

RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE in ACADEMIA / ACADEMIC CAREER MAP & ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS: Key messages narrative

What is the Academic Career Map (ACM)?

The ACM is a framework to set out relevant expectations, support development and recognise achievements at each academic career stage and will include indicative examples of work activities, standards and behaviours. **It will come into effect for the 2019/20 academic year.** The aim of the ACM is to provide guidance – both for individual academics and for the University – to support the career development and progression of academics.

The ACM is organised into three 'strands', covering the full spectrum of activity undertaken by academic colleagues. The strands are:

- Education, Scholarship & Professional Practice
- Research & Innovation
- Citizenship & Leadership

The framework is designed to be used in a number of ways by staff and managers. Examples of these uses and further information on how the ACM will work is set out in the guidance which accompanies the ACM, available in the dedicated [webpages](#). Academic colleagues are encouraged to review the information on the website.

The ACM has been introduced in response to staff requests for greater transparency and the content was developed in consultation with a broad cross-section of academic and academic-related colleagues from the University, through Steering Groups and Working Groups. It was approved by JSNCC and SPC in spring 2019. The project has been overseen by a Programme Governance Board led by Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost, David Nightingale. The Governance Board also includes the DVC for Education, DVC for Research & Innovation, the Dean of the Graduate School, the Chair of the Athena Swan Working Group and HR representatives.

What is the relevance of the ACM for promotion?

A key purpose of the ACM is as a reference framework for individuals when building a case for promotion and a guidance tool for management in evaluating promotion applications.

A new Academic Promotion Policy has been introduced to align with the ACM and to give effect to a number of procedural efficiencies, addressing feedback received from all key stakeholder groups through consultation during the Recognising Excellence in Academia (REiA) project. The policy will also come into effect at the beginning of the 2019/20 academic year.

The new policy is currently available on the HR website under the A-Z of policies – [click here](#) to view it. Revised templates and detailed guidance to support the policy will also be made available on the website over the summer months, allowing staff to start considering their applications well in advance, should they wish to do so.

What has changed?

The main changes are summarised below.

- The promotion criteria have been structured to align with the three strands of the ACM.
- It has been made explicit that there may be different routes to promotion: an education-led practice, a research-led practice or a mixed academic practice. The promotion application form allows candidates to state which of these areas they consider their application to be based on. Guidance is also provided on the balance of evidence that promotion committees would expect to see, dependent upon the main basis of the case.
- Promotion candidates must demonstrate they are **consistently** achieving a **good range** of the ACM indicators for the career stage to which they seek promotion in **most of the themes** ordinarily applicable to their contract type. (As part of this candidates must include evidence of citizenship.)
- The key basis for promotion will be demonstration of a positive impact from activities described. In making their assessment, the promotion committees will take a holistic view of a candidate's overall contribution, applying their academic judgement as guided by the ACM framework.
- More guidance is provided on how candidates may evidence their achievements. There will also be the opportunity to embed electronic links into the application form, where the inclusion of a link will clarify a candidate's evidence for the benefit of promotion committees over and above what may be achieved through a narrative description in the application form.
- Schools have been given the option of developing disciplinary-specific guidance (to accompany the ACM) to help colleagues and promotion committees understand any nuances in how the ACM indicators may be evidenced within the discipline.
- A number of changes have been made regarding the process of obtaining independent referees: in order to make this more efficient and to help ensure that referees are in the best position to provide an independent and informed perspective on a candidate's application.
- Applications for promotion to Senior Lecturer / Senior Research Fellow (Research Grade 9) will now be approved or declined at Faculty Promotions Committee.

How can staff find out more?

In addition to reviewing the information in the dedicated [webpages](#), staff are encouraged to attend one of the available information sessions in May and June, details of which can be found [here](#).

Who are the contacts for further information?

Any questions which are not answered by guidance and FAQs on the webpages can be referred to the HR project team by email: academiccareemap@kent.ac.uk.