



General Procedure and Protocol for the Approval and Recruitment of Professors

Purpose and Scope

These procedures set out the procedure and protocol for approval of, and recruitment to Professor (Chair) positions. They replace the existing Appendix A (2008), of the College's Recruitment Procedures.

This document is set out in three parts, addressing General issues, the Approval Process, and the Recruitment Process.

1. General

1.1 Guiding Principles

The College recognises that it is operating in a highly competitive global market for academic talent. It is understood that the approval of Professor positions are key strategic decisions for College, and that Faculty Deans and Schools must invest as much time as is necessary to properly prepare and execute a successful recruitment campaign. It is essential Schools stimulate sufficient interest from the right candidates, and complete the selection process in a professional and efficient and timely manner, to ensure that there is a high likelihood of acceptance by a successful candidate.

The recruitment process cannot be considered in isolation from an effective induction process and it is the School's responsibility to assist new hires in relocating to Dublin successfully and to ensure that they are successfully integrated into the University.

The School will also commit to having regular conversations regarding expectation and performance with the appointed candidate.



It is a requirement that all newly appointed Professors must give an inaugural lecture within the first year of their commencement and the Faculty Dean will liaise with the Provost's Office regarding suitable dates.

1.2 Professorship

A Professorship is the highest academic post within the College. The holder of a Professorship plays a central leadership role in regard to the development of the relevant discipline and represents it at a senior level inside and outside the College.

The qualifications for appointment to such a position are as follows:

- a) high academic distinction with the capacity to provide leadership in the development of the subject and in the promotion of teaching and research;
- b) capacity to represent effectively the discipline inside and outside the College;
- c) capacity to act as Head of an academic unit (in the context of Board approved arrangements for the Headship of discipline/department/school/Research institute);
- d) a willingness to participate in the overall life of College.

2. Approval to fill a Professorial Vacancy

2.1 The Role of the Faculty Dean

The Faculty Dean represents the Provost throughout the process until the interview stage. The Faculty Dean's role is essentially one of project management and he/she will shape and direct the recruitment process from the outset. This includes getting approval to fill the post and proposing a search committee to Council following consultation with the Provost.

2.2 The Approval Process

In view of the significance of Professor appointments as outlined in section 1 above, the decision to fill a Professor post is a key strategic decision requiring consideration of a complex range of strategic, human resource and financial considerations. The authority to approve a Professor post for filling is delegated to the Strategic Staffing Sub Group, in consultation with the Provost.



A proposal to fill a Professorial position may originate from one of a number of circumstances, namely;

1. Through a requirement to replace an existing post in the context of normal HR planning and budgeting processes.
2. Through new philanthropic donations (in the context of the agreed Philanthropy Strategy).
3. Through College decision to make Strategic Appointments in Schools (including medical posts), as determined by the Provost, Vice Provost/CAO and Faculty Dean.

At the outset of the process the School will draft the strategic case and statement of commitment (Vision and Commitment statements referred to below), for consideration and endorsement by the Faculty Dean. If the case is supported by the Faculty Dean, an application for approval to fill a Professor position will be made to the Strategic Staffing Sub Group.

Once a School achieves approval from the Strategic Staffing sub group, the formal proposal to fill the Professor post, including the Commitment and Vision statements, will be brought to the Faculty Executive Committee for noting.

Following noting by the relevant Faculty Executive Committee the proposal together with the proposed internal membership of the Search Committee should be sent by the Faculty Dean and only after approval by the Provost, to the Director of Human Resources for submission to Council. The required composition of the Selection Committee is set out in further detail in section 3.1 below, and in exceptional circumstances the Provost may add additional members.

a) **Commitment Statement:** this confirms that the necessary finance and infrastructure are in place to:

- a. fund the salary and ongoing employment costs
- b. cover the cost of recruitment including visits



- c. provide a competitive start-up package
- d. offer the essential infrastructure to fully enable the post e.g. space, equipment, laboratories, students
- e. describe the national and international funding programmes and agencies for which the successful candidate could apply. (Providing evidence that the School has a successful track record in attracting such funding programmes would be desirable)
- f. detail any analogous posts either occupied or currently in recruitment that would provide critical mass for the appointment.

b) Vision Statement: this should describe

- a. how the Professorship will add value to the School and College in terms of Research, Teaching and Contribution to the Discipline/ Engagement with Society.
- b. how the position maps onto the School's Research Strategy and the strategic themes and ambitions of the College;
- c. the anticipated synergies with existing academic staff
- d. how the position might link to College research institutes
- e. if the position would increase the College's participation in international networks or consortia

3. The Recruitment Procedure

3.1 Search Committee

The search and selection process will be undertaken by a specifically appointed Search Committee as an ad hoc Committee of Council formally delegated the responsibility to make the appointment decision.

The membership of the Search Committee should include:



- The Provost (Chair)¹
- The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer;
- The Dean of the Faculty;
- The Head of School;
- One academic member of the Discipline concerned (the Head of Discipline or his/her nominee);
- Professor from a Cognate Discipline
- Two external assessors

In the event of the candidacy of any of the role holders listed above, the Provost will nominate a pro role holder.

In the case of medical Consultant Professorial appointments in the Faculty of Health Sciences, representatives of the Hospital Boards will, in accordance with the teaching agreements, participate in full in the appointments procedure including the finalisation of job specification, advertising and search, shortlisting, and selection. Hospital participation in the Search Committees will consist of the CEO (or his/her nominee) of a stakeholder hospital and two THI nominees, one of whom should be from the stakeholder hospital. The Vice Provost/CAO will not be a member of these Search Committees.

3.2 Responsibilities of Search Committee

The responsibility for assessing all candidates, drawing up a short-list, interviewing and ranking those short-listed, and making recommendations to Board on behalf of Council is assigned to a Search Committee. The Search Committee may encourage applications from suitable candidates who have not put their names forward. It may also engage professional headhunting agencies to target candidates.

¹ Where the Provost does not chair, the Vice-Provost/CAO will chair and a pro-Vice-Provost/CAO may be appointed by the Provost.



The Search Committee will examine all aspects of the candidates' qualifications for the Professorship in question with due consideration of all the special circumstances that might pertain to a particular Professorship and School. Where a candidate is required to be in place by a specific date this must be clearly stated in the advertisement and further particulars. The Search Committee will also evaluate the non-pay resources, if any, likely to be required by an incoming Professor.

External Assessors

The primary role of the External Assessors is to provide the Search Committee and Council with advice concerning the scholarly abilities and attainments of the candidates and their suitability for appointment on this basis. The independence of External Assessors must be assured at all times. The Search Committee will pay particular attention to the selection of External Assessors to ensure gender balance, independence, and international representation. To ensure as broad a representation as possible on the Search Committee, each assessor should be distinct yet complementary to the other and ideally should not overlap with the specialism of another Committee member e.g. that of a Head of School or Discipline. The Faculty Dean will discuss and agree the External Assessors with the Provost.

Training & Support

Professional training will be offered to all members of Professorial selection committees with particular emphasis placed on developing the skills and expertise of Heads of School regarding successful hiring techniques.

3.3 Preparation of Job Description, Further Particulars and Advertisement

The Search Committee comprising the internal members will meet to discuss the post and the recruitment timeline. They will also:

- decide the form of advertisement
- agree the advertising media and appropriate publication dates
- agree the further particulars
- confirm the budget available for recruitment and start-up



- set suitable dates for candidate visits and interviews
- generate a list of external assessors and make recommendations

The Assessors will be sent all necessary documentation including the job advertisement, further particulars, College recruitment policy and Professorial appointment procedures.

3.4 The Role of the School/Discipline:

The Faculty Dean will nominate a member of the academic staff, typically the Head of School or Discipline or other appropriate senior member of staff who will act as the 'Hiring Lead'. The Hiring Lead is responsible for developing the first draft of the further particulars and is the expert liaison with Human Resources throughout the recruitment process for example, advising where to advertise, co-ordinating candidate visits, answering academic queries regarding the Discipline / School etc.

It is imperative that the School owns the hiring process, prioritises the recruitment and devotes sufficient time as is necessary to ensure a successful hiring outcome. Schools must be proactive in the identification and targeting of suitable candidates worldwide and should use their external assessors and professional networks to identify interesting candidates and make sure the recruitment competition is widely promulgated. Schools must be confident in their ability to attract candidates, yet be conscious that they are likely to be competing for staff against higher ranked and better endowed institutions. Each School should develop a compelling research story designed to enthuse and attract potential applicants.

3.5 Candidates

Candidates should be provided with adequate and timely information such that they can determine their own level of interest early in the recruitment process. In order to ensure, in so far as is possible, that only the most serious and interested candidates progress, the Search Committee may appoint a sub-group to conduct initial conversations with candidates to confirm their level of interest. These meetings may be conducted over telephone, video conference or other suitable means having due regard to international time differences and



costs. The structure of these conversations will comply with College's equal opportunities policy and a report on the outcome of these conversations will be sent to the full Search Committee.

Following initial conversations, the Search Committee may invite a long list of viable candidates to visit the School and College in advance of a final interview shortlist being compiled.

The purpose of the visit is to allow candidates engage with academic staff and students, and for the School to become more familiar with the candidate. A meeting schedule should be drawn up by the School so the candidate meets the Head of School and/or Head of Discipline, the Director of Research, the Director of Undergraduate Teaching, the Director of Graduate Teaching and the Faculty Dean. These meetings may take the form of one to one or small group meetings.

At the commencement of their visit the candidate will be invited to give a presentation to the School on their research. After the completion of their meetings they should give a second shorter presentation illustrating the synergy they have identified between their research interests / plans and that of the School, Faculty and the wider College. They should also stipulate how their research maps onto the Strategic Research Themes of the College. Other meetings may also be arranged by the School as required (e.g. with Human Resources, national funding agencies, etc.)

3.6 Shortlisting

After the closing date and following the candidate visits the Search Committee will meet to confirm that a quality field of candidates exists in order to proceed with interviews. In the event a quality shortlist does not exist then the recruitment process returns to the advertising and headhunting phases.

The Search Committee including the External Assessors should draw up a short-list of candidates for interview.

Where the External Assessor(s) are unable to participate the Recruitment Officer will ensure that their views of candidates are communicated to the Search Committee.



3.7 References

Each candidate will be asked to provide 3 referees. Having consulted with the Head of School(s) through the Faculty Dean, , the Faculty Dean and Provost shall nominate 2 independent referees from whom the College will seek an opinion as to the Candidate's Research, Scholarship, leadership ability and overall suitability for the position.

3.8 Seminar Presentation

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to present a seminar for a maximum of 45 minutes followed by a 15 minute question and answer session. Members of the Search Committee, including the External Assessors and members of the Discipline/School should attend these presentations. The presentations are open to all interested members (both staff and students) of the School, Faculty and College. The Faculty Dean will advise the audience of the procedures in relation to the presentations and question and answer sessions. He / She will then introduce each candidate before their presentation and facilitate the question and answer session afterwards. The Faculty Dean is responsible for time-keeping and ensuring candidates are not interrupted during their presentation. At the conclusion of all the presentations, the External Assessors and selection committee will withdraw before the audience provides feedback to the Faculty Dean and Head of School.

3.9 Interview(s) by Search Committee

The short-listed candidates shall be interviewed in depth by the Search Committee. An appropriate marking system will be used to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate against the published selection criteria with suitable marks awarded such as to differentiate the candidates. An adequate record of a candidate's assessment will be retained for the purposes of feedback and to satisfy the College's requirement to retain documentary evidence for decisions.

It shall be the responsibility of the Faculty Dean and Head of School to ensure that the views of the members of the School regarding the candidates are made known to the Search Committee.



It is the function of the Search Committee to nominate the appropriate candidate to Council² and Board having ensured that all the criteria have been properly applied, and that any special concerns relating to the particular post have been properly considered. If more than one candidate is considered appointable then the candidates will be ranked accordingly.

3.10 Candidate Negotiations

The Faculty Dean, Head of School together with a representative from HR will be involved in negotiating the employment offer with the successful candidate. It is expected that the Faculty Dean will normally lead on such negotiations. The agreements in relation to start-up and support will be included as an appendix to the Contract. Candidates will normally be given 30 days to accept a written offer of employment unless otherwise agreed. A candidate must normally commence in post within one year of offer.

In the unfortunate situation that a School fails to have an offer of Professorship accepted, it will normally have to wait twelve months before re-applying to the Strategic Staffing Sub Group for permission to recommence the recruitment process. Approval to recommence will not necessarily be granted. Any re-application must contain a statement as to why the previous recruitment competition failed and evidence as to why a further recruitment competition is likely to succeed.

3.11 Relocation and Retention

Where a candidate is relocating to Ireland the School needs to actively support them in that process. The College must ensure that new hires are successfully integrated within both the School and College community. A School/Faculty must assign a 'mentor' to the new hire to

² (Approved by Council on 23 October 2013 and subsequently amended by Council on 22nd October, 2014 – Council approved an amendment to the appointment procedures to note that all appointments should be approved by Council and Board)



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help them settle into their new surroundings, facilitate introductions and explain the workings of College.
