

# Academic Progression Policy & Procedure

2019 -2020



Edge Hill  
University

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# Academic Progression Policy & Procedure

*This policy does not form part of employee's contracts of employment and may be reviewed and amended subject to agreement by relevant parties.*

*This policy must be read in conjunction with the Code of Practice which overarches all the University's policies and procedures and details generic aspects that apply to all of our policies and procedures.*

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Scope

This policy applies to the progression process for Grade 8-10 academic members of staff.

## 1.2 Aim of Policy and Procedure

The University recognises that in order to retain talented and excellent academic staff the opportunity for such staff to progress will be essential. The University has subsequently developed a clear career pathway to support academic staff to become fully rounded practitioners.

It is the aim of this policy and procedure to provide academic staff with guidance as to how the University will support and enable progression through the grading structure in a way which is managed fairly and consistently.

## 1.3 Principles

In the letter and spirit of the 2006 Pay Framework Agreement, the principles that will be applied in the operation of this procedure are that:

- It is fair, equitable and transparent
- It is applied consistently and fairly
- It maintains the key principle of equal pay for work of equal value in the longer term
- It is available and publicised to all staff

## 1.4 Responsibility

The University aims to attract and retain an excellent academic workforce by applying a modern and flexible approach to academic career development.

The development of academic staff and their career is principally the responsibility of the individual, working in partnership with their line manager / Head of Department / Director / Associate Dean / Dean.

Managers are expected to ensure they are familiar with this policy and aware of their responsibility to consider the personal and professional development of their staff. Progression should therefore be considered as part of operational planning, resources should be made available to develop staff and then those skills must be deployed appropriately.

Academic staff are expected to take an active role in their own development and engage with the support on offer.

## 1.5 Definitions

### **Progression**

There is no economic bar to progression for academic staff up to Grade 10 and therefore cost implications must be accommodated. However, progression to the next grade is not automatic. Individuals will need to demonstrate both their experience and capacity to fulfil the role of the grade above.

- **Annual Incremental Progression**

*Each grade contains a number of pay points and all employees should have a normal expectation of incremental progression from point to point up to a defined threshold, i.e. until they reach the top point in that grade, subject to satisfactory performance, on 1st August, each year in line with the evaluated grade for the role.*

### **Promotion**

Promotion to roles graded 11 and above will be achieved on the basis of budget authorisation, contribution and open competition via either the recruitment process or annual promotions rounds.

## 2. Progression Within Grade and to the Next Grade

### 2.1 Developmental support

The University gives a commitment to academic staff that they will be provided with opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge and expertise. Their development could be supported in any number of ways, for example:

- work shadowing
- coaching
- mentoring
- providing 360 feedback
- a secondment
- exposure to strategic projects and/or steering groups and other opportunities for external and cross-institutional engagement.

### 2.2 Career Development Discussion

The aim of the career development discussion is to consider the individual's personal and professional development and to prepare them to take on higher level responsibilities in the longer term. This discussion should help the individual to assess whether they have the necessary experience and capacity to fulfil the responsibilities of the grade above, whether they have a case to apply for progression within grade, or to agree steps to achieve either goal if further development is required.

Career Development Discussions between the academic member of staff and their line manager can take place at any time.

Career Development Discussions should also form part of annual performance review meetings.

Academic members of staff can develop their own aspirational career plan as part of their career development discussion. There is a separate form on the online Talent Module <https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/services/myview/> to help facilitate this discussion.

### 2.3 Management-Led Business Case

It is recognised that roles within the University change and develop on a regular basis to meet business needs, and that this can sometimes fall outside of the normal progression application window (see 2.7).

If a manager believes permanent changes to a role holder's responsibilities are likely to impact on pay or grading, then the manager will need to assess whether a management-led business case is the most appropriate course of action in line with principles set out in 1.3.

It is recommended that the manager seek guidance from their Human Resources Business Partner in the first instance regarding the above.

### 2.4 Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA)

Grading of all individual roles at Grades 8, 9 & 10 are underpinned by the HERA job evaluation process. Each role descriptor represents a standard academic job description, which has been scored using HERA to determine the relevant grade.

Academic roles are therefore not individually HERA evaluated as part of this process. Subsequent changes of grade are determined by the Progression Panel.

A member of the Panel is HERA trained to provide advice and guidance to the rest of the Panel on this aspect.

### 2.5 Accelerated Progression

Academic staff do not need to wait until they reach the top scale point of a grade in this range (Grade 8 – 10) to apply for progression within grade. If the member of staff has passed their probationary period and has had a Career Development Discussion (see 2.2) with their line manager, then they can apply for progression within grade or to the next grade (where appropriate) within the progression window.

### 2.6 Application Criteria

The criteria for progression to the next grade considered by the Progression Panel covers four key themes:



The applicant will be asked to provide supporting statements (with reference to the person specification document) and supporting evidence as part of their online application which should reflect the above four central themes to demonstrate their experience and capacity to cover the higher-level responsibilities within grade or of the next grade.

HERA role descriptors are also available on the HR wiki site, which provide additional insight into how these themes shape the role of the academic at different grades. However, please note that the role descriptors do not act as a replacement for a Job Description and are only indicative of the types of responsibilities undertaken at a certain level.

## 2.7 Application Window

When the annual progression round is launched, academic members of staff will have the opportunity to submit their application in a one calendar month window, using the online application form via the Edge Hill vacancies page. The window for applications is normally the month of April.

## 2.8 Role of the Progression Panel

The Panel is normally made up of Associate Deans / Deans / Director of Human Resources.

The Panel will verify the standard of the evidence found within the individual's application using the criteria indicated in 2.6. The applicant's name will not be visible on the application form.

The Panel will use a 3-score rating in relation to each of the four themes: 0 (development required) – 3 (fully meets criteria).

All Panel members must have completed equality & diversity and unconscious bias training in the last three years.

## 2.9 Application Outcome

The potential outcomes of the evaluation are:

- (a) The verified evidence provided supports progression to the next grade.
- (b) The verified evidence provided does not support progression to the next grade.

If successful, Human Resources will make the necessary adjustments to the applicant's grade, scoring and pay, and a new job description will be issued.

Any increase in pay will be effective from the 1st August.

If the verified evidence does not support progression to the next grade, meaningful and evidenced feedback will be provided by a member of the Progression Panel addressing each of the four key themes (see 2.6).

### 3. Right of Appeal

On receipt of the outcome from an application for progression to the next grade, the member of staff has the right to appeal.

To exercise the right of appeal the employee should, within 10 working days of the date of the letter advising of the outcome of the formal process, write to the Senior HR Adviser (Advisory Services) outlining the reason for the appeal.

The employee may wish to appeal because, for example:

- They believe information or evidence has not been fully or fairly evaluated
- There is evidence of unfair or unequal treatment
- They believe they have been disadvantaged in some way through the process

The Senior HR Adviser (Advisory Services) will nominate an independent senior manager who has not previously been involved with the issue, and who has a knowledge and understanding of the relevant policy to impartially consider the appeal.

The role of the Appeal Manager is to review the original decision taking into account the grounds of appeal, and to review the process that led to the original decision, establishing whether the procedure was correctly followed, whether the action taken was reasonable and to consider any new evidence that has been brought forward.

Following receipt of an appeal the staff member will be invited, in writing, to attend an Appeal Hearing, normally within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal in Human Resources.

#### 3.1 Appeal Hearing

The staff member will have the right to be accompanied to the appeal hearing by an Edge Hill colleague or union representative.

At the hearing the staff member will present their case to the Appeal Manager, which may include submitting additional documents. A member of the HR Advisory Team will also be present to advise on policy and procedure.

In order to seek clarity as to why the original decision was reached the Appeal Manager will usually meet with key personnel within the formal process.

### 3.2 Appeal Outcome

The decision of the Appeal Manager will normally be conveyed to the staff member in writing within 10 working days of the last investigatory meeting conducted by the Appeal Manager.

If the Appeal is not upheld, the original decision will stand.

If the Appeal Manager finds that the application may be eligible for progression, they will refer this back to the panel for them to reconsider it. The decision of the panel following a second review will be final.

If there is to be a delay in any stage of the procedure for any reason the staff member will be notified in writing.



#### 4. Endmatter

Title	Academic Progression Policy & Procedure
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