

# **UNIVERSITIES ACT 1997**

## **UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK – NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, CORK**

### ***REGULATION***

*on*

### ***APPOINTMENT TO RESEARCH PROFESSORSHIPS***

*adopted by the Governing Body at its meeting on 13 December, 2011  
and as amended by Governing Body at its meeting on 14 February 2012  
and on 12 February, 2013*

*and as amended by Governing Body at its meeting on 17 December, 2013  
by virtue of the Universities Act, 1997, ss 18(2) and 25(1)  
and Principal Statute B.5.b and F.1.a*

# ***Appointment to Research Professorships***

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## **1 Introduction**

The overarching objective of these appointment procedures is to enable the University:

- a. to recognise outstanding internal senior researchers
- b. to attract outstanding research staff into UCC

by granting Research Professorships to research leaders who have successfully competed for major research grants from prestigious funding agencies in an area that reflects UCC's strategic priorities. The employment cost of such Research Professorships is directly associated with the associated projects and is not borne by UCC.

## **2 The Role of the Research Professor**

**2.1 Research role** Research Professors are acknowledged leaders in their research disciplines, performing to the highest level internationally in research output, and competing for highly prestigious awards. Their scholarly standing in relation to research in the discipline is comparable to that of the established Professors in the University. However, while many of these senior researchers contribute to Teaching and Learning through postgraduate supervision and both undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, in general their remit is focussed almost entirely on research.

**2.2 Other activities** Research Professors are envisaged to commit up to 20% of their time to the Teaching and Learning (including postgraduate supervision) and other activities of the relevant School / Department.

**2.3 Terms and conditions** The terms and conditions of the appointments will be determined by the nature of the funding award rather than alignment to a scale. Research Professor is not a tenured position. Research Professorships are supported through external research funding and not from the core budget. The funding source may in some instances be reflected in the title *e.g.* "Research Professor (SFI)".

## **3 Criteria for appointment**

**3.1 Personal standing** Research leaders appointed to a Research Professorial post will have a track record that is internationally acknowledged to be of world class for its significance. They will have been successful in attracting competitive research funding to their programmes and maintaining research groups over a sustained period of time. Applications will address the academic track record, leadership, international standing, ability and trajectory of the applicant, as well as the prestige of the research awards and funding agencies, and the mechanisms by which the awards were achieved (i.e. whether competitive or non-competitive).

**3.2 Strategic considerations** The applicant's research plan must advance the strategic plan of the University, and will show a commitment to active engagement with, and applications for, additional future funding from all appropriate funding programmes on a competitive basis. Applications will

address the importance of the applicant's research area to UCC's research strategy and to her/his appropriate Institute / Centre / School and College. Applications will be considered within the overall strategy for the University and the relevant College, and must allow for, and encourage, synergies with developments elsewhere in the University.

*3.3 Standards for appointment* Appointments to Research Professorships will be judged on international standards, will be evidence-based, and will be entirely based on merit. Achievement will be recognised via established metrics in relevant fields including publications, scholarly activity and personal awards and fellowships.

#### **4 Assessment Documentation**

Statements of Application should be forwarded to the Director of Human Resources for the attention of the Research Professorships Assessment Committee from a Head of College, in association with the Director of one of the University's Institutes or Centres as appropriate. The Head of College should forward, along with the application, the names of three independent external assessors who are recognised as international leaders in the applicant's subject area.

The application shall incorporate:

- Details on how the applicant was identified – rationale for the application.
- A concise statement on the applicant's research achievements and how they are recognised internationally.
- An identification of the connection between the strategic goals of the University and those of the researcher.
- A letter of support from the appropriate Head of School or Department outlining plans for engagement of the Research Professor with research and teaching/learning within the academic unit .
- A letter of interest from the applicant to the University, with a concise, accomplishment-based five-year personal research plan, which confirms that a strong relationship exists between the proposed research programme, the priorities of the funding agencies/bodies and the strategic priorities of the Institute / Centre / School, College and University. This plan should also include additional anticipated funding over this period.
- A copy of the applicant's full Curriculum Vitae, including a list of publications and scholarly activity.
- Details of existing funding for the position including the salary of the applicant Research Professor.
- A summary of the applicant's currently funded research projects.

## 5 Assessment Committee

*5.1 Composition* A single Research Professorial Assessment Committee [“the Committee”] will oversee the entire processing of each application, supported by the Department of Human Resources. The Committee will comprise of the following:

- The President (or nominee) shall chair the selection committee.
- Registrar (or nominee).
- Vice President for Research and Innovation.
- Two professorial members of Academic Council within the relevant College, nominated by the President.
- Two external assessors of high academic standing in the applicant’s discipline, selected by the other Committee members.

### 5.2 Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of the Research Professorial Assessment Committee shall be four members. Members may also participate by video conference or phone.

*5.2 Written assessments* The two independent external assessors nominated by the Head of College and approved by the Committee shall be asked to provide written assessments on the applicant’s suitability for the post of Research Professor. The assessors shall be required to evaluate and determine whether the applicant:

- works in an important area of research in the specific discipline and is investigating important questions in that area;
- possesses an established high level international reputation based on research achievement, knowledge advancement, discovery and contribution to the discipline;
- has achieved an academic leadership position in the discipline;
- has an established teaching track record informed by research; and
- would be appointed to an equivalent position in their own University.

*5.3 Procedures* The Committee shall review the full application, and the reports of the external assessors, before making a decision. For successful candidates, the Committee shall recommend the appointment associated with a School and Research Centre/Institute. The Committee’s recommendation shall be communicated to the President, who has final approval of the appointment. An offer of appointment shall be communicated to the prospective appointee by the Director of Human Resources. If the offer is accepted, the appointment shall be made by the President.

## **6 Terms of the appointment**

The terms and conditions of the appointment, and the salary payable, are entirely determined by the terms of the research award(s) supporting the Research Professorial Post, and will be one of the following :-

- For senior researchers employed on research contracts at UCC, the period of the appointment as Research Professor shall be for the duration of their current contract of employment with the University.
- For members of academic staff who secure prestigious external peer reviewed grants which include payment of salary for the payment of the award, secondment to a position of Research Professor can be made for the period of the grant supporting the salary. Subsequent to this the member of staff ordinarily returns to their prior post. In exceptional circumstances where funding is available, continuation in the Research Professor role beyond the term of the grant can be enabled subject to review of progress and achievements over the period of the grant by the Research Professorial Assessment Committee.
- Where the Senior Researcher is not currently employed by the University, the duration of the appointment as Research Professor shall be determined by the nature and period of the award(s) supporting the Research Professorial Post.
- Where the Senior Researcher is employed by an outside Research Body, the duration of the appointment as Research Professor shall be determined by the continued employment of the researcher with this research body, or alternatively a term of appointment may be agreed with the Research Body.

While not automatically entitled to membership of the Academic Council, the post holder may be co-opted by agreement of the Council.

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