

Guidance on considering the impact of the Covid-19 period on the application of promotions criteria.

For applications submitted in the 2020/2021 Annual Promotions Exercise

It is recognised that the Covid-19 pandemic may have had a significant impact on the contributions that staff have been able to make during this period. In addition, the impact may not be uniform, even within a specific discipline or track as many factors, including but not restricted to, family circumstances have created a variety of impacts.

In recognition of this, applications for promotion as part of the 2020/21 annual exercise include the opportunity for an applicant to provide comment on how the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on their opportunities to meet the required performance standards at the grade they are applying for. Statements provided should be taken into account as follows:

- Role Analysts should take the comments into account in respect of undertaking the job evaluation.
- Heads of School should take comments into account in completing their Head of School evaluation and in indicating whether or not they support the application.
- Sub-committees will also consider statements made by applicants and comments in the Head of School evaluation regarding the impact of the pandemic.

Statements will be considered on a case-by-case basis but, in doing so, the following broad principles will be applied.

- Whilst recognising the pandemic may impact on the outputs of an applicant with regards particular elements, there should be no adjustment on quality;
- Where an applicant indicates an impact of Covid on their performance against one or more elements, Heads of School/sub-Committee panel members should evaluate that impact in determining the outcome taking into account the overall period under review and any particular, disproportionate impact during the Covid period;
- Research and Scholarship Outputs: it is recognised that the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a reduction in the number of research outputs and it is reasonable to assume the same will be true of scholarship outputs. Outputs may have been delayed as a result of disruption to research work, a slow-down in publication processes or an increased focus on teaching activity. For this reason, the period of time (up to one year) over which a publication record is considered when evaluating performance may be increased but the quality thresholds.
- Award Generation: the number of research grant applications submitted by the University during the pandemic period dropped in most parts of the University, but not all. Although awards lag behind applications, where a negative impact is suggested, panels should consider how grant capture has been affected during the Covid period and factor this into the calculation of the six-year average by adjusting the income threshold accordingly.
- For all other criteria, panels should consider the impact on the opportunities of the applicant on a case-by-case basis. In doing so, adjustments may be made for delays or cancellation of activity that may have contributed positively to the case of the individual but quality thresholds should not be adjusted. Panels should also wish to take the performance trajectory of the applicant into account in coming to a final decision.
- It should be noted that there may be aspects of some dimensions that can be evidenced more strongly due to the pandemic, such as leadership, supervision, etc.

The University will monitor any adjustments and analyse them with respect to grade, gender career track and the different dimensions.

It is recognised that the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic period on staff is likely to extend well beyond the period of the pandemic itself. For this reason, the guidance above will be updated in future years to reflect this.

The nominated Dean/VP allocated to sit across all committees will have a role to play in ensuring consistency of application and decision making with regards these considerations.