

**TEMPLATE LETTER TO BE USED TO REQUEST REFERENCES**

Private and confidential

Dear

[Name] in the Faculty/Department of ..... has applied for promotion under the University's annual senior researcher promotions procedures to the position of [Director of Research/Principal Research Associate]. Accordingly, I am writing to ask if you would be willing to provide a confidential qualitative assessment of the applicant giving a full and frank appraisal of [his/her] suitability for promotion.

The case for promotion is assessed in relation to the criteria for the position on the basis of the evidence covering the academic's career contained in all the relevant documentation. The guidance on the criteria for promotion [to Director of Research/Principal Research Associate] is attached to this letter. In so far as you are familiar with the applicant's research and general contribution, it would be helpful if you could provide evidence of the candidate's suitability for promotion to a [Director of Research/Principal Research Associate], indicating whether [he/she] meets these criteria.

It is understood that you may not be able to comment across both the criteria (i.e. research/scholarship with reference to originality, contribution to the advancement of knowledge and general contribution); if this is the case, please make this clear in your letter. It would also be helpful if you were able to comment on the size and importance of the applicant's work, indicating where the applicant stands in comparison with others working in the same field. If you have personal knowledge of [Name] and of [his/her] work would you please specify the nature of this knowledge, and indicate whether you have had significant collaboration in research.

I would be grateful if you would provide evidence, where applicable, of achievement and contribution covering the academic's whole career. Committees would expect to see a rising research trajectory. Please note that work in progress or work completed but not yet published cannot be taken into account as part of the evidence for promotion and your comments therefore should avoid any reference to such work.

I enclose for your information a copy of [Name's] curriculum vitae and their personal statement for promotion.

I am sure you face increasing demands on your time. However, we would greatly value your comments on [Name's] application.

*Please note that in providing this reference you are giving permission for your letter to be disclosed to the above candidate should s/he request to see it. This is in line with the UK Data Protection Act, 1998. If there are strong reasons for protecting the confidentiality of your reference, please state them within your reply. For your information, the law relating to data protection and references is explained at [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).*

It would be particularly helpful if you were able to reply by [date]. If you have any queries please contact me at the address above. If for any reason you will not be able to provide a reference, please let me know as soon as possible. Thank you in advance for your response.

Yours sincerely

Head of Institution \_\_\_\_\_

*Enclosures:*

Criteria for Promotion to Director of Research and Principal Research Associate  
Curriculum vitae  
Personal Statement

## **CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION TO DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND PRINCIPAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATE**

Promotion is determined in terms of the criteria on the basis of the evidence contained in all the relevant documentation.

Evidence must be submitted to demonstrate a significant and sustained contribution in areas of Research/Scholarship and General Contribution

### **Principal Research Associate**

#### *Research/Scholarship*

The applicant must clearly demonstrate that they are recognised at an international level for the advancement of their area of research and that their current potential will lead to continued achievement in research. This will be judged by reference to:

- International reputation and peer recognition
- Innovation and originality of research
- Contribution to the advancement of knowledge
- Strategy for maintenance and development of future research
- Successful collaboration with other research teams/institutes
- Established record of securing external research funding.

#### *General Contribution*

The applicant must clearly demonstrate a wider contribution to their institution or team other than in research, to the University and, where appropriate, to external individuals and organisations. This may include (but is not limited to):

- Contribution to management or administrative tasks/duties that enable the achievement of the University's and/or Institution's wider goals and aims
- Contribution to the development of the research base through activities that develop early career researchers e.g. PhD and Post Doctoral research training and/or supervision, mentoring etc.
- Activities that contribute to knowledge transfer and engagement with broader communities including business, the public sector and the wider society e.g. through informing public policy, consultancy, intellectual property, commercialisation activities, public outreach activities etc.
- Effective management of a research group(s) that maximise the contribution of the individuals within the group and the group as a whole.
- Clinical duties, participation in regional and national medical education or veterinary education committees and other bodies concerned with undergraduate and postgraduate medical and veterinary education
- Teaching duties for a college or colleges

**Director of Research***Research/Scholarship*

The applicant must clearly demonstrate that they are a recognised leader in the advancement of their subject in the international field and that they will continue to do so.

This will be judged by reference to:

- International reputation and peer recognition
- Innovativeness and originality of research
- Leadership of, and seminal contribution to, the advancement of knowledge
- Strategy for maintenance and development of future research
- Leadership of successful and impactful collaborations with other research teams/institutions where appropriate
- Exceptional record of gaining external research funding

*General Contribution*

The applicant must clearly demonstrate a wider contribution to their institution or team other than in research, to the University and, where appropriate, to external individuals and organisations. This may include (but is not limited to):

- Contribution to management, leadership or administrative tasks/duties that enable achievement of the University's and/or Institute's wider goals and aims.
- Significant contribution to the development of the research base through activities that develop early career researchers e.g. PhD and Post Doctoral research training and/or supervision, mentoring etc.
- Activities that contribute to knowledge transfer and engagement with broader communities including business, the public sector and the wider society e.g. through informing public policy, consultancy, intellectual property, commercialisation activities, public outreach activities etc.).
- Effective management of a research group(s) that maximises the contribution of the individuals within the group and the group as a whole.
- Clinical duties, participation in regional and national medical and veterinary medical education committees and other bodies concerned with undergraduate and postgraduate medical and veterinary education
- Teaching duties for a college or colleges