

A'Sharqiyah University Policy

ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS POLICY

Policy name	Academic Promotions Policy		
Policy number	AC008		
Contact Person	Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research (DVCAAR)		
Approval Authority	Board of Trustees		
Date first approved	11 January 2015	Last substantive review	23 June 2022
Policy Review Cycle	One year	Next review	June 2023

1. Definitions

Terms / Abbreviations	Definition
Collegial Work Ethic	Ability to work co-operatively and effectively in a team with initiative for the benefit of A'Sharqiyah University.
Consultancy	Non-teaching applications of scholarship or research that provide expert service to government, business or industry. Only consultancies that attract income to the University and are undertaken through the University will be considered.
Leadership	Guidance, support and facilitation of the collective efforts of academic and non-academic colleagues in teaching research, consultancy, university and community service. Formulation and implementation of policies at Departmental, College and University levels.
Research	Scholarly investigations that generate new knowledge, ideas, processes and creativity.
Academic Classifications	Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor.
Sections of Academic Classifications	Lecturer A, B and C; Assistant Professor A and B; Associate Professor A and B. Each of these sections has five annual steps: 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). Professor has only one section and no annual steps.
Scholarship	The attainment and/or practice of state of the art, knowledge, and technique.

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University and Community Service	Participating in the administrative, leadership, and governance structures of the University including committee work both internally and external to the University. Service as a reviewer or editor for research publications.
Teaching	Scholarly activities that draw on one's discipline and expertise to provide opportunities for students' learning and academic development.
MoHERI	Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.

2. Purpose

A'Sharqiyah University is committed to motivating and retaining academic staff by offering opportunities for promotion and rewarding excellent performance. The overall objective of this policy is to provide a coordinated definition of eligibility for academic promotion, and a consistent process for consideration and approval of academic promotions.

3. Scope

The policy applies to all academic staff of A'Sharqiyah University.

4. Policy Statement

4.1 The academic promotion process at A'Sharqiyah University shall be fair and transparent. It will be based on the principles of merit and equity. Demonstrated achievement will be the principal factor for gaining promotion. Primary consideration will be given to performance since appointment or last promotion, whichever is most recent.

4.2 All applications for academic promotion including supporting documents will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Members of College and University Academic Promotion Committees may not divulge the content of applications, supporting materials or discussions relating to academic promotions outside committee meetings.

4.3 Schedule

The academic promotions scheme will ideally run annually. It will be structured so that academic promotions take effect from 1 September of the following academic year.

4.4 Eligibility for Promotion

4.4.1 A minimum of four (4) completed years' service at his/her current academic rank is required. The date for determining the minimum period is the closing date for receipt of applications.

4.4.2 Applications for promotion to a higher section within one classification (e.g. from Assistant Professor A-2 to Assistant Professor A-5) will not be considered by the Academic Promotions Committee.

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- 4.4.3 A member of staff who submits an application for academic promotion shall excuse themselves from serving on the College and/or University Academic Promotions Committee during that particular year.

5. Key Stakeholders

University Academic Staff, Board of Trustees, Board of Directors, and MoHERI.

6. Procedures and Guidance

6.1 Application Procedure

6.1.1 Calling for Applications

The Vice Chancellor will call for applications once each year at the beginning of the month of September subject to budgetary considerations. All candidates who feel that they meet the relevant criteria for promotion to the next academic rank are strongly encouraged to apply and the closing date will be 15th October. The number of promoted posts available in the University may vary from year to year and shall be determined by the Vice Chancellor taking into account the University's budgetary considerations and staffing requirements. Successful candidates for promotion will compete for the available posts and academic promotions will take effect on the 1st September of the following academic session.

6.1.2 Advisory Support

Every applicant is urged to discuss his/her intention to apply and the application itself with his/her line manager and the College Dean. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to seek advice from their Dean prior to submitting an application for promotion. Applicants are reminded that academic promotions at the University are evidence-based and that applications are judged against published criteria and therefore the role of the Dean is purely advisory. The decision to submit or not to submit an application for promotion rests with the applicant.

6.1.3 Method of Application

1. All applications for academic promotion will be assessed based on evidence of performance in three areas: 1. Teaching, 2. Research and Consultancy, and 3. University and Community Service. In addition, the University Academic Promotions Committee will assess the applicant's academic qualifications and collegiality. The Committee will assess the evidence and make its recommendation as to whether a promotion is warranted based on this assessment.
2. Each applicant should attach to their application a covering letter, case for support, an academic achievement portfolio and curriculum vitae.
3. It is matter for each applicant to decide on how best to make their case for academic promotion. Applicants should pay particular attention to the criteria given in [Section 6.2](#) of this policy. Applicants are required to provide a brief narrative about their achievements in each element of the criteria and provide evidence to support their claims.
4. All applicants are required to provide sufficient evidence to substantiate their claims and to enable the College and University Academic Promotions Committees to assess whether the

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applicant meets the criteria and standard of performance required to be promoted. Evidence should be of high quality and should highlight the impact of the applicant's work.

5. The completed application together with supporting evidence must be submitted electronically to the Secretary of the University Academic Promotions Committee by the closing date. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
6. The University Academic Promotions Committee may exclude as fundamentally deficient some applications (areas of deficiencies will be clearly stated and communicated to applicants), but some candidates may be called for interview. The Dean of the relevant college may also be interviewed.
7. The University Academic Promotions Committee will forward the research section of all applications to three external reviewers for assessment, at least two of whom will be outside the Sultanate of Oman.

6.2 Promotion Criteria

6.2.1 Promotion from Assistant Lecturer to Lecturer

For promotion from Assistant Lecturer to Lecturer, the applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Hold a Master's degree in a relevant discipline from a University recognized by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.
- Have at least one semester's teaching experience at A'Sharqiyah University.
- A collegial work ethic and proven ability to work collaboratively.
- A good teaching record evidenced through feedback from students, peer review of teaching and a self-evaluation.

6.2.2 Promotion from Lecturer to Assistant Professor

For promotion from Lecturer to Assistant Professor, the applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Hold a PhD in a relevant discipline from a University recognized by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.
- Have at least one year's teaching experience at A'Sharqiyah University.
- A collegial work ethic and proven ability to work collaboratively.
- Demonstrated research potential evidenced by publication of at least one journal paper and one conference paper whilst at A'Sharqiyah University.

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- A good teaching record evidenced through feedback from students, peer review of teaching and a self-evaluation.

6.2.3 Promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor

For promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor, the applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Hold a PhD in a relevant discipline from a University recognized by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation
- Have a minimum of 4 years' experience at the rank of Assistant Professor of which at least 2 should have been spent at A'Sharqiyah University.
- Evidence of teaching excellence and innovation.
- An established research record including publications in high quality refereed and indexed international journals (Six international journal papers minimum and all should have been published after gaining the PhD and attaining the rank of Assistant Professor). At least one or two of these papers should have been prepared by the applicant as the corresponding or first author.
- At least 50% of the research papers presented for promotion should be in the field of the candidate's area of specialization.
- Proven record of excellent service to the University and the Community.

6.2.4 Promotion from Associate Professor to Professor

For promotion from Associate Professor to Professor, the applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Hold a PhD in a relevant discipline from a University recognized by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.
- Have a minimum of 4 years' experience at the rank of Associate Professor of which at least 2 should have been spent at A'Sharqiyah University.
- Demonstrate an outstanding contribution and commitment to high quality teaching at all levels, with the ability to develop and provide excellent advanced University teaching materials and programs.
- Evidence of an active role in upholding the highest academic standards and in developing educational policies and curricular.
- An outstanding record of research in a relevant discipline, with a good portfolio of major publications in high quality refereed and indexed journals (Eight international journal papers minimum and all should have been published after gaining the PhD and attaining the rank of Associate Professor). Four of these journal papers should have been published with A'Sharqiyah University's affiliation. At least one or two of

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these papers should have been prepared by the applicant as the corresponding or first author.

- At least 50% of the research papers presented for promotion should be in the field of the candidate's area of specialization.
- Experience as Principal Investigator on research projects with multiple external research grants.
- Demonstrated willingness to represent the discipline at College and University level and to provide leadership in community affairs particularly those related to the discipline.

6.3 Assessment Matrix

The suitability of an applicant for academic promotion will be evaluated against the following key elements:

- Teaching
- Research and Consultancy
- University and Community Service.

The assessment matrix for assessing applicants in the three key areas which are graded is therefore as follows:

Assessment	Total	Minimum
Teaching	40%	25%
Research and Consultancy	40%	25%
University and Community Services	20%	10%

To be eligible for promotion, an applicant must achieve a score of 75% and the minimum acceptable score in each area is indicated above.

6.4 General Guidelines on Criteria and Evidence

6.4.1 Teaching

Evidence under the teaching criteria may include but not limited to:

- Peer observation reports on the quality of teaching
- Student course evaluation survey results

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- Publications of text books.
- Participation in curriculum development
- 6.4.2** Each applicant is advised to reflect on their own teaching practice and submit evidence to show, for example, how his/her:
 - Creation of learning experiences and assessments that reflect the integration of discipline and transferable skills.
 - Organization and facilitation of learning experiences to assist students in achieving desired outcomes.
 - Provision of suitable feedback directed to individual student requirements.
 - Response to students with sensitivity to background and learning style in a variety of settings.
 - Generation and fostering of student enthusiasm for learning.
 - Support to the development of students' independent learning ability and ability to learn with others.

6.4.3 Research and Consultancy

Evidence in Research and Consultancy may include, but not limited to:

- Refereed journals papers, conference publications, books, book chapters, etc.)
- Paper citation count
- Research grants
- Editorship of national and international journals and conference proceedings
- Awards from national professional societies and international learned societies
- Keynotes and invited addresses nationally and internationally
- Chairmanship and program committee membership of well recognized conferences
- Membership of grant awarding bodies
- Editorship of conference proceedings
- Best paper awards
- Awarded patents and licenses
- Learned society involvement
- External examiner for research degrees such as Masters and Doctoral degrees

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- Reviewer of research grant proposals
- Elected Fellowship of learned societies

6.4.4 University and Community Service

Evidence of contributions to University and Community Service; may include; but not limited to:

- Articles written in newspapers and magazines.
- Membership of College and University Committees
- Academic program management and course co-ordination
- Conducting training courses and general lectures
- Participation in events, interviews and scientific or specialist programs via media
- Building beneficial relationships with business and industry
- Building academic partnerships with national and international institutions.
- organizing conferences, symposiums or exhibitions
- Contributions to the Higher Education Sector
- Participation in establishing academic units, departments, centers, labs, etc.
- Any other contributions by the applicant that serve the University or the Community.

6.5 Guidelines for Selection of External Reviewers (Referees)

The University Academic Promotions Committee shall appoint at least three reviewers for each applicant except for applications from Assistant Lecturer to Lecturer and from Lecturer to Assistant Professor where external reviewers are not required. The nominations of external reviewers for each applicant shall come from the College Dean. If one reviewer declines to provide an independent report, then the University Academic Promotions Committee shall seek other nominations from the College Dean. Each reviewer will be paid OMR 100 for their services per application. The following conditions apply to the selection of reviewers:

- The referees should hold a position of not less than Associate Professor.
- Reviewers should be experts in the same field of specialization as the applicant and are required to provide an independent report on the quality of the candidate's research and other details relating to the promotion.
- Reviewers must be at a higher academic rank than the applicant.

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- Reviewers shall be based in recognized Higher Education Institutions and at least two of them shall be from outside the Sultanate of Oman.
- Reviewers should have no current or previous relationship with the applicant.

External reviewers are not required for promotion from Assistant Lecturer to Lecturer and from Lecturer to Assistant Professor.

6.6 College Academic Promotions Committee

The College Academic Promotions Committee will consist of three people nominated by the Dean. All members of the committee will be at the rank of Associate Professor or Full Professors. All members nominated to serve on the committee shall be at a higher rank than the applicant. The Dean may nominate suitable individuals from other Colleges in the University to serve on the Committee.

The College Academic Promotions Committee will discharge the following responsibilities:

- Discuss the promotion applications from the college and check for completeness and eligibility of the candidate.
- Evaluate the teaching performance and University/Community service of the candidate.
- If the application meets the required conditions, recommend that the application be submitted to the University Academic Promotions Committee.
- If the application, does not meet the required conditions, advise the candidate to make amendments to the application where applicable and send it to the Vice Chancellor's office within one week.

The College Academic Promotions Committee will be chaired by the Dean provided that they are at a higher academic rank than the applicant.

It should be clarified that the decision to or NOT to submit the application for promotion to the University Academic Promotions Committee rests with the applicant. The role of the College Academic Promotions Committee is in effect advisory.

6.7 University Academic Promotions Committee

All applications for promotion in the University shall be considered by the University Academic Promotions Committee which shall be constituted as follows:

Chair – Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research.

Four members of academic staff who are Associate Professors or Full Professors.

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The Director of Human Resources shall attend meetings of the University Academic Promotions Committee to provide secretarial support and to observe that due process is adhered to in considering applications for academic promotion.

A member of staff shall not serve on both the College Academic Promotions Committee and the University Academic Promotions Committee during any given academic promotions round. Furthermore, Associate Professors shall not participate in deliberations on applications for promotion to full Professor.

The University Academic Promotions Committee will discharge the following responsibilities for each applicant:

- Consider the application and check for completeness and eligibility of each candidate.
- Consider the external reviewers reports on the quality of the candidate's research.
- Evaluate each application for academic promotion in the areas of teaching, research and consultancy; and university and community service.
- Assess the applicant's academic qualifications and collegial work ethic.
- Consider all reports on the application including minutes of the College Academic Promotions Committee and, if any, referee and external reviewer reports, etc.
- Make recommendations to the Vice Chancellor for final approval regarding the merits or readiness of each applicant for academic promotion.

6.8 Decision Making and Reporting

The University Academic Promotions Committee shall seek to reach decisions through discussion, deliberation, and consensus. Decisions will be reached by a majority vote in case of failure to arrive at a decision by consensus. In case of a tie, the Chairman shall cast the deciding vote. The Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research shall provide a report to the Vice Chancellor on decisions reached by the Committee. In cases where the recommendation of the Committee is not accepted by the Vice Chancellor, the application will be referred back to the University Academic Promotions Committee for review and reconsideration.

The Vice Chancellor will report to the University Academic Board, the Board of Trustees and the Board of Directors the names of successful applicants and the success rate of all applications for all academic ranks. Copies of all academic promotions decisions shall also be sent to the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.

Notification of Results to Candidates

The Vice Chancellor will notify the candidate in writing on the outcome of his/her promotion application after a decision has been reached by the University Academic Promotions Committee. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified within 15 days of the decision date.

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All unsuccessful applicants will be provided with detailed feedback on their applications by the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research. College Deans will be responsible for guiding unsuccessful applicants on how they can strengthen their applications in subsequent rounds of academic promotions.

6.9 Appeals

An applicant may appeal to the Vice Chancellor and seek reconsideration of their application if they believe that this policy or due process and procedures have not been followed in considering their application.

Appeals must be substantiated with evidence of alleged procedural irregularities or violation and must be lodged within 30 days of receipt of the rejection decision.

In considering an appeal, the Vice Chancellor will only consider documents presented in the original application. No extra documentation will be considered. The Vice Chancellor's decision on any appeal is final and will be communicated to the applicant within 30 days from the date of submitting the appeal.

6.10 Miscellaneous

Internationally registered patents and other intellectual property publications will be considered as research publications in assessing a candidates' research performance.

Publications that are in preparation or have been submitted but not yet accepted should not be cited in the application.

The research papers submitted for promotion shall be conducted after getting the PhD and the last academic title.

Research papers accepted for publication shall be attached with an original letter from the publisher stating that the research is accepted for publication.

The research papers submitted for the promotion should not be part of the applicant's Masters or PhD thesis or of his previous publications or previous academic promotion request.

Candidates must include with their application copies of all publications cited in support of their case for promotion including others that they consider most significant since appointment or promotion to their current position.

The College or University Academic Promotions Committees may request for soft copies of all other publications or documents cited in the application.

Candidates should highlight their individual contributions to any joint activities such as joint teaching, joint research publications, research supervision, research projects and joint consultancy work.

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The University Academic Promotions Committee is empowered to recommend any candidate for academic promotion even if they do not precisely fit the prescribed promotion criteria. However, this power will only be exercised in exceptional cases.

Appendix A

Indicative Requirements and Characteristics of Academic Grades

Title	Step	Indicative Requirements <i>Higher levels normally must satisfy lower level criteria</i>	Characteristics
Professor		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outstanding performance in at least two of and satisfactory performance in at least one of teaching, research, and University/Community service. • A minimum of 8 publications in internationally recognized journals published after attaining a PhD and the rank of Associate Professor. At least one or two of these papers should have been prepared by the applicant as main researcher or first author. • At least 50% of the research papers presented for promotion should be in the field of the candidate's area of specialization. • Multiple external research grants with significant research income. 	Promotion to Professor is for the exceptional few who have distinguished themselves in making major contributions to academia.
Associate Professor	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated excellence in teaching, research and University/Community service • Demonstration of successful leadership • A minimum of 6 internationally recognized journal publications published after attaining a PhD and the rank of Assistant Professor. At least one or two of these papers should have been prepared by the applicant as main researcher or first author. • At least 50% of the research papers presented for promotion should be in the field of the candidate's area of specialization. • Principal Investigator for several research grants 	<p>Not all academics will reach Associate Professor level merely by diligent work</p> <p>Increasing quality, initiative, responsibility and leadership in teaching, research and service must be demonstrated.</p>
	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Investigator on external research grants • Significant and excellent service showing initiative • 10 years' teaching and research experience with increasing responsibility and leadership 	
	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful external applications for research grants • Significant and excellent service showing initiative 	

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Assistant Professor		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 years teaching and research experience with increasing responsibility. 	Increasing quality of teaching and research outputs
	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PhD is normally required Demonstrated research outputs and potential 3 years' successful academic experience 	Increasing course and program responsibility and initiative
Lecturer	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master's degree (or PhD with limited experience) 10 years' successful teaching experience Significant and excellent service 	Increasing course and program responsibility
	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 years' successful experience Demonstrated service 	Increasing teaching experience and quality
	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor's degree. Teaching Potential 	

7. References

None

8. General provisions

- Everything that is not provided for in this policy/procedure is subject to the relevant Omani law and the internal regulation of the university
- Any violation or breach of one of the provisions of this policy/procedure makes those responsible accountable in accordance with the provisions of the relevant Omani law and the internal regulations of the university.
- Any exception from this policy/procedure upon application shall have no effect against the university or others unless it has been approved by the Vice Chancellor or Board of Directors as the case may be.

9. Revision History

Version	Author/Reviewer	Revision(s) made and justification	Date
I	Chair of Academic Promotion Policy Committee	Changes to the Academic Promotions Policy subject to the development of procedures for selection criteria for the external reviewer and review criteria.	23 February 2017
II	University Teaching and	Policy has been revised to ensure alignment with Ministerial Resolution No 2/2014 which was reissued on 20th April, 2017. The main changes are:	22 June 2017

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	Learning Committee	<p>The minimum experience requirement at any academic rank before being eligible for promotion has been reduced from 6 years to 4 years;</p> <p>Section 6.3 has been revised and quantitative assessments have been introduced to judge the success or otherwise of an application;</p> <p>Section 6.5 regarding external reviewers has been rewritten;</p> <p>Section 6.10 (Miscellaneous provisions) has been rewritten to improve clarity in relation to the requirements on research papers submitted in support of the application</p>	
III	DVC	Annual Review	3 October 2017
IV	DVC	Annual Review	17 July 2018
V	University Teaching and Learning Committee	<p>The Academic Promotions Policy has been revised taking into account the recommendations of the OAAA Audit report. In particular, the last paragraph in Section 6.9: Appeals. The main changes are:</p> <p>Every member of academic staff who submits an appeal to the University will receive a reply from the Vice Chancellor within 30 days of submitting the appeal.</p> <p>Every unsuccessful applicant will be entitled to detailed feedback on their application.</p> <p>College Deans will provide guidance to all unsuccessful applicants on how they can strengthen their applications in subsequent rounds of academic promotions.</p>	5 November 2018
VI	DVCAAR	Substantive Review Changes to the Policy as suggested are likely to increase in research productivity and motivation of academic staff to amend Section 6.1 of the Academic Promotions Policy and it has been revised to reflect this.	23 June 2019
VII	DVCAAR	The policy was amended as follows:	23 June 2022

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility criteria has been amended and academic staff whose applications are unsuccessful can resubmit applications the following year without any restrictions. • The Vice Chancellor's discretion to waive eligibility criteria has been removed. • It is now not necessary for a Dean to complete a statement in support of an application for promotion. • Criteria for promotion from Assistant Lecturer to Lecturer has now been added to the policy. • Redundant paragraphs at the end of Section 6.3. Assessment Matrix have been removed. • Two bullet point statements on assessment of teaching excellence have been removed. • Redundant statements in the section on selection of external reviewers have been removed. • The size of the College Academic Promotions Committee has been reduced from 5 to 3 Members. • Membership of the University Academic Promotions Committee has been streamlined. The University Academic Promotions Committee is now chaired by the DVCAAR and not the Vice Chancellor. The role of the Vice Chancellor is to receive recommendations of the Committee and to hear appeals if any. • During any given academic promotions round, an individual can serve on either the College Academic Promotions Committee or the University Academic Promotions Committee but not both 	
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