

Professor of Practice Guideline

What is it?

Professors of Practice are a sub-category of Teaching and Research academics, with a learning & teaching focus, using their experience to contribute to the teaching and curriculum excellence of the University.

Professor of Practice appointments aim to or attract eminently qualified business or government leaders that have had major impacts in fields and disciplines important to the University. The introduction of these positions represents an effective and meaningful way for RMIT to involve accomplished professionals who seek a position within RMIT University.

Professors of Practice are also engaged due to their industry experience and networks. They can use their experience to influence their teaching and curriculum. Some practice academics may not hold a PhD which is acceptable providing they have the right level of experience.

This guideline outlines considerations for appointments of Professor of Practice positions.

Who is this for?

This guideline applies to RMIT University and specifically, areas wishing to engage a Professor of Practice.

1. Application

For guidance only, the following applies in considering appointments of Professor of Practice positions.

	Consistent with Professor of Practice appointments	Inconsistent with Professor of Practice appointments
Level	Academic Level E SSEE (a base salary of no less than 15% above of an Academic Level E1). The salary paid to a Professor of Practice will be at a negotiated annual rate aligned with the expectations of the appointment.	Level A – E Academic as per the Enterprise Agreement rates of pay.
Fraction of Appointment	0.2 – 0.4 FTE. The appointment will likely be part-time in recognition of the importance of industry currency but there may be a case for a full-time position. If above a 0.4 FTE load.	Full-time positions. A full-time position may be appropriate for the development / implementation of relevant programs however a case on how the incumbent

		intends to remain connected with industry will need to be made.
Duration of Appointment	Fixed term appointment of up to three years duration. A Practice Academic would normally be considered to develop and implement new programs of which their duration is normally time limited.	Ongoing Professor of Practice appointments would not be normal. Ongoing positions are normally only considered due to the number and duration of prior fixed term appointments.
Reappointment Process	There are no restrictions on reappointments. In the contract, we will need to state that Part B of the Enterprise Agreement is excluded, so the rules there about renewing fixed term contracts don't apply.	If a Professor of Practice is appointment below an Academic Level E SSEE, the Enterprise Agreement precludes a further reappointment past three years. The relates to the recent professional practice required fixed term reason where the engagement cannot extend past three years

2. Appointment process

Appointments will require Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) endorsement. With the approval of the DVC, candidates may be eligible for a direct appointment.

It is recommended that Hiring Managers discuss Professor of Practice candidates with their People Partner to support a proposal to appoint as recommendations must be consistent with the levels expected for academic appointments at the Professor rank. Justification should be made based on work history and achievements and the total combination of contributions made, and expected to be made, to the School/Centre, College and/or to the University.

The appointment process must follow RMIT's Recruitment and Selection Guideline. The following actions would be undertaken as part of the appointment process.

A. Check references

The People Team or the hiring manager will undertake reference checking in line with the requirements of the role. The reference checking may include two or more candidates in order to make a final decision.

B. Organise required checks

The People Team will conduct the following verification checks where appropriate:

- Police checks
- Working with Children checks
- Verification of qualifications and/or certifications
- Australian Working Rights check
- Confirmation of Aboriginality for Special Measures roles (this needs to be requested on application)
- Sanctioned country screening and assisting the hiring manager with the sanctions process when relevant.
- Any other verification of mandatory requirements.

Note: Probation may be subject to the successful completion of these checks.

Note: There may be some instances where Professor of Practice roles are advertised.

3. Selection Criteria

Below is the list of key accountabilities and selection criteria to refer to when making drafting a proposal to appoint.

Key Accountabilities

- Lead and foster excellence in teaching in the discipline within the University and within the community, professional, commercial, or industrial sectors
- Ensure implementation of best practice teaching strategies within discipline and dissemination of innovative practices across the University, including initiating responses to emergent issues and integrating into curriculum development, leading improvement of academic standards, program review and course evaluations within and across disciplines
- Mentoring & providing leadership to the discipline
- Work collaboratively with peers with the College, other colleges, and schools to enhance the quality of relevant programs/courses and student experience

Key Selection Criteria

- Significant professional standing in Industry
- Established Industry and Professional experience demonstrating the capacity to initiate, lead and manage change projects
- Demonstrated high level of interpersonal, communication and negotiating skills including the ability to consult with senior executives, external bodies, produce executive reports, negotiate agreed directions, outcomes and targets within a collaborative environment.
- Ability to combine a collaborative style with decisive, clear-thinking, creative, and practical implementation strategies

4. Employee Expectations

Professional activity, teaching, and contributions will differ from standard academic professorial activities, but Professors of the Practice will still participate in an annual performance review, in the same way as other academic staff.

Performance will be evaluated during this annual review, with actions and recommendations made as appropriate.

During the term of appointment, Professors of the Practice are subject to, and protected by, RMIT policies and procedures while undertaking activities relating to their appointment.

This includes the University's code of conduct which sets out the university's expectations of staff and affiliates with respect to professional and personal behaviour, including academic freedom and ethical conduct.

5. More information

- [Employee Lifecycle Policy](#)
- Contact your People Partner to discuss further
- Contact [People Connect](#) for general advice

Document history

Version	Effective date	Authority	Author
1.0	26 April 2024	Employee Lifecycle Policy	Associate Director, People Partnering - Academic