



2025 Strategy Office – Academic Excellence

Education Focussed Academics Information Pack

The introduction of Education Focussed academic roles represents a significant step towards achieving UNSW's 2025 strategic priority of educational excellence.

The objective of this paper is to provide an overview of the Education Focussed career model and to introduce an expression of interest process that will be used to convert existing academics to Education Focussed roles.

Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	The Benefits of Education Focussed Roles	4
3.	The Educational Focussed Career Model	5
3.1	The Education Focussed Career Pathway	6
3.2	Performance Expectations and Evidence Guide	7
3.3	Education Focussed Academics and Research	8
3.3.1	Research Expectations	8
3.3.2	Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Supervision	9
3.4	Academic Workloads	9
3.4.1	General Workload Expectations	9
3.4.2	Access to Special Studies Program	9
3.5	Aligned Promotions Policy	10
4.	Expression of Interest (EOI) Process	10
4.1	Eligibility	10
4.2	Application Process	11
4.2.1	Timeframes for Applications	11
4.2.2	The Application Form	11
4.2.3	Review and Decision Making	12
5.	Socialisation and Support	12
5.1	During the EOI Process	12
5.1.1	Socialisation	12
5.1.2	Support	12
5.2	Beyond the EOI Process	13
5.2.1	Support Networks	13
5.2.2	Learning and development	13

1. Introduction

Universities are at the heart of the sophisticated global knowledge system shaping our future. UNSW has a key role to play in driving discoveries, inventions and innovations to transform and improve lives worldwide. The university prepares graduates to navigate, understand and embrace the new opportunities and challenges that this rapid change is generating.

The 2025 Strategy outlines UNSW's aspiration to be Australia's global university. The university aims to improve and transform lives through excellence in research, outstanding education and a commitment to advancing a just society. UNSW has developed the following three strategic priorities:

Academic Excellence in Research and Education	Passion for Social Engagement	Commitment to Achieving Global Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UNSW will be both 'research intensive' and 'teaching intensive'• UNSW will value discovery and application of outstanding research, while emphasising the equal importance of education in guiding the students' lives and careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advancing knowledge, equality, diversity, debate, and economic progress• Social justice for students, staff and community• Discussion, debate and policy on grand challenges facing humanity• Economic prosperity through our innovation agenda and partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International education and sharing capability in research and education in the highest quality partnership• Working with disadvantaged and marginalised communities worldwide

As part of this strategy, UNSW is proud to declare itself 'Research Intensive and Teaching Intensive'. The mutually beneficial partnership between research and teaching is at the heart of the university's strategy.

The introduction of the Education Focussed career model is a key way that the university will achieve excellence in education. The new model provides an exciting career pathway for talented academics who excel at teaching. It allows the university to attract, reward, and retain academics who can make a vital contribution to the delivery of outstanding outcomes for its students and the broader society.

Many Go8 and international institutions have successfully introduced teaching focussed roles. UNSW is now introducing its own Education Focussed model with the full commitment of its leadership team.

2. The Benefits of Education Focussed Roles

The introduction of Education Focussed roles will enable UNSW to deliver a distinctive educational experience to its students. This will benefit the entire academic population by better fostering a culture of educational excellence.

The introduction of an Education Focussed career model enables us to achieve this change in three ways:



A. Recognition of teaching achievements and ability to develop and attract talent:

- The Education Focussed model recognises, rewards and develops teaching talent from level A through to level E.
- All academics have the opportunity to build on their existing teaching strengths by receiving targeted development.
- Experts in higher education pedagogy will be attracted to UNSW to further enhance our capabilities.

B. Increased focus on enhancing educational leadership, pedagogical research and teaching experimentation

- The Education Focussed model provides flexible career paths that will enable academics to pursue a wide range of educational leadership, pedagogical research and teaching experimentation opportunities.
- It allows for these initiatives to be the basis for academic performance and promotion discussions.

C. Greater sharing of best practice in teaching across the university

- The Education Focussed model aims to foster a university culture of excellence by:
 - sharing teaching innovations across the breadth of the university's course offerings
 - making higher education expertise available to all academics who teach
 - building communities of practice to enhance teaching capability

3. The Educational Focussed Career Model

The Education Focussed career model has been developed holistically, is based on domestic and international market analysis, and has been informed by widespread engagement across the university.

To ensure that the model best reflects UNSW's 2025 Strategy, the following principles have been used as the foundations of the model:

Contributions to both scholarship and the education environment will be recognised

- Education Focussed academics will be recognised as experts in education and for more than just the amount of teaching they do.
- Education Focussed academics will be recognised for contributions to educational practice, the teaching and learning environment, and to pedagogical research.
- Education Focussed academics will be expected to maintain their discipline-specific knowledge but may do so through means other than research.

Education and research will have equal status

- Education Focussed academics will have equal status with Research Focussed and Teaching & Research academics.
- The equal status will be reflected in the career levels available for Education Focussed academics and in how they are rewarded and recognised.

The model will be supported by a rigorous and clearly defined career and progression framework

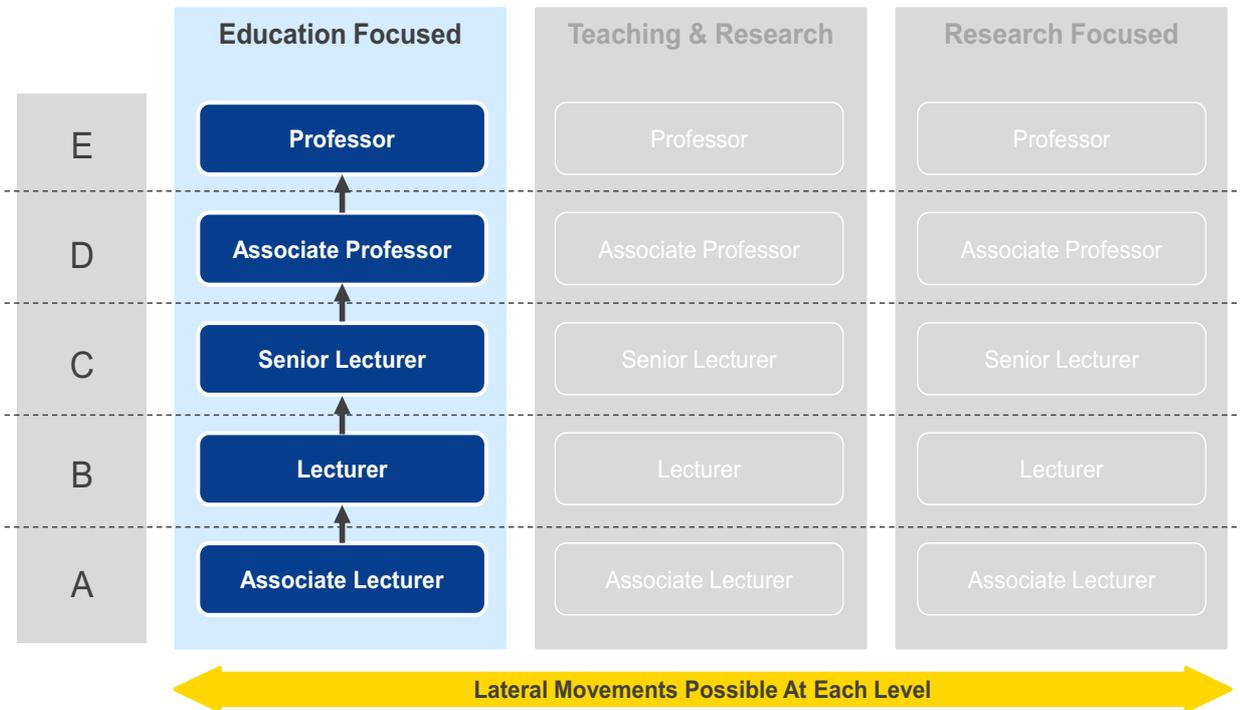
- The Education Focussed model must be supported by an adaptable expectations framework that encourages innovation in pedagogy or delivery.
- The expectations framework must be supported by objective measures of achievement.
- The model as a whole must be supported by a clear promotions policy that recognises excellence in education and allows for equal access to progression.

The above principles were used to develop the design of the Education Focussed career model. The next section will provide you with an overview of the following components of the model:

- The Education Focussed Career Pathway
- Performance Expectations and Evidence Guide
- Workload Model
- Promotions Policy

3.1 The Education Focused Career Pathway

The Education Focused career model is centred on a formalised, clearly defined and rigorous career pathway that extends through all levels, from A to E. The academic titles in the Education Focused model are the same as those of Teaching & Research, and Research Focused academics.



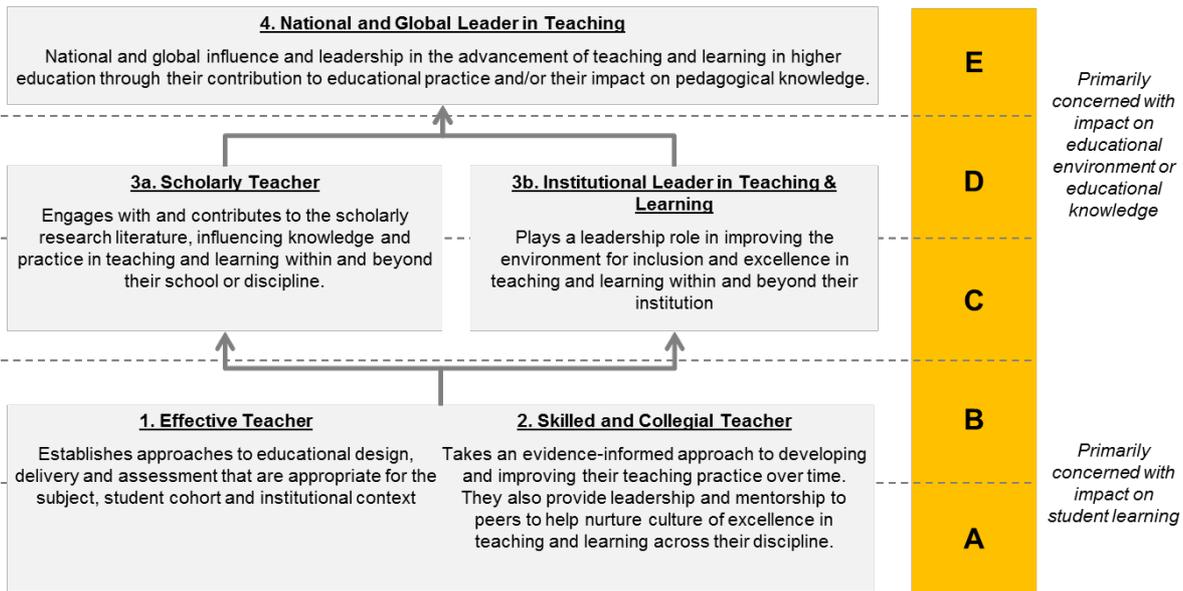
The Education Focused career pathway allows for lateral movement at each level into a Teaching & Research or Research Focused career pathway. The potential for this movement will be assessed in consultation with your Head of School and Dean based on your performance strengths and preferences.

It is important to note that lateral movement is likely to become more difficult as academic seniority increases because of the expectations associated with more senior academic levels.

The Education Focused Career Model has four levels for teaching achievement from level A through to E:

Teaching Achievement

UNSW Level Mapping



*Adapted from the Royal Academy of Engineering

Levels 1 and 2 relate to an academic's impact on student learning. Levels 3a and 3b relate to an academic's opportunity to focus either on educational knowledge or the educational environment. Level 4 relates to an academic achieving national and global leadership for their contributions to educational knowledge or the educational environment.

Across levels 3 and 4, the model places balanced recognition on pedagogical scholarship and investments in the development of the educational environment. This provides academics with the flexibility to use their skills and passions across a variety of initiatives that will drive educational excellence across the university.

3.2 Performance Expectations and Evidence Guide

The Education Focussed Academic Expectations Framework has been developed based on the career model outlined in section 3.1. This framework aims centre Education Focussed academic roles on the capabilities that will be required to foster excellence across UNSW. The framework provides a consistent and clear set of expectations by level to enable Education Focussed academics to set and work towards achieving development goals.

The Education Focussed career model provides for three main expectation areas:

Expectation Area	Competency Theme	Description
Student Learning <i>Demonstrate high quality student teaching, recognised by peers and students alike</i>	Delivery	Effective delivery, assessment and management of courses and materials, and display of teaching skills that support learning and engagement
	Design and Development	Design and development of syllabus and curriculum material
	Attitude	Professional attitude that develops over time, and contributions to educational culture
	Professional Development	Participation in professional development activities
Educational Knowledge <i>Demonstrated contribution to and application of pedagogical knowledge</i>	Knowledge	Knowledge of pedagogical approaches
	Research	Contributions to advancement of pedagogical knowledge
Educational Environment <i>Improves the environment for inclusion and excellence in teaching and learning</i>	Pedagogical Innovation	Role in driving educational innovation
	Leadership	Ability to lead processes of change, review, innovation and development

The expectations for level A and B academics are primarily in relation to ‘Student Learning’. The expectations for level C, D, and E academics extend to include ‘Educational Knowledge’ and the ‘Educational Environment’.

Additional information in relation to the Education Focussed academic performance expectations and supporting evidence guide can be found on the Education Focussed Careers [website](#).

3.3 Education Focussed Academics and Research

3.3.1 Research Expectations

Education Focussed academics may engage in pedagogical research with the approval of their Head of School and Dean.

All Education Focussed academics are expected to remain in contact with the latest research findings within their discipline. This may be achieved through a variety of means including:

- Reading the latest publications for their discipline
- Retaining membership with key organisations
- Engaging with the research of colleagues
- Attending relevant conferences

Education Focussed academic may also complete discipline-specific research if:

- The research is approved by their Head of School and Dean
- The required teaching workload is maintained
- Infrastructure and support is available.

3.3.2 Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Supervision

The capabilities and experience of an Education Focussed academic are recognised as being very valuable to the supervision of higher research (HDR) candidates. Education Focussed academics with active research (pedagogical or discipline specific) may act as primary, joint or secondary research supervisors on topics aligned with their research.

Research inactive Education Focussed academics may act as secondary supervisors with the approval of the Dean of the Graduate Research School (GRS).

In both instances, Education Focussed academics will be required to hold a doctoral degree or have equivalent research experience. For more information in relation to eligibility for HDR roles, please refer to the university's *Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy*.

3.4 Academic Workloads

3.4.1 General Workload Expectations

Education Focussed academics will make major contributions to teaching (80% of their time as opposed to approximately 40% for Teaching and Research academics).

Generally, Education Focussed academics will be expected to be available to teach in two of three periods per year under the current semester model, and in three of four periods per year under the UNSW3+ model. Actual workloads should be discussed and agreed between the academic and their Head of School, taking into account current workload models as well as faculty, school and discipline specific nuances.

3.4.2 Access to Special Studies Program

Education Focussed academics will have access to the Special Studies Program (SSP) to further education related activities in alignment with the university's strategy. Potential uses for SSP include, but are not limited to:

- Completing agreed pedagogical research
- Partnering / collaborating with another institution in the design and development of courses / programs
- Developing new courses / programs etc.

Access to SSP will remain at the discretion of the Head of School and Dean based on the faculty's specific review process.

For more information on the Special Studies Program, please refer to the *Special Studies Program (SSP) Policy* and *Special Studies Program (SSP) Procedural Guidelines* (currently under review).

3.5 Aligned Promotions Policy

In order to ensure the performance of Education Focussed academics is recognised and rewarded across the university, the *Academic Promotions – Policy and Procedures* has been updated. These updates have focussed on ensuring that:

1. The promotion of all academics reflects UNSW’s research and educational excellence, social engagement, and global impact strategic priorities.
2. The principle of equal status between Education Focussed, Teaching & Research and Research Focussed paths is upheld.
3. The breadth of activities that an Education Focussed academic may complete to drive educational excellence is appropriately reflected in performance and promotion discussions.

The key changes that have been introduced into the academic promotions policy that are specifically relevant to Education Focussed academics include:

- Academics may be promoted on the basis of an outstanding contribution in any two of the three pillars of academic performance – Education, Research and Social Engagement, Global Impact & Leadership. Education Focussed academics may therefore make a case for promotion without a research profile.
- Pedagogical research accomplishments completed by Education Focussed academics can be included in the research pillar for assessment.
- Accomplishments in relation to educational leadership and enhancements to the teaching and learning environment can be included in the Social Engagement, Global Impact & Leadership pillar for assessment.

A full version of the updated *Academic Promotions – Policy and Procedures* document can be found on [UNSW’s Human Resources website](#).

4. Expression of Interest (EOI) Process

UNSW has taken a big step towards achieving educational excellence by introducing Education Focussed roles across all faculties. The university and its leadership team are committed to ensuring that the Education Focussed model is a success, both in the short and long term.

Supporting the conversion of existing academic talent into Education Focussed roles will be critical to the success of the model. An expression of interest (EOI) process is therefore being rolled-out to facilitate this conversion.

One question you may have is whether Education Focussed roles are permitted under the UNSW Enterprise Agreement. The Fair Work Commission recently confirmed the ability for the university and an existing staff member to agree that the staff member will perform an Education Focussed role for a defined period

This section outlines the eligibility criteria and the application process for the Education Focussed academic EOIs.

4.1 Eligibility

Academics can apply to perform an Education Focussed role for a defined period as part of the expression of interest process. All applications will be subject to a selection process defined by their faculty.

4.2 Application Process

4.2.1 Timeframes for Applications

Interested academics will be required to complete and submit the *Education Focussed Academic Application Form* to officially express their interest.

Each faculty will be responsible for reviewing and making decisions in relation to applications based on faculty specific review processes.

For successful applicants, the timing of conversions to Education Focussed roles will be based on agreement with their Head of School.

Engagement and socialisation activities are planned to take place throughout the EOI process to ensure that all academics have access to the information they need to make this career decision.

4.2.2 The Application Form

Academics wishing to express interest in an Education Focussed role must complete the *Education Focussed Academic Application Form* and submit it along with a copy of their current CV (maximum of 10 pages) to hvice-president@unsw.edu.au

4.2.3 Review and Decision Making

All applications will be reviewed and assessed against the performance expectations associated with Education Focussed academics. Teaching and learning contributions will be assessed through a number of measures including:

- Courses taught
- Student evaluations (CATEI and/or MyExperience)
- Prior and existing contributions towards syllabus and curriculum development
- Evidence of contributions to the educational environment (e.g. teaching and learning innovation and educational leadership)
- Evidence of contributions to the development of educational knowledge (e.g. advances in pedagogical research and approaches)
- Teaching and learning publications
- Teaching and learning funding (grants and external consultancies)

5. Socialisation and Support

5.1 During the EOI Process

5.1.1 Socialisation

Education Focussed roles are being socialised via a number of channels. Detailed information about the model and FAQs are available on the [EF website](#). Information session and EF career workshops are also offered.

Website posts and newsletter articles will also be used to share additional information and informal events will be run to allow academics to engage in discussions in relation to the model.

5.1.2 Support

Heads of Schools

If you require additional information, or would like to discuss your options, please speak with your Head of School in the first instance. They will be a key contact for anyone considering an Education Focussed role, and will provide formal support and guidance.

Education Focussed Champions

You will also have access to a network of Education Focussed Champions throughout the EOI process. This group of senior academics can help you to understand the details of the Education Focussed model and expectations framework. They can also provide you with an in-confidence opportunity to ask questions about the model and discuss how it may relate to your circumstances.

Professional Development Funding

All EF academics can apply for up to \$5000 per year (pro rata). The funding can be used for professional development, including relevant course attendance and conferences, visits to institutions where Education Focussed positions are established, support for applications for fellowship status relevant to Education Focussed roles, support for teaching award applications, etc.

Education Focussed Champion	Position
 Professor Anne Simmons	Academic Excellence Stream Lead
 Associate Professor Cath Ellis	Associate Dean Education, FASS
 Associate Professor Patsie Polly	Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine
 Associate Professor Louise Lutze-Mann	BABS Deputy Head of School / Director of Teaching
 Associate Professor Simon McIntyre	Associate Dean Education, Art & Design

The Champions will be present at the information sessions and other Education Focussed engagement events. You may also contact the Champions by sending an enquiry to EFRoles@unsw.edu.au.

Electronic Submission of Questions and Feedback

A range of questions and answers relating to the Education Focussed model are available online and updated regularly. To access these, please visit the 2025 Strategy website.

For any additional questions, or feedback that you may have in relation to the Education Focussed model, please send them through to EFRoles@unsw.edu.au. We will endeavour to respond to your queries as soon as possible.

5.2 Beyond the EOI Process

Academics moving into Education Focussed roles will continue to receive support from the university to ensure they are equipped to succeed in their new role.

5.2.1 Support Networks

- MyCareer conversations with leaders to support with the setting and achieving of development goals
- Mentoring support
- Education Focussed peer support groups/communities of practice

5.2.2 Learning and development

- Access to formal accreditations relating to teaching and learning
- Access to development opportunities through the Scientia Education Academy
- Access to other informal learning opportunities