



Tenure Track Procedures for new Assistant Professors

1. Introduction

The implementation of a Tenure Track process for new academic staff was approved by Board in 2016 (23/3/2016). Tenure Track is a key feature of the academic career path for staff employed as Assistant Professors. It consists of an initial five-year contract, with a view to permanency, subject to performance. In addition, it includes a progressive professional development strand and each staff member will have the support of a mentor. Incremental progression along the salary scale occurs on a yearly basis, subject to performance.

2. Who does it apply to?

Five year contracts with a promise of permanency subject to performance are normally offered to Assistant Professors other than those employed for a defined term or specific purpose. It does not apply to staff hired at the grade of Associate Professor or above.

3. How does the process work?

The criteria for tenure focus on excellence in teaching, research, service to college and contribution to discipline. These criteria are expressed in a discipline relevant way, in a manner appropriate to this career stage and require originality, rigour and significance in research; commitment and innovation in teaching and impact in engagement and service, both to society and to the University, at a level appropriate to the grade.

During the tenure track period, the Assistant Professor will receive regular feedback from their Head of School. In addition, new Assistant Professors will be assigned an

experienced mentor and will be invited to avail of learning and development supports provided by HR Learning and Development and CAPSL.

The tenure track process consists of a time period of five years with the first year being a probationary year. Goals and objectives will be set by the Head of School and agreed with the Assistant Professor each year. Performance will be reviewed on a regular basis as follows:

- Year 1 – Two interim reviews during the probation period – after the first term/semester and after the second term/semester. Then one final formal review between nine and eleven months. All probation reviews will be conducted by the Head of School.
- Year 2 – Performance will be reviewed in year two against objectives set by the Head of School and agreed with the Assistant Professor. The review will be conducted by the Head of School.
- Year 3 – Performance will be reviewed by a School Review Panel¹ which is chaired by the Head of School and including two staff of at least the grade of Associate Professor in the School.
- Year 4 – All candidates eligible for tenure will be interviewed in the last term of year four of their contracts. At the end of year four, performance is reviewed by the Junior Academic Progression Committee which comprises of:

| | Membership of the Junior Academic Progression Committee | Scoring Responsibility | Membership Term |
|----------|--|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Chair: Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer | no | Ex officio |
| 2 | Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences | yes | Ex officio |
| 3 | Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences | yes | Ex officio |
| 4 | Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science | yes | Ex officio |
| 5 | The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies | Yes | Ex officio |
| 6 | The Dean of Graduate Studies | yes | Ex officio |
| 7 | A member of the academic staff of the University who is an Assistant Professor above the merit bar | yes | 3 years |

¹ In line with all review panels in the University, the panel will be gender balanced.

| | Membership of the Junior Academic Progression Committee | Scoring Responsibility | Membership Term |
|-----------|--|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 8 | A member of the academic staff of the University who is an Associate Professor, Professor in or Professor of | yes | 3 years |
| 9 | A member of the academic staff of the University (of any academic grade) | yes | 3 years |
| 10 | Secretary: Director of HR (or nominee) | no | In attendance |

Note regarding members 7-9 of the Committee:

There will be one academic staff member from each Faculty. These members will be nominated by IFUT/ASA in consultation with the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer as Chair of the Committee, to ensure gender balance and Faculty balance across the whole Committee.

Further information on the Junior Academic Progression Committee may be found in the Procedures for Progression within the Assistant Professor grade

(<http://www.tcd.ie/hr/spr/promotion-progression/index.php>).

4. Year 4: Tenure Review Process

The candidate will submit an application, including a portfolio of research and scholarship, teaching, and contribution to College/Discipline/society outputs accumulated over the period of assessment. Reports from one External Assessor will be sought (the external assessor is to be nominated by the Head of School and approved by the Faculty Dean). Subject to a satisfactory performance review at the end of year four, the candidate will be offered a permanent contract. Those who do not satisfy the committee that they have met the threshold in all areas i.e. research and scholarship, teaching, and contribution to College/Discipline/society, will complete their five year contract and leave the College. An Assistant Professor may appeal the decision of the Junior Academic Progression Committee to the Appeals Committee (chaired by the Senior Dean) within one month of notification of the decision.

| Timing | Process |
|---|---|
| Year 1 Initial five year contract issued | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twelve month probation for the fixed term contract is put in place. • Goals/objectives are set by the Head of School (in conjunction with a Discipline expert where necessary) and agreed with the Assistant Professor within the first month of taking up the post. • The Head of School meets with the Assistant Professor to review performance after the first and second terms. The Head of School will provide feedback to the Assistant Professor and will highlight any areas where improvement is needed (if applicable). • After nine months, the formal probation report is completed and the Head of School carries out a formal final probation review. • If probation is passed, the Assistant Professor progresses to year two of their five year contract. If they do not successfully pass probation, they leave the University no later than twelve months from their start date. |
| Year 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals/objectives are set by the Head of School (in conjunction with a Discipline expert where necessary) and agreed with the Assistant Professor at the beginning of year two. • Performance is reviewed during and at the end of the year by the Head of School. The Head of School will provide feedback to the Assistant Professor and will highlight any areas where improvement is needed (if applicable). |
| Year 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals/objectives are set by the Head of School (in conjunction with a Discipline expert where necessary) and agreed with the Assistant Professor at the beginning of year three. • Not later than their last term in year three, the Assistant Professor will complete a Year 3 Tenure Track Review Form and submit it to the Head of School for review by the School Review Panel². • Performance is reviewed at the end of the year by the School Review Panel. Following the review, the Head of School will provide feedback to the Assistant Professor and will highlight any areas where improvement is needed (if applicable). |

² The School Review Panel will be Chaired by the Head of School and also include two senior members of academic staff from the School, to be at Associate Professor grade or above.

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|--------|--|
| Year 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals/objectives are set by the Head of School (in conjunction with a Discipline expert where necessary) and agreed with the Assistant Professor at the beginning of year four. • In the last term of year four of their contract, the Assistant Professor will complete a Final Tenure Track Review Form for submission to the Junior Academic Progression Committee. • The Junior Academic Progression Committee will interview the Assistant Professor and review their performance in the final term of year 4 of their contract. • For those who demonstrate satisfactory performance to the Junior Academic Progression Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A permanent contract will be offered • For those who do not demonstrate satisfactory performance to the Junior Academic Progression Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will complete the final year of their 5 year contract and their employment with the University will come to an end. |
| Year 5 | <p>For those who have been offered permanent contracts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals/objectives are set by the Head of School (in conjunction with a Discipline expert where necessary) and agreed with the Assistant Professor. These goals/objectives form part of the permanent Assistant Professor’s ongoing performance management. <p>For those who did not demonstrate satisfactory performance to the Junior Academic Progression Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will complete the final year of their five year contract and their employment with the University will come to an end. |