

# Administrative Promotions Scheme (Interim Revised Scheme)

March 2025



## Introduction

Our promotional schemes provide a means of defining excellence and guiding work activity while providing a means to enable progress. The overall objectives of our promotion schemes are:

- to progress and promote on the basis of performance, achievement, impact and merit;
- to operate procedures that are fair and thorough and are perceived to be such;
- to ensure equity as far as possible whilst recognising the different opportunities and norms pertaining to different disciplines; and
- to operate procedures expeditiously.

## Scope

The Administrative Promotions Scheme applies to the following administrative grades: Senior Executive Assistant, Senior Library Assistant, Admin V (Grade 5), Admin III (Grade 6), Admin II (Grade 6A), Admin I (Grade 7), Senior Admin IV (Grade 8), Senior Admin III.

## Eligibility

The following are eligible to apply under the Scheme:

- probation is successfully completed and
- the candidate has served 1 year in a administrative classified post in UCC in the time immediately preceding the closing date or application.

Eligibility to partake in the Scheme is confirmed by People & Culture following the closing date for receipt of applications.

Promotion will be to the next grade only (e.g. a current Executive Assistant can only be promoted to Senior Executive Assistant, a current Senior Executive Assistant can only be promoted to Admin V etc.). Where an applicant is seconded to a higher grade than their substance grade, the application is based on the substance grade unless a candidate has been in post in a higher admin grade than their substantive grade for an extensive period of time (such cases will be judged on a case-by-case basis and in line with a university level pre-existing union agreement).

## Number of Promotions

The number of promotions in any round will be announced at the time of the promotion call. In principle promotions will be allocated across the individual grades, from which the call for promotion is being made, based on the proportion of staff in that grade as a ratio of the total.

## University College Cork's Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

UCC is committed to being a fully inclusive global university which actively recruits, supports and retains colleagues from all sectors of society. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) are core values under UCC's Strategic Plan '*Securing Our Future*' – 2023-2028. UCC holds a Bronze Athena SWAN award in recognition of our commitment to advancing equality in higher education. We value diversity as well as celebrate, support and thrive on the contributions of all our employees and the communities they represent. We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer and encourage applications from everybody, regardless of age, care-giving status, disability, ethnicity, gender and/or gender identity or expression status, nationality, marital status/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion/creed, and/or sexual orientation. We value the enrichment that comes from a diverse community and seek to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of each individual in line with equality legislation.

The Administrative Promotions Boards described in this Scheme shall receive mandatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training. In addition, the Chair of Administrative Promotions Board under this Scheme shall undertake "EDIB Champion Training" provided by the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit.

The Administrative Promotion Scheme is a competitive scheme where candidates will be required to satisfy the competencies related to the promotional grade applied to and demonstrate achievement in the assessment areas looked for. Candidates need to achieve at least a 'Good' rating across all competency areas and a total assessment score such that it places the candidate within the number of posts available in order to be recommended for promotion in a specific promotional round.

### The Scheme

The Administrative Promotion Scheme is a competitive scheme where candidates will be required to satisfy the competencies related to the promotional grade applied to and demonstrate achievement in the assessment areas looked for. Candidates need to achieve at least a 'Good' rating across all competency areas and a total assessment score such that it places the candidate within the number of posts available in order to be recommended for promotion in a specific promotional round.

### Process Overview

The Administrative Promotions Scheme comprises of a one stage application process made based on an evidence based application (against set scheme competency areas as published by the People & Culture Department).

### Administrative Promotion Boards

For the purposes of Administration Promotions, two Boards will be established with separate grade dedications across the administrative grades.

- **Board 1:** the Administrative Promotions Board (SEA/ Senior Library Assistant – Grade 6a) focusing on grades SEA/ Senior Library Assistant up to and including Grade 6a.
- **Board 2:** the Administrative Promotions Board (Grade 7 – Senior Admin III) focusing on grades 7up to and including Senior Admin III.

## Terms of reference

- to consider and assess applications for administrative promotion and to make recommendations thereon to the dedicated Scheme Administrator in the People & Culture Department;
- to carry out these tasks in accordance with the terms of the Scheme, as adopted by the University Leadership Team;
- to report at the end of each round on the operation of the Scheme to the University Leadership Team;
- act as a point of reference for grade related administrative standards and advice to the institution on same.

## Membership

The membership of the two dedicated Administrative Promotions Boards is set out in **Appendix 1**.

- Chaired by a Chief People & Culture Officer Nominee
- Each Administrative Promotions Board has appointed members from relevant administrative grades (applying an 'above level' membership principle) and key stakeholders of administrative activity from other staff categories e.g. academic.
- Board members will be drawn from Colleges and Central Service areas.
- Given the seniority of the promotional grades considered by the Administrative Promotions Board (Grade 7 – Senior Admin III), that Board will have a President's nominee.
- An Independent External Administrator outside of UCC and not a Board member has oversight of the process and acts as an advisory on points of best practice to the Board.

Administrative support for the Board will be provided by the People & Culture Office to ensure smooth operation of the Board and candidate experience.

The membership of the Administrative Promotions Board shall have equal males and females where possible, with a minimum of 40% female members on the Board and a minimum of 40% male members on the Board. The Secretary to the Board is the nominee of the Chief People & Culture Officer. The Board membership shall be as set out in Appendix A.

**Note on the Independent External Administrator:** An independent, senior administrator from outside the University shall oversee the process and attend the assessment meeting(s) of the relevant Administrative Promotions Board in order to observe the integrity of the promotion evaluation process. Although not a Board member, their role shall be to bring to the attention of the Board any issues associated with the operation of the Board during its deliberations concerning the evaluation of applications and decision making for promotion.

## Conduct of Business

### Quorum

At least 70% of the members of the Board must be present at assessment when decisions are taken regarding candidates for promotion. Conduct and potential conflicts of interest of Board members are governed by the established Code of Conduct (available on the People & Culture Webpage).

### Board Member Notes

Members of the Board may record notes during the assessment process so as to assist in recall and discussion for the purposes of decision making in the process. Such notes and scores will not form part of the final record of the relevant Board's decision and will be destroyed once the final consensus decision of the respective Board is recorded.

### Making an Application

While it is the responsibility and prerogative of an eligible candidate seeking promotion to submit an application in a given round using the procedures outlined in this Scheme, applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss any proposed application with their Line Manager in advance, for advice and guidance. A readiness to apply should be considered in such discussions.

### Assessment Criteria & Paperwork

The candidate's completed application will be made via a structured application template as published by the People & Culture Department at the time of the promotional call.

*Evidence presented via a structured 5/6 (grade dependent) application template, as published by People & Culture, will involve evidence in the following areas*

- Admin Profile (Span of role/ responsibilities)
- Competency areas (as published by People & Culture) [Competencies | University College Cork \(ucc.ie\)](#)
- University Values/ Behaviours Contribution
- Top three achievements
- Impact on Function/ Service, University & Professionally

In addition for Grades 7 – Senior Admin III applicants:

- Contribution to the delivery of the University's Strategy.

## The Application Template

The template, completed by the candidate, will include the following elements: *(page limit in brackets)*.

- 5/6 page templated application made up of the following defined sections:
  - Statement of administrative profile (*remit/ span of activity etc*) – (½ page – 250 words)
  - Portfolio of evidence against the relevant promotional grade competencies (other than the competency relating to UCC values and behaviours)/ criteria as set out in the in the scheme and published by the People & Culture Office – (3 pages made up of ½ page per competency area – 250 words each)
  - Statement on demonstration of UCC’s Values & Behaviours – (½ page 250 words)
  - List of the candidate’s top 3 achievements in post – (½ page 250 words)
  - Statement of impact on Function/ Service, University & Professionally – (½ page 250 words)

### **For (Grades 7 to Senior Admin III) applicants only:**

- Statement on contribution to the delivery of the University’s Strategy– (1page 500 words)

Optional & as relevant on a candidate by candidate basis:

- Statutory Leave,
- Personal Impact Statement/ COVID-19 Impact\* (it is noted that the inclusion of a COVID-19 Impact Statement as part of promotional processes is due to end by the end of 2025).

The Head/ Line Manager will sign that they have seen the application prior to submission.

## Scoring

Applications to SEA/ Senior Library Assistant up to Grade 6a carry a total set of marks equating to 1,000 marks.

Applications to Grade 7 up to Senior Admin III carry a total set of marks equating to 1,200 marks.

Scores will be attached to the assessment areas for each administrative grade reflective of the score distribution set out below:

Area	Score Distribution (Marks)
Administrative profile	100
Portfolio of evidence against the relevant promotional grade competencies	700
Top 3 achievements in post	100
Demonstration of UCC’s Values & Behaviours	100
<b>In addition: (Grades 7 to Senior Admin III)</b>	
Contribution to the delivery of the University’s Strategy	200

**Table 1:** Distribution of scores across assessment areas

### Portfolio of evidence against the relevant promotional grade competencies (700 Marks)

In the Portfolio of Evidence, for each of the competency areas the candidate’s evidence will place them within the awarding categories set out below.

Competency Awarded level	Definition	Percentage
<b>Exemplar</b>	Demonstrates evidence of significance and impact beyond that of their current role and at a high level/ or beyond that expected at the promotional grade applied for.	90%- 100%
<b>Good</b>	Demonstrates evidence of significance and impact at the level expected at the promotional grade applied for.	60%- 90%
<b>Developing</b>	Inconsistent or a developing pattern of evidence provided which indicates a good trajectory which needs more time to enable a stronger presentation of significance and/or impact expected at the promotional grade applied for.	45%- 59%
<b>Premature Application</b>	Lacks evidence of the required competency at this time.	Up to 44%

**Table 2:** Competency Ratings and related percentage (based on scores attained)

To be considered to be in the promotional pool one needs to achieve at least ‘Good’ across all competency areas. Once in the promotional pool, the scores attained by the candidate will reflect the level of excellence and the award of one of the promotions available in the round.

### Administrative Disciplinary Norms

Disciplinary norms, approved by the relevant Head of Service/ Head of College, will be submitted to the Administrative Promotions Board to assist them in their deliberations. These norms will provide contextual information which may guide the Board in understanding the administrative context or nuances related to administrative work conducted in their Area/ College. Under the Interim Revised Scheme these norms will take the form of a brief statement (template provided by People & Culture). It is acknowledged that the candidate’s application provides for submission by the candidate of a ‘Admin Profile’ which also provides context specific to the candidate.

### Statutory Leave

In this Scheme, “Statutory Leave” refers to maternity leave, paternity leave, parental or adoption leave, carer’s leave and/or any other protected leave which may be provided for in legislation enacted by the State from time to time. The University acknowledges that periods during which an individual may have been on Statutory Leave may have impacted on an individual’s performance as judged against the promotion criteria.

The Promotion Scheme Leave Form issued by People & Culture, must be used by all candidates who wish to have Statutory Leave taken into account. The onus is on the candidate to ensure that People &

Culture is made aware at the time of submission of the candidate's application, of any Statutory Leave and the impact this has had on their output.

Details submitted as part of the Promotion Scheme Leave Form will be shared with the relevant Administrative Promotions Board members, the independent external administrator, the candidate's Head/ Line Manager, the People & Culture Office and where applicable, members of the relevant Administrative Promotions Appeals Board.

Statutory Leave details submitted via the Promotion Scheme Leave Form are a consideration which the Boards shall take into account, in assessing a candidate's merit in the specific competency/criteria relative to their opportunity to accrue that merit. The decision as to how to Statutory Leave shall be taken into account shall be made by the relevant Board based on the principles outlined herein.

For example, a Grade 5 (V) Competency: Delivery of Results: *Evaluates the current work practices to identify changes that could be made to help them run more effectively.* A candidate may have evidence in a year prior to and after a period of Maternity Leave relating to this criterion e.g., they may have conducted a review of work approach, made recommendation and implemented improvements. In considering the application, the Board will take the Statutory Leave into account and take it that this candidate would have affected such changes if they were not on Maternity Leave, consistent with the pattern of evidence before and after that period of leave.

## **Personal Circumstances/Covid-19 Impact Statement**

Candidates may elect to submit a Personal Circumstances/Covid-19 Impact Statement (of up to one page). The candidate's Personal Circumstances/Covid-19 Impact Statement must specify which of the competency category areas/ criteria has been impacted. Candidates are not required to describe specific details about sensitive issues (e.g. medical information) in such a statement. Where it is important to share sensitive details of the relevant circumstances in order for such circumstances to be fully understood, staff may share this information in private discussion with the relevant Administrative Board Chair or the Chair's Nominee.

In this Scheme, "personal circumstances" refers to a career impact caused by personal circumstances that involves a prolonged interruption or poses a significant impact to a staff member's capacity to work. This includes, but is not limited to: disruptions caused by major illness/injury, carer responsibilities, disability, and personal impactful life event/trauma.

The University acknowledges the contributions of staff made during the Covid-19 pandemic. Candidates may elect to submit details of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the individual's opportunities during that time. For example, this may include but is not limited to: access to resources, opportunities or personal circumstances.

The Personal Circumstances/Covid-19 Impact Statement shall be taken into account in the overall assessment of applications by the Administrative Promotions Boards however, the statement shall not be attributed with the Statutory Leave formulaic approach described in section above as part of Boards' assessments.

## Closing Dates

The closing date for receipt of applications will be no sooner than 1 month after the promotional call is announced.

All documentation and supporting evidence must be submitted electronically (via e-recruitment) to the Secretary of the Board by the specified date and time. No supplementary materials will be accepted after the closing date and time, unless specifically requested by the Board.

## Notification

The Secretary of the Administrative Promotions Board (or their nominee) shall inform each candidate of the relevant Administrative Promotions Board's recommendation in their case. Successful candidates shall receive formal notification regarding their promotion after its approval by the People & Culture Office. A promotion takes effect from the first day of the next month, following the approval.

Unsuccessful candidates shall be provided with written feedback including their overall rating across promotional grade related competencies assessed and the overall combined score of the application, as well as an overview of anonymised statistics from the promotion round in a format determined by the People & Culture.

Once approved, the outcome of the promotion round, upon completion of all administrative grade promotional rounds, shall be reported to the University Leadership Team and relevant university bodies.

Following issuing of written feedback, unsuccessful candidates have the option to avail of an in person facilitative feedback session with the Chair of the relevant Administrative Promotions Board and their Line Manager. A candidate has 20 days to book their feedback session following the result announcement. Requests for in person feedback shall be submitted to People & Culture Office within twenty business days of results of the outcome of the candidate's application being notified to the candidate.

## Appeals

Prior to lodging an appeal, an intending appellant must first have availed of the in-person feedback meeting, and appeals within 30 business days following the feedback meeting. An appeal can be made on process as opposed to outcome decision of the relevant promotions board. Appeals will be heard by an Admin Appeals Board. The Administrative Promotions Board (Grade 7 – Senior Admin III) will act as an Appeals Board for candidates appealing an application made to the Administrative Promotions Board (SEA/ Senior Library Assistant – Grade 6a). An independent Appeals Board will be established by the Chief People & Culture Officer to consider appeals from applicants to the Administrative Promotions Board (Grade 7 – Senior Admin III), the membership of which will be made available prior to the closing date for applications in the promotional round.



### **Starting Pay/Annual Leave**

A successful candidate's salary will be determined in line with Department of Public Expenditure Rules relating to pay upon promotion. All other terms and conditions attaching to the promotion will be that which would ordinarily apply on promotion or appointment to a new post at a higher grade. In this context successful candidates will maintain their current annual leave entitlement if the leave entitlement for the grade to which they are promoted is lesser than their current entitlement subject to a maximum entitlement of 30 days annual leave. Those staff with a current annual leave entitlement of greater than 30 days will have their leave entitlement reduced to 30 days.

### **Assignment of successful candidates**

The University reserves the right, based on the overall outcome of the promotion call, to deploy resources in order to achieve maximum efficiency in line with service needs and priorities. In the event that the current assignment of a promoted staff member expires (for example, due to the cessation of a temporary contract), the staff member concerned will be redeployed into another role at the promoted grade in line with the service needs/priorities of the University.

## APPENDIX A:

### Membership of the Administrative Promotions Board (Grade SEA/ Library Assistant to Grade 6a)

#### The Administrative Promotions Board (SEA/ Senior Library Assistant – Grade 6a)

- Chief People & Culture Officer Nominee (Chair);
- Eight members made up of one representative from each of the four Colleges and four representatives from Central Service Area, the composition of which is to be determined by the People & Culture Office.
- Two stakeholder representatives from staff categories other than administrative e.g. academic, research, technical etc.

These members shall be appointed by the Senior Leadership Team following consultation by ULT members in their constituent areas. Appointments shall be staggered, with four members being appointed every two years, to serve a four year term.

- Oversight by Senior External Administrator.
- Administrative support provided by the People & Culture Department.

### Membership of the Administrative Promotions Board (Grade 7 to Senior)

#### The Administrative Promotions Board (Grade 7 – Senior Admin III)

- Chief People & Culture Nominee (Chair)
- President's Nominee
- 4 members made up of senior administrators
- Two senior stakeholder representatives from staff categories other than administrative e.g. academic, research, technical etc.

These members shall be appointed by the Senior Leadership Team following consultation by ULT members in their constituent areas. Appointments shall be staggered, with four members being appointed every two years, to serve a four year term.

- Oversight by Senior External Administrator.
- Administrative support provided by the People & Culture Department.