

Teaching Staff Promotions 2027 Guidance for Heads of Department

Introduction

Imperial is committed to recognising and rewarding excellence in teaching. Heads of Department play an important role in supporting the promotion process by identifying potential candidates, overseeing departmental review arrangements, and ensuring that applications submitted to the Teaching Promotions Committee are robust, fair and evidence-based.

This guidance should be read alongside the Teaching Staff Promotions Candidate Guidance and the relevant Teaching role profiles.

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.

1. Department Responsibilities

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.

Departments are responsible for ensuring that candidates receive appropriate advice regarding promotion expectations and suitability before applications are submitted.

2. Departmental Review Process

Departments should establish a review panel to consider potential applications. 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.

Departmental review must be based on the published Teaching role profile for the promotion sought. Departments must not introduce additional criteria, evidence requirements or local thresholds. Departmental review should support a consistent and evidence-based assessment of readiness; it does not replace the Teaching Promotions Panel's independent consideration of the 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.

3. Department-Supported and Personal Applications

Departments should inform candidates whether their application is supported. 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, via a statement, a clear, evidence-based explanation of why it considers that the relevant role profile has not yet been demonstrated.

Departmental support provides relevant information to the Teaching Promotions Panel but does not determine whether an application proceeds or the eventual outcome. Supported and personal applications are assessed against the same published role profile and through the same Panel process.

4. Submission Deadline

15 January 2027, 12:00 noon.

Departments must ensure that all required documentation is submitted to the Progression Team by the published deadline.

5. Required Documentation

Departments must complete and use the following documentation:

- Online [Department Referee Nomination Form](#) (Microsoft Forms).
- Email template when contacting nominated referees (**Appendix 4**).
- Head of Department Citation (**Appendix 5**).

Departments should ensure that all information submitted is accurate, complete and submitted within the published deadlines.

6. Referees

Candidates nominate:

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

Departments nominate additional referees according to the promotion level (using template – **Appendix 4**):

Grade	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.

Departments are responsible for ensuring that referee nominations meet these requirements before submission.

7. Head of Department Citation

Departments must submit a Head of Department Citation for all applications (using guidance/template - **Appendix 5**). The citation should be jointly written by the Head of Department and, where applicable, the senior member of staff with responsibility for Education.

The purpose of the citation is to provide the Teaching Promotions Panel with the Department's assessment of the candidate's suitability for promotion and evidence that the candidate is operating at the level sought. The citation informs the Panel's consideration but does not determine the outcome or replace the Panel's assessment against the relevant role profile. It should provide relevant departmental and disciplinary context that the Panel could not reasonably obtain from the candidate's application alone. It should not include sensitive personal information unless there is a clear and approved reason for doing so.

It is recommended that the citation includes:

- Brief details of the Departmental Review Panel that considered and supported the application.
- Confirmation of the candidate's current job title and appointment history since their last promotion.
- Evaluation of the candidate's current undergraduate and postgraduate teaching activities, including the volume and quality of activity within the department.
- Evaluation of the candidate's contribution to educational quality enhancement, including the quality and impact of their most significant contributions to the delivery, development, organisation and evaluation of education. Where work has been undertaken collaboratively, the candidate's individual contribution should be identified.
- Evaluation of the candidate's scholarship, innovation and evaluation activities, including the influence of their scholarship, educational innovations introduced, and evidence of impact.
- Evaluation of the candidate's leadership, collaboration and wider impact within and beyond Imperial.
- Commentary on how the candidate demonstrates Imperial's Values and Behaviours through their Working Together statement.

Departments should also:

- Highlight any departmental circumstances that may have affected the candidate's opportunities to undertake disciplinary and/or educational research.
- Focus on the quality, significance and impact of the candidate's contributions rather than providing a descriptive summary of activities.
- Avoid simply repeating information contained within the application and instead provide an informed departmental assessment of the candidate's achievements and readiness for promotion.
- Where publications are referenced, departments should note that Imperial is a signatory to DORA and that assessment should focus on the quality and contribution of the work rather than journal metrics.
- Give a clear indication of support (or not) for the application.

All citations must be signed and dated before submission

8. Interviews

Interviews are normally required for:

- Level 6 applications
- Level 7 applications
- Some Level 5 applications where clarification is needed

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.

Departments should ensure that an appropriate representative is available to attend. Department representatives observe the panel interview but do not participate in the panel or decision-making. Once the interview has ended, the panel may ask the representative if they feel that the candidate's interview was a fair reflection of their abilities and if they have anything further to add. This contribution may inform but would not decide the panel's decisions.

9. Promotion Decisions

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.

Departments should ensure that feedback is communicated constructively and used to support future development and promotion planning.

10. Confidentiality, Equality and Data Protection

Departments must handle all promotion information confidentially, use only the approved systems and submission routes, and ensure that personal data is managed in accordance with data protection legislation and Imperial policies. Candidate information, referee details, citations and outcomes must not be circulated beyond colleagues who require access for their defined role in the process.

Departments should not include unnecessary personal or sensitive information in citations or local records. Working documents and local copies must be stored and disposed of in accordance with Imperial's records-management and data-protection requirements.

Any actual or suspected inappropriate disclosure should be reported promptly to learning-and-teaching-promotion@imperial.ac.uk.

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

11. Appeals

Candidates may appeal only on the grounds of a procedural defect in either the departmental or university process.

Departments may be asked to provide information during the consideration of an appeal.