

EMERITUS/EMERITA PROFESSORSHIPS

The Chairs Committee (CC) is responsible for considering and recommending to the Senate the award of the title of Emeritus¹ Professor to reflect an excellent academic contribution to The Open University. The title also serves to reflect the continued academic role of the individual.

Information is given here on:

- Eligibility for award of the title Emeritus Professor
- Criteria for the award
- The procedures for award

Eligibility

The University confers the Professor Emeritus title to specifically acknowledge the academic contribution made to the University by a former professor of the University. The title is thus a mark of recognition of both the recipient and the institution.

The University may grant the title of Emeritus Professor to a professor who demits office. Normally the individual should have at least five years service with the University as a professor.

It is acknowledged that other circumstances might exist. The Chairs Committee would take these into account when considering a submission. These could be for example:

- Long and exemplary service to the University but where promotion to a chair in the University happens late in an academic's career
- Appointment of a distinguished academic to a chair at The Open University late in their career

If an individual moves to another academic institution, an emeritus professorship at The Open University would not be awarded, although consideration might be given to the award when the staff member retires, if not awarded by the new institution. If an individual moves to another form of employment, the award of an emeritus professorship would be considered on an individual basis.

Criteria for award

Professors at The Open University who meet the following criteria will normally be awarded the title of Emeritus Professor (subject to the procedures set out below):

- Demission from office as a professor at The Open University
- At least five years service as a professor at The Open University
- Demonstration of an excellent academic contribution to the University. (The areas of contribution will be those normally considered for internal promotion to a chair at The Open University)
- Evidence of a continuing academic association with The Open University

Exceptionally professors with less than five years service may be awarded the title.

¹ The term *Emeritus Professor* in these procedures also covers the term Emerita Professor

Conduct

The University expects an emeritus professor to conform to, and act in a manner consistent with normal standards expected of senior academic staff.

Emeritus professors are required to comply with [OU Information Security Policies for OU staff and contracted third parties](#) designed to govern the use of OU information assets.

Entitlements

The University permits emeritus professors access to the University Library subject to registration with the Library.

Emeritus professors are not automatically entitled to office space, secretarial support or other resources; individual cases will be considered by the Executive Dean.

When an emeritus professor is provided with additional support it is expected that an annual report summarising activities undertaken over the period would be provided to the Executive Dean of the host faculty/unit.

Employment

On a case by case basis, Emeritus Professors may be considered for and appointed to part-time or ad-hoc duties provided that the normal appointment processes are followed (e.g. [consultant](#)).

Procedures

1. Cases must be submitted (usually by the Executive Dean of the Faculty) to the Chairs Committee. The Committee meets three times a year and dates are published on the Governance Sharepoint site.
2. Cases would normally be submitted to the Chairs Committee in advance of a professor's demission from office.
3. Executive Deans should normally consult in confidence with senior colleagues to establish that a case has merit, prior to submission.
4. The case presented to the Committee should comprise:
 - a concise curriculum vitae (two pages maximum);
 - a concise statement of support from the faculty/unit endorsed by the Executive Dean (500 words maximum) this statement should also include reference to the intended future plans of the professor on award of Emeritus title.
5. Following approval of the submission by the Chairs Committee the submission would be forwarded to the Senate with a positive recommendation.
6. Award of the title Emeritus Professor would take effect immediately on approval by the Senate.
7. Individuals wishing to make a case for the award of the title independently of their Faculty/Unit would be expected to provide a CV and a statement of no more than 500 words outlining their academic contribution. In these circumstances, the Executive Dean of the Faculty would be asked to provide a statement on the submission. This would be made available to the candidate.
8. The Chairs Committee may recommend to the Senate that the title be withdrawn if the conduct of an emeritus professor brings the University into disrepute.

Notes to support the procedures

1. When cases are considered by the Chairs Committee discussion would only be required where there appeared to be strong indications not to award an emeritus professorship.
2. The award will not be conferred at degree ceremonies.

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