Operational Procedure
5.41.05 Probation and Confirmation of Continuing Appointment (Academic Staff)

1.0 Purpose and Scope

The University of Queensland (UQ) is committed to ensuring that a robust career and performance development approach exists for academic staff which provides a foundation for the achievement of academic excellence.

This procedure provides a practical context to the process, key controls and responsibilities with regard to academic probation reviews (Mid-Term and Final), consistent with the principles outlined in the Policy.

1.1 Scope

This procedure applies to all academic staff employed on a continuing basis who are subject to a three-year probation period.

This procedure does not apply to academic staff members on a fixed-term appointment. Fixed-term academic staff will be subject to the probation period and conditions outlined in their letter of offer, in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement.

For avoidance of doubt, where a fixed-term academic staff member is successful in securing a continuing academic appointment, the staff member will then be subject to the probation and confirmation of appointment process, as outlined in this procedure.

2.0 Key Controls

2.1 Review Periods

Continuing academic staff are required to undergo two major reviews during the three-year probation period:

1. Mid-Term Review is typically conducted between 12 and 15 months after commencement of the probation period, and
2. Final Review is typically conducted between 6 and 9 months prior to the probation end date.

2.2 Transitionary Arrangements

Due to the introduction of changes to the Criteria for Academic Performance Policy (PPL 5.70.17) on 7 October 2021, a transitionary approach will be implemented to determine which Criteria will be used for assessment in Mid-Term and Final Review processes. For the purpose of this procedure, the previous Criteria for Academic Performance will be referred to as the 'legacy criteria'.

1. **Academic Staff with a probation period commencing after 7 October 2021.**

   Academic staff in this category will immediately adopt the current Criteria for Academic Performance for all relevant performance processes including Annual Goal Setting, Annual Performance and Development (APD) process, Mid-Term Review and Final Review.
2. **Academic Staff with a probation period commencing prior to 7 October 2021.**

For the purpose of Mid-Term and Final Review processes, academic staff in this category will be assessed against the legacy Criteria for Academic Performance.

However, to ensure that academic staff in this category are not disadvantaged beyond the conclusion of their probation period by anchoring their goals and activities to the legacy criteria, they will begin to use the current Criteria for Academic Performance for their Goal Setting and Annual Performance and Development (APD) processes immediately.

### 2.3 Assessment

Assessment will be against the Criteria for Academic Performance outlined for the staff member’s academic level at the time their application is considered. The Committee may however, in an effort to ensure that an applicant is not disadvantaged by a change in academic category, give consideration to the overall contribution of an applicant since their appointment.

The duties assigned to the staff member by the Supervisor and Head should reflect the balance appropriate to the academic category and level of appointment and should ensure that probationary staff have the opportunity to meet the criteria for confirmation of continuing appointment.

It is the joint responsibility of the Head and the staff member to consider the implications of changing a staff member’s academic category while on probation and the requirements for Final Review.

### 2.4 Final Review

Applicants are to be aware that:

a) It is critical that feedback provided as a result of the Mid-Term Review is considered and responded to as part of the Final Review process; and

b) All mandatory training must be completed prior to the submission of the Final Review documentation.

### 2.5 Particular Circumstances

#### 2.5.1 On Commencement

All probationary staff are expected to discuss the expectations for their academic category and level with their supervisor on commencement. Following this discussion, appropriate goals and objectives should be recorded in Workday for discussion at the first annual performance and development review.

The staff member and academic supervisor should meet regularly during the first year of employment to review progress against these goals and ensure that appropriate support is in place.

#### 2.5.2 Shortening or Waiving Probation

Probation may only be shortened or waived in exceptional circumstances with approval by the Provost.

#### 2.5.3 Probation Extension

In exceptional circumstances, the period of probation may be extended by one or two years, at the request of the staff member.

The staff member must apply in writing to the relevant Head/Director prior to the Final Review. A request for extension of probation must clearly articulate both the exceptional circumstances relevant to the request and the duration of the probation extension sought.

The Head/Director will consider the submission and provide a written recommendation for consideration by the relevant Committee Chair.
Alternatively, the Committee may extend the probation period for one or two years as an outcome of the Final Review process.

Only one extension to the probation period is permitted.

### 2.5.4 Probation in Abeyance

The probation period applicable to continuing academic staff is intended to provide appropriate opportunity to demonstrate the expected level of performance across all domains, equivalent to their Academic level and category.

In circumstances where a probationary staff member is unable to demonstrate the key requirements of their substantive position due to extended leave, secondment to a different role, or other relevant circumstances, the relevant Committee Chair on recommendation from the supervisor may place the probation period in abeyance for an equivalent period. Alternatively, a request to place the probation period in abeyance can also be initiated by the staff member with appropriate justification.

Probation in Abeyance will not be used in circumstances where the absence is less than 12 weeks.

Upon return to the workplace, a revised probation end date will be confirmed.

### 2.5.5 Probation/Promotion Relationships

Where a Level A academic is on probation and is successful in gaining promotion to Level B, confirmation of continuing appointment will be considered against the academic criteria for Level B. Confirmation of continuing appointment will be determined by the relevant LCPC in accordance with the standard Final Review process.

Level B – E staff on probation who make a successful application for promotion, will also be considered by the Committee for early confirmation of continuing appointment if they have been employed by the University for two years or more at the time of the promotion submission date.

### 3.0 Key Process Requirements

#### 3.1 Academic Documentation Submission

The Applicant must ensure that the following items are completed and submitted by the due date advised in writing by the relevant secretariat:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mid-Term</th>
<th>Final Review</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case for Confirmation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>All Levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600 words maximum, clearly demonstrating the applicant’s case for confirmation.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most recent Annual Performance and Development (APD) documentation (including the Individual Activity Profile)</td>
<td>All Levels</td>
<td>All Levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head/Director Assessment &amp; Recommendation</td>
<td>All Levels</td>
<td>All Levels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Submitted applications are considered final and are not to be amended following submission.

#### 3.1.1 Head of School Probation Requirements

It is recognised that Heads of School have a significant leadership responsibility beyond that of most academic staff. Heads of School who are on probation should also address the Roles, Responsibilities and Authority of...
Heads of School and major centres – PPL 1.20.04, when submitting documentation for Mid-Term and Final Review.

3.2 References

In circumstances where clarification is needed on a specific aspect of an applicant's case, referees may be sought at the discretion of the Committee Chair. Referees must be able to attest to the applicant's contribution and impact and it is expected that referees will be at or above, the academic level of the applicant.

3.2.1 Conflict of Interest Considerations

If a conflict of interest exists (perceived or otherwise), the referee must declare this to the person seeking the reference.

A referee must not have a personal, financial, business or professional conflict of interest with the applicant. This may include:

- Being a mentor, relative or friend, or
- Having held a grant or published with the person in the preceding five years, or
- Having participated in the same research group in the preceding five years, or
- Having ongoing and close collaboration links, or
- Being a current member of the relevant Confirmation and Promotions Committee.

3.2.2 Adverse Comments

Applicants will have the opportunity to respond to adverse referee comments.

3.3 Committee Interview

As part of the Final Review process, all applicants will be interviewed by the relevant Committee.

The interview process provides an opportunity for applicants to present their case for confirmation and enables the Committee to seek clarification on any aspects of the application.

The interview will also provide an opportunity for applicants to further discuss the Head's/Director's recommendation and any other relevant matters as required.

3.4 Appeals

In circumstances where the relevant committee determines that a Final Review applicant’s probation period is to be extended or not confirmed, a staff member may only appeal the decision on procedural grounds.

Prior to appealing, it is expected that the unsuccessful applicant will seek feedback on their application and reasons for the decision to extend or not to confirm.

An appeal must be lodged in writing to the Chief Human Resource Officer at cap@uq.edu.au within 21 days of the date of the outcome notification. In order for an appeal to be upheld, the Authorised Officer must be satisfied that the procedural error had a substantial and significant impact on the decision. The decision of the Authorised Officer is final.

3.5 Notice

For applicants for whom the decision is not to confirm, the University may elect to provide payment in lieu of notice (in whole or in part) in accordance with the provisions of the Enterprise Agreement.
4.0 Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

4.1 Local Confirmation and Promotions Committee (LCPC)
The relevant LCPC is responsible for considering applications for confirmation, non-confirmation, or extension of the probation period for staff at Academic Level B-D and providing recommendations to the Chair.

4.2 Professorial Confirmation and Promotions Committee (PCPC)
The PCPC is responsible for considering applications for confirmation, non-confirmation, or extension of the probation period for staff at Academic Level E and providing recommendations to the Chair.

4.3 Provost
The Provost is required to:
- Chair the Professorial Confirmation and Promotions Committee and hold decision making responsibility.
- Provide Final Review applicants with feedback (Level E).
- Consider requests for probation extension (Level E).
- Consider requests to shorten or waive the probation period (Level A – E).

4.4 Executive Dean
The Executive Dean is required to:
- Chair the relevant Local Confirmation and Promotions Committee (LCPC) and hold decision making responsibility.
- Consider requests for probation extension (Level A-D).
- Provide constructive and developmental feedback to staff undertaking Mid-Term Review (Level A-D).
- Provide Final Review applicants with feedback (Level A-D).
- Undertake document review and provide formal written feedback for Mid-Term Review (Level E).
- Complete Executive Dean Report for staff applying for Final Review (Level E).

4.5 Head of School
The Head of School is required to:
- Provide all necessary documentation to the applicant within reasonable timeframes.
- Seek feedback from the Academic Supervisor as appropriate.
- Meet with applicants to provide constructive and developmental feedback (at the request of the Faculty Executive Dean).
- Complete the Head/Director Assessment and Recommendation within Workday at least two weeks from the submission closing date (Level A-D).

4.6 Supervisor
The academic supervisor is required to undertake the Annual Performance and Development (APD) process as articulated in PPL 5.70.15 Academic Annual Performance and Development Procedures and provide all necessary documentation to the applicant within reasonable timeframes.
4.7 Academic Staff

Academic staff have a responsibility to:

- Provide full and complete information relating to their performance based on the academic criteria, and any specific expectations or requirements that the University may have stipulated in the Offer of Employment.
- Ensure all required documentation is factually correct and submitted via the online system by the due date.
- Seek assistance if support is required throughout the probation process.

4.8 Committee Secretariat

The Committee secretariat is responsible for supporting the Committee to undertake its obligations and responsibilities effectively in line with University Policy, Procedure, and associated standards. This includes:

- Assisting the Committee and applicants where required.
- Notifying staff members of Mid-Term and Final Review requirements.
- Recording outcomes of Mid-Term and Final Review processes.
- Ensuring that confirmation outcomes and changes to probation dates, via extension or abeyance, are accurately recorded in the appropriate systems.
- In conjunction with the Committee Chair, ensuring that applicants are advised of outcomes in writing as soon as reasonably practicable.

5.0 Monitoring, Review and Assurance

The Chief Human Resources Officer has responsibility for ensuring compliance with this procedure and ensuring it is monitored and reviewed appropriately.

6.0 Definitions, Terms and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Category</th>
<th>Teaching and Research (T&amp;R)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching Focused (TF)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Focused (RF)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Clinical Academic (CA)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Performance and Development (APD) process</th>
<th>The APD process refers to the annual appraisal and development conversation.</th>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authorised Officer</th>
<th>The officer authorised to exercise certain powers and functions as outlined in the HR Authorisation Schedule.</th>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Chair</th>
<th>Faculty Executive Dean (for LCPC)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provost (for PCPC)</td>
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</table>

| Committee          | The relevant Local Confirmation and Promotions Committee (LCPC), or The Professorial Confirmation and Promotions Committee (PCPC) for Level E |

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuing Appointment</th>
<th>All employment other than Fixed-term, Research (Contingent Funded), or Casuals.</th>
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</table>

| Head                  | Head of School (or equivalent), which for purposes of this process, also refers to a Director of a University or Faculty Institute or Centre. |
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5.41.05 Probation and Confirmation of Continuing Appointment (Academic Staff)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Probation Period</th>
<th>Level A – D: Three years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level E: By Agreement (up to three years)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enterprise Agreement</td>
<td><em>The University of Queensland Enterprise Agreement 2018 – 2021</em>, or as amended or replaced.</td>
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7.0 Meta Data for Document Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Web Links</th>
<th>Probation webpage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HR Authorisation Schedule</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Policy 5.70.17 Criteria for Academic Performance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The University of Queensland Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guideline of Evidencing Academic Achievement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.20.04 Roles, Responsibilities and Authority of Heads of School and Major Centres</td>
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<td>1.70.06 Discrimination and Harassment</td>
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<td>Approval Authority</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor</td>
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<td>Last Approval Date</td>
<td>Thursday, 2 May 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next Review Date</td>
<td>Five years from approval date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audience / Users</td>
<td>Academic staff subject to a three-year probation period</td>
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<td>Notes</td>
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