

IMPERIAL

Teaching Staff Promotions 2025

GUIDANCE NOTES

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A. Introduction

Imperial recognises the important contributions made by members of the Teaching job family to the delivery of its mission, and is committed to ensuring that our overall package for reward and recognition is attractive and competitive. A cross-university working group has undertaken a review of both the Research and Teaching job families in several phases. For the Teaching job family this has so far resulted in the introduction of a new grade at level 7 (currently titled “Professor of Teaching”), new role profiles, a revised pay structure, the introduction of ten professional development days and the introduction of an annual promotions process that aligns with that for the Academic job family.

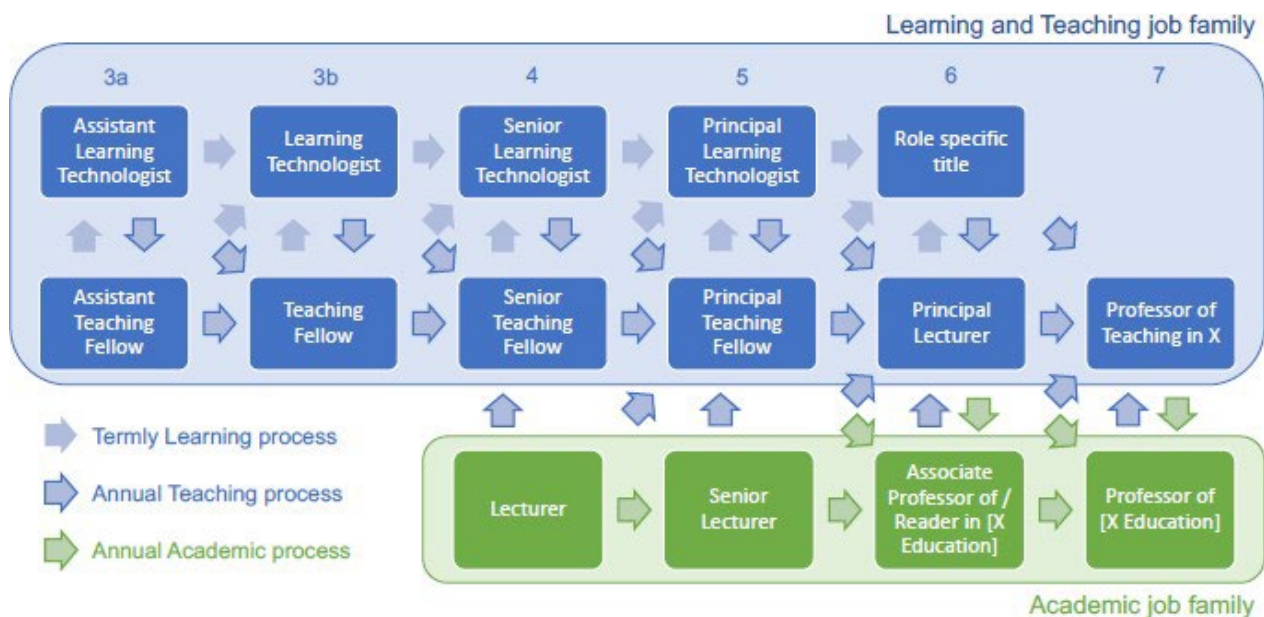
This is the formal guidance governing the annual Teaching promotions process. Further practical guidance, covering completion of the form and preparation for interview, can be found in the slides and recording of a briefing for Teaching staff on the **Teaching Promotions webpage**.

This procedure is for promotion to the Teaching grades of the Learning & Teaching job family listed below. The Role Profiles can be found in Appendix 1-3.

Title	Criteria for Promotion
Teaching Fellow (Level 3b)	Appendix 1
Senior Teaching Fellow (Level 4)	Appendix 2
Principal Teaching Fellow (Level 5)	Appendix 2
Principal Lecturer (Level 6)	Appendix 3
Professor of Teaching in x (Level 7)	Appendix 3

The diagram below represents the career progression opportunities through the various pathways within the Learning & Teaching job family as well as the educational research pathway in the Academic job family.

- Progression for all staff in the Learning and Teaching job family is through promotion on individual merit and on the basis of achievement.
- Promotion for Learning Technologists remains through the termly promotions process.
- Promotion within the Teaching family for Teaching Staff is through the annual promotions process.
- Promotion within or into Academic family – including to Reader or Associate Professor in Education, or Professor in Education – is through the Academic Promotions process.
- Any job family transfers, whether or not they involve a promotion, are managed through the promotions process for the destination job family as indicated, to ensure that all staff meet the expectations of the role.
- The Business School does not support movement from the Academic job family to the Learning and Teaching job family.



Important Employment Considerations

1. Probation and Disciplinary Issues

Applications for promotion cannot be considered in isolation from matters connected with an employee's probation or general employment. If a member of staff is at the informal, or any other stage of the university's Performance Improvement Policy and Procedure, the application will be put on hold until the matter has been resolved, or any warning issued is spent, to the satisfaction of the Deputy Director of Human Resources (Operations). Every effort will then be made to deal with the application as quickly as is practicable. The above also applies to those whose probation has been extended, or where an individual's employment has not been confirmed for performance/disciplinary-related reasons.

Staff who are on probation may be considered for promotion, but only where there are no current disciplinary/capability issues. Staff can only be promoted when all mandatory probationary requirements (e.g. compulsory course attendance) have been completed.

2. Transferring to Learning & Teaching Job Families

It is a condition of promotion that staff, who are still on the old job grading system at the time of their application for promotion, will be moved to the relevant level Learning & Teaching job family, with associated terms and conditions when promoted.

3. Requirements for EEA and non-EEA nationals sponsored under the Skilled Worker Route (SWR) / Tier 2 and T5 Temporary Worker Route (TWR) / Tier 5 (Government Authorised Exchange)

As part of the university's sponsorship duties, the [Staff Compliance Team](#) is required to report any significant changes to sponsored workers' employment, including any promotions, changes in job title or core duties, to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) within 10 working days.

Additionally, should the promotion mean that the worker would need to be sponsored in a different occupation code, for example, a member of academic staff promoted into a teaching-only role, a 'change of employment' application would need to be made. This would require:

- The Staff Compliance Team to issue a new Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS); and
- The worker to make a new application for permission to stay in the UK; and
- The Staff Compliance Team to complete a follow-up Right to Work check of the worker's new status via an Online right to work check, once their new visa status is granted by UKVI, before the effective start date of the promotion is confirmed and the worker starts work in their new role.

Where the worker would need to be sponsored in a different occupation code and they have an application already in process for a non-sponsored immigration category (e.g. Indefinite Leave to Remain, Global Talent Visa, etc), they would need to await the outcome of their application and the Staff Compliance Team would need to complete a follow-up Online Right to Work check before the effective start date of the promotion is confirmed and they start work in their new role.

The Progression team will share the outcomes of the Teaching Promotions exercise for sponsored workers with the Staff Compliance Team to ensure that the relevant reporting requirements are undertaken, or new permission obtained (where required), before promotions for sponsored workers take effect.

B. Departmental Review Procedure for all Staff

Heads of Department Review

- Heads of Departments should arrange an annual review of all Teaching staff to determine whether any proposals should be made for promotion to all Teaching Fellow grades listed in Section A.
- The Head of Department should request all Heads of Sections or Groups in the Department to review Teaching staff in their Section/Group. Heads of Sections/Groups should prepare a report that highlights the achievements and promotion potential of each of their staff against the criteria set out in the role profiles for Teaching staff. This report should be presented to the Departmental Review Panel, together with any proposals for promotion.
- The Head of Department should publish, within the Department, the timetable for the review, indicating that self-applications may also be made for promotion.
- Heads of Department should also consider whether any staff not in the Learning & Teaching job family should be considered for transfer into this job family via the relevant promotions process. This measure should be considered for staff who are making a significant contribution to teaching, educational leadership, education research or educational transformation, beyond that normally expected within their current job family.
- Heads of Department are strongly encouraged to provide each Teaching member of staff with the names of two senior teaching/professorial members of staff who are available to provide informal guidance and advice to candidates regarding promotion. These staff may be outside the Department, but should have an understanding of the disciplinary context of Teaching staff in the Department.
- Heads of Department should be wary of putting forward candidates **prematurely** because of the potential negative effects on a member of staff if unsuccessful (but possibly more likely to succeed the following year). See advice on Previous Applications below.
- Proconsuls and Associate Provost (Learning and Teaching) are now providing a voluntary service to all Faculties and Departments that wish to seek advice on promotion issues. Proconsuls are not conflicted as they do not play a part in the promotions process and will therefore be able to answer any questions or discuss any points that may arise from a

candidate's paperwork.

N.B. Deans of Faculties and Imperial Consuls do not take part in the departmental process by which potential candidates may be identified. Faculty-level panels are advisory only.

Previous Applications

A promotions cycle is counted as starting at the beginning of each academic year. An unsuccessful application for promotion should not be submitted as part of the next promotions cycle the following academic year.

Staff that have been promoted in the preceding promotions cycle will not be considered the following academic year unless measurable, clear and very significant progress can be shown. Permission to advance such applications should be sought from, and granted by, the Vice-Provost (Education and Student Experience). Furthermore, such applications must be flagged when submitted to the Promotions team. The same applies to staff that have been appointed to a post during an ongoing promotions cycle.

Departmental Review Panel Composition

The Panel should be as diverse as possible, with sufficient academic range for broad representation of the Department's education and relevant research.

(a) Faculties of Engineering, Medicine, Natural Sciences, Education Office and the Business School.

The Panels must have the following composition, according to the level of promotion being sought. This may be a combined Panel for all job families or a specific Panel for Teaching staff. ***Either way, Heads of Department must ensure that Panels have sufficient and comparable information to review all eligible staff.***

Levels 3b to 7: Teaching Fellow, Senior Teaching Fellow, Principal Teaching Fellow, Principal Lecturer, Professor of Teaching in X

- Head of Department (Chair)
- At least **five** other members of the Department including a professor and a senior member of the Department with educational responsibilities (for example the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Director of Postgraduate Studies, Director of Education or other similarly titled member of staff).

Before submission to the Learning and Teaching promotions team, please ensure all applications have been approved by the Faculty/Education Office/Business School.

C. Personal Applicants

If an application is not supported by the Departmental Review Panel, the Head of Department **must** inform the candidate of the reasons so that the candidate has the opportunity to make a personal application.

If a personal, unsupported application is made, the Head of Department should provide a brief statement explaining the Departmental Review Panel's reasons. The statement should accompany the **References for Promotion** form when the application is submitted.

Personal applicants submit their application paperwork through the normal Departmental channels. Applications cannot be made in isolation from the Department. Regardless of whether a candidate is supported by the Department, the application is evaluated in exactly the same way at university level as all other applications.

D. Key Date for Submission of Application Documents

17 January 2025, by noon

Departments submit the following documents for each candidate by e-mail to the Learning & Teaching promotions team at the HR alias learning-and-teaching-promotion@imperial.ac.uk:

- **Application Form**
- **Departmental Form**
- **The Departmental Panel's comments on unsupported applications** (if appropriate)
- **Citation from the Department**, which should be jointly written by the Head of Department and, where applicable, the senior member of staff with responsibility for Education. The report should cover an overview of the Department's expectation for teaching fellows, teaching activity and impact by the Director of Education or similar role with educational responsibilities. This report should also provide information on teaching observation, and data on any student supervision (MD, MSc, PhD), if relevant. Departments may optionally provide additional attributable feedback (e.g. via their own surveys supplementing the centrally run MEQ) but this is not required. All available evidence will be considered by panels. Please see section E4 and the separate guidance on departmental citations for further information.

Unsigned citations attached in an e-mail cannot be accepted.

- **MEQ** teaching evaluation reports relating to the last two years. Individual candidates may optionally provide additional attributable feedback (e.g. via peer observation or older SOLE data to supplement the centrally run MEQ) but this is not required. All available evidence will be considered by panels.

E. Details of Documents and Information Required

1. References

Candidates:

- Candidates recommend one referee (two if the application is personal), who has agreed to provide a reference as indicated on the **Application Form**.
- Applicants should consult about suitable choices for referees (see criteria below).

Departments:

- Departments recommend referees on the **Departmental Form** (see criteria below) as follows:
 - no departmental referees are required for promotion to grade 3b;
 - one referee is required for grade 4;
 - two referees are required for grade 5;
 - three referees are required for grade 6;
 - five referees are required for grade 7.
- If in doubt concerning the suitability of a referee, please seek advice from the Pro-Consuls or Associate Provost (Learning and Teaching) prior to submission as seeking replacements can cause delays. It is expected that the recommended referees have been approached by the Department using the standard form of words given at the beginning of **Appendix 4** and that

referees have agreed to be nominated. The subsequent formal Imperial requests will be issued using standard letters exemplified in **Appendix 5**.

Criteria for choice of referees

- Referees should be Academic or Teaching staff of appropriate seniority, relevant to the type of promotion sought, familiar with the Teaching role profile criteria, based at universities in the UK or overseas, and leaders and experts in their field.
- For Principal Lecturer (Level 6) and Professor of Teaching in x (Level 7), at least one referee should be an internationally recognised authority in the field of education; it is expected that most referees should be professorial academics, including practitioners at a comparable level in their institution.
- For promotions to level 5 or below, it is expected that most referees should be academics, including practitioners, holding a position equivalent to level 6 or above at Imperial.
- Referees should not have worked at Imperial within the last five years.
- Referees do not need to know the candidate personally.
- Referees must be independent, should not work closely with the candidate, nor have published work with the candidate within the last five years.
- Referees should be as knowledgeable as possible about the candidate's subject area, particularly if their teaching is interdisciplinary in nature. Current and former external examiners may serve as referees if they meet the above criteria.

The Teaching Promotions Committee meets in February/March to review and approve referees for candidates, and to seek alternative referees if warranted.

The taking up of references is handled centrally by the HR Academic Promotions administrators. References will be copied to Heads of Department only, one to two days prior to interviews; references must not be copied further to ensure compliance with data protection legislation. This applies in the case of both supported and personal candidates. **Referees' names and references are strictly confidential, and Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring confidentiality is maintained at all times.**

2. Application Form

For those candidates for whom it is relevant, a list of publications should be included within the body of the Application Form, and not as a separate document.

3. Imperial's Values

A section on the form completed by candidates gives the opportunity to highlight their achievements with regard to Imperial's Values and Behaviours Framework. The purpose is to guide the behaviour of all staff, demonstrating the ways in which staff respect and support each other in achieving personal goals and Imperial's strategic objectives. Please see [Values - Behaviour Framework \(imperial.ac.uk\)](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/values-behaviour-framework)

Please note that the Values replaced Imperial Expectations from November 2021. The following link relates the Values to the replaced Imperial Expectations and may be helpful when providing information. https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/hr/public/values/Values_Link-to-Imperial-Expectations.pdf.

4. Citation

- a) **Citation by the Department** – jointly written by the Head of Department and, where applicable, the senior member of staff with responsibility for Education

The citation (**Appendix 6**) outlines the principal grounds for promotion. It should relate to the relevant role profile within the disciplinary context of the applicant's work, and cover the

applicant's contribution to Imperial's educational mission; innovation and evaluation; leadership and management; and professional practice and scholarship. Please see the separate guidance for further information.

Unsigned citations will not be considered. Citations must be signed and dated (not on an unsigned, undated attachment e-mailed to HR.

5. Review Procedure

The Teaching Promotions Committee will consider all applications. It may seek additional advice on applications as appropriate.

6. Interviews – When and Where

The Teaching Promotions Committee will invite candidates for interviews for Levels 6 and 7 and for Level 5 where further clarification is needed or the individual has requested to be interviewed. These are expected to take place between March and June at the South Kensington Campus. The HR Division will make the arrangements and inform Departments of dates, usually before the end of March. The Departments inform candidates of interview dates, times and venues.

- **Faculty of Engineering and Business School** candidates will be interviewed in **March**, although there may be exceptions.
- **Faculty of Natural Sciences and Education Office** candidates will be interviewed in **April**, although there may be exceptions.
- **Faculty of Medicine** candidates will be interviewed in **May**.

Candidates are strongly advised to inform HR, in the relevant section of the **Application Form**, of dates when they will **not** be available for interview due to important prior commitments (such as pre-booked annual leave, pre-booked overseas conferences). If advised in advance, HR will try to accommodate candidates but cannot guarantee this will be possible.

Important note: Interview dates and times are based on the availability of the Teaching Promotions Committee members. Candidates from the same Department are grouped together where possible, as are those seeking the same level of promotion. Due to the large number of interviews scheduled, the Committee expects candidates to attend interviews on the dates and times requested.

Departments should inform Daljeet Birdy (d.birdy@imperial.ac.uk) of anticipated difficulties.

7. Attendance at Interviews by Heads of Departments

Supported candidates

The Head of Department is expected to attend the interview as an observer or to send an appropriate representative. At the end of the interview, the Head of Department is asked whether the candidate's interview was an accurate reflection of the candidate's capabilities. In the case of an unsupported candidate, the Head of Department may only be present with the candidate's permission.

Unsupported, Personal Candidates

Personal candidates may choose an alternative representative to the Head of Department if they wish. Personal candidates should inform their Head of Department and the Promotions Coordinator in Human Resources, who their representative will be (if anyone), as soon as possible after they receive an invitation to interview. The representative must be an Imperial employee.

8. Interview Panels

The Vice-Provost (Education and Student Experience) normally acts as the Chair of the Teaching Promotions Committee. The committee membership is published on the teaching promotion webpage.

For candidates being interviewed (see above):

- Interview panel members are mainly drawn from the Teaching Promotions Committee, normally from different departments to that of the candidate. Every effort is made to have a diverse panel membership.
- To enhance the interview process or when specific expertise is required, the Teaching Promotions Committee may decide that other senior members of the university should join, or act as substitutes on panels. These may include Heads of Departments from a different Department to that of the candidate.
- At the time invitations to interview are sent to the Departments, panel composition is included and candidates are normally informed as a courtesy.
- The panel composition is not prescriptive, may be changed as needed, at the Committee's discretion, without further notification to the candidate if this is not practicable.
- Notes of the interview are taken.

The panel includes at least three members from the Committee:

- The Vice-Provost (Education and Student Experience) will act as Chair
- A Consul
- The Vice-Dean for Education from the relevant faculty

F. Decisions on Promotion

Notification to Candidates

1. In consultation with the Faculty Deans and Heads of Department, applicants will be informed as soon as possible after a final decision has been made.
2. The Teaching Promotions Committee will meet in June or, if not possible, July to make decisions on any outstanding cases.
3. Letters will be as informative as possible, and may be subject to review, so that Heads of Department can provide feedback to candidates, initially face-to-face and, subsequently, in writing. Candidates who have been unsuccessful will, of course, need to be dealt with sensitively and Heads of Department should ensure that they provide the candidate with the reasons for the decision.
4. Personal applicants not supported by the Department will be written to directly to inform them of the decision on their application. The Department will also be informed of the decision.
5. Unsuccessful candidates are encouraged to approach their Faculty Dean or Education Office for further information on the reasons for the decision.
6. Candidates have the right to appeal. Please see the Appeals Procedure below.
7. Once Heads of Department have been consulted on salaries, formal notification of promotion will be sent to successful candidates as soon as is practicable via the Heads of Departments' offices. Promotions take effect on 1 September of the year of the promotions cycle.

Monitoring

HR will compile a record of all applications and the decisions that were agreed. Applications will be monitored in relation to gender, ethnic origin, age, disability and level of pay awarded. The results will be analysed and monitored by HR and anonymised data will be provided to the Vice-

Provost (Education and Student Experience) and the relevant university committees.

G. Teaching Promotions and the Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

- 1 The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), which came into effect in 2018, set out a number of principles with which organisations have to comply. Full details are available under [Imperial's Data Protection Policy](#) and [Staff Privacy Notice](#). Your information will be retained in line with the [College's Retention Schedule](#).
- 2 With respect to Teaching Promotions, the university sends information containing personal information about candidates to referees, some of whom may be located in overseas countries, not all of which will have adequate levels of data protection. The information is sent to assist referees in their assessments of candidates and includes the application form. The information will be sent to referees by e-mail, fax or post.
- 3 At present, the following EEA countries can be regarded as having appropriate levels of data protection:

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom.

Countries outside the EEA which have been approved as offering adequate data protection are:

Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Canada (commercial organisations), Switzerland, Faroe Islands, Guernsey, Israel, Isle of Man, Jersey, and in the US, signatories to the US Department of Commerce's Safe Harbour Privacy Principles. Other countries may be added at a later date.
- 4 References are received via e-mail.
- 5 Candidates are asked to give consent for the transfer of their data to referees on the understanding that some referees may be located in countries which do not meet the criteria defined as adequate by the GDPR. The information received is used as part of the assessment for academic promotion and is held on file in the HR Division.

H. Appeals Procedure

1. Unsuccessful candidates are entitled to appeal, but only on the grounds of a defect in the departmental and/or university procedure.
2. In the event of an appeal, the candidate should, within 30 days of receipt of the official written decision from the Human Resources Promotions Team, inform the relevant Head of Department of the grounds of the complaint, and the Head of Department should forward this information to Angela Kehoe, Head of HR (Natural Sciences and Progression) a.kehoe@imperial.ac.uk.
3. In the case of a candidate whose application was not supported by the Department, the candidate may write directly to the Deputy Director of Human Resources.

4. The Deputy Director of Human Resources (Operations), or a nominee, shall conduct an investigation of the complaint and will report to relevant members of the Teaching Promotions Committee within 30 days of receipt of the appeal on whether there has been a defect in procedure which would materially affect its decision. The Teaching Promotions Committee will then arrange for the appellant to be informed whether it has agreed to reconsider the appellant's case on the grounds of a defect in procedure. If the appeal is upheld, the Teaching Promotions Committee will reconsider the case and may seek further information as appropriate and/or require the candidate to attend a meeting/interview.
5. If the appellant is dissatisfied because the Teaching Promotions Committee has decided not to reconsider the case, or remains dissatisfied following the review of the case, the candidate should inform Daljeet Birdy (d.birdy@imperial.ac.uk), Progression Manager, Human Resources, within 14 days of receipt of the Teaching Promotions Committee's decision, stating in writing the grounds for the complaint. The time limit may be extended for good cause e.g. illness. The Promotions Coordinator will arrange for the Provost to appoint an Investigation Committee which will consist of three members of Imperial, one of whom will be appointed as Chair by the Provost and none of whom will previously have been involved in the case at Departmental/Divisional or university level. A member of the Human Resources Division will normally be Secretary to the Investigation Committee.
6. Within 14 days of the date of the hearing, the Chair of the Investigation Committee, on behalf of the Committee, will submit a report to the Provost, with the Committee's judgement on whether a defect in procedure has occurred which would materially affect the decision of the Teaching Promotions Committee.
7. The Provost will consider the Committee's report and decide on whether or not the case for promotion should be reconsidered. The decision will be conveyed to the appellant in writing within 28 days after the date of the hearing.
8. Every effort will be made to adhere to the timetables given above, with the proviso that more time may be necessary on occasion because cases are considered by senior staff and over the summer period.