

Conferral of Emeritus status

When a professor retires from an established chair or a personal chair, the Head of the relevant College may decide to invite Senate to confer upon them Emeritus status. Since May 2012, the award of Emeritus Professor Status refers to the title of the individual's former Chair or discipline as agreed by the Head of the relevant College.¹ Senate will ask the Head of College to prepare a Special Minute which provides an overview of the Professor's career and their contribution to the University. The Special Minute is submitted to the Senate for approval. On approval the Special Minute is sent to the Emeritus Professor. It is conferred for an open ended period.

Emeritus status is also subject to the Human Resources Policy for the Award of Honorary Status: https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/honorary_status_policy_for_the_award_of.pdf

Emeritus Professors Procedure

1. Eligibility for Emeritus status

Emeritus status is awarded to professors of the University of Edinburgh who are retiring from their personal or established chair and who have made a distinguished contribution to the life of the University. When seeking approval for Emeritus status on behalf of a retiring professor, the College will produce a Special Minute which formally recognises their distinguished contributions during their careers (see Section 3).

Emeritus status will not be awarded to a professor who leaves to take up a professorial position with another academic institution or to Honorary Professors.

The title of Emeritus Professor does not have a limited time period. Where an individual has been awarded Emeritus Professor designation, and subsequently returns temporarily to a role within the University at Professorial level, which requires a contract and payment by the University of Edinburgh, they may be granted the title of 'Professorial Fellow.' Their Emeritus Professor designation will be held in abeyance until their contract with the University at Professorial level has ended.

2. Contribution to the University and Access to Resources

Emeritus Professors are experienced academics who are held in high regard by both former colleagues and the wider University community. While there is no requirement for Emeritus Professors to make a contribution to the University, they are nonetheless an important part of University life. They should therefore be regarded as properly part of the University community and should be given every appropriate opportunity to contribute to it.

Emeritus Professors are entitled to access to University resources, including library services and email, plus additional resources if they are bringing in money for the University.

3. Approval of Emeritus Status

¹ Central Management Group, 23 May 2012, Paper I *Review of Honorary Appointments*

Approval for Emeritus status must be sought at the point that the professor retires from their personal or established chair. When a Professor indicates their intention to retire from their personal or established chair, the relevant Head of School² must consider whether Emeritus status is warranted and, when this has been confirmed, request approval from the Head of College.

If the Head of College approves the award, they should inform the Head of School and request the preparation of a Special Minute. The Special Minute is a brief statement of around 500-550 words on the distinguished contribution that the Professor has made to the University of the Edinburgh and a note on how they intend to spend their retirement. Care should be taken to ensure the accuracy of the Special Minute, since a copy will be retained in the University records.

The Head of College must then contact the Senate Support team in Academic Services with a copy of the approval and the Special Minute, requesting approval for Emeritus Status for the retiring professor.

The Senate Support team will then submit the name of the retiring professor, along with the Special Minute, to Senate for formal approval. Emeritus Professor appointments will carry the title of their former Chair or discipline. (For example, the holder of the Buchanan Chair of Genetics would become an Emeritus Professor of Genetics). When the retiring professor is female, the title of Emerita Professor can be awarded.

If Senate approves the conferment of Emeritus Status, the Senate Support team will write to the professor to confirm that they have been awarded Emeritus Status and will enclose a copy of the Special Minute. Copies of the letter will be sent to the Head of College.

4. Withdrawal of Emeritus Status

Awards of Emeritus status do not have a limited time period. However, there are circumstances under which the status may be withdrawn, as set out below:

- Where the individual has accepted a contract of employment with the University at Professorial level, meaning that their Emeritus Professor designation has been held in abeyance (see section 1).
- Where the actions of the individual, either within or outwith the University, could result, or have resulted, in negative publicity for the University
- Where the individual has been found to have breached University policies or procedures, and where that breach would have ordinarily led to formal disciplinary action, if the holder of Emeritus status had been an employee of the University.

Any proposal to withdraw Emeritus status must be agreed by the relevant Head of College and communicated to Senate before it is communicated to the individual concerned.

² Hereafter, 'Head of School' may refer to the Head of School or suitably delegated member of staff.