Promotion to Associate Professor

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. Can an applicant who was unsuccessful in the 2025 process apply now?

Yes, provided you were deemed to have met threshold in the 2025 process. If you did not meet threshold in the 2025 process, you shall be required to wait for **2 years** prior to submitting a further application and are not eligible to apply for this year's call.

Q.2 How do I submit my application?

An on-line application form is required for the 2026 call. Only on-line application forms will be accepted. Please submit one signed on-line application form which is available at https://www.dcu.ie/people/promotion-associate-professor-2026.

Please submit hard copy books chosen as published work directly to *The Vice President for People, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, DCU People Department, DCU*, marked *Confidential, Addressee only, Associate Professor application 2026*. Please note that books must also be submitted by the specified application deadline. In lieu of the submission of hard copy books, applicants can include links to the publisher's catalogue/website.

Q.3 Can an applicant include pre-academia experience in their application for promotion?

Should an applicant have pre-academia experience, it is expected that their strengths and experience will have become evident in the activities and roles they have subsequently taken on since joining DCU. The process is about both assessing experience and identifying potential, therefore it is important that the applicant includes evidence in their application that they are continuing on a trajectory of academic success.

Q.4 Should an applicant who has recent Ph.D experience include such details in their application?

The process is about both assessing experience and identifying potential, therefore it is important that the applicant includes evidence in their application that they are continuing on a trajectory of academic success.

Q.5 Where the form asks applicants to outline their experience over the last 5 years, and if the applicant has been on a certain type of leave, e.g. maternity leave for one year, that may affect their output, should the applicant outline their

experience over the last 6 years instead?
Yes – An applicant can extend the period, add a year for each year of leave but include the leave description, i.e. sabbatical, maternity, sick etc. Q0.4 & Q0.5 allows candidates to provide information in relation to periods of leave.

Q.6 The Associate Professor presentation refers to the "Highlights of Application". Where is this section on the Application Form?
The *Highlights of Application* section on Q 0.6 of the on-line application form allows the applicant to state the highlights of their case for promotion.

Q.7 How are the Highlights of Application scored?
This is not scored explicitly but is taken into account within the scoring over the three domains.

Q.8 In Section 1.1.1 of the application form, what is meant by level 1-5?
Levels 1 to 5 refer to:
Years 1-4 undergraduate
5 Masters level and above

Q.9 What is the email address if I have any questions?
If applicants have queries in relation to the on-line application form, procedural issues, including the requirements in relation to the preparation and completion of applications please forward your query to apc.dcupeople@dcu.ie.

Q10. Does class size matter in when being scored?
The size of a class makes no difference in the scoring process.

Q11. If an applicant has a forthcoming publication, is it possible to include that publication in the application?
If the applicant decides that this is important to their case for promotion then the applicant should include the publication details in their application in section 2.1 and in the Appendix. It should be made clear what stage of publication it is at, i.e. it may be under initial review, or reviewed and revisions may have been submitted but still under consideration, or it may have completely finished the peer-review process and any revisions have been fully accepted but not yet published. If an applicant chooses to include a forthcoming publication, the specific status should be made clear. A piece of work that has just been submitted is unlikely to carry much weight, and reviewers will be aware of the pattern of publishing when considering the likelihood of forthcoming output being published and having impact. **Work in preparation, but not yet under review should not be included.**

Q12. If an applicant has a forthcoming publication is it possible to submit that publication for review?

If the applicant decides that this is important to their case for promotion then the applicant can nominate such publications as one of those for review in section 2.5 'Research Quality & Productivity: Impact', but only if the work has been accepted for publication and if a letter confirming the acceptance of the work by the publisher and the date of the publication accompanies their application. As this work will not be available to reviewers, it will also be necessary to submit the latest version you possess, for example proofs (hardcopy).

Q13. Is it a conflict that the Dean of the Business School provides a reference as Head of School and also participates on the Faculty Review Panel?

It was clarified that this was not a conflict. Each applicant's case is discussed in detail at the Faculty Review Panel and there is also a 'Common Dean' involved to ensure consistency in the process.

Q14. In terms of the Head of School reference, can a Director of a Research Centre be a referee in place of the Head of School?

Yes, this is possible, however, the applicant is advised to remember that the person writing the reference must be able to comment on the applicant's suitability for promotion under the three domains.

Q15. Who can an applicant choose as their Referee?

The chosen referee should be an eminent academic or professional expert in the applicant's field, who is external to the university, and can provide an objective academic opinion on the candidate. This **cannot** include your PhD supervisor or a co-author. However, if the applicant has not collaborated with the co-author within the 10 years preceding their application for promotion, the co-author may be used as a Referee in that specific circumstance.

Q16. Can the nominated external referee be at the level of Associate Professor?

Yes, this has happened on occasion over the years, but it is not a frequent occurrence and most external referees are at the level of Full Professor or Professor.

Q17. Can the nominated external referee be a retired member of staff?

No. A retired member of staff is not considered to be suitable as an external referee in this process.

Q18. Should the applicant contact the nominated external referee in the first instance?

This is the recommended approach. DCU People will write to the external referee to request them to provide their reference, so it is recommended that the applicant informs the nominated referee to expect contact from DCU People.

Q19. Will the external referee be provided with a copy of the application form?
External referees are not provided with an electronic copy of an application by the DCU People Department; however, the applicant may choose to share their application directly with their referee

Q20. What happens in the case where an applicant received a low score from one Faculty Review Panel member and a high score from another member?
The applicant is scored by each Faculty Review Panel member over three domains. The average score for each applicant over the three domains is then calculated. The scores for all applicants are discussed and considered and a final set of scores is agreed by the full Faculty Review Panel.

Q21. Will there be one successful applicant from each Faculty?
This is not always the case; the successful candidates will depend on the ranking across the university, agreed by the Academic Promotions Committee.

Q22. Is the ranking of candidates ever changed at the Academic Promotions Committee, after the Faculty Review Panels?
APC should not impact FRP rankings, however this has happened but very rarely and only in exceptional, well-evidenced cases.

Q23. Is consideration given, during the Associate Professor Promotions Process, to the number of Associate Professors that are already in a Faculty?
No, the Policy for *Targeted Promotion to Associate Professor* deals with this.

Q24. In relation to the Head of School reference, what happens in the case where the applicant has a new Head of School?
The request shall be made of the current Head of School if they have been in post for a minimum of six months. If the current Head of School has been in post for a period of less than six months, applicants may opt to nominate the previous Head of School/Dean DCUBS.

Q25. What if the Head of School is also applying for promotion to Associate Professor?
Applicants may opt to nominate the previous Head of School/Dean DCUBS to provide a reference. In relation to the Faculty Review Panel, the School should elect a second academic staff member (Associate Professor grade or above) to replace the Head of School on the panel. This staff member can also provide a reference for an applicant, instead of the Head of School.

Q26. Does the University acknowledge gender imbalance during the Associate Professor Promotions process?
Following the recommendation of the HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions (June 2016) and in line with DCU's Strategic Plan (2023 - 2028) – Transformation for an unscripted future using the guiding philosophy of people, focus, impact which states the University's commitment to continue to promote principles of equality, inclusion and to embrace diversity, the DCU Executive Committee

gave approval for eight Associate Professor posts for the 2023 promotion round, of which there was four male and four female applicants promoted. Unconscious Bias Training will also be delivered to DCU staff involved in the FRPs and the APC.

Q27. What is the guideline in relation to points on salary scale for those promoted under the Associate Professor Promotions Process?
This is outlined in the policy for Pay Upon Promotion for Internal Staff

Q28. How or where should an applicant make reference to one piece of work that originated as Teaching and was then further developed though Research?
This can be covered in Domain 1: Teaching and Learning area of the application and further relevant reference can be made to it under Domain 2: Research and Scholarship.

Q29. Is feedback available to applicants after the promotions process is complete?
Applicants are advised to contact their Executive Dean to discuss the outcome of their application. This feedback can be useful if an applicant intends to apply for future promotion rounds.

Q30. If a Table in the application is not relevant to an applicant, what do I do?

The on-line application form 2026 is a pre-set format of questions and tables can not be deleted. If an applicant considers a table in the application to be irrelevant, continue to the next question or indicate that it is not applicable to their application.

Q31. Is it necessary to input information under each of the dimensions?
No. Applicants can only use information once and must judge where it best supports their case. If they have not been active in a particular dimension, then it is legitimate to indicate that is not applicable. However, it is noteworthy that higher scored applications will have evidenced achievement 'across several/all other dimensions of the Domain being scored'.

Q32. Is there a vertical line within the columns in tables, Q2.1.1, Q2.1.2, Q2.1.3 & Q2.1.4 to insert the relevant numbers on the right and left side of the columns?
No, numbers can be inserted in the following format example: 03/02. Click 'example of format instructions' on the question to display a further example.

Q33. How are members of the Faculty Review Panel's elected?
The membership of the Faculty Review Panel is provided in the Policy document on page 5 and available on the Promotion to Associate Professor 2026 web page. There is one member of academic staff from each school, elected by the academic staff members of the relevant school.

Q34. Can an applicant provide details on mentorship roles?
Yes. Applicants are advised to be specific in relation to their mentorship role. Applicants should be able to show the difference they have made and demonstrate the effectiveness of their mentorship.

Q35. Can a part-time academic staff member apply for promotion to Associate Professor in this process?

No, Applicants applying for promotion to Associate Professor in this process must be employed on a full-term basis. Please refer to page 1 and 2 of the Policy, Procedures, Criteria and Guidelines for full information on eligibility criteria.

Q.36 Can you use the 2025 form rather than using the 2026 application form?

No, only the on-line application form will be accepted in 2026.

Q.37 Is it necessary to be Programme Chair to score the minimum in Teaching?

No

Q.38 Can your Ph.D Supervisor be your external referee?

No, your external referee should be an eminent academic or professional expert in your own field.

Q.39 When applicants are asked to demonstrate excellent past performance, what timeframe should they consider and how far back should they go?

The timeframe for evaluating past performance is based on the overall trajectory of the applicant's career. Applicants should focus on demonstrating the impact and value they have contributed to DCU, considering their entire career trajectory.

Q.40 In table 2.1.1 of the application form the column (year of publication) the first line is 0 what year should that be should it be the year 2025 or 2026?

It's early in the year for publications so in that case it would be 2025 unless you have published in 2026 and then it would be 2026.

Q.41 Will the increase in promotions through APC in 2024 be permanent going forward?

We would hope that this is the case, however, each year the request must be made to Executive and budgetary constraints shall be considered.

Q.42 Will the proposed 15 promotions in 2024 impact targeted promotions?

No, it will not. The presence of 15 proposed promotions in 2024 indicates that targeted promotions are likely to be fewer compared to previous years, given that the usual number of promotions at the University level ranges between 20 to 30 per year. However, this overall number may vary across faculties, with some experiencing fewer promotions.

The Academic Promotions Committee (APC) oversees the entire promotion process, determining whether individuals are deemed suitable for promotion. Targeted promotions differ from the general promotions process as they are overseen by the

Executive Dean. The decision to pursue a targeted promotion depends on factors such as, strategic considerations, staff ratios, or budgetary constraints.

Q.43 The ranking in a Business School is different to other areas?

Everyone understands the ranking in the Business School is ABS. One of the Executive Deans acts as a common Dean and is on every FRP in order to ensure there is comparability throughout. The applicant can give the Q ranking but there is a common understanding of the ranking value of ABS.

Q.44 How should an applicant proceed with an appeal if they haven't received any feedback or documentation, given that they are required to wait for 10 days after receiving the notification and schedule an appointment with the Dean during this period to receive feedback?

The Dean will provide feedback on various aspects, including the applicant's ranking within the University, areas of strong performance, and areas needing improvement. It's important to note that an appeal can only be made to the President if there is an alleged irregularity in the procedure. The appeal must be initiated within 10 working days after the applicant has been notified of the application outcome. Further details on the appeals process is available on the Promotion to grade of Associate Professor - Policy, Procedures, Criteria and Guidelines 2026.

Q.45 Is the breakdown of the scoring system available to applicants?

The policy, procedures, criteria and guidelines 2026 outlines how applicants shall be assessed and scored across the three domains. It is available on https://www.dcu.ie/people/promotion-associate-professor-2026

Q.46 On the application form in table 1.1.2 what is the credit referring to?

It refers to the credit taught by the applicant on the module which is then multiplied by the approx. students to give student credits.

Q.47 What criteria do FRP (Faculty Review Panel) and APC (Academic Promotions Committee) members consider when evaluating applications?

When applicants are preparing their application, it is advised to use the Academic Development & Promotion Framework to showcase their achievements across various areas. This framework clearly outlines the performance requirements, and all FRP and APC members are familiar with these criteria. Additionally, a Common Dean attends the FRP meetings to ensure knowledge transfer and consistency across different FRPs.

Q. 48 Is the DCU Strategy available in a PDF document?

A direct link to the DCU Strategy 2023-2028 is available on the https://www.dcu.ie/strategy and in addition a link to the DCU Strategy is provided on the https://www.dcu.ie/people/promotion-associate-professor-2026.