employed, periods of absence and/or personal circumstances. Where information about a staff member’s personal circumstances is provided, that information will remain confidential to the assessing committees.

2.8 Applications from candidates who subsequently resign or who are otherwise terminated will cease to be processed from the date of receipt of the resignation, or notification from Human Resources Division of the termination.

3. Probation and Continuing Appointment

3.1 In this statement "continuing appointment" means appointment to continuing full-time or part-time employment, subject to the successful completion of a probationary period and the permanency of which is qualified by resignation, redundancy or dismissal pursuant to the relevant University of Queensland Enterprise Agreement.

3.2 Appointment to the rank of Associate Lecturer (Level A), Lecturer (Level B), Senior Lecturer
(Level C) and Associate Professor (Level D) will be a probationary appointment for five (5) years.

3.3 The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) may shorten or waive the probationary period having regard to prior experience or service.

3.4 An extension of the probationary period for one or two years may be granted by the Chair on behalf of the Central Confirmation and Promotion Committee (CCPC) upon request from the staff member. This request requires written support from the relevant Head of School or Centre/Institute Director.

3.5 Candidates on probation for continuing appointment, who apply for promotion and are successful, will also be considered by the Local Confirmation and Promotions Committee (LCPC) or the Central Confirmation and Promotions Committee (CCPC) for early confirmation of continuing appointment if they have been employed by the University for two years or more at the time of application for promotion. This includes candidates whose two years employment at the University has included a fixed term contract.

4. Criteria for confirmation of continuing appointment

4.1 Academic staff will be assessed on their performance of the duties pertaining to their type and level of appointment according to the criteria set out in policy 5.70.17 Criteria for Academic Performance.

4.2. They should also refer to the Guidelines for Mid-term and Final Review for Continuing Appointment attached to this policy for further information on the submission to be made and the process to be followed.

5. Responsibilities of staff members and Heads/Directors

5.1 It is the responsibility of the staff member at the time of any review to provide full information relating to his or her performance based on the criteria set out in policy 5.70.17, and in relation to any specific expectations or requirements which the University may have stipulated in the letter of appointment.

5.2 It is the responsibility of the Head/Director or his/her delegate to conduct with the staff member an appraisal during which the Academic Portfolio of Achievement will be discussed. For each candidate for mid-term or final review, the Head/Director will complete a Head’s Assessment (Form D) that will be forwarded to the candidate for any comment and to the LCPC. The Head/Director will nominate referees in the case of final review (see Guidelines for Candidates for Mid-Term and Final Review for Continuing Appointment). The Head may consult a candidate when selecting referees but must inform the LCPC of any referee suggested by the candidate.

5.3 For final reviews, the Head/Director will, before making a recommendation on continuing appointment, consult a range of senior members of the School.

6. Procedures for mid-term and final review of probation

6.1. Mid-Term Review
The mid-term review for Levels A to D for all types of appointments ("T&R", "TF" and "RO") will be carried out by the relevant LCPC. The staff member will submit an Academic Portfolio of Achievement and associated documentation after completing an annual review with the Head of School/Centre or Institute Director or delegate. The Head/Director will submit a report (Form D) to the Committee.

After the Committee considers the relevant documentation, the LCPC Chair will provide a feedback letter on the candidate’s progress to the staff member and to the Head/Director. A meeting between the Chair of the LCPC (or nominated LCPC representative), staff member and, normally, the relevant Head may be required by the LCPC or at the request of the staff member. The purpose of the feedback meeting is to further elaborate on the written feedback and to provide advice on the staff development plan. Since continuing appointment guidelines may change and membership of committees will alter, advice given at such interviews can only be general and will not be binding on future committees.

### 6.2. Final Review

#### 6.2.1 The Local Confirmation and Promotions Committee (LCPC)

The final review for all types of appointments ("T&R", "TF" and "RO") for Levels A to D is considered by the LCPC; however, cases may be referred to the CCPC for decision. The case will be referred to the CCPC for consideration where there is a lack of consensus of the LCPC on the outcome for confirmation.

A staff member undertaking Final Review is required to submit an Academic Portfolio of Achievement and associated documentation, including referee nominations after completing an annual review with the Head/Director. The Head/Director provides an assessment of the candidate and nominates suitable referees.

Candidates will have the opportunity to respond to any adverse comments made by assessors or referees.

The LCPC’s deliberations result in one of the following outcomes:

1. Confirmation in continuing appointment.
2. Non-confirmation of continuing appointment.
3. Case referred to the CCPC including all recommendations for an extension of probation for up to two years.

In cases where the LCPC refers the matter to the CCPC for resolution, or there is a recommendation that the probation be extended LCPC summary reports and relevant continuing appointment documentation are provided to the CCPC on the candidates concerned.

In cases of confirmation and non-confirmation of continuing appointment the Chair of the LCPC communicates the Committee’s decision for all candidates to the CCPC and the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

In cases where the LCPC’s decision does not agree with the recommendation from the Head/Director, the Chair of the LCPC informs the Head/Director.

#### 6.2.2 The Central Confirmation and Promotions Committee (CCPC)
The CCPC considers referred cases and recommendations for extensions of probation and reaches a determination on these cases and communicates its decisions to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

6.3 The Chair of the CCPC advises the staff member not later than six months before the end of any probationary appointment whether it is proposed to offer continuing appointment, an extension of the probationary appointment, or not to offer continuing appointment. Failure to give six months notice shall not have the effect of extending or renewing the appointment, but in that event the staff member will be paid as compensation in lieu of notice an amount equal to the salary and any other emoluments of office for a period from the probation expiry date to the date six months after the date of notice by the Chair of the CCPC.

7. CCPC and LCPC: Committees’ Structure and Roles

7.1 The Local Confirmation and Promotions Committee (LCPC) is comprised of:

- A chair who is the Executive Dean or Director of the cognate Institute(s);
- One Level D or E staff member who is the Local Committee’s representative on the Central Committee and is the Central Committee’s representative on another Local Committee;
- One CCPC representative from another Local Committee (normally an Arts/Humanities representative would be on a Sciences Local Committee and vice versa);
- Four staff members (one staff member at Level E, two at Level D and one at Level C or alternatively three staff members at Level D and one at Level C), giving balanced representation across the Faculty and cognate Institute(s).

A quorum will be the Chair, the CCPC representative and two other members.

7.2 Committee members must declare all conflicts of interest to the Chair of the LCPC in the first instance, who will determine the level of conflict and take appropriate action including referring the matter to the Chair of the CCPC, where appropriate.

7.3 Committee members will respect the confidentiality of the Committee’s deliberations and associated continuing appointment documentation and the privacy of the staff member, including any personal circumstances, at all times.

7.4 Members of the LCPC should not themselves be subject to probation. The Level C member should not be an applicant for promotion during the term of their appointment on the Committee.

7.5 The Guidelines for committee members, University Officers and CA&P Section contain further information relevant to committee members.

7.6 The LCPC acts on mid-term review, confirmation and promotion decisions for all types of appointments (Teaching and Research, Teaching Focused and Research Only) for a Faculty and cognate Institute(s).

7.7 The Central Confirmation and Promotions Committee (CCPC) is comprised of:

- The Chair who is the President of the Academic Board;
- Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor for policy decisions (only);
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic);
• Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research);
• Deputy President of the Academic Board;
• The “representatives” from each of the LCPCs.

A quorum will be the Chair, at least one Deputy Vice-Chancellor (or the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor for policy decisions) and at least three “representatives.”

The CCPC is the decision-making body in cases where a referred recommendation has been made by the LCPC or where extensions are recommended.

The CCPC acts as a policy, monitoring and decision making committee at University level.
It reviews and monitors the mid-term review, final review and promotion processes each year and provides overall outcomes and statistics from the LCPC to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the University through the Academic Board.

8. Feedback

The Chair of the LCPC and LCPC nominee, or the Chair of the CCPC, if appropriate, will meet with candidates who are not confirmed in their continuing appointment on the request of the candidate.

Candidates and their Heads (if appropriate) whose probation is extended will receive feedback by interview with the Chair of the LCPC (or LCPC nominee) and Chair of the CCPC.

9. Appeals

Appeals can only be made to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor on procedural grounds and must be lodged within 14 days of the date of issue of notification. An appeal may be made in writing to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor who has discretion in reviewing the case, and whose decision will be final. It is expected that unsuccessful candidates or candidates for whom an extension of probation has been recommended should seek the feedback discussion prior to appealing.

Guidelines for committee members, University officers and CA&P section HR
Guidelines for candidates for mid-term and final review

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