

Competitive Promotion Policy

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Purpose

The competitive promotion process at the University of Luxembourg (hereafter the University) provides current Assistant Professors (*Professeur(e)s assistant(e)s*), Associate Professors (*Professeur(e)s adjoint(e)s*), as well as Research Scientists (*Maître-assistant(e)s*) with the opportunity to have their work and activities evaluated for potential promotion as part of a University-wide competitive process.

The present document outlines the scope, terms and conditions, parties involved in, and procedures for the competitive promotion process.

Scope and application

Article 25 of the University law provides for competitive promotion opportunities in the following cases:

- Associate Professor to Full Professor;
- Assistant Professor to Associate Professor; and
- Research Scientist to Assistant Professor.

The measures and provisions outlined in this document apply only to the competitive promotion process and have no bearing on the rights or career prospects of tenure/promotion-track Assistant and Associate Professors awaiting evaluation.

The present policy will be reviewed and updated as needed.

General conditions

Overview

Applicants must fulfil the criteria for Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Full Professor as laid out in the job descriptions in force for these functions. Particular consideration is given to the quality of research, the vision and plans for future research and scholarship activities, teaching and doctoral training, knowledge and technology transfer, and administration and management. Additional eligibility requirements apply.

Competitive promotion is subject to restrictions on the number of appointments; as such, the process is launched when relevant thresholds are met and following the opening of positions by the Board of Governors.

Applicable quota on competitive promotion

In accordance with the University law, the number of promotions to a given professorial rank is limited. For every four (4) new appointments, only one (1) can be through promotion. In other words, for every three (3) open recruitment hires, one (1) promotion is allowed.

This 25% quota is applicable for appointments to each professorial rank independently, i.e. Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Full Professor.

Details on the quota calculation method are provided in annex of the present document.

Funding

The Faculty or Interdisciplinary Centre responsible for the applicant's salary costs must confirm their commitment to sustain additional salary expenses on own budget.

Eligibility

In compliance with the University law, the following eligibility criteria apply:

Current Assistant and Associate Professors: Employment at the university for at least 60 months – in whichever position, on full-time or part-time (min. 50%), fixed-term or permanent contract.

Current Research Scientists (*Maîtres-assistant.es*): To request to be considered for promotion, a Research Scientist must meet the following two eligibility requirements:

- Employment for at least 60 months at the University– in whichever position, on full-time or part-time (min. 50%), fixed-term or permanent contract; and
- At least 12 months spent at another University or research institution outside Luxembourg since the completion of their doctoral studies.

For the purposes of the latter criterion, all of the following may be considered:

- Contractual work undertaken with (an)other institution(s); and
- Visiting researcher stays carried out on a non-contractual basis but otherwise recognized and recorded by the host institution(s).

The period of the above activities may be consecutive or cumulated over several periods. Certificates issued from the relevant institution(s) must be submitted at the time of notification of intent as proof of fulfilment of these criteria.

Ongoing or past teaching missions at other institutions as adjunct lecturer are not eligible for consideration in fulfilment of this eligibility criterion.

Applications

Applicants are required to submit a preliminary notification of intent to apply for promotion. Thereafter, they are requested to submit complete documentation by the announced deadline using the provided templates. Applications received after the deadline or incomplete documents are not considered. All documents must be submitted in English.

Additional reports

Each application is supplemented with 4 assessment reports, from the following:

- Joint assessment report by the Dean or Director and Head of Department or Research Group of the applicant's primary assignment; and
- Three external referees.

The applicant may provide the names of up to three (3) individuals whose feedback **should not be solicited**, providing an explanation thereof.

Referees

An independent external institution is tasked by the Rector to provide assessment reports from external referees.

External Evaluation Committee

Composition

The External Evaluation Committee (hereafter the committee) is composed of at least five (5) members, holding professorships at other universities. The committee is constituted and its Chair is appointed by the Rector. In its composition, best efforts shall be made to ensure geographical diversity and gender balance among members; when balance is not feasible, a minimum representation (2 members) of the underrepresented gender is ensured.

Internal observers

Up to two (2) Rectorate members will participate in committee discussions as institutional observers. They may provide insight and contextual input to the committee, but they do not interfere with deliberations and ranking.

Criteria for membership eligibility

Committee members must hold the equivalent of a full professorship at another University or research institution and be internationally recognized for their expertise; they will preferably have had experience participating in such evaluation activities and relevant knowledge or training in equality and diversity topics as they relate to academic recruitments and promotions.

Committee members must have demonstrated ability and record in ranking / evaluating across different disciplines.

Conflict of interest

Prospective or appointed committee members must take all reasonable steps to identify and report potential conflicts of interest at any point during the course of a competitive promotion process. Members must sign a commitment letter before final appointment.

Assessments of applications are conducted fairly and transparently. Any member can challenge the process at any time if they consider that this is not the case by raising this with the committee Chair.

Should a conflict of interest become apparent, the impacted committee member should notify the Chair, and a substitute should be identified.

The following conditions rise to the level of conflict of interest:

- Relation by blood to the fourth degree or other intimate relationships;
- Ongoing or past legal conflict(s);
- Economic competition or common economic interests in the past five (5) years;
- Joint publications, contractual collaborations on joint projects and other scientific collaborations in the past five (5) years;
- Thesis supervisor relationship with a student;
- Subordinate relationship* in the past five (5) years.

*Subordinate relationship should be understood above as direct line management.

Evaluation

Overview

The evaluation process includes two major components:

- Evaluation of the applicant across the assessment areas based on own merits; and
- A ranking among the whole pool of applicants in the given rank.

Assessment areas

The applicant's performance is measured along the following areas:

- Research and scholarship (i.e. a record of high-quality and peer-assessed scholarly work);
- Teaching and doctoral training (i.e. a teaching record with commitment to academic and pedagogical excellence. This may include participation in set-up or reorganisation of teaching programmes);
- Knowledge and technology transfer (i.e. a record of activity in technology transfer, public outreach, industry collaboration/partnership or other relevant activities); and
- Administration and management (i.e. a record of university service and good management practice).

The professorial function of "International, European and national collaboration" is considered within each of the areas laid out above.

The specific criteria for assessment for each area are outlined in [Annex 2 - Assessment criteria](#)

It is the nature of the position that there is overlap between the different categories and that their weight will be different for different individuals, position profiles and disciplines. Guidelines for weighting between areas are presented below.

Weighting of assessment areas

The evaluation may be weighted differently across the different assessment areas, in line with disciplinary and individual differences. An applicant may choose to weight an area more significantly in order to reflect greater participation and self-identified achievement in that area.

WEIGHTING SCALE

Area	Minimum weighting	Maximum weighting
Research and scholarship	40	65
Teaching	20	45
Knowledge and technology transfer	10	35
Administration and management	5	30

Total points attributed across all areas must not surpass 100.

Weighting of assessment areas is proposed by the applicant; the Dean or Director of the entity to which they are primarily assigned provides an opinion on the weighting in their assessment report.

Committee work and reports

The committee carries out the detailed scoring and ranking for all applications through a multistep process:

Review of documentation: Individual members of the committee assess each application and conduct an initial, individual scoring exercise based on consideration of submitted documentation and received assessment reports, using the band scoring as laid out in [Annex 3: Scoring Bands and definition thereof](#).

Review of initial scoring: The committee reviews input from the external referees and the Deans/Directors, and, as necessary, may interview the applicants or any persons it deems appropriate. The committee may request additional assessment reports.

Input re-evaluation and assessment: For each applicant, the committee delivers its assessment regarding the quality of each application using the band scoring system and taking into account the selected weighting. Based on the overall score outcome, the committee assigns a relative ranking among the applicants for each level. The assessment is detailed in a written report delivered to the Rector. All applicants and Deans/Directors are informed that the assessment has been rendered and delivered to the Rector.

Confidentiality and data protection

Evaluations are carried out in line with the [GDPR regulations](#).

The candidate is advised on the treatment of their personal data upon the launch of the evaluation exercise and all committee members sign a commitment letter including a confidentiality/non-disclosure agreement before appointment.

Related policies and legislation

- Law of 27 June 2019 (modified) on the organisation of the University of Luxembourg
- Internal regulations
- Gender equality policy
- Data protection policy

Related forms and guidelines

- Checklists for candidates, Deans/Directors, Heads of Department
- Template for applicants
 - Application submission form
- Template for external referees
 - Assessment report
- Template for Faculty Deans/Directors of Interdisciplinary Centres, Heads of Department or Research Group
 - Assessment report
- Templates for External Evaluation Committee
 - Commitment letter
 - Assessment report
 - Ranking report

Procedure

Responsibilities

Numerous stakeholders are involved in the process of evaluating applicants for promotion.

Their respective roles and responsibilities are laid out below.

Applicant

The applicant is responsible for:

- Notifying the Rector on their intention to stand for promotion;
- Providing the names of up to three (3) external experts that should not be contacted for an assessment and providing an explanation thereof;
- Gathering all necessary documents and preparing statements of their application as laid out in the present policy;
- Submitting documentation within the timelines established;
- Attending meetings, as needed, with the appointed committee; and
- Responding to any requests for supplementary information from the relevant committee.

Rector

The Rector is responsible for:

- Defining and communicating the modalities and timeline of the process, and generally providing oversight thereof;
- Composing and appointing the External Evaluation Committee and its Chair;
- Receiving applicant documentation;
- In collaboration with an external and independent institution, requesting and receiving assessment reports from external referees;
- Communicating external assessment reports and applicant documentation to the Dean/Director and Heads of Department for their joint assessment report;
- Communicating applicant documentation and assessment reports to the committee for review; and
- Following the report by the committee, putting forward a recommendation for promotion of successful applicant(s) to the Board of Governors.

Members of the Rectorate

Members of the Rectorate are responsible for:

- Participating in committee discussions as institutional observers to provide insight and contextual input, as needed, without interfering with deliberations and ranking.

Faculty Dean / Director of Interdisciplinary Centre

The Dean/Director is responsible for:

- Putting forward proposals for disciplinary experts to the External Evaluation Committee, as needed;

- Mentoring and coaching applicant(s) from their entity;
- In collaboration with the Head of Department/Research Group preparing a joint assessment report of the applicant(s) from their entity;
- Providing other feedback as necessary during the competitive promotion process; and
- Providing feedback to applicants from their entity following the competitive promotion process.

Head of Department / Head of Research group

The Head of Department in a Faculty or a Head of research group in an Interdisciplinary Centre is responsible for:

- Supporting the Dean/Director in putting forward proposals for disciplinary experts to the External Evaluation Committee, as needed;
- Mentoring and coaching applicant(s) from their department;
- In collaboration with the Dean / Director participating in a joint assessment report on the applicant(s) from their department / research group; and
- Providing other feedback as necessary during the competitive promotion process.

External Evaluation Committee

As an advisory body to the Rector, the committee is responsible for:

- Reviewing the documents and evidence submitted by the applicant as well as assessment reports of the external referees, Dean/Director and Head of Department / Research Group;
- As needed, interviewing the individual, Dean/Director, and/or Head of Department/Research Group to which the applicant belongs regarding their activities and performance;
- Requesting and examining any other information it considers relevant to complete the file and ensure consistency in the procedure;
- Assessing each individual applicant's work using the criteria necessary for promotion to the next level;
- Proposing a ranking of the applicants; and
- Delivering a report regarding each applicant's activities across the different professorial functions at the University, including any relevant developmental feedback.

Chair of the External Evaluation Committee

The Committee Chair is responsible for general oversight of the good functioning of the committee, including but not limited to:

- Preparing meetings;
- Contacting additional referees, as needed;
- Following up on identified conflicts of interest and notifying the Rector accordingly; and
- Ensuring all documentation from the committee is communicated to the Rector.

Board of Governors

The Board of Governors is responsible for:

- Approving the present policy;

- Approving the number of positions opened and the provisional timeline;
- Approving the promotion of identified applicants; and
- Appointing successful applicants to the next professorial level.

HR department

The HR department is responsible for:

- Following positive outcome of the evaluation process, defining the new grade for the successful candidates in alignment with the salary grid in force; and
- Setting up the contract or addendum.

Honorarium and other expenses

Each committee member receives an honorarium.

The Office of the Rector covers the honorarium and all travel expenses for committee members in accordance with the [financial regulations](#) of the University of Luxembourg.

Chronology of the process

Available quotas and timeline

The Board of Governors confirms and approves the number of positions and timeline proposed by the Rector.

Launch

The Rector notifies the community, including information on the procedure, timeline and any relevant forms and guidelines. The Rector identifies and appoints the committee, following consultation of Deans and Directors, as needed.

Submission of applications

Following notification of intent, applicants gather all necessary documents and submit their dossier to the Rector by the announced deadline. The Rector mandates an external and independent institution with the gathering of assessment reports from external referees, complements applications with said reports, and forwards the documentation to the Dean/Director of the applicant's primary entity.

The Dean/Director, along with the Head of Department / Head of Research Group, provides the Rector with a joint assessment report on the applicant's accomplishments, including their opinion on the chosen weighting and confirming funding support. The Rector informs applicants that this step is complete and that their documentation is forwarded to the committee.

External Evaluation Committee review and ranking of applications

Committee members individually review all applications and conduct an initial scoring. The committee meets to review its initial scoring and input provided by Deans/Directors and external referees. It may request additional assessments, and/or interview the candidates or any other person it deems appropriate. The committee re-evaluates all input and, for each applicant, delivers its assessment taking into account the selected weighting options. Based on the overall score outcome, the committee assigns a relative ranking among the applicants for each level.

Members of the rectorate participate in the committee's deliberation as institutional observers to provide factual insight, as needed, without providing an opinion.

The committee's opinion is detailed in a written report delivered to the Rector. Applicants and Deans/Directors are informed that the assessment exercise is completed.

Selection, proposal and approval of candidates for promotion

The Rector considers all committee reports and assessments and proposes candidates for promotion to the Board of Governors, who considers and approves or denies the proposal. The Rector informs each candidate and the Dean/Director of the candidate's entity of primary assignment of the Board's decision.

Implementation of promotion

The new salary and title take effect upon final appointment.

Key steps and timeline*

The key steps in the evaluation process are laid out below (NOTE: “T” is the date of approval of positions by the Board of Governors). Please note that the timeline is provided for guidance purposes only and may be adapted according to process requirements.

Step	Responsible	Start date	End date
Confirmation of number and level of appointments possible	Rector	Month T	Month T
Call for external committee membership proposals, as needed	Rector	Month T	Month T
Communication on process	Rector	T + 1 month	T + 1 month
Submission of preliminary notification of intent to apply for promotion	Applicant	T + 1 months	T + 2 months
Communication of notifications of intent to Deans/Directors and Heads of Department of applicants affiliated to their respective entities/departments	Rector	T + 3 months	T + 3 months
Appointment of External Committee and its chair	Rector	T + 4 months	T + 4 months
Submission of all documentation	Applicant	T + 3 months	T + 3 months
Submission of candidate documentation to respective Deans/Directors and Heads of Department	Rector	T + 3 months	T + 4 months
Request for assessment reports from external experts	Rector	T + 4 months	T + 4 months
Submission of assessment reports	External institution	T + 4 months	T + 7 months
Submission of external assessment reports to Deans/Directors and Heads of Department of candidates to their respective entities/departments	Rector	T + 7 months	T + 7 months
Submission of joint assessment report(s) to the Rector	Deans/Directors+Heads of Department	T + 7 months	T + 8 months
Communication of applicants’ full assessment folders to External Evaluation Committee	Rector	T + 8 months	T + 8 months
Deliberation on applicant documentation and assessment reports	External Committee	T + 8 months	T + 10 months
Communication of assessment report and ranking of applicants to Rector	External Committee	T + 10 months	T + 10 months
Notification on end of committee work	Rector	T + 10 months	T + 10 months
Proposal to the Board	Rector	T + 11 months	T + 11 months
Decision on promotion of applicants	Board of Governors	T + 11 months	T + 12 months
Communication to applicants of decision and individualized feedback	Rector	T + 12 months	T + 12 months
Final appointment of successful applicants	Board of Governors	T + 13 months	T + 13 months

Annexes

Annex 1- Basis for calculating number of positions to be opened under competitive promotion scheme

Quota schedule

The period for the quota count starts as from the day following the last day of the quota period of the previous Competitive Promotion round.

For the purposes of the quota count, an appointment is counted as on the date of contract start at the given professorial rank.

Consideration of different appointments in the quota calculation

The different types of appointments are considered in the following way for the purpose of establishing the quota:

	Counted in quota of new appointments	Counted in quota of promotions
Appointment on a non-tenure track position following an open call	Yes	No
Initial appointment on a tenure/promotion -track position	Yes	No
Final appointment on a tenure/promotion -track position	No	No
Initial appointment of an ATTRACT candidate	Yes	No
Final appointment of an ATTRACT candidate	No	No
Initial appointment of an ERC award winner	Yes	No
Final appointment of an ERC award winner	No	No
Appointment following classification exercise as part of compliance with the new law	No	No
Appointment on a non-tenure track external position following " <i>nomination par appel</i> "	Yes	No
Appointment after successful application in the competitive promotion scheme	No	Yes
Appointment after external search of rector, vice-rector, dean or director	Yes	No

All positions are calculated using the headcount method.

Should the calculation result in a non-integer number, the unused fraction of a position shall count towards a future promotion round.

Annex 2 - Assessment criteria

International competitive excellence is the prime criterion in all areas. The following criteria will be taken into consideration:

Research and scholarship

- Research output (quality, productivity and impact);
- International visibility and recognition as illustrated by invited conferences, key notes, expert committees, awards, editorial boards, etc;
- External funding acquired as principal investigator;
- Supervision and mentoring of Doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers; and
- Organisation of international scientific conferences.

Teaching

- Courses taught, including doctoral education and continuing education;
- Teaching coordination and/or programme directorship;
- Quality of teaching materials or teaching methodology developed by the candidate (including curriculum development and assessment practice);
- Student feedback;
- Student supervision and mentoring (Bachelor and Master, excluding PhD students);
- Teaching awards, fellowships, and teaching grants;
- Scholarship on teaching and learning;
- Contributions to national, European and international collaborations in this area (i.e. dual degrees); and
- Formal continuing professional development in teaching and learning.

Knowledge and technology transfer

- Partnerships with the private or the public sector;
- IP creation and valorization (patents, licensing agreements, spin-offs); and
- Public engagement, citizen science and other forms of service to the general public;
- Contributions to (inter-)governmental professional committees and other forms of engagement with public and private sector actors;
- Other forms of service to the society;
- Formal continuing professional development in this area.

Administration and management

- Involvement in faculty and university committees;
- Administrative roles and appointments;
- Academic leadership and management;
- People and team management and mentoring; and
- Formal continuing professional development activities in this area.

Annex 3: Scoring Bands and definition thereof

Across each area, the evidence supporting an applicant's application is evaluated on a five-level scale:

Reference: Competitive promotion policy – Individual scoring

Band Scale	Maximum and minimum percentage allocations	
	Minimum	Maximum
A* Outstanding	90	100
A Very good	80	89.9
B Good	65	79.9
C Satisfactory	50	64.9
D Unsatisfactory	0	49.9

These bandings should be used to summarize the description of achievement in relation to the criteria.

The lowest band ("Unsatisfactory") is deemed to be below the threshold for promotion. Any applicant whose contributions fall within this band for any area for promotion (research/scholarship, teaching, knowledge and technology transfer, and administration and management) will be deemed not to have met the minimum level for promotion.

Definition of scoring bands

Outstanding: The professor's performance is outstanding and far exceeds expectations in the area. Their contributions have a significant and widely recognized impact and often sets a benchmark for others in the field.

Very good: The professor performs at a high level, exceeding expectations in most aspects in the area. Their contributions are impactful and well-recognized within the institution or field.

Good: The professor meets expectations with reliable and competent performance in the area. Their contributions are solid, with a positive impact on the department or field.

Satisfactory: The professor adequately meets the basic expectations but shows noticeable shortcomings in the area. Performance is consistent with the minimum requirements but lacks significant impact or innovation.

Unsatisfactory: The professor's performance is significantly below expectations in the area. Performance is inconsistent or insufficient, requiring development or improvement to meet basic standards.

[Annex 4: Job descriptions in force](#)

See version in force on the University intranet.