

## Reward and Promotion – FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

<b>1</b>	<b>General Questions</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1	How are diverse achievements in very different disciplines compared and assessed?	2
1.2	Reader is just for research, isn't it?	2
1.3	Can I go from Grade 7 straight to Grade 10?	2
1.4	Do I have to work above my grade to be promoted?	2
1.5	What is the correct balance of Research, Teaching and Leadership/Management?	2
1.6	Do I need to have "2 out of 3" at a high level?	2
1.7	Is there a quota on the number of promotions/annum?	2
1.8	I do interdisciplinary work – will that be seen as good or bad?	2
1.9	Should I include everything I've done in my academic promotion application form?	2
1.10	Does it matter if I don't use the University forms and format?	2
1.11	Does my promotion bid require a business case?	2
1.12	Do I need to wait a particular length of time in my current grade?	2
1.13	Should I nominate myself if my School does not?	3
<b>2</b>	<b>Teaching contribution and achievements</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1	How many of the "Exemplars of Excellence in Student Education" must I meet?	4
2.2	Can I be promoted for teaching alone?	4
2.3	Do teaching qualifications or being a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy count?	4
2.4	Do student evaluations ... course evaluation questionnaires ... count?	4
2.5	Does work as a Personal (Or Senior) Tutor count?	4
2.6	Do Students' Association teaching awards and nominations count?	4
2.7	Can I submit student testimonials on my teaching?	4
2.8	My work doesn't fit the Exemplars of Excellence. Help?	4
<b>3</b>	<b>Research contribution and achievements</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1	How much grant income do I need to be promoted?	5
3.2	Does it matter if I am a Co-Investigator, not a PI, on grants?	5
3.3	Can I be promoted for research alone?	5
3.4	Will my achievements in my previous institution count for promotion?	5
3.5	How many papers and citations do I need?	5
<b>4</b>	<b>Leadership contribution and achievements</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1	I do a lot to keep the School going and students happy. Does that count?	6
4.2	Can I be promoted for leadership alone?	6
4.3	Does my work as a Course Organiser, Director of Teaching or Senior Tutor count?	6
4.4	Does my work on Open Days count?	6
4.5	I'm part of a team that leads on an important School activity – can I count that?	6
<b>5</b>	<b>Other contribution and achievements</b>	<b>7</b>
5.1	Does public understanding and external communication work count?	7
5.2	Does Knowledge Exchange/Knowledge Transfer count?	7
5.3	How is clinical work, legal practice and expert witness activity (etc.) assessed?	7
5.4	Is consultancy the same as research?	7
5.5	Do external work and achievements count?	7

## 1 General Questions

### 1.1 How are diverse achievements in very different disciplines compared and assessed?

Promotions committees at College level have representatives from all Schools. Your achievements will not, however, be “compared” with those of other candidates for promotion. They will be looked at against what is typical in your subject area and for your particular profile of work (teaching/research/other).

It is, however, in your interest to remember that the academic promotion application form and summary CV must be intelligible to panel members from across your College.

### 1.2 Reader is just for research, isn't it?

No. This was true until academic year 2017-2018. It is now viewed as a step from Senior Lecturer toward Professor for [any combination of Teaching, Research and other contributions to the University](#).

### 1.3 Can I go from Grade 7 straight to Grade 10?

The precise career route from Grade 7 to Grade 10 is not fixed. Although it is possible to “leapfrog” progression is normally to the grade above your own.

### 1.4 Do I have to work above my grade to be promoted?

Yes. In all promotions, it is expected that the candidate will demonstrate

1. Contribution and achievements above his/her current grade.
2. Crucially, the ability and intention to continue to contribute at a level above his/her current grade.

Promotion is really about **what you are going to do**, based on an assessment of what you have done already.

### 1.5 What is the correct balance of Research, Teaching and Leadership/Management?

There is none. It is, however, vital that your achievements and contribution match the percentages of time spent on each dimension of your role that you give in section 1 of your [academic promotion application form](#).

### 1.6 Do I need to have “2 out of 3” at a high level?

You mean that 2 out of 3 of Research, Teaching and “Other” must be at the grade you are applying for? This is a historical rule-of-thumb that is now obsolete. It is entirely possible to be promoted on the basis of a single class of contributions and achievements, but most promotion cases are based on at least two dimensions of the academic role.

### 1.7 Is there a quota on the number of promotions/annum?

No. Professorial increments and contribution awards are awarded from fixed budgets. Promotions involving a change of grade are not.

### 1.8 I do interdisciplinary work – will that be seen as good or bad?

Neither! Interdisciplinary work is necessary to address many important research questions and to teach students some of the skills that our global society now requires. It is, however, neither good nor bad *per se*.

The University has recognised the challenges involved in presenting a reward case that crosses disciplines and has produced a [guidance document to help](#).

### 1.9 Should I include everything I've done in my academic promotion application form?

Most definitely **NO!** Your application should be concise, impressive and readable. If it includes high- impact items alongside minor contributions, the latter will tend to mask the former. It is particularly important to pre-empt the “*so what?*” question. Ask yourself: “*What was the impact of this achievement and how would I evidence it?*”

This should help you to decide which items to include.

### 1.10 Does it matter if I don't use the University forms and format?

Yes. It is important to create a process that is fair to all candidates and allows panel members to make value decisions on all promotion documents efficiently and effectively.

This is best achieved when all cases are presented in the same format.

### 1.11 Does my promotion bid require a business case?

No. This was once the case for some promotions in some Schools, but there is now a clear path from Grade 7 to Grade 10 available to everyone that allows anyone to be considered for promotion, irrespective of their academic profile across teaching, research and other contribution.

### 1.12 Do I need to wait a particular length of time in my current grade?

No. Promotion is not constrained in this way and it's also important to note that length of service alone is not a basis for promotion. Promotion rewards achievement and contribution to the work of the University against [grade profiles at every level](#), supported by [guidance documents for different grades and patterns of activity](#).

### **1.13 Should I nominate myself if my School does not?**

You can do this. However, it is generally more productive to talk with your line manager about the reason(s) why the School feels that your promotion case is not yet likely to succeed. Self-nominations do, occasionally, succeed.

## 2 Teaching contribution and achievements

### 2.1 How many of the “Exemplars of Excellence in Student Education” must I meet?

The [exemplars of excellence](#) do not work like this!

They are provided simply to indicate, by example, the level and extent of achievement and contribution in teaching-related activities at a particular grade. New exemplars are welcome and remember to [ask yourself the “so what?” question](#). Anyone can be a Course Organiser for 5 years. The sustained impact that you have made in that role is of primary importance. You must highlight it clearly and concisely.

### 2.2 Can I be promoted for teaching alone?

This is entirely possible, but is not the strategy with the highest success probability! Most successful promotion cases are based upon multiple dimensions of the academic role, with an increasing emphasis on external connections and influence, particularly as you aspire to move from Grade 9-10. A “single-strand” (teaching, research or other) promotion case focusses the value judgement exclusively on that single activity. That activity must therefore be extraordinarily important and remarkable, with clear evidence to support the value judgement the panel must make.

### 2.3 Do teaching qualifications or being a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy count?

Most definitely yes – they represent important **external** evidence of your commitment and skill in teaching. This is otherwise generally difficult to identify.

### 2.4 Do student evaluations ... course evaluation questionnaires ... count?

Yes. You can make the decision to include them. If presented clearly and concisely, they offer strong evidence of sustained teaching excellence. Multiple years of excellent student evaluations are a valuable indicator of your commitment and contribution to our students’ experience.

Taken with [other measures of teaching excellence](#), they can help to boost your case.

### 2.5 Does work as a Personal (Or Senior) Tutor count?

Most definitely yes. It is challenging, in the absence of a *Personal Tutor Evaluation Questionnaire*, to produce hard evidence of achievement and impact in this role, but your Senior Tutor or Head of School should be able to assure a promotions panel of your sustained positive contribution to Personal Tutoring if necessary.

### 2.6 Do Students’ Association teaching awards and nominations count?

Yes. A single nomination is not, however, viewed as significant.

A sustained record of nominations and/or an actual award is a useful indicator, taken alongside [other measures of teaching excellence](#), of your success in improving our students’ experience.

### 2.7 Can I submit student testimonials on my teaching?

Not normally. If your pattern of work is such that testimonials would be more helpful than other [Exemplars of Excellence in Student Education](#) your Head of School may be willing to present a summary of them, but they cannot at present be included as a formal part of your promotions documentation

### 2.8 My work doesn’t fit the *Exemplars of Excellence*. Help?

If your work has produced outcomes in terms of student learning and experience that are of the same quality, impact and extent as those in the [Exemplars of Excellence in Student Education](#), you have defined a new Exemplar. Well done. Please present it in your academic promotion application form and summary CV and please send details to your local HR Team. We can then incorporate its implications in a revised set of Exemplars.

### **3 Research contribution and achievements**

#### **3.1 How much grant income do I need to be promoted?**

That depends on your discipline and research agenda within that discipline. There is no “rule” about grant income and your Head of School, or school representative on the Promotions Committee, will be asked to comment on what is typical in your area.

Grant income is only one research “metric” and, like all of the others, it is not useful by itself.

Please indicate, in collaborative awards, both the overall grant and the funding associated with this University.

#### **3.2 Does it matter if I am a Co-Investigator, not a PI, on grants?**

No. Team research now means that many outstanding researchers are unlikely to be the PI on a collaborative, team project. It is, however, important to make clear the extent and impact of your contribution to a team project as a CI, including the writing of the proposal for the grant that may be funding it.

#### **3.3 Can I be promoted for research alone?**

[This answer is given above in the context of teaching-only promotions!](#)

#### **3.4 Will my achievements in my previous institution count for promotion?**

This is a tricky one! You will have been appointed here at a particular grade, based upon your suitability for the job and the appropriateness of your experience and achievements in your previous job(s). An application for promotion must therefore be based upon evidence of performance at the grade above your current grade, which by definition will be here at the University of Edinburgh. Clearly, all of your teaching achievements, research outputs etc. will be visible on your CV when a judgement is made, so they are not simply disregarded. Promotion, however, depends upon what you have achieved here and what you are likely to achieve in future.

#### **3.5 How many papers and citations do I need?**

That depends on your discipline and research agenda within that discipline. There is no “rule” about papers and citations and your School representative will be asked to comment on what is typical in your area. Papers and citations represent only one research “metric”. Like all of the others, they are not useful by themselves and may, in fact, be considered of little value in some disciplines.

## 4 Leadership contribution and achievements

### 4.1 I do a lot to keep the School going and students happy. Does that count?

Yes - very strongly. Schools value “good citizens” who cheerfully take on what are often relatively thankless roles and are happy to cover for colleagues when illness strikes. This is arguably just part of the academic role, but you can be assured that your Head of School will know about and value all significant contributions to the life of the School. If they are of the form of a one-off activity to deal with an emergency, they will normally be seen as a good reason for a contribution reward. If you are a habitual good citizen, that can form part of a promotion case, but will need the Head of School’s endorsement. Guidance on Citizenship can be accessed [here](#).

### 4.2 Can I be promoted for leadership alone?

[This answer is given above in the context of teaching-only promotions!](#)

### 4.3 Does my work as a Course Organiser, Director of Teaching or Senior Tutor count?

Very strongly – but not simply as a position that you have held. It is vital that you can [identify and evidence improvements that have resulted](#) from your leadership in any such role clearly and concisely.

### 4.4 Does my work on Open Days count?

Yes. It is expected that everyone will contribute to such events, but providing sustained leadership and input to elements of our outreach activity can help a promotion case. Furthermore, sustained contribution at any level is a characteristic of a “[good academic citizen](#)”, which should be recognised as part of any reward case.

### 4.5 I’m part of a team that leads on an important School activity – can I count that?

Yes - but you must make your own contribution to the work clear.

## 5 Other contribution and achievements

### 5.1 Does public understanding and external communication work count?

Yes – it is vital that we fulfil our duty as a University in offering education to the general public in many forms. You can present your achievements in this area under

- Research (if the work draws directly on your research)
- or
- Teaching (if it is, for example, related to work with schools).

### 5.2 Does Knowledge Exchange/Knowledge Transfer count?

Yes – it is broadly equivalent to research and the University has a set of [Exemplars of Excellence in Knowledge Exchange](#) to assist you. Research “impact” is extremely important in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and the [REF guidance document](#) gives additional guidance on the definition and scope of research impact.

### 5.3 How is clinical work assessed?

If you hold a clinical academic position you can only apply for promotion as a *Clinical Reader* or *Clinical Medical Professor*. You must be able to show that you meet the same standards as non-clinical colleagues, however, and your advancements and impact on teaching or research can be evidenced through your clinical work.

### 5.4 Is consultancy the same as research?

No. When consultancy brings benefit to the University and/or our students, it can form part of a promotion case. The benefit must be clearly evidenced, however, in terms of ancillary outputs of the consultancy such as

- Industrial/commercial input to teaching
- New collaborative research
- Funding for students/equipment/resources
- Opportunities for students
- Esteem to the University (e.g. via work as an external expert witness)

### 5.5 Do external work and achievements count?

Yes – work for (e.g.) Professional bodies, government agencies, funding bodies, conferences and journals is important.

It is particularly valuable when it brings direct benefit or esteem to the University and/or our students.

*Professor Alan Murray, Assistant Principal, Academic Support, 1 July 2019.*