**The Role of Independent Academic Assessors – Guidance Notes**

1. **Introduction** 
   1. The University uses Independent Academic Assessors to ensure that assessments of applicants for promotion are completely independent as defined below. The use of the term Independent Academic Assessor (Assessor hereafter), should make clear the distinction between an **Assessor**, who has knowledge of an applicant’s work, and that of a **Referee**, who has, or may have had, a close professional working relationship with the applicant.
   2. The nomination of Assessors is to be completed on the following forms by the applicant for promotions to Senior Lecturer/Senior Research Fellow and above, under the Research and Education and Research pathways. The form must be submitted by the applicant to the [academic.promotions@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:academic.promotions@sussex.ac.uk) along with their application for promotion. In completing the form, the applicant should also state why the Assessors have been chosen and confirm that they are independent. It is not necessary to nominate Independent Academic Assessors for those applying for promotion under the Education & Scholarship Pathway.
   3. If necessary, the applicant can discuss with their line manager and/or Head of School about potential Assessors before submitting the form.
   4. Independent Assessors will be completely independent and should not have previously collaborated closely with the applicant as a co-author or co-researcher; nor provided them with supervision. Applicants should not approach potential Assessors directly and should not communicate with the Assessor about their promotion application and the request for an assessment in any way. If they do so, this may result in the Assessor no longer being regarded as completely independent and/or it may prejudice the applicant’s promotion application.
   5. In some disciplines, it may be the case that there are a small number of potential Assessors, and the applicant has had a previous relationship with one or more of those Assessors. In this case, the nature of the previous relationship should be declared on the Independent Assessors Form, and this information will be shared with the SPC and APATC (if applicable) when the application is considered. However, completely independent Assessors should be provided wherever possible.
   6. Heads of Schools are responsible for checking the submitted assessor form and confirming the list meets the criteria and guidance in the first SPC meeting, ready for HR to contact accordingly.
2. **Criteria for Assessors** 
   1. Nominated Assessors must be:

* At Professorial or Reader level
* Subject experts of significant international academic distinction who have detailed knowledge of the field and the candidate’s contribution to it
* **Completely independent** - they should not have previously collaborated closely with the applicant as a co-author or co-researcher; nor provided them with supervision; should not be current employees of the University of Sussex, nor have worked for the University within the last five years.\*
  1. The number of Assessors required are:
* For **Lecturer A to B** or **Research Fellow A to B** – none
* For **Senior Lecturer** or **Senior Research Fellow** – four, (2 UK Institutions, 1 Non-UK Institution and 1 reserve – which is usually Non-UK).
* For **Readers** – five**,** (3 UK Institutions, 1 Non-UK Institution and 1 reserve – which is usually Non-UK)
* For **Professors** and **Research Professors –** five, (2 UK Institutions, 2 Non-UK Institution\*\* and 1 reserve – which is usually Non-UK)

\**Please see 1.5 for circumstances in which an exception can be made.*

\*\**While normally no more than two of the five Assessors should be from any one overseas country, where there is good reason to have more than two Assessors from the same country, the Head of School can recommend that an exception is made.*

**Independent Academic Assessor Details Form – Senior Lecturer/Senior Research Fellow**

***To be completed by the applicant***

All cases to be considered under both the School Promotions Committee and Academic Promotions, Advancements and Titles Committee processes.

**Name of applicant:**

**School: Date:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Assessors Contact Details to include email address AND telephone number** | **Statement as to suitability of the Assessor and independence** |
| **1**  ***UK INSTITUTION*** |  |  |
| **2**  ***UK INSTITUTION*** |  |  |
| **3**  ***NON-UK INSTITUTION*** |  |  |
| **4**  ***RESERVE ASSESSOR (USUALLY FROM A NON-UK INSTITUTION) IN THE EVENT THAT ONE OF THE ABOVE CANNOT BE OBTAINED*** |  |  |

**Applicant signature:**

**Head of School signature (to complete at 1st SPC):**

Please return to: [academic.promotions@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:academic.promotions@sussex.ac.uk)

**Independent Academic Assessor Details Form – Reader**

***To be completed by the applicant***

All cases to be considered under both the School Promotions Committee and Academic Promotions, Advancements and Titles Committee processes.

**Name of applicant:**

**School: Date:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Assessors Contact Details to include email address AND telephone number** | **Statement as to suitability of the Assessor and independence** |
| **1**  ***UK INSTITUTION*** |  |  |
| **2**  ***UK INSTITUTION*** |  |  |
| **3**  ***UK INSTITUTION*** |  |  |
| **4**  ***NON-UK INSTITUTION*** |  |  |
| **5**  ***RESERVE ASSESSOR (USUALLY FROM A NON-UK INSTITUTION) IN THE EVENT THAT ONE OF THE ABOVE CANNOT BE OBTAINED*** |  |  |

**Applicant signature:**

**Head of School signature (to complete at 1st SPC):**

Please return to: [academic.promotions@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:academic.promotions@sussex.ac.uk)

**Independent Academic Assessor Details Form – Professor/Research Professor**

***To be completed by the applicant***

All cases to be considered under both the School Promotions Committee and Academic Promotions, Advancements and Titles Committee processes.

**Name of applicant:**

**School: Date:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Assessors Contact Details to include email address AND telephone number** | **Statement as to suitability of the Assessor and independence** |
| **1**  ***UK INSTITUTION*** |  |  |
| **2**  ***UK INSTITUTION*** |  |  |
| **3**  ***NON-UK INSTITUTION*** |  |  |
| **4**  ***NON-UK INSTITUTION*** |  |  |
| **5**  ***RESERVE ASSESSOR (USUALLY FROM A NON-UK INSTITUTION) IN THE EVENT THAT ONE OF THE ABOVE CANNOT BE OBTAINED*** |  |  |

**Applicant signature:**

**Head of School signature (to complete at 1st SPC):**

Please return to: [academic.promotions@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:academic.promotions@sussex.ac.uk)