

Teaching Staff Promotions 2027 Guidance for Candidates

Introduction

Imperial is committed to recognising and rewarding excellence in teaching. Promotion within the Learning & Teaching job family is based on individual achievement and evidence of impact.

This guidance applies to promotion to the following grades:

Grade	Role
Level 3b	Teaching Fellow
Level 4	Senior Teaching Fellow
Level 5	Principal Teaching Fellow
Level 6	Principal Lecturer
Level 7	Professor of Teaching

Promotion is normally through each grade in sequence. Applicants proposing to skip a grade are advised to discuss their case with their Head of Department and/or the Chair of the Teaching Promotions Committee.

Key Principles

- Promotion is based on merit and achievement.
- Applications are assessed against the relevant role profile.
- Teaching staff apply through the annual Teaching Promotions process.
- Transfers into the Learning & Teaching job family are considered through the relevant promotions process.

1. Employment Considerations

Probation, Capability and Disciplinary Matters

Promotion applications cannot proceed where there are unresolved capability, disciplinary or probation-related concerns.

Staff on probation may apply, provided:

- there are no active disciplinary or capability issues; and
- all mandatory probation requirements have been completed.

Imperial Essentials

All candidates must be compliant with Imperial Essentials before a promotion can be confirmed.

Sponsored Staff

Promotions may require reporting to UK Visas and Immigration and, in some cases, a change of visa sponsorship arrangements. Relevant cases will be reviewed with the Staff Compliance Team before promotion takes effect.

2. Departmental Review Process

Heads of Department should conduct an annual review of teaching staff to identify potential promotion candidates. Departments should:

- Review eligible staff against the relevant role profile.
- Publicise the promotion timetable and self-application route.
- Consider whether staff in other job families should transfer into the Learning & Teaching pathway.
- Provide access to promotion advice and mentoring wherever possible.

Departmental review supports career development and departmental consideration of potential cases. Departments must use the published role profiles and must not introduce additional criteria, evidence requirements or local thresholds. A decision not to support an application does not prevent the candidate from making a personal application.

Previous Applications

Applications should not normally be resubmitted in the year immediately following an unsuccessful application. Staff promoted in the previous cycle should only be considered again where there is clear evidence of substantial additional achievement.

Departmental Review Panel

Panels should:

- Be diverse and representative.
- Be chaired by the Head of Department.
- Include at least five additional members, including a professor and a senior member of staff with educational responsibilities.

3. Personal Applications

Where a Department does not support an application:

- The candidate must be informed of the reasons.
- The candidate may submit a personal application through the Department.
- The Department must provide a statement explaining why support was not given.

The department's support position and statement provide relevant information to the Panel but do not determine the outcome. Supported and personal applications are assessed against the same published role profile and through the same Panel process.

4. Application Deadline

15 January 2027, 12:00 noon

Candidates must submit all applications to the Progressions Team by this deadline.

5. Required Documentation

Candidates must complete and submit the following documentation:

- Online [Teaching Promotions Application Form](#) (Microsoft Forms).

To assist in completing the Teaching Promotions Application Form, a word document version can be found on the webpage ([Word Application Form](#)). Please note that all final responses must be submitted through the online Microsoft Form, and the Word template should not be submitted as your application.

References

Candidates nominate:

- One referee for supported applications.
- Two referees for personal applications.

Departments nominate additional referees according to the promotion level:

Grade	Department Nominated Referees Required
Level 3b	None
Level 4	One
Level 5	Two
Level 6	Three
Level 7	Five

Referees should:

- Be appropriately senior and independent.
- Have relevant expertise.
- Not have worked at Imperial within the last five years.
- Not have collaborated closely with the candidate within the last five years.

References provide independent evidence about the significance, influence and standing of your contribution. They inform the Panel's consideration but do not operate as votes for or against promotion and do not replace the Panel's assessment against the relevant role profile.

References will be considered on the basis of the referee's relevant expertise, independence, knowledge of your work and the evidence provided.

6. Assessment Process

All applications are reviewed by the Teaching Promotions Panel. The Panel may request additional information where required.

Applications are assessed against the published role profile for the promotion sought. The Panel considers the application as a whole, including the quality, significance and sustained impact of the candidate's contribution, the departmental information and references received through the approved process. Departmental support and references inform, but do not determine, the outcome. The Panel is responsible for reaching its own assessment against the published criteria.

Interviews

Interviews are normally required for:

- Level 7 applications
- Level 6 applications
- Some Level 5 applications, where the panel considers that this would aid their evaluation

Interviews are usually held between February and March and the panels normally include:

- Vice-Provost (Education and Student Experience) as Chair
- A Consul
- Relevant Faculty Vice-Dean (Education)

Panel membership may be adjusted as required.

Teaching Promotions Committee and Panels

The Teaching Promotions Committee is the University's overarching governance body for the Teaching Promotions process. Individual Teaching Promotions Panels are constituted from members of the Committee to undertake the detailed assessment of applications, including the review of paperwork and, where applicable, interviews. Panel membership may vary according to the applications being considered, but members are drawn from the Teaching Promotions Committee. This structure is distinct from Departmental Review Panels, which operate within departments to review and support applications before submission to the University process.

7. Promotion Decisions

Candidates will be informed of outcomes after final decisions have been made. Successful promotions normally take effect on **1 September 2027**. Unsuccessful candidates will normally receive feedback through their Head of Department. Personal applicants will be informed directly and their Department will also be notified.

8. Monitoring and Data Protection

Promotion outcomes are monitored to support equality, diversity and inclusion and to ensure fairness in decision-making.

Personal data is processed in accordance with data protection legislation and Imperial policies. Application materials and references may be shared with approved referees as part of the promotions process.

9. Appeals

Candidates may appeal only on the grounds of a procedural defect in the departmental or university process. Appeals should normally be submitted, by e-mail to Daljeet Birdy (d.birdy@imperial.ac.uk) within 30 days of receiving the formal written outcome.

If an appeal is upheld, the case may be reconsidered by the Teaching Promotions Committee. Further review arrangements are available where concerns remain unresolved.

Completing Your Application

What makes a strong application?

Promotion panels are looking for evidence that you are already operating consistently at the level being sought. The purpose of the application is not to provide a comprehensive record of everything you have done, but to demonstrate the quality, significance and impact of your contributions.

Strong applications focus on a relatively small number of significant achievements and explain clearly why they matter. Rather than describing activities or responsibilities, applicants should focus on the outcomes they have achieved and the difference their work has made.

Be Clear About Your Contribution

Where work has involved collaborators, make it clear whether you led, initiated, coordinated, supervised, chaired or contributed to the activity, and explain the role you played in achieving the outcome.

Focus on Impact

Throughout the application, focus on the impact of your work rather than simply describing what you did. Panels are interested in the difference your contribution has made to teaching and the learning experience.

For example, rather than stating that you developed a new course, explain how it improved student outcomes, influenced practice elsewhere, increased engagement, or delivered another measurable benefit.

Be Concise and Well Structured

Word limits are maximum limits, not targets. Clear, focused and well-evidenced responses are more effective than lengthy descriptions. If an achievement is relevant in two places, provide detail on one place and a pointer to that in the other rather than repeating yourself.

You are responsible for the accuracy, authenticity and integrity of your application. If you use generative AI or other digital tools to support drafting or editing, you must ensure the final submission accurately reflects your own work and contribution, and independently verify every factual claim. Do not enter confidential, sensitive or unpublished information into an unapproved external tool.

You may include examples from across your career, but applications should place particular emphasis on achievements and contributions since your last appointment/promotion that are relevant to the promotion being sought.

Demonstrate Influence

As promotion levels become more senior, panels will expect to see evidence of wider influence.

This influence may be demonstrated through leadership, educational innovation, scholarship/research contributions, professional standing, the development of others, or contributions beyond your immediate role. The nature of that influence will vary, but applicants should consider how their work has extended beyond their own individual responsibilities.

Tell a Coherent Story

The strongest applications create a clear overall picture of achievement. Reviewers should be able to understand the progression of your career, the significance of your contributions and why the evidence presented demonstrates readiness for promotion.

When preparing your application, consider whether someone unfamiliar with your field would be able to understand:

- What you did
- Your personal contribution
- The impact achieved
- The evidence that demonstrates success

A clear and well-evidenced application is often more effective than a longer application containing large amounts of information

The form should save your progress automatically while you are signed into your Imperial Microsoft 365 account and connected to the internet. We recommend drafting longer responses in the Word template and retaining your own copy until submission has been confirmed.

Completing Each Section

These notes also appear in the online form at the start of the relevant section.

Career Overview

Provide a concise summary of:

- Your current role and responsibilities.
- Key career experience relevant to your application.
- How your responsibilities, influence or impact have grown since your last promotion.

Current Undergraduate and Postgraduate Teaching

List your current student-facing teaching activities in bullet-point format, including:

- Programme and year of study.
- Type of teaching (e.g., lectures, tutorials, labs).
- Approximate contact hours per year.

Educational Qualifications and Professional Recognition

Include:

- Educational qualifications (e.g. PGCert, PGDip, MEd).
- Professional body memberships and recognitions, including AdvanceHE/HEA.

Contribution to Educational Quality Enhancement

Focus on your most significant contributions to the delivery, development, organisation and evaluation of education and where you have had a demonstrable impact. You may wish to include:

- Teaching activity and scale
- Curriculum development
- Assessment and feedback practice
- Digital learning
- Inclusive education
- Student partnership activity
- Contributions to lifelong learning (executive education, CPD, summer schools)

Scholarship, Innovation and Evaluation

Be clear about the influence of your scholarship, the nature of innovations (why they were introduced, how their effectiveness was evaluated), and provide evidence to support your assertions of impact. You may wish to include:

- Educational scholarship or research
- Influence of scholarship/research on your teaching practice.
- Evaluation of teaching practice

- Publications, conference presentations, funding, awards
- Innovations in modes of teaching and assessment
- Innovative initiatives and projects
- Implementation of change as the result of feedback
- Evidence-based evolution of student support processes

Leadership, Collaboration and Scope of Impact on Others

Describe your roles and contributions within and beyond Imperial and focus on evidencing the influence and impact of these. You may wish to include:

- Management roles, committee membership
- Leadership responsibilities
- Mentoring and development of others
- Strategic projects
- Institutional contributions
- External roles
- Professional bodies
- External examining
- Educational networks
- Community building
- Industry or NHS engagement
- Widening participation, outreach or recruitment activity

Working Together

Provide examples of how you contribute to a collaborative, inclusive and high-performing culture and demonstrate Imperial's Values of respect, collaboration, excellence, integrity and innovation in your and others' work. Examples could include:

- Collaboration and teamwork.
- Inclusion and respect.
- Supporting and developing colleagues.
- Creating positive learning and working environments.
- Innovation and continuous improvement.

Personal Circumstances (Optional)

You may provide information about personal circumstances that have affected your career progression, opportunities, or the timing or pattern of your contributions. This could include:

- Caring responsibilities.
- Parental leave.
- Illness or disability.
- Career breaks or secondments.
- Part-time working arrangements.

Providing this information is optional. It will be available to the panel and relevant People Function staff (as required to administer the process). It will not be shared with your referees.

Personal circumstances do not change the role profile or standard required for promotion. The Panel may use the information to understand your achievements in the circumstances in which they were delivered, including any effect on the opportunities available to you or the timing, volume or pattern of your work.

Please provide only information relevant to your application. You do not need to provide detailed medical or other sensitive evidence.

If you require a reasonable adjustment to the application or interview process, please contact learning-and-teaching-promotion@imperial.ac.uk at the earliest opportunity.

Referees

Provide the details of your nominated referee(s) and ensure they have agreed to provide a reference before submitting your application.