

BPP University – University Policies and Procedures

Academic Appointments and Honorary Awards



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Regulatory Mapping

BPP University General Academic Regulations
Section F: Academic Appointments and Honorary Awards

BPP University
University Policies and Procedures
Academic Appointments and Honorary Awards

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1. Academic Appointments

Introduction and Authority

- 1.1. As set out in the General Academic Regulations (GARs) Part F: Academic Appointments and Honorary Awards, the University awards a series of academic ranks to recognise the learning, teaching, scholarly, and leadership experience of staff. These academic ranks may be conferred on appointment, or through a process of application to the relevant promotions board.

- 1.2. The following policy stipulates the policy and procedures for the award of academic rank either through appointment or promotion.
- 1.3. As stipulated in the GARs Part G, Section 2, and the University's Policy and Procedure on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech, there shall be no discrimination on the basis of the lawful exercise of academic freedom and/or freedom of speech in relation to appointment to, and promotion within, the University. Appointment/promotion terms for academic staff within the University, shall not seek to restrict academic freedom/freedom of speech.

Award of Academic Rank by Appointment

- 1.4. Where an academic rank is to be awarded as part of an offer of employment at the University, this must be advertised in the relevant role description, and the relevant criteria for that academic rank should form as part of the role description and determination of the final postholder.
- 1.5. Applications and interviews for posts that seek to appoint either an Associate Professor or Professor, should have a member of the University's Professoriate on the interview panel, in order to assess the suitability of the candidate for a Professorial level title.
- 1.6. There may be circumstances where a candidate is provided with an employment offer by the University, and subsequently seek as part of their negotiation a higher academic rank than that advertised. In such situations, the candidate's request will be referred to the relevant promotions board who will decide on whether to grant it based on evidence provided by the candidate to demonstrate their suitability for the rank.

Award of Academic Rank by Promotion – Professor

- 1.7. Applications for Professorial promotions shall follow the below guidelines and procedure, and will be considered by the Professorial Promotions Board.
- 1.8. There are three categories of Professorial Appointment at BPP University:

Professor of Academic Leadership

In relation to their expertise in Academic Leadership, applicants for Professor shall demonstrate the major category criteria of:

- a. Leadership and Enhancement

- b. External Engagement and Impact/Professional Contribution

And the minor criteria of:

- c. Scholarship
- d. Teaching

Professor of Educational Practice

In relation to their expertise in Educational Practice, applicants for Professor shall demonstrate the major category criteria of:

- a. Teaching
- b. External Engagement and Impact/Professional Contribution

And the minor criteria of:

- c. Scholarship
- d. Leadership and Enhancement

Professor of Law, Business, Nursing, Other (Discipline-Specific)

Applicants for a Discipline-Specific Professorship shall demonstrate the major category criteria of:

- a. Scholarship
- b. Teaching

And the minor criteria of:

- c. Leadership and Enhancement
- d. External Engagement and Impact/Professional Contribution

- 1.9. The following category criteria are used to assess Professorial applicants and their suitability for the rank they have applied for:

Major categories will be judged using the points set out in the below Guidance on Assessing the Professorial Application and carry the most significant weight in the assessment of the application.

Minor categories will be judged using the same points set out in the major criteria and points set out in the below Guidance on Assessing the Professorial Application, albeit at a less significant level than the major categories.

Scholarship: The University defines this as: 'The application of the most current knowledge of a discipline or professional specialism to broader activities and practice, communicated in ways which are validated by peers and influence others beyond the institution' (Boyer, 1990). This includes, for example, contributions to professional journals/magazines, contributions to conferences, exhibitions, collaboration with professional bodies, invitations to give seminars and keynote/named lectures and to participate as principal speaker in national/international meetings. It also includes: updating teaching materials, developing new programmes, attending and giving papers at conference, writing papers and articles, external collaborations and other activities that help keep the University up to date in subject areas.

Teaching: A sustained record in teaching enhancement underpinned by feedback from students, peer review, external examiners, employers, professional bodies or other appropriate sources. The candidate will have attained the highest authority and influence as a teacher, as evidenced by, for example, a strengthening of the link between teaching and cutting-edge developments in practice. Development of curriculum and new programmes of study comes within this head. Examples of achieving the highest authority in teaching could include: enhancement of teaching and learning within and beyond the candidate's department or school, active development of innovative study programmes within the candidate's department, receipt of a teaching qualification or recognition by the HEA, significant experience of external examining, participation in reviews of activity in other institutions/professional or regulatory bodies, significant contributions to the development of curriculum through teaching/learning aids in the forms of textbooks, articles, e-learning and contributions to assessment methodologies.

Leadership and Enhancement: Significant contributions to management or administration of a department or School which benefits the University and enhances the activities of its members. This would include the creation of frameworks, documentary guidance or other aids which manifestly enhance the effective contribution of member of the department, School or University level activities such as chairing key committees, review groups, working parties etc. This could also be evidenced by external office-holding or other high-level activity in learned societies, professional bodies, governmental committees etc.

External engagement and impact / Professional contribution: Significant contributions to the development of knowledge benefiting business and the professions that the University serves. This would include for example, consultancy, advice to the professions/particular employers/professional bodies, presentation of innovations in learning and teaching, disseminating knowledge and understanding about the work of the University, design for a particular employer of a leading programme and the dissemination of the learning points

from that process, enhancing the public's understanding of the work of the professions/business and the cutting edge developments in the relevant fields. The candidate should be able to demonstrate impact from the external engagement, for example, a major professional service firm changing the way in which it trains future professionals, a professional body adding a new path to qualification, academic infrastructure prescribed by QAA being changed/modified or a developing country adopting new standards/education in response to the external engagement.

1.10. Application Process:

Candidates should provide:

- An **Academic CV** detailing their career and achievements. The CV must include appropriate information in relation to how they meet the Professorial Criteria and Category criteria.
- Develop a no more than **six-page** document that states how they meet the following four criterion in the two major and two minor categories, and draws on their CV to evidence this, as set out by the Professorial rank the candidate is seeking promotion to:
 - a. Evidence that demonstrates that the applicant is making a sector-wide contribution (i.e. outside of BPP)
 - b. That the applicant interacts with a sufficiently high level that one would expect from a Professor, e.g. other Professors, Senior University Leaders, Senior members of regulatory bodies
 - c. That the interactions are of a sufficiently high academic level (rather than purely operational)
 - d. That the applicant is sought out in the sector to profess their ideas, contribute to the debate and inform the decision-making process.
- **Two** written references from independent referees of Professorial rank who can attest their application meets the above four criteria in relation to the major and minor categories.

1.10. Guidance on Assessing the Professorial Application:

The attached professorial application meets the guidelines for submission for assessment, and they are invited to read through the application and make an assessment on whether the candidate meets the major and minor category criteria to warrant the title award.

Both major and minor categories are judged according to the following criteria:

- a) The evidence presented demonstrates that the applicant is making a sector wide contribution (i.e. outside of BPP)
- b) That they interact with a sufficiently high level that one would expect from a Professor, e.g. other Professors, Senior University Leaders, Senior members of regulatory bodies
- c) That the interactions are of a sufficiently high academic level (rather than purely operational)
- d) That the applicant is sought out in the sector to profess their ideas, contribute to the debate and inform the decision-making process.

In assessing the application, panelists are required to read the major and minor categories and using the four points above, assess how the candidate does or does not meet the rank of Professor.

For the two major categories, these hold the greatest significant weight in determining the candidate's suitability, and it is an expectation that they will meet these criteria in a consistent way. The two minor categories are also to be considered but carry a lesser significant weight than the major categories in determining the candidate's suitability. Both major and minor categories are assessed using the criteria as set out in point in this guidance.

Award of Academic Rank by Promotion – Associate Professor

- 1.11. Applications for Associate Professor promotions shall follow the below guidelines and procedure, and will be considered by the Professorial Promotions Board:
- 1.12. There are three categories of Associate Professorial Appointment at BPP University, with the following criteria applicants must demonstrate they meet when seeking appointment:

Associate Professor of Educational Practice

- Evidence of ongoing excellence in teaching practice, including evidence of disseminating best practice to colleagues. For example, significant leadership contribution to the design and development of the curriculum.

- Evidence of high-quality mentoring and developing other staff in the school and/or across the University in relation to learning and teaching practices.
- Make significant contributions to leadership, management and development of teaching and learning strategies and academic standards for the School, discipline, and/or University.
- Demonstrate a growing reputation outside of the University in relation to learning and teaching, for example, through sustained contributions to relevant national statutory and professional bodies, the professions, employers, and/or learned associations.

Associate Professor of Academic Leadership

- Evidence of ongoing excellence in the academic management or administration of a department or School that benefits the University and enhances the activities of its members.
- Make significant contributions to leadership, management and development of academic strategies and academic standards for the School and/or University.
- Evidence of high-quality mentoring and developing other staff in the School and/or across the University in relation to the academic management of administration.
- Demonstrate a growing reputation outside of the University in relation to academic leadership, for example, through sustained contributions to relevant national statutory and professional bodies, the professions, employers, and/or learned associations.

Associate Professor in Law, Business, Technology, Nursing, and Other

- Evidence of ongoing excellence in academic practice in the relevant discipline (e.g., such as discipline-specific learning and teaching practice/development, and/or research activities), including evidence of disseminating good practice to colleagues. For example, significant leadership to disciplinary developments in your School/University.
- Make significant contributions to leadership, management and development of academic strategies and academic standards in relation to the discipline in the School/University.
- Demonstrate a growing reputation outside of the University in relation to the discipline, for example, through sustained contributions to relevant national statutory and professional bodies, the professions, employers, and/or learned associations.

1.13. Application Process

Candidates should provide:

- An **Academic CV** detailing their career and achievements. The CV must include appropriate information in relation to how they meet the Associate Professorial criteria for the category they are applying for.
- Develop a no more than **four-page** document that states how they meet the criteria, and draw on their CV to evidence this.
- **A written reference** from their line manager or other appropriate individual (e.g., Dean) who can attest their application meets the criteria in relation to the Associate Professorial category they have applied for.

Award of Academic Rank by Promotion – Senior Lecturer

- 1.10. Applications for Senior Lecturer promotions shall follow the below guidelines and procedure, and will be considered by the Academic Promotions Board (Senior Lecturer).
- 1.11. Senior Lecturers are expected to represent the achievement of a consistently high standard of teaching, scholarship and contribution to the student experience, curriculum innovation and design, academic development, and administration. The aim of the application is to demonstrate to the board their work as an academic citizen and enable the board to identify strengths and development opportunities.
- 1.12. Applicants for promotion to Senior Lecturer must:
 - a) Submit an Academic CV
 - b) Hold Fellowship to the HEA and provide proof
 - c) Have engaged in enhancement activities across one or more areas (School, University, external). For example, through their work on committees, panels and projects; how they have participated in the life of the School or the University at open days, careers events, and outreach etc.; their role and impact on any external educational activities (e.g., Outreach work, work as an external examiner, etc).
 - d) Provide a supporting statement from a line manager to demonstrate the School supports the application.

2. Appointment of Honorary Fellows, Visiting Fellows and Visiting Professors

Background

2.10. BPP University has a tradition of building relationships with external advisors who have demonstrated outstanding academic learning and/or professional expertise. From time-to-time BPP University may wish to formalise the relationship between itself and such external advisors to recognise their contribution to its teaching programmes and professional and research activities by conferring visiting status with one of the following titles:

- (a) Honorary Fellow;
- (b) Visiting Fellow;
- (c) Visiting Professor
- (d) Visiting Associate Professor
- (e) Visiting Senior Lecturer
- (f) Visiting Lecturer

2.11. As stipulated in the GARs Part G, Section 2, and the University's Policy and Procedure on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech, there shall be no discrimination on the basis of the lawful exercise of academic freedom and/or freedom of speech in relation to appointment to, and promotion within, the University. Appointment/promotion terms for academic staff within the University, shall not seek to restrict academic freedom/freedom of speech.

Authority

2.12. Honorary and Visiting status may be conferred by the Academic Council on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor, or nominee.

Process: Honorary or Visiting Fellows

2.13. The Vice-Chancellor, or nominee's recommendation shall be in writing and must outline how the nominee meets the criteria set out below. In addition, for Visiting Fellows, the recommendation shall outline the ongoing or envisaged contribution that the nominee is making or will make to the teaching, programmes, professional activities or research of BPP University.

- 2.14. The recommendation shall be accompanied by the nominee's detailed CV and two references providing evidence of their academic or professional expertise.
- 2.15. Following initial approval by the Academic Council, the nominee will be invited to attend a meeting at which shall be present, at least, a member of the Academic Council, the relevant dean of school, and a senior academic or academic related officer. The purpose of this meeting is:
- (a) to ask any questions about the nominee's academic or professional background;
 - (b) to explain to the nominee BPP University's vision and strategy in the relevant area;
 - (c) to discuss and agree the nominee's intended remit (where appropriate).
- 2.16. Once approved, the appointment will be confirmed by the Vice-Chancellor by letter to the nominee.
- 2.17. The process outlined above may be modified and/or waived at the discretion of the Academic Council (e.g. where the nominee is already well known to BPP University).

Process: Visiting Professor/Associate Professor/Senior Lecturer/Lecturer

- 2.18. The Vice-Chancellor, or Dean, must inform the Secretary to the Academic Council of the recommendation to appoint an individual to a Visiting Academic Rank to their School, and provide the Secretary with the CV of the appointee. The Secretary then seek approval for the appointment from the Academic Council.
- 2.19. The Vice-Chancellor, or Dean must write to the appointee confirming the appointment and the terms and conditions associated with it.

Criteria

- 2.20. The decision to confer Honorary Fellowship, Visiting Fellowship or Visiting Academic Rank status will be based on the following criteria:
- (a) The title of Honorary Fellow shall be reserved to appointees who have made (through their eminent status and standing in their field) a significant contribution to the development of BPP University and its reputation. It may be awarded to appointees from any field of professional practice or academia.

- (b) The title Visiting Fellow shall be reserved to appointees who are drawn from the professions, business, industry, commerce or the public sector and who do not have academic status;
- (c) The title Visiting Professor/Associate Professor/Senior Lecturer/Lecturer shall be reserved to appointees who hold appropriate academic status.

2.21. In addition, nominees shall be expected to have:

- (a) substantial academic and/or professional expertise in the relevant area or discipline at a level accorded to the Visiting Rank;
- (b) significant experience at a senior level (either on an employed or consultancy basis) in professional practice, professional service firms, business, industry, academic institutions, or the public sector;
- (c) such experience in teaching, learning, development and research as deemed by the Board (or nominated sub-committee) necessary to enable the external advisors to undertake successfully the remit envisaged (having regard to the corresponding criteria for the internal teaching grades);
- (d) the ability, availability (without any commercial conflict in relation to other activities) and willingness to make a significant contribution to BPP University's teaching programmes and/or professional or research activities; and
- (e) a commitment to quality in all academic and professional endeavours.

Duration

2.22. Visiting Fellow, and Visiting Academic Rank status will normally be conferred for a period of three years, reviewed annually, which may be renewed upon expiry subject to confirmation by the Academic Council upon the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor in the case of Visiting Fellows and by the dean of school in the case of Visiting Professors.

2.23. Honorary Fellow status will normally be conferred for life.

3. Honorary Degrees

Introduction

3.10. The University has the right to recognise through the conferment of Honorary Degrees the major contributions of individuals to their professional and/or

academic field, or individuals who demonstrate a major contribution to broader society. Degrees are therefore awarded in *honoris causa* meaning that the degree is not awarded for the completion of an academic programme of study at the University, but rather in recognition of their life achievements or contribution to their field as aligned with the criteria as set out below.

- 3.11. As stipulated in the GARs Part G, Section 2, and the University's Policy and Procedure on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech, there shall be no discrimination on the basis of the lawful exercise of academic freedom and/or freedom of speech in relation to the decision making processes around, and subsequent award of honorary degrees.

Awards and Criteria

- 3.12. As stipulated in the University's General Academic Regulations, Part F, the right to award honorary degrees is vested in the powers of the Academic Council who must approve any nomination and subsequent award of an Honorary Degree. The University awards the following Honorary Degrees to candidates of merit:

a) Doctor of the University *honoris causa* (DUniv, h.c.)

The DUniv, h.c. is awarded to individuals who have made a major contribution at a national and/or international level in one or more of the below criteria:

- i) Notable services to the University
- ii) Notable contributions to the educational or culture well-being of society
- iii) Academic distinction in and/or services to academic disciplines of particular concern to the University
- iv) Public service of notable distinction

b) Master of the University *honoris causa* (MUniv, h.c.)

The MUniv, h.c. is awarded to individuals who have made a major contribution at a regional or local level in one or more of the below criteria:

- i) Notable services to the University
- ii) Notable contributions to the educational or culture well-being of society
- iii) Academic distinction in and/or services to academic disciplines of particular concern to the University

- iv) Public service of notable distinction

Exclusion Criteria

- 3.13. The University may not award honorary degrees to a currently employed member of the University's/Group's academic or professional staff, or members of its regulatory committees (either employed or otherwise).
- 3.14. Where recognition is sought to be granted for an individual under this category, consideration may be given to a non-degree special recognition award as agreed by the Vice-Chancellor or nominee.
- 3.15. If an honorary degree is being sought for an individual currently employed or engaged within the University/Group through its regulatory committees, this will only be considered if they are due to demit their responsibilities to the University/Group by the time of the award (e.g., end of term, departure from the University/Group, or retirement).

Confidentiality of Nominations and Anti-Bribery and Corruption Guidance

- 3.16. The Honorary Degree nomination process is confidential, and intentions to nominate, potential or actual, must not be discussed with the proposed nominee. Only when a nomination has been approved by the Academic Council and meets the conditions of award confirmation (outlined below) will the proposed honorand be approached by the Secretary of the Academic Council to extend an offer.
- 3.17. Honorary Degrees must not be promised to individuals under any circumstances, and Honorary Degrees are subject to the anti-bribery and corruption rules of the University and wider BPP Group. Consequently, Honorary Degrees must not be negotiated or promised in return for services to the University/Group.

Conditions of Award Confirmation (post-nomination and approval) and Offer Length

- 3.18. *Award Confirmation – Due Diligence:* Whilst initial due diligence of nominees will be carried out prior to their approval by Academic Council, complete processes of due diligence will be undertaken following approval. An award will not be confirmed if the results of this complete process of due diligence suggest that it is not in the University's interest to award the honorary degree to the approved nominee. Only once the due diligence has confirmed the award can proceed will it then be

confirmed, and the Secretary of the Academic Council approach the approved and confirmed nominee to accept the intention of the University to make the award.

- 3.19. *Offer Length:* Once the approved nominee has met the conditions of award confirmation, they will then be approached by the Secretary of the Academic Council to arrange for the conferment of the award and attendance at one of the University's graduations. The award will normally be conferred at the next available graduation, but the University understands that this might conflict with the approved and confirmed nominee's scheduling commitments. Where an award cannot be conferred at one of the proceeding three graduation sessions from the date of approval and confirmation of the award, the offer of the award will be rescinded by the University, unless extenuating circumstances permit the maintenance of the offer of the award.

Nomination Process

- 3.20. Nominations for Honorary Degrees can be made to the Secretary of Academic Council who will present them as part of reserved business for consideration by the Academic Council. Please complete the Honorary Degrees Nomination Form and send it to AcademicGovernance@bpp.com ahead of the deadline for the nomination to be considered.

Policy Revision History

Version Number	Description	Author	Reviewed by	Date
1.0	New policy that incorporates previous policy on Honorary Appointments, new policy Honorary Awards, and includes policy on Academic Appointments.	Director of Academic Governance & Proctor	Dean of Academic Quality & Policy	July 2023
2.0	Revisions to Honorary Appointments to mirror academic ranks in the University. Ability to appoint Visiting Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Associate Professors, and Professors.	Director of Academic Governance & Proctor	Dean of Academic Quality & Policy	July 2024
3.0	Insertion of clear instruction that all forms of academic appointments and honorary awards will not be affected by the lawful exercise of freedom of speech/academic freedom.	Director of Academic Governance & Proctor	Dean of Academic Quality & Policy	July 2025