BIMM UNIVERSITY | A university for the creative industries

Professorial Appointments Framework

Last approved: September 2024,
Approved by: Academic Board
Next Review Approved: September 2028

Professorial Appointments Framework

Aims and Principles

BIMM University's procedures for the conferment of the academic titles 'Professor' and 'Associate Professor' are designed to provide a means of recognising the outstanding contribution made to the university's mission by its leading academic staff and the intellectual leadership they provide in research and knowledge exchange, learning and teaching, professional practice and academic leadership.

This framework is explicitly aligned with sector expectations and practice in terms of the promotion of academic and academic management staff and, in particular, with the UK Professional Standards Framework 2023 (UKPSF), which expects academic staff to 'enhance practice through own continuing professional development' and to 'use scholarship, or research, or professional learning, or other evidence-informed approaches as a basis for effective practice.'

This framework recognises that the university is a practice-based, vocationally focused institution. Therefore, this framework is designed to recognise and reward staff working at the forefront of their discipline or practice, which may be evidenced in several ways.

Responsibility for the Professorial Appointments Process resides with the Academic Board, which delegates authority to its subcommittee, the Professorial Appointments Committee (PAC), which will submit its minutes to the Academic Board.

This Framework applies to all BIMM University employees and those employed by recognised partners. It acknowledges academic and/or professional distinction and leadership achieved in a field relevant to and supporting the mission of BIMM University, including responsibilities towards students.

Professorial Titles and Pathways

The Professorial Appointments Committee (PAC) has the authority to confer the titles of Professor and Associate Professor on staff currently working at the university or for a recognised partner institution. Applications for Professor and Associate Professor titles should be made against the criteria for one of the five pathways. Applications for the title of Professor will typically only be considered from staff who have already been awarded the title of Associate Professor (exceptions may be made where the claim is from an individual who has previously held a professorial title). The pathways to a professorial title all recognise the achievement of the highest distinction. They are based on recent accomplishments and on an expectation of a continuing significant contribution in the area for which the title is conferred:

a) Research Pathway

b) Learning & Teaching Pathway

c) Enterprise & Knowledge Transfer Pathway

d) Creative Arts Practitioner Pathway

e) Academic Leadership Pathway

The committee will also define the title to be awarded in recognition of the applicant's discipline and area of expertise, for example:

- Professor of Music, Professor of Popular Music, Professor of Songwriting.
- Professor of Performing Arts, Professor of Acting, Professor of Choreography.
- Professor of Film, Professor of Screenwriting, Professor of Directing.
- Professor of Games, Professor of Games Art, Professor of Animation.
- Professor of Learning & Teaching, Professor of Academic Leadership, Professor of Enterprise.

Eligibility and Term

The titles of Professor and Associate Professor will usually be conferred on employed academic or management staff members and those responsible for the student experience. However, other staff members may be considered for a professorial title provided they satisfy the criteria. The title of Professor and Associate Professor may be conferred on a permanent or fixed-term basis, and the title may normally only be used while the holder is employed by BIMM University.
Employees of BIMM University academic partner institutions are also eligible for Professorial title under the terms stated above.

Other Professorial Titles

The Professorial Appointment Committee may also confer the following titles:

Emeritus Professor is a title given to a staff member who is retiring, who has held a professorial title while in the university's employment, and who is deemed to have served the university with particular distinction. Nominations for the title of Emeritus Professor should be made by a senior staff member responsible for overseeing the nominee's employment within the university. There is no time limit on this title. As an Emeritus Professor, we expect you to engage with faculty and students to share your research from time to time, initially through your inaugural lecture. You would also be asked to support faculty through mentoring for staff intending to submit their claim for a professorial title.

Visiting Professor is a title given to a distinguished person who satisfies the professorial criteria and regularly commits to the university's activities. The title will be awarded for three years and can be renewed. The appointment lapses with the termination of the connection with the university. Nominations for the title of Visiting Professor should be made by a senior staff member responsible for overseeing the nominee's engagement with the university. As a Visiting Professor, we expect you to engage with faculty and students to share your research from time to time, initially through your inaugural lecture. You would also be asked to support faculty through mentoring for staff intending to submit their claim for a professorial title.

Professorial Appointments

The university's Professorial Appointments scheme has five pathways that reflect the core activities and practices of the university. For all pathways there is an expectation that candidates demonstrate both achievement and impact as follows:

Level of Achievement:

- **Professor:** Requires "outstanding and sustained achievement" recognised at a **national and/or international level**.
- **Associate Professor:** Requires "sustained achievement" recognised at a **national level**.

Impact:

- **Professor:** Demonstrates impact at the **university and regional/national level**, with expectations of international recognition in some pathways.
- **Associate Professor:** Demonstrates impact at the **faculty/departmental and university level**.

Leadership:

- **Professor:** Must show capacity and acceptance of responsibility for **leading development** within their discipline and across the university.
- **Associate Professor:** Must show capacity and acceptance of responsibility for **contributing to leadership** within their discipline and across the university.

Professor and Associate Professor Pathways

A) Research Pathway

In conferring the title of Professor or Associate Professor, the committee will have regard to the following principles relating to the award:

Criteria for Professor are:

- Outstanding and sustained achievement in original research, either pure or applied, recognised at national and/or international level.
- Outstanding and sustained contribution to the research profile of their discipline.
- Record of demonstrable impact in terms of reach and significance beyond the university.
- They must commit to the future development of their research and the capacity and acceptance of the responsibility for contributing to the leadership of research development within their discipline and, more widely, within the university.

Criteria for Associate Professor are:

- Sustained achievement in original research, either pure or applied, recognised at a national level.
- Sustained contribution to the research profile of their discipline.
- Record of demonstrable impact in terms of reach and significance beyond the university.
- They must commit to the future development of their research and the capacity and acceptance of the responsibility for contributing to the leadership of research development within their discipline and, more widely, within the university.

The committee will look for evidence appropriate to the discipline to determine whether the criteria are met. This includes evidence such as:

- An original contribution to the field of work and validation of this contribution by nominated referees.
- A sustained record of high-quality peer-reviewed publications and conference papers, where appropriate, validated by the number of citations or by other indices.
- National/international standing of the applicant's work validated by, for example:
    - Membership of research councils and bodies.
    - Invitations to give keynote papers.
    - Editorial roles.
    - Organisation of national and international conferences.
    - Acceptance of work by internationally rated journals which undertake rigorous peer review.
    - External examination of PhD candidates.
    - Membership of international networks and collaborations.

- Contributions to their academic community, public policy, industry, the professions, commerce, the public sector or voluntary organisations.
- Ways in which research has linked to and informed teaching.
- Academic team development and leadership within the Faculty.

B) Learning and Teaching Pathway

In conferring the title of Professor or Associate Professor, the committee will have regard to the following principles relating to the award:

- It should recognise the achievement of distinction in learning and teaching.
- It should reflect national and/or international recognition.
- It should be based on past achievements and impact, and the expectation of continuing appropriate contribution at that level, including the capacity and acceptance of responsibility for leadership of teaching and learning within the university.

Criteria for Professor are:

- Sustained outstanding contributions to advancing knowledge and understanding in learning and teaching at the highest level.
- Sustained outstanding achievement in contributing to student learning.
- Commitment to the future development of learning and teaching and the capacity and acceptance of responsibility for contributing to the leadership of learning and teaching development within their discipline and, more widely, within the university.
- Applications should demonstrate impact at least at the university and regional/national level.

Criteria for Associate Professor are:

- Sustained contribution to advancing knowledge and understanding in learning and teaching at the highest level.
- Sustained achievement in contributing to student learning.
- Commitment to the future development of learning and teaching and the capacity and acceptance of responsibility for contributing to the leadership of learning and teaching development within their discipline and, more widely, within the university.
- Applications should demonstrate impact at least at the faculty/departmental and university level.

In determining whether the criteria are met, the panel will look for evidence such as:

- A sustained practice and reputation as a teacher and scholar.
- A sustained contribution to the learning, teaching and assessment process, for example:
    - Innovation in teaching, learning and assessment approaches.
    - Innovation in curriculum design.
    - External assessments and evaluations of this contribution.
- Impact of approaches to and innovations in learning and teaching at institutional, regional/national and/or international level.
- Pedagogic research and how this has been received and utilised.
- External experience in evaluating learning, teaching, and assessment, e.g.,

QAA/TEF/OfS reviewer, and consistent involvement in external examination.

- Leadership of a major academic function within the university.
- Recognised external leadership roles in learning and teaching, e.g. through membership of national or international bodies.
- Contribution to policy development within or beyond the university.
- Commitment to the future development of teaching and learning.
- Capacity and acceptance of responsibility for contributing to the leadership of teaching and learning development within the university.

C) Enterprise and Knowledge Transfer Pathway

In conferring the title of Professor or Associate Professor, the committee will have regard to the following principles relating to the award:

- It should recognise enterprise and knowledge transfer achievements of the highest distinction.
- It should reflect national and/or international recognition.
- It should be based on past achievements and impact, and the expectation of continuing appropriate contribution at that level, including the capacity and acceptance of responsibility for enterprise leadership and knowledge transfer within the university.

Criteria for Professor are:

- Sustained outstanding contribution to the university through the leadership and delivery of enterprise and knowledge transfer activities.
- Sustained outstanding achievement in developing and maintaining links with external stakeholders, e.g., industry and commerce.
- Commitment to the future development of enterprise and knowledge transfer, and a capacity and acceptance of responsibility for contributing to the leadership of these activities within their discipline and, more widely, within the university.
- Applications should demonstrate impact at least at the university and regional/national level.

Criteria for Associate Professor are:

- Sustained contribution to the university through the leadership and delivery of enterprise and knowledge transfer activities.
- Sustained achievement in developing and sustaining links with external stakeholders, e.g. industry and commerce.
- Commitment to the future development of enterprise and knowledge transfer, and a capacity and acceptance of responsibility for contributing to the leadership of these activities within their discipline and, more widely, within the university.
- Applications should demonstrate impact at least at the faculty/departmental and university level.

In determining whether the criteria are met, the panel will look for evidence such as:

- An established and sustained practice of and reputation for knowledge transfer, enterprise research and activity.
- Innovation in linking research (and scholarly activities) and knowledge transfer through, for example, consultancies, CPD, and enterprise activities.
- Impact of approaches to enterprise and knowledge exchange at institutional, regional/national and/or international level.
- Sustained success in developing knowledge transfer, enterprise networks, and partnerships with internal and external stakeholders.

- Sustained industrial/commercial collaboration(s); validation of collaboration.
- A leadership role within the university, e.g. leading a team in developing and delivering successful enterprise activities within a Faculty or across the university.
- External recognition, e.g., through membership of enterprise bodies and advisory/consulting roles for national/international agencies or bodies.
- Commitment to the future development of enterprise and knowledge transfer activities.
- Capacity and acceptance of responsibility for contributing to the leadership of enterprise and knowledge transfer within the university.

D) Creative Arts Pathway

In conferring the title of Professor or Associate Professor, the committee will have regard to the following principles relating to the award:

- It should recognise creative arts practice of high distinction outside teaching and academic management.
- It should reflect national and/or international recognition and impact as a creative arts practitioner.
- It should be based on sustained past achievement and the expectation of continuing appropriate contribution at that level, including the capacity and acceptance of the responsibility for the external promotion of the university through professional activities.

Criteria for Professor are:

- Outstanding sustained achievement in creative arts practice, for example, performance, filmmaking, choreography, production, script writing or songwriting, recognised at a high national and/or international level.
- Record of demonstrable impact in terms of reach and significance beyond the university.
- They must commit to the future development of their creative arts practice and the capacity and acceptance of the responsibility for contributing to the leadership of creative practice development within their discipline and, more widely, within the university.
- Applications should demonstrate creative arts practice that is recognised internationally.

Criteria for Associate Professor are:

- Sustained achievement in creative arts practice, such as performance, filmmaking, choreography, production, script writing, or songwriting, recognised nationally.
- Record of demonstrable impact in terms of reach and significance beyond the university.
- They must commit to the future development of their creative arts practice and the capacity and acceptance of the responsibility for contributing to the leadership of creative practice development within their discipline and, more widely, within the university.
- Applications should demonstrate creative arts practice that is recognised nationally.

In determining whether the criteria are met, the panel will look for evidence such as:

- Established and sustained creative arts practice and reputation.
- Sustained contribution to the discipline and validation of this contribution by nominated referees.
- Recognition and impact of the applicant's creative practice at the institutional, regional/national and/or international level.
- Sustained record of high-quality original creative outputs, for example, performances at recognised venues, commercial recordings and publications, commissions, and broadcasts.

- National/international standing of the applicant's work validated by, for example:
    - Creative industry awards and metrics.
    - Membership of industry bodies.
    - Invitations to give masterclasses/workshops.
    - Membership of international networks and collaborations.
- Capacity and acceptance of responsibility for contributing to the leadership of creative arts practice within the university.

E) Academic Leadership Pathway

In conferring the title of Professor or Associate Professor, the committee will have regard to the following principles relating to the award:

- It should recognise academic leadership and its impact within the university and contributions to the broader national and/or international education sector.
- It should reflect leadership in at least one of the university's core activities: academic strategy, learning and teaching, academic staff development, curriculum design/enhancement, creative arts practice, research, and knowledge transfer and enterprise.
- It should be based on past achievements and the expectation of continuing appropriate contribution at that level, including the capacity and acceptance of responsibility for academic leadership within the university.

Criteria for Professor are:

- Sustained outstanding contribution to the university's development through academic leadership in at least two university core activities: academic strategy, learning and teaching, academic staff development, curriculum design/enhancement, research, creative arts practice, and knowledge transfer and enterprise.
- Commitment to the future development of these core activities and a capacity to contribute to the leadership of these activities within their discipline and, more widely, within the university.
- Applications should demonstrate impact at least at the university and regional/national level.

Criteria for Associate Professor are:

- Sustained contribution to the university's development through academic leadership in at least two university core activities: academic strategy, learning and teaching, academic staff development, curriculum design/enhancement, research, creative arts practice, and knowledge transfer and enterprise.
- Commitment to the future development of these core activities and a capacity to contribute to the leadership of these activities within their discipline and, more widely, within the university.
- Applications should demonstrate impact at least at the faculty/departmental and university level.

In determining whether the criteria are met, the panel will look for evidence such as:

- Outputs from the leadership of one or more of the university's core activities: academic strategy, teaching and learning, academic staff development, curriculum design/enhancement, research, creative arts practice, and knowledge transfer and enterprise.
- Leadership skills and outputs in designing and implementing substantial organisational change and/or building new institutional capacity within, for example, academic strategy, teaching and learning, academic development and curriculum design, research, creative

arts practice, and knowledge transfer and enterprise.

- External experience as a recognised expert in evaluating learning and teaching, curriculum design, and/or quality assurance processes, for example, as a QAA/TEF reviewer, an external subject specialist on course validation panels, or consistent involvement in external examining.
- Recognition and impact of the applicant's academic leadership at the institutional, regional/national and/or international level.
- Contributing to the learning and assessment process through, for example, leading the development of innovative modules and/or courses, educational innovation and new approaches to assessment.
- Research profile at the national level, for example, by peer-reviewed publications and conference papers, invitations to give keynote papers, peer review/editorial roles, external examination of PhD students, and organisation of internal conferences.
- Commitment to the future academic leadership within or across the university's core activities.

Appendix 1: Applicant Guidance

Applications for the title Professor and Associate Professor will be invited annually, normally in September, by the Servicing Officer of the Professorial Appointments Committee (PAC) on behalf of the Chair. The closing date for applications will normally be the start of January, after the winter break. Applications will be assessed by the Professorial Appointments Committee, a subcommittee of the Academic Board, at a meeting typically held in February. The conferment of titles for successful applicants will be effective from 1st July.

Process and Documentation

Those making an application under the framework should submit the following documents to the committee Servicing Officer:

- A narrative submission that details how the applicant meets the criteria for the award of the title Associate Professor or Professor under a specific designated pathway
- A current Curriculum Vitae using the BIMM University Professorial Framework CV template.
- The names and email addresses of the applicant's two referees should be entirely independent of the university and leading authorities in the field. Referees should not include former PhD supervisors, close collaborators, friends or relatives. Both referees should hold professorial titles, although, for pathway D, referees of high standing and national or international recognition within the creative industries may be used.

Applicants must ensure in advance that the nominated referees are willing and available to act in this capacity, as failure to do so may lead to problems with a reference. It is the responsibility of the applicants to ensure that the proposed referee can comment effectively on their application against the criteria. Applicants are required to share a draft of their application with their referees ahead of submission, as this will provide a chance for feedback and guidance, allow referees to confirm that they feel able to fully support the application, and enable them to refer back to it when they later provide a reference. It is helpful that referees are also informed of the PAC timetable to ensure they are prepared to provide their references within the necessary window.

Applicants should advise referees that, when requested to provide a reference, they should refer to the relevant criteria and provide their opinion on the strength of the application. It is recommended that all applicants consider including international referees when making claims of an international profile.

One-to-one mentoring is available to applicants who may benefit from it. Up to three mentoring sessions can be provided, which usually take the form of:

- An initial consultation: the applicant should be prepared to present a synopsis of their intended narrative submission for discussion.
- Up to one read-through of the draft narrative submission.

- A one-to-one discussion of any elements of the application, including the suitability of referees, and a detailed conversation regarding how the applicant intends to demonstrate they have satisfied the criteria of this framework.

To ensure fairness to all applicants, mentoring sessions will only be available to applicants from the start of the application period, September, to the end of the first working week of December. Any queries or requests for mentoring sessions should be directed to the PAC Servicing Officer at ProfessorialandHonoraryAwards@bimm.co.uk before the deadline.

Once the application deadline has passed, an initial assessment process will occur, wherein the Chief Academic Officer and the Deputy Provost, both *ex officio* members of the PAC, will consider the readiness of each application for submission to the full committee meeting.

Any applications that, for whatever reason, are deemed unlikely to be approved by the PAC will be returned to applicants with feedback on how to improve their submission for the subsequent application cycle. For applicants deemed likely to succeed, the committee Servicing Officer will contact referees to obtain their references, which will be supplied as part of the portfolio for the PAC to consider. Applicants should not submit references as part of their application. If references are not provided in time for the meeting, the applicant will be informed and asked to resubmit for the following cycle.

The PAC will typically reach a decision based on the application submitted and the references received, so the documents provided must be clear, complete, and include enough detail, evidence, and evaluation against the criteria for the committee to make a judgement without requiring additional information.

Successful applicants will be notified of the outcome by the PAC Servicing Officer on behalf of the Chair within four weeks of the committee meeting. The adoption of the awarded title will commence on 1st July. Successful candidates for a professorial title will be expected to complete an inaugural lecture, workshop or performance in connection with their application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive appropriate feedback about their application and advice regarding the potential for resubmission. As the PAC makes decisions based on the criteria outlined above, there is no appeal of the committee's decision, as it is a matter of academic judgment. Usually, unsuccessful applicants will be advised not to submit a further application for at least two years, so they have sufficient time to enhance their profile before re-application.

Style, Length and Referencing

The narrative document should be laid out in headed sections and sub-sections with consecutively numbered paragraphs to assist committee members in their discussions. The document should be written in the first person, and direct and explicit claims should be made against the criteria, providing evidence and examples against each claim made.

Applicants should bear in mind that the committee includes external members who may not know them, the university or their work. For this reason, applicants should be careful

to avoid jargon. Relevant references should be included using the Harvard format, providing full references or hyperlinks as footnotes. All evidence must be from credible, verifiable sources. Other forms of evidence may be included, for example, audio and video, as long as they are supplied in an online format that is easily accessible to committee members.

The narrative section of the claim is strictly limited to 5,000 words. Word counts must be stated, and any claim over 5,000 words will be rejected. CVs may be used to provide additional contextual information by applicants, and information in the narrative should not repeat that provided in the CV.

Demonstrating Impact

The criteria for all pathways include a requirement to demonstrate the impact of your achievements on relevant stakeholders. In simple terms, you need to tell us what you did, why you did it and what changed as a result. It's the 'so what?' question that is crucial here, and you need to support your claims with evidence that verifies those claims. So, for example:

- If you have undertaken research, how has it impacted your discipline and been drawn on by other researchers and/or practitioners?
- If you have published an academic paper, was it peer reviewed, and have others cited it?
- If you have presented your work at conferences, has it been published in proceedings or other means? Who was your audience (and how many), and was the conference national or international?
- If you have published a book, has it been included on reading lists at BIMM University and/or other university's?
- If you have achieved sector recognition (for example, a national teaching fellowship or a university award), you should articulate the impact you made that led to the award and what you have done since to use your recognition to effect change amongst peers and the wider sector.
- If you have supported, mentored and coached others in their professional roles or creative practice, how has that impacted their development and progression?
- If you have been involved in a national employability project, how has that project impacted stakeholders? (employers and university's and their graduates)
- If you have been involved in knowledge exchange, how has that knowledge benefited both the university and industry?
- If you have led a project on teaching enhancement, what impact has it had on students and/or staff, and has your work been published or adopted by others?
- If you are a teacher, course leader or curriculum developer, how has your work impacted your students, the practice of your peers and the wider sector?

- If you are an academic leader, how has that leadership impacted BIMM University, its staff and students and/or the wider sector?

- If you are a creative practitioner, how has your practice impacted your profession and its advancement, and how have your peers recognised that nationally and internationally?

Portfolio Mapping

Applicants may find it helpful to map the criteria for the pathway being applied against the evidence being cited. The example template below is provided for this purpose (Appendix 2), though it is not a requirement. The mapping can also inform an initial decision on which pathway is most suited for an application before committing to writing the much more exhaustive and detailed narrative claim.

Submission

The submission deadline will typically be the end of the first working week of January, with the date published annually when applications are invited. Completed applications should be emailed to ProfessorialandHonoraryAwards@bimm.co.uk by the published deadline. Late applications, or applications made to individual members of the PAC, will not be considered. If your submission is incomplete or missing the required parts, your application will likely be determined as unsuccessful at the initial assessment stage.

Appendix 2: Portfolio Mapping Table (Template)

Professor - (Insert name of pathway)		
Criteria:	How met:	References:
	•	
	(insert additional rows for each criterion)	