

SCG Working Party report on Promotion Policy

A Meeting of the working party to consider a new promotion policy was held on Monday 15 September 2008. This policy was circulated with papers for the SCG Meeting of **Friday 8 August 2008** in the Council Room Building E11A.

Working Party Team: Cathy Wright (Chair), Carolyn Kennett, Iain Stewart

Summary of Recommendations

1. Under Policy
 - a. That the scope be clarified
 - b. That the term 'research focussed staff' be replaced with terminology consistent with the EA and that requirements for reporting on all three elements of scholarship relating to these staff be clarified;
 - c. Removal of the provision that an offer from another university at a higher level can be used to demonstrate that they have met the requirements for promotion;
2. Under Selection Criteria
 - a. That discipline based selection criteria be established
 - b. That benchmarking be carried out as part of their development
3. Under Academic Promotion Procedures
 - a. That more information be provided about the competencies required for the promotion selection committee members that require them to have undertaken PDR supervisor training
 - b. That all committees include a nominee of the NTEU in the roles of both independent observer and equity observer
 - c. That more information be provided about what is a discipline profile, its format and its purpose.
 - d. inclusion of a clause to the effect that 'a staff member has the right to see the Dean's comments and to respond and that the Dean's comments will not be considered unless the staff member has confirmed that they have had this opportunity'.
4. Under Appealing Against an Academic Promotion Decision
 - a. That Chairs of Promotions Appeals Committees be selected from an agreed list (appointed in the same way as the MIC ref. EA Section 4.21.19)
5. Evidence Required for Academic Promotion
 - a. That it be made clear which criteria must be met for promotion

Recommendations & Issues

1. Policy –Academic Promotion (9 pages)

Scope

The scope of who this applies to is ambiguous. The Working Party recommends this be amended. Suggested wording is "this policy applies to all continuing and fixed term academic staff, whether full-time or part-time, who seek promotion..." (if this is the intention)

Academic Standards & Selection Criteria

These sections lead to confusion over what some staff will be assessed on. The policy

refers to 'Research-focussed Staff' and implies these staff do not need to address all three elements of scholarship. The term 'research-focussed' is not defined in the policy. The university has two groups of employees to whom this could refer: (a) staff who have a research weighted pattern (EA 4.17) and who will need to meet some learning and teaching criteria and (b) staff who are Research Academic Staff (see MSALs) such as ARC Fellows, MQ Fellows and other research fellows who are employed on research grants and do not normally undertake learning and teaching as part of their role. These staff should not have to meet learning and teaching criteria. The working party recommends that this section be reworked to clarify these matters.

Paragraph 6 "A written offer of appointment to a higher level from another university may be used by a staff member to demonstrate that they have met the requirements for promotion..."

The working party recognises that the university wishes to retain good staff. Our concern with this clause is threefold:

- (a) The university has a salary loading policy with the stated purpose of attracting and retaining staff.
- (b) The working party recognises that there are different standards amongst universities.
- (c) Our view is that staff must meet our university's criteria for promotion and the university's mechanism for assessing this is the promotion process.

The working party recommends that this paragraph be removed.

2. Criteria for Academic Promotion (Appendix A, 9 pages)

The working party is concerned that the criteria are inequitable across disciplines and makes two recommendations:

- (a) That the criteria be discipline based
- (b) That benchmarking of the criteria on a discipline basis, be carried out as part of their development.

3. Academic Promotion - Procedure (7 pages)

Promotions Committee

(a) The working party would like clarification on what competencies are required of committee members that PDR supervisor training will provide and notes that the requirement for all committee members to undertake this training will limit the number of Level C staff who will be eligible to participate as most will not have done the training.

(b) The working party notes that an equity observer is recommended for each panel and recommends that this be a union representative who will be both an independent observer and an equity observer.

Prepare 'Discipline Report'

The working party requests that more information be provided about what a Discipline Report is, including its proposed format, as this is a new concept that has not been described or defined. The working party also requests information about the future of Discipline Profiles.

Process Discipline Report

The working party recommends the inclusion of a clause to the effect that 'a staff member has the right to see the Dean's comments and to respond and that the Dean's

comments will not be considered unless the staff member has confirmed that they have had this opportunity’.

4. Appealing Against an Academic Promotion Decision – Procedure (5 pages)

The working party recommends that Chairs of Promotions Appeals Committees be selected from an agreed list (appointed in the same way as the MIC ref. EA Section 4.21.19)

5. Evidence Required for Academic Promotion – Guidelines (5 pages)

The working party notes that in the guidelines it is not expected that applicants will address each criterion and believes that, for equity issues, it needs to be clear what criteria have to be met to achieve promotion. It recommends further work on how criteria are written to achieve this.

end