



To: Heads of Institutions
Chairs of SAP School Committees
Secretaries of SAP Faculty Committees
Assistant HR Director (Operations)
HR Business Managers

cc: Academic Secretary
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Institutional & International
Relations)
Resourcing Manager
HR Advisers

9 September 2019

Senior Academic Promotions: 1 October 2020 Exercise

This letter launches the 1 October 2020 Senior Academic Promotions exercise.

Details of a few changes made to this year's guidance to improve the process are set out in the Appendix attached. In addition, a summary of the changes made last year, in preparation for implementation of the Academic Career Pathways (ACP) model in 2020, is provided.

You will be aware that a further Report of the General Board on arrangements for the implementation of the Academic Career Pathways scheme was approved last year, so this is the last SAP exercise.

The minor revisions to the SAP scheme this year and preparations for the implementation of the new ACP model in September 2020 will be covered in the annual briefing meeting with Chairs and Secretaries of promotions committees scheduled for **Friday, 18 October from 10.30 to midday**. Invitations to this meeting, to which Heads of School are also invited, will be sent out shortly.

Heads of Institution are asked to refer all eligible members of staff in their institutions to this letter and the guidance on the web as soon as possible:

https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/sap_2020_procedures_and_guidance_manual.pdf

A hard copy of the guidance can be provided on request.

The deadline for the submission of applications is **4 November 2019**. It would be helpful if, as soon as possible after that date, the Secretaries of the Faculty Committees would provide the relevant HR Business Manager with the following information by e-mail:

- names of applicants and their gender
- applicants' institutions
- current office/post
- office applied for
- funding of office/post (e.g. UEF/other)

As previously, the timeframes have been set to give applicants time to seek advice from their Head of Institution or an appropriate senior academic colleague, and to receive guidance through the CV mentoring scheme before submitting their application. The timescales also allow Faculty Committees time to collect documentation and hold their meetings by **10 February 2020**. Full details of timeframes are set out in Section 3 of the guidance.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Sarah Botcherby, Resourcing Manager (ext 32352), if you have any immediate queries.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Stone', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Emma Stone
Director of Human Resources

Enc – Appendix

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Appendix – SAP 2020: Changes to the Guidance

1. MINOR CHANGES:

i) Scoring model flexibility

The process for setting out a request that a candidate be assessed under a different scoring model than the standard one has been clarified, with examples of when this might be appropriate (**para 5.24**).

ii) References

The guidance has been amended to clarify that PhD supervisors and collaborators in research can act as referees but this interest should be disclosed (**para 7.37; Doc 3**).

The Feedback section has been changed in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 that came into force alongside GDPR and created a new exemption from the right of access for confidential references (**para 11.7 (iii)**). The reference request template has also been revised (**Doc 3**).

iii) Teaching evaluation

The applicant coversheet highlights the section of the guidance setting out how teaching contribution will be assessed, including examples of teaching excellence (**Doc 1, Annex B**).

iv) Documentation

The template for the Faculty Committee minutes has been revised to highlight key information and to focus on assessing candidates against the criteria (**Doc 9**).

v) Feedback provision

The guidance has been revised, giving stronger encouragement to Heads of Institution to discuss with their Head of School feedback to be provided to unsuccessful candidates before holding individual meetings (**para 11.4**).

Provision has been made for unsuccessful applicants to ask for the feedback statement set out in the School Committee minutes to be carried forward for information to their next promotion application (**new para 11.5**).

2. REMINDER OF SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES INTRODUCED IN LAST YEAR'S SCHEME:

These changes were implemented after approval of the Report of the General Board on arrangements for senior academic promotions published in the Reporter on 10 May 2018: (<https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2017-18/weekly/6505/section8.shtml#heading2-13>).

2.1 Key Principles

To aid transparency, key principles underpinning the SAP Scheme are set out at the beginning of the guidance (**para 2.1**).

2.2 Equal Opportunity (Section 2)

Changes have been made to the guidance relating to equality and diversity. Practical steps to bring equality and diversity and the risk of implicit bias, which might negatively impact on under-represented groups, to the forefront of decision making, are set out including:

- ensuring there is a gender balance in committee membership (**para 2.8**).
- updating the provisions related to 'additional considerations', renamed as 'contextual factors' (**paras 2.11-2.13**).
- clarifying the role of the Head of Department in supporting staff to apply for promotion when they are ready (**para 2.10**)

Substantive changes made in the 2017 exercise concerning gender representation have been retained, namely:

- to focus on ensuring that eligible female academics apply, where the gender balance of applications is not in proportion to the proximate less senior office, Heads of Institutions provide an explanation to the Chair of Faculty Committee (**paras 1.8**).
- The Faculty Committee Chair will then seek any further information from the relevant Head of Institution, as appropriate, before the meeting (**para 9.12**).

2.3 Scoring Methodology (Section 5B)

Professors and Readers

The standard model for scoring and weighting between the three evaluative criteria has been adjusted with more weighting towards Teaching and less for Research/Scholarship, as follows:

- Research/Scholarship: up to a maximum of 50/100 (previously 30/50)
- Teaching: up to a maximum of 30/100 (previously 10/50)
- General Contribution: up to a maximum of 20 points (previously 10/50).

University Senior Lectureships

Scoring and weighting remains unchanged.

2.4 Committees (Sections 8, 9 and 10)

Committee membership and roles have been updated. Full details are set out in the guidance

3. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The Academic Career Pathways (ACP) Scheme will be implemented in September 2020, replacing SAP, further to the approval of the Report of the General Board on arrangements for the implementation of this scheme, published in the Reporter on 15 May 2019:

<https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporter/2018-19/weekly/6547/section4.shtml#heading2-20>

Key aspects of the Scheme covered by this Report include:

- Evaluative criteria defining academic excellence for promotion to each senior office, informed by indicators of excellence, against which candidates for promotion will be reviewed within the context of relevant disciplinary norms.
- Updated probationary arrangements and their alignment with the promotions excellence criteria.
- Progression to University Senior Lecturer (Grade 9) on completing probation and to Grade 10 through a Contribution Reward Scheme.

Heads of Institutions may wish to take the opportunity informally to 'road test' local indicators of excellence that are being drafted and taken to their Council of School for approval during 2019-2020.

During Michaelmas Term 2019 consultations will be taken forward on the following proposals, to introduce:

- A career pathway for Teaching-focussed staff
- A Research Career Pathway aligned with the ACP Scheme to replace the current Senior Researcher Promotions (SRP) Scheme
- A dual progression pathway from University Lecturer to Senior Lecturer through research as well as teaching excellence.

In addition, consultation will be taken forward on academic titles, further to seeking informal views during the long vacation.

Academic staff are encouraged to participate and provide their views.

September 2019