



## **CLASSIFICATION OF ACADEMIC RANKS AND GENERAL PROMOTION CRITERIA IN ZAMBIA**

### **1. Introduction**

The Higher Education Authority is mandated to coordinate the development of higher education in Zambia and promote quality assurance in the sector. In order to achieve quality education, it is critical for the country to have well qualified and experienced academic staff in higher education institutions (HEIs). World over, countries have developed academic rank classification systems aimed at promoting teaching and research proficiency which are critical to the delivery of quality education.

The classification systems are used as the basis for promoting staff from one level to the other. In this regard, having established academic ranks in higher education is a prerequisite to the development of a robust, fair and objective promotion criteria. In turn, the promotion criteria allow for a clear articulation of standards for successful appointments of academic staff to ranks.

In Zambia, since the liberalization of the higher education sector, the sector has operated without a harmonised academic ranking system and a general promotion criterion that espouses the expectations of what society and other actors expect of Zambian academics in terms of research, teaching and community service. Consequently, most higher education institutions either do not have an academic ranking classification system and promotion criteria or have adopted systems that are not in line with acceptable international best practices.

In order to address this gap in our higher education system, the Authority has developed a national academic ranks classification system and general promotion criteria.

### **2. Aims of the National Academic Ranking System and Promotion Criteria**

The academic ranks classification system is aimed at categorising academic appointments in higher education institutions into ranks and titles in order to promote teaching and research proficiency. The specific objectives are:

- a. To provide a framework for academic career progression in higher education institutions in Zambia.

- b. To provide a common minimum criterion for appointing and promoting staff to academic ranks.
- c. To define general responsibilities and rights of each academic rank in the classification system.
- d. To restore and promote quality standards associated with academic ranks
- e. To support mobility of academic staff among HEIs locally and internationally.

### 3. Academic Ranks and Titles in a University.

The standard academic ranks in Higher Education Institutions in Zambia shall be in line with other Commonwealth and SADC Member States (appendix 1). The senior most rank shall be that of Professor followed by Associate Professor and Senior Lecturer as tabulated in Table 2. The ranks shall also apply to visiting Academic staff.

**Table 2: University Academic Ranks \***

Teaching Ranks	Research Ranks
2.1 Professor	2.1 Research Professor
2.2 Associate Professor	2.2 Associate Research Professor
2.3 Senior Lecturer	2.3 Senior Research Fellow
2.4 Lecturer**	2.4 Research Fellow
2.5 Tutor	

\*Universities may have to follow similar ranks for library staff and medical consultants.

\*\* Universities may have a system of categorising Lecturers and Research Fellows (e.g., Lecturer/Research Fellow Level A, B or C. Where these categories do not exist, universities may use different salary scales to distinguish between those with PhDs and those Master's degree within the same level).

### 4. Attributes and responsibilities of academic staff.

Rank/Title	Attributes	Responsibilities
<b>Professor</b>	<p>An authority in his/her field of specialisation with a distinguished record of research and scholarly publications in reputable outlets</p> <p>Demonstrated ability to attract competitive research grants</p> <p>An eminent and internationally recognised</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide academic guidance and mentorship to other members of staff.</li> <li>• Lead the development of research agendas/projects and innovation</li> <li>• Lead the development and implementation of resource mobilisation strategies in departments and Schools/Faculties.</li> </ul>

	<p>scholar who attracts research students</p> <p>Distinction in training evidenced by successful supervision of Master's, Doctoral students and post-doctoral researchers</p> <p>Outstanding contributor to teaching</p> <p>Distinguished leadership to the university and the community at large</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide leadership in securing research grants in Departments/ Schools/ Faculties</li> <li>• Provide leadership in curriculum development and implementation in Departments and Schools</li> <li>• Foster development of innovative teaching and learning methods</li> <li>• Lead in the development and review of instructional resources.</li> <li>• Promote the image of the University through public/ community engagement, involvement with professional bodies, presentations at national and international fora.</li> <li>• Supervise higher research degrees and postdoctoral research.</li> <li>• Contribute to management and leadership of the University through committee membership and academic policy development</li> </ul>
<p><b>Associate Professor</b></p>	<p>A distinguished scholar in his/her field of specialisation with a good track record of research and scholarly publications in reputable outlets</p> <p>Demonstrated ability to attract research grants</p> <p>A recognised scholar who attracts research students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide academic guidance and mentorship to other members of staff.</li> <li>• Facilitate the development of research agendas/projects and innovation</li> <li>• Provide leadership in securing research grants in Departments/ Schools/ Faculties</li> </ul>

	<p>Demonstrated ability to supervise Master's and Doctoral students</p> <p>Notable ability in teaching and training</p> <p>Demonstrated academic leadership</p> <p>Notable ability to provide public/community service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervise higher research degrees and postdoctoral research.</li> <li>• Provide leadership in curriculum development and implementation in Departments and Schools</li> <li>• Foster development of innovative teaching and learning methods</li> <li>• Facilitate the development and review of instructional resources.</li> <li>• Enhance the image of the University through public service, involvement with professional bodies, presentations at national and international conferences</li> <li>• Contribute to management and leadership of the University through committee membership and academic policy development</li> <li>• Facilitate development and implementation of resource mobilisation strategies in Departments and Schools</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Senior Lecturer</b></p>	<p>An expert in his/her field of specialisation evidenced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a record of publications and award of research grants.</li> <li>• successful supervision of both undergraduate and postgraduate research students</li> <li>• Significant contribution to teaching, university life and public service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide guidance/mentorship to other academic members of staff in developing their capacity in teaching and research</li> <li>• Contribute to the development of research agendas and securing of research grants in departments/faculties</li> <li>• Contribute to curriculum development and implementation in departments and school</li> <li>• Contribute to external bodies including research councils, international organisations, professional bodies and societies</li> <li>• Supervise students' research at both undergraduate and postgraduate level</li> <li>• Contribute to the development of innovative teaching and learning methods</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lecturer</b></p>	<p>A scholar with demonstrated competence in his/her field of specialisation evidenced by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in research projects/ research groups/ research networks</li> <li>• Scholarly publications</li> <li>• Teaching</li> <li>• Participation in the life of the university and public service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To teach and supervise undergraduate students</li> <li>• For lecturers with PhD, to teach and supervise both undergraduate and postgraduate students</li> <li>• Conduct research and publish in the field of specialisation</li> <li>• Participate in curriculum development and implementation.</li> <li>• Participate in the development of teaching and learning materials</li> <li>• Participate in the life of the university through committee</li> </ul>

		<p>membership, course coordination etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in the development of innovative teaching and learning methods</li> </ul>
<b>Visiting Scholar (Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This a scholar from another HEI (locally or internationally) who visits a host HEI and is expected to teach or conduct research at the HEI.</li> <li>• The scholar is expected to have the same attributes as scholars at the host institution within their ranks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibilities may be similar to scholars at the host institution.</li> <li>• Specific responsibilities shall be defined by the host institution.</li> </ul>
<b>*Adjunct Lecturer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experts from industry or professional practice appointed by the University because of their practical experience or unique skills.</li> <li>• Expert expected to add value to the University through their contribution from an industrial-professional perspective</li> <li>• Have full-time employment outside the University or may have retired from industry and therefore engaged by the HEI on part-time basis**</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching undergraduate students in his/her specialist field</li> <li>• Any other responsibilities to be defined by individual HEIs</li> </ul>
<b>*Adjunct Professor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expert from industry or professional practice appointed by the University because of their long and distinguished service/contribution to the field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching postgraduate and undergraduate students in their specialist field</li> <li>• Supervising graduate students in their specialist fields</li> <li>• Any other responsibilities to be defined by individual HEIs</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have unique skills or distinguished specialist knowledge</li> <li>• Top expert expected to add value to the University through their contribution from an industrial-professional perspective</li> <li>• Have full-time employment outside the University or may have retired from industry and therefore engaged by the HEI on part-time basis</li> </ul>	
<b>Tutor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holder of a good first degree (Merit or better) in the relevant field</li> <li>• Employed to teach Diploma level courses or to assist lecturers in conducting seminars, tutorial and practical sessions for Bachelor's degree programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach Diploma level courses in their relevant fields</li> <li>• Assist lecturers in conducting seminars, tutorial and practical sessions for Bachelor's degree programmes</li> <li>• Assist undergraduate students in research projects</li> </ul>

\*For adjunct positions, the prefix 'adjunct' must be used before the academic title.

\*\*Adjunct lecturers or professors working on part-time should be distinguished from ordinary part-time academic staff who are employed to fill up positions in universities due to inadequate staffing in academic units. Ordinary part-time academic staff should be considered as relief staff and shall, in that regard, simply be classified as *part-time lecturers* and will not be eligible for promotion to senior ranks.

### 3. Promotion Criteria

<b>Position</b>	<b>Classification/Promotion Criteria</b>
<b>Professor/Research Professor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An earned Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or <b>equivalent</b> qualifications in the relevant discipline from a registered/accredited university.</li> <li>➤ At least ten (10) years teaching/research experience at the university or research institute.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ At least <b>25 peer-reviewed publications</b> in recognised outlets, in the field of specialisation for promotions to Full Research Professor and <b>20 peer-reviewed publications</b> for teaching focused Full Professor.</li> <li>➤ Demonstrated research impact (e.g. publication citations, patents or other evidence of research results uptake by industry or society).</li> <li>➤ Supervised a minimum of ten (10) postgraduate students to completion including at least <b>four (04) at doctoral level. For supervision of doctoral students, at least two (02) must be as principal supervisor.</b></li> <li>➤ Attracted research or development funds</li> <li>➤ Significant contribution to innovation in research or educational innovations including designing appropriate curriculum.</li> <li>➤ Demonstrated provision of leadership in the discipline area.</li> <li>➤ At least five (5) years administrative experience</li> <li>➤ Contributed significantly to the life of the University or Research Institute.</li> <li>➤ Significant contribution to public service, professional bodies, international associations, networks etc.</li> <li>➤ Significant contributions to consultancy services of the university.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Associate Professor/ Associate Research Professor</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An earned Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or <b>equivalent</b> qualifications in the relevant discipline from a registered/accredited university.</li> <li>➤ At least eight (8) years teaching/research experience at the university or research institute.</li> <li>➤ At least <b>20 peer-reviewed publications</b> in recognised outlets, in the field of specialisation for promotions to Research Associate Professor and <b>15 peer-reviewed publications</b> for teaching focused Associate Professor.</li> <li>➤ Demonstrated research impact (e.g. publication citations, patents or other evidence of research results uptake by industry or society).</li> <li>➤ Supervised a minimum of eight (8) postgraduate students to completion including at least <b>two (02) at doctoral level. For supervision of doctoral students, at least one (01) must be as principal supervisor.</b></li> <li>➤ Attracted Research or development funds.</li> <li>➤ Significant contribution to innovation in research or educational innovations including designing appropriate curriculum.</li> <li>➤ Demonstrated provision of leadership in the discipline area</li> <li>➤ At least three (3) years administrative experience.</li> <li>➤ Evidence of contribution to public service.</li> </ul>



<b>Senior Lecturer/ Senior Research Fellow</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An earned Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or <b>equivalent</b> qualifications in the relevant discipline from a registered/accredited university.</li> <li>➤ At least five (5) years teaching/research experience at the university or research institute.</li> <li>➤ At least <b>15 peer-reviewed publications</b> in recognised outlets in the field of specialisation for promotion to Reader/Senior Research Fellow and <b>10</b> to Senior Lecturer.</li> <li>➤ Demonstrated research impact (e.g. publication citations, patents or other evidence of research results uptake by industry or society).</li> <li>➤ Supervised a minimum of four (4) postgraduate students to completion as a principal supervisor.</li> <li>➤ Evidence of contribution to public service.</li> </ul>
<b>Lecturer/ Research Fellow (this position may have several levels such as Lecturer level A, B and C)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A scholar with an academic Master's (at least 18 months duration) or PhD qualification in the appropriate discipline from a registered/accredited university.</li> <li>➤ Evidence of engagement in research and publication.</li> </ul>
<b>Visiting Academic Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Each HEI shall have own criteria and procedures for appointing visiting staff. However, the HEI shall, as much as possible, ensure that the criteria used is close to the HEA standard.</li> </ul>
<b>Adjunct Lecturer</b>	<p>HEI shall have own criteria and procedure for appointing adjunct staff. However, adjunct lecturers shall have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An academic or professional Master's degree.</li> <li>➤ At least five years industrial/professional experience outside University in his/her specialist field.</li> </ul>
<b>Adjunct Professor</b>	<p>Each HEI shall have own criteria and procedure for appointing adjunct staff. However, in general, adjunct lecturers shall have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An earned PhD or equivalent in their field of specialisation.</li> <li>➤ Attained top level positions/achievements in their field (e.g., Judge, Senior Counsel, Senior Business Executive, Senior Engineer, Senior Civil Servant).</li> <li>➤ Distinguished record of service or contribution to his/her field of specialisation.</li> <li>➤ At least 15 years of experience in the field of specialisation.</li> </ul>

**Notes:**

- a. Universities shall use this as the minimum criteria for appointments and promotions and may prescribe additional requirements for staff promotion.
- b. Universities shall be required to establish promotion committees/boards to facilitate academic appointments.

- c. Appointments to the rank of Associate Professor and Professor shall, in addition to evaluation by the University promotion committee(s), be subjected to external review of the candidate's academic record i.e., the University shall appoint external assessors at the rank of Professor who shall assess the candidate's academic record and submit an evaluation record to the University.
- d. For the purpose of this criteria, PhD equivalent qualifications means any qualifications at the level of ZQF10 on the Zambia Qualifications Framework. These shall be well defined in the appointment and promotions policy of each University.
- e. Peer-reviewed journal publications shall exclude predatory journals. Each University shall be required to have a directory of journals in which their staff can publish. The directory can be at departmental and school level.
- f. For purposes of this promotion criteria, administrative experience will include such responsibilities as Dean of School, Director, Head of Department/ unit, Research Coordinator, Postgraduate Coordinator, Learning Programme Coordinator and university committee leadership etc.
- g. HEA shall maintain a directory of *senior academics* (Senior Lecturer/ Senior Research Fellow, Associate Professor and Professor) from all HEIs.