



University
of Exeter

Exeter Academic
Review - Feedback
2022

What is the Exeter Academic Review?



- Chaired by Professor Rich Smith, the group aims to review the promotion and progression (including probation) structures for academic colleagues, to create a reward, recognition and promotion scheme that values and recognises excellence across all academic career paths.
- The review started in May 2022 and plans to implement any changes from the start of the 2023/24 academic year.
- Throughout October and November, we will be speaking to our academic community to gain valuable feedback on both current and alternative probation, promotion and progression structures.
- Alongside seeking views from academic colleagues, we have employed an external consultant to undertake some sector research to look into alternative practices. Both the sector research and the feedback from colleagues will be used to draft initial recommendations for further feedback in the new year.

Further information about the review as well as a copy of the terms of reference are available here:

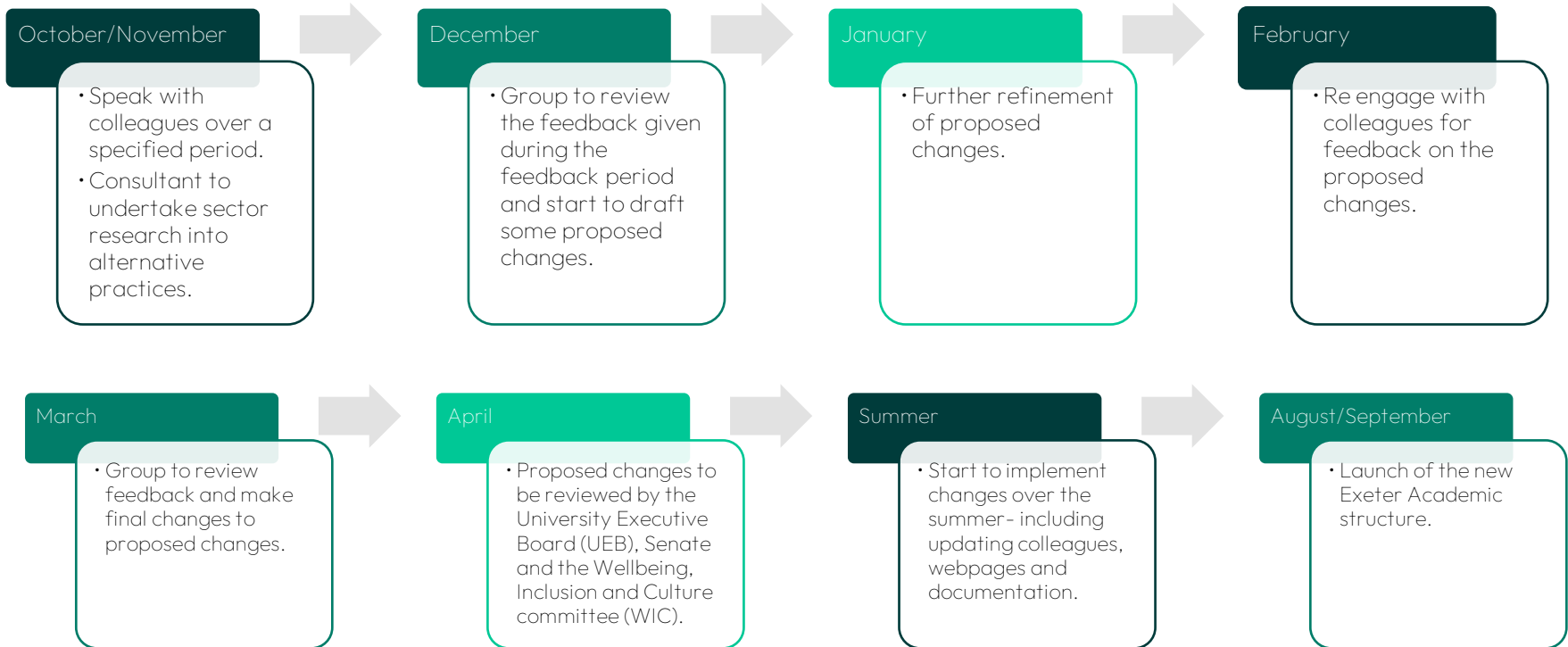
www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/exeteracademic/review/

Exeter Academic Review Principles



- Commitment to our inclusive culture is central to all we do.
- Developing and supporting careers is key to individual and University success (and reputation), particularly for early career researchers.
- Valuing equally the vital roles of research and education, with the two interlinking.
- Consideration of the nature of Higher Education in a rapidly changing digital world, requiring new skills and understanding of the nature and needs of new and diverse learners.
- Recruitment, progression and promotion processes will support increasingly fluid careers with colleagues moving across traditional boundaries, recognising the importance of other interfaces (e.g. industry and public policy).
- Placing importance on citizenship, teamwork, leadership and mentorship, giving the recognition they deserve.
- Creating a new framework for the Exeter Academic that is light touch, clear, supportive and flexible.

Project Timelines



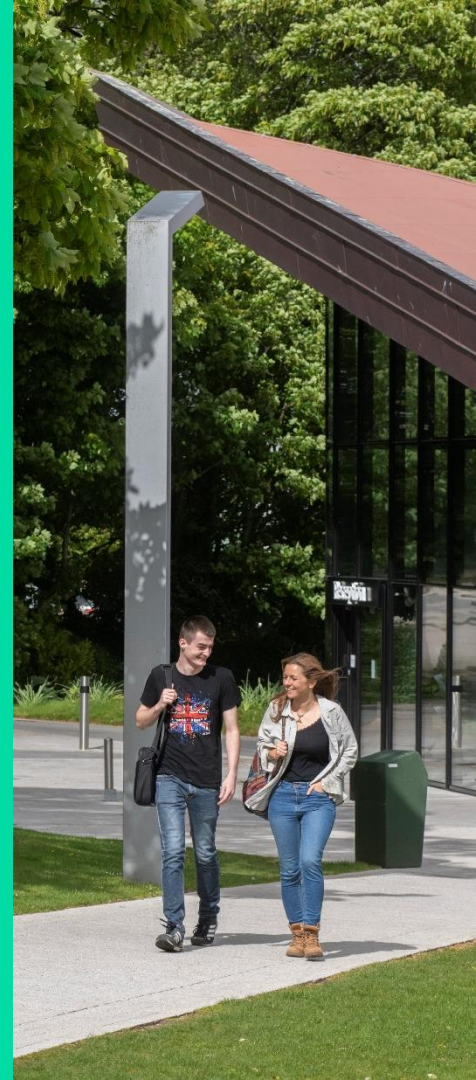


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Feedback to date

We have already received feedback from a number of sources including the Big Conversation, the Exeter Academic steering group, HoD engage, PDR/reviewer training, PVCs/Promotion board, CEDARs survey and Research Culture workshop.

This has been consolidated to form a set of common comments and concerns that comprise four core areas (outlined in the next 4 slides) that will be the basis for wider feedback.



Job Families and Titles



Job Families refer to the job contract that you have (E&S, E&R or R only) more detail can be found on the [Exeter Academic website](#).

Common comments/concerns arising include:

- Equitable acknowledgement of contribution between job families
- Variance in career progression between job families
- Limitations to moving between job families
- Acknowledgement of the contribution of less conventional career track academic colleagues who bring different (but needed) skills and knowledge (eg in industry, public policy, technical skills)
- Link between those who move between academic and non academic roles and the contribution they bring.
- Relationship between academic and professional services careers at the interface, such as in technical services (will be jointly considered with the concurrent [Exeter Professional review](#) that is underway)

Criteria



A number of comments and concerns thus far relates to the criteria by which promotions are judged and expectations set, such as for research achievements, internal citizenship contribution and leadership roles. The review will therefore consider what areas to recognise and how best to recognise them across the core components of research, education and citizenship, and reflect on how best to consider aspects such as teamwork, external engagement and non-traditional roles and skills.

Common comments/concerns arising relate to:

- Grant applications (focus and size) will vary depending upon career point and discipline.
- Impact (as a research target) in line with REF.
- Business and public (civic, regional, global) engagement.
- Greater recognition of leadership, teamwork and citizenship.
- Work across interdisciplinary groups and networks (and Institutes).
- Importance of research and scholarship within both E&R and E&S roles.
- Significance of leadership as one of the criteria for excellence and confirmation/promotion.
- Educational innovation, global educational activity, WP initiatives, programme development as evidence of excellence and criteria for confirmation/promotion.

Process



There have been many comments about the processes associated with promotion in particular, relating to the forms that are required to be completed to the length of time associated with progress.

Common comments/concerns arising include:

- PVC's statement to focus more on contribution.
- Clarity on what is required vs what is suggested or eligible for inclusion as evidence.
- Greater clarity on 'where' and 'how' people appear on grants with more focus on awards achieved and outputs published but balance to recognise effort in submissions that may be unsuccessful.
- Consistent application of policy in relation to research income and submission activity (and targets) is needed (FEC and commercial considerations to be included).
- Improve evidence of sustainable (recent) high-quality publications and funding as a PI, as appropriate to the discipline/sector.
- Greater evidence of progress since last probation or promotion.
- Greater transparency and inclusivity to the process.
- Devolution of process as far as possible to Departments for many grades
- Reduction in number/timing of external references at certain grades

Learning and Development (Support)



There has been recognition that the support provided to colleagues needs to match the expectations made of them. Whilst formally outside of Exeter Academic, the review will make clear recommendations for Learning and Development provision and how this should be mapped to probation, promotion and progression.

Frequent feedback/comments/concerns include:

- Greater emphasis on the role of 1-1 reviews to support colleagues that address progress, workload, wellbeing, careers; includes (but is not limited to) formal PDRs.
- Effective mentoring (the role of mentor and training to support this)
- Further guidance and support on quality CV presentation.
- Address barrier that heavy teaching loads may place on early career academics (hindering research progress).
- Better use of ASPIRE (or UK Professional Standards Framework) to evidence quality teaching.
- Closer links to HEA status in promotion
- Personal skills that are sometimes taken for granted (eg confidence, resilience, networking)
- People Management and Leadership skills and how these relate to career progression
- Development that supports career development for people from minority backgrounds

Feedback

Now seeking more specific feedback on these areas through groups and individuals.



Feedback



The feedback is structured into four themes:

- Job Families and Titles
- Probation, promotion and progression- the criteria
- Probation, promotion and progression- the process
- Learning and Development (support)

For each theme we want colleagues to think about the following broad questions:

- What works about the current process/system?
- What could be done to improve the current process/system?
- Are you aware of any other university who does this (or any specific aspect) well?

In the following slides we will be asking you a number of more specific questions that will help guide the discussion in your session. Note these are not exhaustive but a guide – all feedback is appreciated.

Please collate and summarise the feedback you have received and complete the consultation feedback form. The form can either be completed [online](#) or through the word document. Please send word documents to Charlotte Juggins (cj261@exeter.ac.uk).

Job Families and Titles



This is a list of the current job families and titles listed for academic staff at Exeter.

Education and Research	Education and Scholarship	Research
Professor	Professor	
Associate Professor	Associate Professor	
Senior Lecturer	Senior Lecturer	Senior Research Fellow
Lecturer	Lecturer	Research Fellow
	Associate Lecturer	Postdoctoral Research Fellow/ Postdoctoral Research Associates

Details on the current job families and titles at Exeter can be found on the Exeter Academic website-
<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/exeteracademic/probationpromotionprogression/>



University of Glasgow

Case Study: University of Glasgow
Academic Clinician family
www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_829709_smx.pdf

Job Families and Titles- Questions



Theme specific questions to think about

- Do we need job families and titles? Why?
- Do we need to add further families or titles? Why?
- How could we change the job family and title structure to better support:
 - Career Progression
 - Colleagues moving between job families
 - Colleagues whose careers move in and out of academia
 - Alternative career tracks
- Are you aware of any other universities whose job families and titles are set up differently to Exeter?

Probation, Promotion and Progression- the criteria



Current promotion criteria based on job family:

- [Education and Research](#)
- [Education and Scholarship](#)
- [Research](#)

Case Study: Netherlands

Room for everyone's talent initiative-
<https://recognitionrewards.nl/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/position-paper-room-for-everyones-talent.pdf>

Probation, Promotion and Progression- the criteria- Questions



- What in the current criteria should stay or be removed and why?
- We have identified areas that we think should be included in the criteria
 - Practitioner expectations (dual- professional roles such as in medicine or law)
 - Research expectations (including open research)
 - Education expectations
 - Commercial expectations (including not for profit collaboration)
 - Citizenship expectations (including E, D & I contributions, this can include internal and external (to the university) citizenship activities)
 - Leadership expectations
 - External commitments (Concordat, DORA, Learned Societies)
- Do you think any of these are more important than others and therefore should have a larger weighting in the criteria? (please rank between 5 (high importance) to 1 (low importance))
- Of the list above- is there anything missing?
- How do you think the criteria should recognise personal and team contributions?
- How far should/how well do criteria reflect and align with institutional strategy?

Probation, Promotion and Progression- the process



Link to the current Exeter Academic process-
<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/exeteracademic/probationpromotionprogression/>

Case Study: UKRI

Narrative CV-

<https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/improving-your-funding-experience/introducing-a-better-way-for-you-to-evidence-your-contributions/>

Case Study: DORA

Responsible Metrics-

<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/research/services/governance/metrics/>

Probation, Promotion and Progression- the process- Questions



- What works well/less well in the current process?
- What do you think about the length of the process? (consider both probation and promotion). If it is too long, how would you suggest it is made quicker?
- What should be included as part of the evidence proved in the application form? (see case studies)
- Is there sufficient opportunity for feedback to be provided to applicants during the process?
- Where do you think decision making process should sit for specific levels of promotion? (department, faculty, university)
- What could be done to make the process more transparent?
- How could we make the process more inclusive?

Learning and Development (support)



Current learning and development opportunities to support colleagues both when they are between levels and at application stage.

- [Your Development](#) (Exeter Academic website)
- [Training to support the promotion process](#) (Exeter Academic website)
- [Exeter Leader](#) (specifically for people management and leadership)

Case Study: Queensland University
Link between PDR and promotion-
<https://staff.uq.edu.au/information-and-services/human-resources/performance-review/academic-staff>

Learning and Development (support)



Support between promotion rounds:

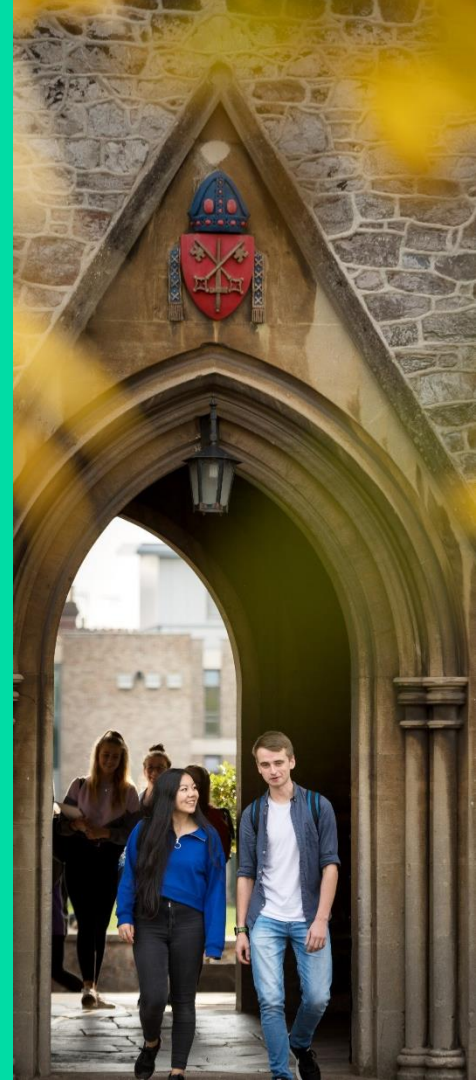
- What learning and development (including training) do you think is needed to support academics between promotions to ensure they are well placed for the next one?
 - What in this might be specific to the university centrally in supporting colleagues between promotion rounds?
 - What in this might be specific to faculties in supporting colleagues between promotion rounds?
 - What in this might be specific to roles (eg Director of..., Head of Dept, APVC etc)?
- What role do you think the PDR process has in relation to promotions?
- What role does mentoring, coaching or other informal support have?

Support while applying for promotion:

- How clear do you think the probation and promotion processes are currently communicated? What could be done to improve this?
- What could the university do to support colleagues in the process of applying for promotion?
- What could faculties do to support colleagues in the process of applying for promotion?



Next Steps



Next Steps



- All feedback collated from the feedback sessions will be considered by the Exeter Academic Review group and help form the draft recommendations for revision to the Exeter Academic.
- In the new calendar year these draft recommendations will be shared with colleagues for a further round of feedback, before final recommendations are made to the University Executive Board in April.
- Please do continue to look for updates in the weekly bulletin and on the Exeter Academic Review webpage- www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/exeteracademic/review/

Further Feedback

If you would like to give further and/or individual feedback we would be very happy to receive it, via this survey-
<https://forms.office.com/r/SEL8KYVYhM>

