

Conferment of Professorships

UPR HR08 version 11.0

Policies superseded by this document

This document replaces version 10.0 of UPR HR08, with effect from 8 October 2026.

Summary of significant changes to the previous version

The UPR has been amended to reflect the three academic pathways for Professor applicants. Updates to the application and decision-making process have also been made. With the requirement for personal referees during the application process being removed and the application form being focused directly on the relevant criteria.

Glossary

A glossary of approved University terminology can be found in [UPR GV08](#).

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 These policies and procedures have been approved by the Board of Governors.
- 1.2 Professorships are conferred on the authority of the Board of Governors.
- 1.3 The University is committed to protecting and promoting freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law. The University’s Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech (UPR FS01) sets out the rights and obligations inherent in supporting the principles of freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law, the University’s values relating to freedom of speech and the procedure to be followed by students and staff in connection with the organisation of events and meetings which fall under the Code of Practice. A

copy of the University's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech (UPR FS01) can be found here [\[FS01-Freedom-of-Speech-Code-of-Practice.pdf\]](#) on the University's Policies and Regulations webpage. In the event of any uncertainty about the University's approach to freedom of speech, the University's definitive and up-to-date statement of its approach is set out in the Code of Practice.

2 Definitions and General Information

- 2.1 The title of 'Professor' is conferred in recognition of an individual's academic or other distinction and their contribution to the work of the University. It is a personal chair carrying defined organisational duties. The title is therefore conferred in recognition of research, enterprise and entrepreneurship or learning and teaching, and overall scholarship achievements of national and international renown.
- 2.2 Following the award of a title, an appropriate workload allocation will be determined according to the roles and activities of the individual, in discussion with the individual's manager.
- 2.3 Members of staff of the University may apply for a Professorship if they believe that they satisfy the promotion criteria
- 2.4 A 'Professor' may be appointed through external recruitment, in which case the procedure for conferring the title will need the appointee to meet the criteria set out in section 4 and be approved by the chair of the Decision Panel.
- 2.5 The University's conferment of the title 'Professor' will be withdrawn automatically upon termination of the holder's employment with the University of Hertfordshire. At the absolute discretion of the Vice-Chancellor, acting in their capacity as Chair of the Academic Board, the title may be removed by the Board in the event of the holder's misconduct, ill health or poor performance (see [Staff Disciplinary Policy \(UPR HR02\)](#), [Managing Sickness Absence and Ill Health Policy and Procedure \(UPR HR20\)](#) and [Managing Poor Performance \(UPR HR19\)](#) respectively).

3 Criteria for the Conferment of the Title 'Professor'

- 3.1 The title of 'Professor' recognises proven achievement with emphasis on one of the following academic pathways.
 - i. Education, Research, and Innovation
 - ii. Education, Student Success, and Pedagogy
 - iii. Education, Enterprise, and Professional Practice
- 3.2 Candidates, irrespective of their focus, will be expected to demonstrate that they meet all the criteria set in Appendix A for the five (5) criteria comprising their chosen pathway with a proven record of distinction. Examples of evidence that

may be used in support of a case for a Professorship in the application form are included in Appendix A.

- 3.3 As a teaching-led university, our defining mission is anchored in education and student success. To reflect this priority, the promotion framework embeds 'Education' as a core criterion across all Professor promotion pathways.
- 3.4 As senior colleagues, Professors are expected to further the objectives of the University within their area of focus and enhance the University's reputation, as well as assisting others in realising their potential. As such 'Collegiality, Citizenship, and Leadership' is a core criterion across all Professorial promotion pathways.
- 3.5 The Professorial Conferment Committee of the Board of Governors has determined that:
 - i in the context of Professorial applications, 'distinction' implies a standing that would be recognised on a national or international canvas by those in the same discipline, profession or in the broader field of education;
 - ii the University gives the same weight to the skills and achievements of individuals undertaking any of the three academic pathways;
 - iii the criteria adopted by the University are intended to demand a level of achievement no less than that traditionally expected within British universities, although the nature of the achievement will reflect the vision and mission of the University of Hertfordshire.

4 Application Process

- 4.1 All applications must be submitted to Human Resources via professorships@herts.ac.uk and must include the following elements
 - a) a full curriculum vitae not longer than 10 A4 pages (including maximum 15 key publications). Please do not include footnotes, endnotes or documents embedded within the CV;
 - b) the structured application form detailing achievements and outcomes relevant to their chosen academic pathway. Each of the five (5) sections of the application form will be limited to a 500-word maximum.
- 4.2 Where appropriate applicants may select to include a 'Mitigating and Exceptional Circumstances' form, confidentially outlining any significant personal or professional factors that they would like to be considered as having had an impact on their career trajectory or volume of output/activity.
- 4.3 A failure to adhere to the submission requirements may result in the application being rejected.

- 4.4** An application for a Professorship should be made in accordance with the timetable issued for the promotion cycle. In exceptional circumstances and at the sole discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (or nominee), applications may be considered against the UPR outside of the issued timetable.
- 4.5** Unsuccessful applicants for a Professorship may re-apply after a period of not less than one (1) year and are strongly encouraged to seek guidance and respond to feedback before applying again.

5 Panel Review Procedures & Outcomes

- 5.1** The promotion process is led on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The University is committed to ensuring fairness, inclusivity and equal opportunities in the appointment and recognition of Professors.
- 5.2** The composition of the Cross-School Decision Panel and the University Decision Panel should be diverse where possible. This does not relate to representation of specific disciplines and subjects.
- 5.3** The Cross-School Decision Panel will consider all applications submitted in relation to the pathway criteria set out in Appendix 1. Panels will comprise of the Deans, an HR representative, and an EDI observer.
- 5.4** The outcome of the Cross-School Decision Panel will either:

- Support the application to progress to the University decision panel.
- Not support the application to progress to the University decision panel.

Where the Cross-School Decision Panel does not support an application, the applicant will receive writing feedback on the application.

- 5.5** The University Decision Panel will be chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor and include a minimum of two senior UH staff and of two senior academics external to UH. Where the University Decision Panel considers it necessary, applicants may be invited to interview.

- 5.6** The outcome of the University Decision Panel will either:

- Recommend that an applicant is promoted.
- Not recommend that an applicant is promoted.

Where the University Decision Panel does not recommend an applicant for promotion, they will receive written feedback on the application

- 5.7** Decisions made by the University Decision Panel will be definitive, with no right of appeal.
- 5.8** The Chair of the University Decision Panel will report the promotions to Professor to Academic Board and to the Professorial Conferment Committee of the Board of Governors.
- 5.9** For successful candidates, once conferred, the title will be permanent whilst employed at the University.

6 Professorship Title

- 6.1 Successful candidates for a Professorship will be eligible to use the title prefix 'Professor'
- 6.2 The title of the Professorship should be nominated in the application form, and reflect the area or research, education, enterprise or professional practice in which the Professorship is being conferred (e.g. Professor in Genomics, Professor in Applied Enterprise, Professor in Digital Pedagogy).
- 6.3 Formal titles will be recommended by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor acting on the authority of the University Decision Panel to the Professorial Conferment Committee of the Board of Governors for approval.

7 Process for the Removal of a Professorship Title

- 7.1 Professors may, with the agreement of their Dean of School/Head of SBU, relinquish their title at any time. Staff who take such action will revert to their original pay, grade and title prior to their promotion.
- 7.2 The title of Professor may be removed from a member of staff at the absolute discretion of the Vice-Chancellor, acting in their capacity as Chair of the Academic Board, in the event of the holder's misconduct, ill health or poor performance. Subject to a confidential report being made to the Board, by the Vice-Chancellor, at the earliest opportunity following the conclusion of a formal process under one of the following policies Staff Disciplinary Policy (UPR HR02), Managing Sickness Absence and Ill Health Policy and Procedure (UPR HR20) or Managing Poor Performance (UPR HR19). The standard appeals process outlined in the relevant UPR would apply.

8 Reporting requirements

- 8.1 The Chair of the University Decision Panel is required to report the conferment of the titles 'Professor' approved by the Professorial Conferment Committee of the Board of Governors. Appointments will be noted by the Board of Governors.

Where the titles of 'Professor Emeritus' or 'Visiting Professor' are conferred by the Vice Chancellor or Deputy Vice Chancellor to an existing Professor they shall be reported to the next scheduled meeting of the Academic Board and noted by the Board of Governors.

Appendix A - Criteria and examples of evidence in support of a case for Professorship

A1 Core Criteria for all Academic Pathways

All Professors are required to demonstrate professional recognition for teaching excellence in higher education. For applicants to the 'Education, Student Success, and Pedagogy' pathway, candidates must hold a Senior Fellowship of the HEA, and external recognition of working at a professorial level as evidenced by Principal Fellow of the HEA, National Teaching Fellow or equivalent is desirable.

For applicants to the 'Education, Research, and Innovation' and 'Education, Enterprise, and Professional Practice' pathways, candidates must hold a Fellowship of the HEA.

It is expected that all applications for promotion will demonstrate their contribution to education, against the examples of evidence within the Education criteria. Regardless of the applicant's chosen pathway, candidates must provide evidence of their active contribution to the advancement, innovation, and enhancement of educational provision at the University of Hertfordshire.

In addition to 'Education', there are other core criteria which apply to all pathways. These are outlined below under 'Collegiality, Citizenship, and Leadership' criteria.

Criteria	Example Evidence
Education	• Consistent high-quality feedback • Demonstrable impact on advancing the student learning experience • Enhancing inclusive practice in teaching and student experience • Substantive contribution to teaching development and innovation • Enhancement of programmes through PSRB, course accreditation, etc. • High-quality PGR supervision to completion • Relevant external roles

The other core criteria which applies to all pathways is 'Collegiality, Citizenship, and Leadership'. Applicants are expected to demonstrate how they have shaped and contributed to the life of the University of Hertfordshire.

Criteria	Example Evidence
Collegiality, citizenship and leadership	• Contributions through citizenship to UH life • Development of self and others • Academic and institutional leadership through formal and informal roles • Chairing of committees, panels, project work and quality assurance processes, at a faculty and university level • Leading and delivering an area of the University's work and/or a significant leadership role.

A2 Education, Research, and Innovation pathway criteria and examples of evidence

Criteria	Example Evidence
Contribution, standing & esteem	• A body of high quality, peer reviewed outputs that demonstrate a sustained contribution to the discipline • Externally recognised national and international reputation • Holding editorships of journals or contributing to the leadership of professional bodies/learned societies • Other measures of peer esteem appropriate to the subject area • Successfully leading a research centre or large collaborative research programme involving multiple partners.
Research outputs & income	• Research outputs of an internationally excellent and world leading standard as defined in the subject area • Successful record of securing external funding as a PI, relative to disciplinary norms • A track record of involvement in collaborative bids as CI on large and/or complex funding applications that involve working with multiple partners nationally and/or internationally
Engagement, impact & innovation	• Leading an impact case study or developing other equivalent forms of research impact • Leading interdisciplinary research projects and associated outputs • Leading the development of new and exiting relationship with external research partners

*All evaluations made in relation to an individual's academic or other distinction will be carried out in accordance with the University's commitment to the principles of the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) and those of the Coalition for the Advancement of Research Assessment (CoARA).

A3 Education, Student Success, and Pedagogy pathway criteria and examples of evidence

Criteria	Example evidence
Programme Development, Enhancement & Innovation	• An established reputation as a leading teaching specialist, with external recognition of enhancing teaching practice • Leading the growth, development and optimisation of the education portfolio across a School or at University-Level • Leading on significant curriculum enhancement projects/initiatives at faculty or university level that have a sustained and demonstrable impact on student metrics. • Developing of new teaching materials or methodologies influenced by pedagogy of the subject • Creating opportunities for non-traditional forms of learning (e.g., work-based learning and assessment)
Student Experience & Student Success	• Leading and implementing of high-quality student learning experiences that impact both experience and outcomes • Leading projects that have improved student outcomes, or NSS scores or B3 metrics • Leading initiatives to provide support for student transitions or vulnerable groups • Leadership of School/University level activities that result in evidenced and sustained improvements in EDI in education

	Externally recognised development of the discipline or areas of L&T practice
Impactful Learning and Teaching Scholarship & Practice	- A track record of securing external funding for teaching and learning projects - Leading on the innovative use of new technologies and/or the development of educational resources with demonstrable impact across UH - Contribution to pedagogical research or scholarly activity on student success - Publication of high-quality outputs (academic or practitioner) as appropriate to the discipline - Shaping institutional and national practice relevant to your discipline - Senior professional qualification e.g. Principal Fellowship of HEA / National Teaching Fellow

A4 Education, Enterprise, and Professional Practice pathway criteria and examples of evidence

Criteria	Example evidence
Contribution through Enterprise and Professional Practice	- A track record of sustained contribution to shaping and developing practice - Leading the development of KE or professional practice tools, resources and training that benefit professionals and practitioners - Leading the delivery collaborative/co-created projects with external partners yielding improved outcomes for partners - Creating projects and establishing partnerships with external organisations around academic, applied or professional insights and expertise
Knowledge exchange or technology transfer outputs & income	- Significant contribution to non-academic outputs demonstrating influence and impact among partner and stakeholder communities - A successful record of securing funding to sustain your KE activities - Generating income based on commercialisation or innovation projects e.g. consulting, patents, licensing, or spin-offs. - Development of training or education programmes that lead to commercialisation opportunities
Impacting professional practice, organisations and/or society	- A track record of leading projects that have led to the development of professional practice - Evidence of sustained engagement delivering impactful outcomes for professional and practitioner communities - Leadership in local, regional or national economic development activity delivering an area of the University's work - Initiating and developing significant, sustained collaborations that raise the profile of the School or University that led to economic and/or societal impact

Dr Matthew Andrews
Secretary and Registrar
Signed: **25 September 2026**

Alternative format

If you need this document in an alternative format, please email us at governanceservices@herts.ac.uk.