Referees/Assessors for Academic Promotions – Guidance Notes and Forms

1 Selection of Referees and Assessors

References/assessments are taken up for candidates for promotion to UE10 and (normally) to UE09. The selection of referees/assessors must take into account:

- The need to minimise conflicts of interest, seeking a balance between those who have, and those who have not, collaborated with the nominee;
- A balance between UK and international references (bearing in mind especially some of the practical difficulties) and possible differences in the degree of familiarity with the nominee’s work.

Occasionally the academic field of a nominee may be such that only a very limited number of individuals would be competent to comment. Ideally, the chosen group of referees and assessors should be able to comment on all aspects of the nominee’s achievements (e.g. teaching, research, leadership/management, knowledge exchange).

2 Head of School Statement

The Head of School is expected to comment on the nominee’s suitability for promotion across all relevant areas of the academic role.

Where a promotion case has a teaching component it is expected that the Head of School will directly comment on the nominee’s teaching contribution. Heads of School may wish to reference the Exemplars of Excellence in Student Education when preparing their statement.

3 Nomination of Referees by the Candidate

All candidates should provide the names of two external referees.

- These referees will be invited to provide references in the knowledge that their names have been suggested by the candidate and that their reports will go forward in a manner similar to references sought as part of an appointment process.

All references received by the stipulated deadline will be shared with the panel.

The sections completed by the Head of School should not be sent to the assessors/referees, nor should any other letter of nomination, whether the nomination is from the Head of School or from the candidate.

4 Nomination of Assessors by the Head of School

The Head of School, where appropriate, in consultation with senior colleagues in the candidate’s School, should provide the names of two further individuals. These assessors

- Will be regarded as independent and should have appropriate standing in the discipline.
- Will be invited to provide reports in the knowledge that they have been suggested by the Head of School to provide a disinterested assessment of the candidates case in a manner similar to that provided by external assessors on appointment committees.

For UE09, depending on the evidence submitted it may be appropriate for the Head of School to substitute one of the external assessors for an internal assessor e.g. where evidence relates to the development of the University’s education policies, for example, the College Dean/Director of Teaching may be an appropriate assessor or where the evidence relates to activity in a team research context senior colleagues within that research team may be appropriate assessors.

For UE10, while not a specific requirement, additional internal assessment may be provided to support a promotion which has a strong component of Teaching, Management or where the role holder is engaged in team research1. This assessment must in be in addition to the required number of external assessors.

All assessments received by the stipulated deadline will be shared with the committee.

1 Guidance on Interdisciplinary and Team Research
5 Communication with Referees/Assessors

It is the responsibility of HR, on behalf of the Head of College, to approach the referees/assessors and to reflect the considerations above.

HR, on behalf of the Head of College, should ensure that the reference/assessment request indicates whether the referee/assessor’s name has been suggested by the nominee or the Head of School and is structured to reflect their slightly different purposes.

Nominees and nominators should let referees/assessors know they are being suggested. Formal approaches to assessors should, however, be made only by HR, on behalf of the Head of College.

- Under no circumstances should a referee or assessor be sent a letter of nomination or any other comment on the candidate’s suitability for promotion.

The following should be included in all requests for reference/assessments:

“All information provided will be treated as strictly confidential. However, you should be aware that under certain circumstances, such as a data protection request or other legal requirements imposed on the University, it may be necessary to disclose references/assessments.”

6 What should be shared with Referees and Assessors?

6.1 Non-Clinical Academics
- The referee/assessor must be sent the following:
  - Matching form (excluding the sections completed by the Head of School)
  - Full CV (for UE10)
  - Summary CV
  - Grade Profiles

- Excluding cases for promotion to Senior Research Fellow, links to the following documents must also be sent:
  - Criteria for the award of Personal Chair or Reader
  - Exemplars of Excellence in Student Education
  - Exemplars of Excellence in Knowledge Exchange
  - Guide on Interdisciplinary and Team Research

6.2 Clinical Academics
- The referee/assessor must be sent the following:
  - Medical Clinical Staff – Application for Promotion to Readership/Personal Chair
  - Full CV (for UE10)

- Links to the following documents must also be sent:
  - Criteria for the award of Personal Chair or Reader
  - Exemplars of Excellence in Student Education
  - Exemplars of Excellence in Knowledge Exchange
  - Guide on Interdisciplinary and Team Research
Appendix – Referee/Assessor Requests

Name of Candidate:
School:

Referees nominated by the candidate

All nominees, whether self-nominating or nominated by the Head of School, should provide the names of two referees. These individuals will be invited to provide references in the knowledge that their names have been suggested by the nominee and that their reports will go forward in a manner similar to references sought as part of an appointment process.

Title:
Name:
Address:

Telephone:
Email:

Relationship between the Candidate and the Referee
Please describe the relationship between the candidate and the referee, and the standing and independence of the referee in the academic field.

Title:
Name:
Address:

Telephone:
Email:

Relationship between the Candidate and the Referee
Please describe the relationship between the candidate and the referee, and the standing and independence of the referee in the academic field.
Assessors nominated by the Head of School

The Head of School, where appropriate in consultation with professorial or other senior colleagues in the nominee’s School, should provide the names of two further individuals, regarded as independent and with the appropriate standing in the field. These assessors will be invited to provide reports in the knowledge that they have been suggested by the Head of School to provide a disinterested assessment of the nomination in a manner similar to that provided by external assessors on appointment committees.

The Policy on Conflict of Interest should be taken into consideration when proposing individuals to be named as assessor.

Title:
Name:
Address:

Telephone:
Email:

Relationship between the Candidate and the Assessor
Please describe the relationship between the candidate and the assessor, and the standing and independence of the assessor in the academic field.

Title:
Name:
Address:

Telephone:
Email:

Relationship between the Candidate and the Assessor
Please describe the relationship between the candidate and the assessor, and the standing and independence of the assessor in the academic field.
Reserve Assessors Proposed by the Head of School

The Head of School should provide two additional ‘reserve’ assessors for the assistance of the Head of College in the event of contact or other difficulties. The Head of College has discretion to approach these reserves and/or others additional to those supplied with the nomination and may invite assessors to name other people in the nominee’s field of study whose opinion may be valuable.

Title:
Name:
Address:

Telephone:
Email:

Relationship between the Candidate and the Assessor
Please describe the relationship between the candidate and the assessor, and the standing and independence of the referee in the academic field.

Title:
Name:
Address:

Telephone:
Email:

Relationship between the Candidate and the Assessor
Please describe the relationship between the candidate and the assessor, and the standing and independence of the referee in the academic field.