

SCHEDULE A: PRINCIPLES FOR APPLYING AND ASSESSING ACHIEVEMENT RELATIVE TO OPPORTUNITY (ARtO)

This Schedule is pursuant to the [Diversity and Inclusion policy](#). This Schedule is effective from 13 April 2022.

These principles should be used by staff, supervisors and relevant panel members when making assessments of academic career progression or achievement. This includes but is not limited to recruitment, academic promotions and performance review processes.

PRINCIPLES

Deakin University seeks to create an environment where we value our diversity, embrace difference and nurture a connected, safe and respectful community. 'Inclusive' is one of our organisational values, and through that we want the people in our community to have a strong sense of belonging, feel respected and be able to thrive in their study and work.

Deakin's academic workforce is diverse, bringing different experiences, perspectives, ways of thinking and personal circumstances. These individual circumstances mean some people may need to pause or balance their career at Deakin through career breaks and/or part-time work arrangements.

The University is committed to fairness in competitive selection processes and aims to ensure academics are not disadvantaged due to personal or professional circumstances that result in a career-break or part-time work, regardless of the basis for that decision.

DEFINITION

Achievement relative to opportunity places emphasis on quality and impact of output and outcomes, as opposed to quantity or rate. It provides a method for making merit-based assessments taking into account the accomplishments of the individual despite reduced opportunities for contribution.

Achievement relative to opportunity should be considered when undertaking the following operations:

1. Recruitment
2. Academic Promotions
3. Performance Reviews

ADDRESSING ACHIEVEMENT RELATIVE TO OPPORTUNITY

As part of the Academic Promotions cycle, applicants are invited to submit a statement outlining any factors that may have impacted their academic output in the period relevant to the application.

Factors might include, but are not limited to;

- breaks in careers due to caring responsibilities, illness, injury or disability or other reasons that have effects that are multifaceted and of longer duration than the actual leave time.
- adjustments to time fraction including but not limited to periods of part-time work to accommodate returning to work from parental leave and an alternate career path before joining academia, such as industry experience.
- other events outside of your control including natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic.

CONSIDERING STATEMENTS ADDRESSING ACHIEVEMENT RELATIVE TO OPPORTUNITY

Statements addressing achievement relative to opportunity guide a committee to consider any factors that may have influenced an applicant's output in the period relevant to the application.

Applicants are encouraged to address achievement relative to opportunity and are reminded that disclosures will only be used for the intended purpose and will form part of the holistic assessment of the academic staff members achievements.

Assessors who use their expertise to focus on the skills of the applicant, their career trajectory prior to their breaks, and the quality and impact and what *has* been achieved despite the impacts will make a more equitable assessment than consideration of quantity alone.

When recruiting, a merit-based decision that considers the candidate's suitability from the perspective of skills, experience, behaviour and achievement, rather than just the number of academic outputs, will support the appointment of an academic who adds demonstrable value to all aspects of the role, the team, the discipline and Deakin.

Impacts to consider relating to achievement relative to opportunity:

- Long breaks in careers typically reduce opportunities for collaboration, student supervision and delay publication and potential grant success beyond the return-to-work date; and may also impact opportunities for leadership in unit and course development, ability to contribute to initiatives beyond the school/centre/institute, etc.
- Adjustments to time fraction can impact research into the future by restricting collegial and collaboration interactions, conference presentations and the development of an international reputation, field work opportunities and time available to undertake research and supervise students and staff.
- The workload associated with additional duties such as committee memberships and leadership roles may be incompatible with caring responsibilities, and work hours may not fit around meeting schedules.
- Unconscious biases are held by everyone. They are a result of lifelong exposure and experience and they affect decision making. For example, if someone unknowingly has a bias that part-time work means less commitment to a job, the decision based on that unconscious bias has the potential to disadvantage someone unfairly. Unconscious bias awareness sessions provide strategies to work around biases, enabling a fairer approach to assessment.

EXAMPLES

1. A staff member who has had various periods of part-time appointments calculates their total number years pro rata in their promotion application and demonstrates how the research output is appropriate in comparison to researchers who have had the same effective years of service.
2. A parent has had three career breaks for parental leave, opportunity for research was delayed for 12 months until increasing their work arrangements to full-time. The selection panel takes into account not only the loss of time, but also momentum loss when considering the track record of the candidate.
3. An applicant for a research-only position highlights a gap in their publication history due to time spent working with a start-up company as part of an innovation grant. The selection committee takes this into account and recognises the value of their experience in industry when comparing with candidates with a greater number of publications.
4. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the timelines of a staff member's research project were impacted because different research methods had to be applied whilst Victoria was in lockdown. The promotions committee takes this into account and recognises the impact of this disruption.
5. A staff member with primary caring responsibilities for their child has not been able to attend major international conferences but has a high citation rate for a few papers in prestigious journals. The promotions committee will take this into consideration as an appropriate compromise between one performance indicator for another.

Please note, each of the above examples covers one potential element of ARtO. Many applications will be more complex with combined impacts. For instance, a primary carer of school children and an elderly parent, may also have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic laboratory closures.