



MLA  
COLLEGE

# Professorial Titles Policy

Professorial Titles Policy  
Sponsor: Rector  
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# 1. Introduction

1.1 The title of “Professor” is designated to acknowledge and give public recognition to individual academic distinction and leadership achieved in a field relevant to and in support of the mission of the MLA College, including responsibilities towards students, the College, and the external community. The title of Professor may be awarded to staff engaged in teaching, research or academic leaders employed by the MLA College who meet the criteria set out below.

1.2 The role of Professor will be to support the mission of the College and its implementation through the Strategic Plan, and Policies and Procedures. A professor will be expected to enhance the quality of the academic provision within its taught, research, and knowledge transfer programmes.

1.3 Professors must have records of achievements which ensure that when awarded the title they demonstrate the standards of excellence and distinction associated with their respective titles in Higher Education and that they continue to be active at the appropriate level.

1.4 As a Transitional Arrangement, staff members who have previously held the title of “Professor” at a reputable Higher Education establishment will be automatically conferred the title of “Professor”.

## 2. Professorships

2.1 **Criteria** - The title of Professor is awarded by the “Academic Titles Committee” acting under delegated authority from the Academic Board. The criteria should be interpreted in the light of peer standards applicable in the candidate’s area of expertise. Candidates are judged against the following criteria:

- a. **Significant Furtherance of Knowledge:** A national or international contribution – by scholarship, research, consultancy or creative achievement – to the furtherance of knowledge or its application to society.
- b. **Excellence in Teaching:** A national or international reputation as a teacher or educator as exemplified by contribution to the development of subjects or fields of study; to pioneering developments in pedagogy; or other innovation in teaching and learning.
- c. **Excellence in Academic Leadership:** substantial academic leadership externally at a regional, national or international level; national or international standing of the individual in his or her profession, Learned Societies, subject associations or other such organizations; qualities of academic leadership relevant to the vision, values and strategic objectives of the College, leading academic change and development.

2.2 A candidate must be excellent in at least one of the criteria and be able to demonstrate substantial strengths in at least one other. Applications should address all three areas. All applications will be expected to include reference to significant published work or equivalent output achieved.

2.3 Applications must be current and will need to demonstrate a significant level of achievement, including publications and/or creative works, in the five years immediately prior to the submission, although it is appropriate for the application to include relevant experience and achievements for earlier periods. Professors are expected to have a record of achievement which ensures that they can maintain the standard of excellence and distinction associated with the title in the field of higher education. Therefore, they are expected to continue their activities in their sphere of interests.

2.4 **Selection** - The award of title of “Professor” is made by the Academic Titles Committee which has been granted delegated responsibility on behalf of Academic Board to award a Professorial title to any

candidate meeting the criteria detailed above. Academic Board will receive a report of those awarded Professorial titles from the Academic Titles Committee.

#### 2.4 Applications

- a. Applications are normally invited on an annual basis by the Rector. Any member of staff considering applying should have an initial discussion with the Rector at least 3 months before the scheduled date of the application. If deemed necessary, the Rector will appoint a senior member of College Professoriate to support the candidate in formulating their application.
- b. Applications should be submitted to the Rector's Office.
- c. All applications will be considered by the Rector who will establish whether a case has been made by a candidate against the criteria stated.
- d. Where the Rector is satisfied that a case has been made, the application will be sent to a minimum of two external assessors of professorial or equivalent standing appropriate to the field of work of the candidate, including independent experts.
- e. The Committee will meet to consider all relevant information and to agree (or otherwise) the award of the professorial title. A report will be made to the Academic Board. The professorial title will not be used until after the meeting of Academic Board to which the award has been reported.
- f. All applications will be considered in confidence.

#### 2.5 Submissions - Candidates should submit their application comprising:

- a. A statement which outlines their candidacy against the criteria (of no more than 2,000 words). It is important that the statement indicates by which criterion or criteria the candidate is claiming to be excellent. Similarly, the candidate must make explicit the nature of the high level of achievement claimed in respect of any other criteria. Dependent on which key criterion is selected, the statement should include some of the following:
  - (i) Furtherance of knowledge may be evidenced through a list of publications and/or other research output as follows: Books: single authored or co-authored; Chapters in books: single authored or co-authored; papers/articles in refereed journals; refereed papers presented to conferences; non-refereed papers/articles in journals, other publications or conferences; research reports; research income; creative achievement may be evidenced through other than traditional research or scholarly publication; this might include artefacts, texts, exhibitions, performance or some other form, but must demonstrate how knowledge and its application in the field concerned has been furthered.
  - (ii) Excellence in Teaching may be evidenced through: teaching profile/portfolio; work as a mentor; research into teaching (e.g. Action research); student feedback results (e.g. institutional questionnaires); ongoing and reflective continuous improvement in teaching through self-assessment and evaluation; innovation in teaching and learning; activities aimed at improving the student experience (e.g. learner support, working with students with disabilities and from different cultural backgrounds); external recognition of involvement in improving teaching (e.g. funded projects, consultancy work, contribution to conferences); QAA reports or external examiner's reports.
  - (iii) Excellence in Academic Leadership:

- (1) External Academic Leadership may be evidenced through: high profile public engagement, e.g. significant contribution to shaping regional and national policy; high level involvement in the intellectual development of a discipline or profession; significant contribution to the development of the academic community:
- (2) Internal Academic Leadership may be evidenced through: innovative work within the College; supporting and encouraging personal and professional development of teaching and research staff; facilitating and actively encouraging inspirational teaching and learning; developing and nurturing a research environment and culture; enabling and encouraging innovative curriculum development and design.

(iv) A copy of their curriculum vitae - it is the responsibility of the candidate to draw attention to relevant aspects thereof.

- b. Candidates are advised that the application should address explicitly the criteria for the award of a professorial title and indicate those aspects of their work which they believe qualify them for the appointment.
- c. The names, addresses and full titles of no more than three, appropriately senior and experienced external referees of professional standing who should be in a position to offer a respected and informed assessment of the candidate's expertise, standing and achievements
- d. An indication of the title they would wish to be associated with the Chair should they be successful. This title should be discussed with the relevant Head of School.

2.6 Following the award of the Professorial Title, each Professor will undertake an appropriate inaugural activity (lecture, exhibition, presentation) to mark the award of the title.

### **3. Honorary Professors**

3.1 At the discretion of the Academic Titles Committee, the title of "Honorary Professor" may be awarded to persons of outstanding academic distinction who meet the criteria above and have been associated with the work of MLA College over a period of time.

3.2 Nominations for consideration may be made by an academic member of staff.

3.3 Appointments will normally be made for five years at which point they will be reviewed.

3.4 Applications will be considered and approved by the internal members of the Committee with guidance sought from external members when required.

### **4 Visiting Professors**

4.1 At the discretion of the Academic Titles Committee, the title of "Visiting Professor" may be awarded to individuals of high academic standing who are closely involved with the work of the College but not permanent employees. Candidates should be either:

- a. In employment or self-employment that generates a direct input to research, scholarship or professional interests of the College.
- b. Retired academics making a direct input to research, scholarship or other academic activity of the College.

- c. Academics visiting the College from another institution.

4.2 The same criteria for appointment are to be used for Visiting Professors as for Professorial candidates where the potential Visiting Professor is an academic. For those outside the academic world it may be appropriate to consider additional factors, such as:

- a. Professional achievement
- b. Research management and leadership
- c. Innovative work within the individual's own institution or organisation
- d. National policy/strategy development

4.3 Nominations may be made by an academic member of staff.

4.4 Appointments normally run for five years at which point they will be reviewed.

4.5 Applications will be considered and approved by the internal members of the Committee with guidance sought from external members when required.

## 5. Emeritus Professor

5.1 At the discretion of the Academic Titles Committee, the title of "Emeritus Professor" may be awarded to those holding the title of Professor who are to retire from the College or, exceptionally, those who have retired. The award will normally be made for a period of five years and must be reported to the Academic Board.

5.2 The establishment of this title will allow Professors of the College to continue to use their professorial title after their retirement.

5.3 **Eligibility** - Staff who retire and who have previously held the title of Professor will be eligible for the title of Emeritus Professor. Individual eligible retiring professors are able to put forward their own names to the Academic Titles Committee through the Rector.

5.4 **Criteria** - The Academic Titles Committee will consider the following criteria:

- a. Evidence of an outstanding contribution to the College
- b. Promise or delivery of a continuing commitment to the College, for example, through research supervision or collaborative ventures or liaison with other bodies.

## 6. Professor of Practice

6.1 A Professor of Practice is a distinguished professional, either practicing or recently retired; a few may have traditional academic backgrounds, but most will not.

6.2 Someone with the title of "Professor of Practice" will help promote the integration of academic scholarship with practical experience. Appointees will support MLA College community with an understanding of the practical applications of a particular field of study. Professors of Practice may be involved teaching, advising students, or collaborate in areas directly related to their expertise and experience.

6.3 Appointment may be made as Professor of Practice or Visiting Professor of Practice.

6.4 **Criteria** - Evaluation of the candidate for appointment as Professor of Practice shall consider the nature of the duties and responsibilities and shall adjust accordingly as to the emphasis placed on each of the following four areas:

- Professional competence and activity.
- Teaching contributions.
- Research contributions.
- Service contributions.