

ACE FAQs 2023

This document provides answers to frequently asked questions in relation to the amended delivery of the ACE scheme this year.

A further review of ACE will be completed this year and a revised scheme launched in 2024. The improvements this year aim to address some of the feedback provided, and to improve inclusivity.

Structure

Will Faculties and Directorates receive data indicating which colleagues are eligible to apply?

We are not providing data this year due to the fact that we have simplified eligibility criteria, and widened the number of colleagues who are eligible for an award.

This ensures that the scheme is inclusive, accessible and that we are acknowledging outstanding performance, based on evidence of activity and impact.

For example, staff who are currently being remunerated at the top ACE point can still be recognised if they are offering an outstanding contribution.

Last year there were three different types of ACE and now there are two - does this mean that an award has been removed?

The three awards provided historically offered a one-off payment (equivalent to an increment) and a permanent progression or ACE point.

We have not removed any awards, but instead, simplified how ACE is structured by grouping the permanent ACE and progression increments within one award. This is to make it easier for managers and staff to identify the appropriate award.

Eligibility

As the eligibility criteria for submitting ACE applications has been amended, does this mean that I could apply and potentially receive an ACE award 2 years in a row?

Colleagues if they wish, could choose to submit a further application, after receiving an ACE award the previous year.

However, we would not reward the same achievement or outstanding performance twice. To achieve an award, applicants would need to provide evidence of a significantly different activity and impact. It is more likely in this circumstance that a non recurrent award would be awarded.

If role responsibilities have changed significantly and permanently, line managers should refer to the job evaluation process. This will ensure that staff are being remunerated fairly for the work completed.

How do you calculate whether staff have achieved 1 year of service?

We would calculate 1 year's service from the date you joined Brookes. If you are unsure of your start date, please contact your line manager. We will also confirm the eligibility of applicants after the deadline for ACE applications on 2 May and prior to progressing applications to the panel.

I have not yet served a full year at the top of my grade, am I still eligible to apply?

Yes - we have simplified eligibility criteria, and widened the number of colleagues who are eligible for an award.

Applying for ACE

The ACE criteria in the application form have changed; how do I now approach this?

The ACE criteria and supporting definitions have been reshaped into a more streamlined and accessible format to better support applicants from a variety of professions with discussing achievement.

For example if research is a key part of your role, you could utilise any of the criteria to discuss this area of activity.

The new guidance on the criteria provides further insight and we advise that applicants read this before writing an application.

Do I need to respond to all 6 criteria and how long should my answers be?

We are asking for applicants to respond only to three criteria of their choice, and have added a maximum word limit of 500 words per criteria. We have amended this following feedback on the scheme, including that the previous application form did not support accessibility.

Applications should focus on providing quality evidence and explanation as to impact, rather than volume.

For line managers, we have also provided a maximum word limit of 750 words to ensure an efficient and effective process. PVCs/Directors may also choose to make a comment in support of applications.

Outcomes

The ACE webpage mentions that outcomes will be backdated to April 1 - why has this date been identified and how does this work with incremental progression?

As per previous years, award outcomes will be backdated to 1 April, as the ACE committee normally meets in April to discuss applications.

We have slightly delayed the launch of the scheme this year to make some improvements, but will backdate awards to the same date to ensure that staff still receive the same benefit.

Your anniversary progression increment will still be applied at the appropriate date, and will not be affected by the application of an ACE award.