



Evaluation Letter Requirements for Associate Professor CHECKLIST

Note: Letters must be solicited by the department, not the candidate. Letters should be signed by the letter writer (digital signatures are accepted) and/or appear on official letterhead.

Definition of terms:

- **Internal Reviewer** = An individual who currently holds an active ladder faculty title at HMS or another Harvard school
- **External Reviewer** = An individual who does not hold any Harvard title (ladder or non-ladder); if previously appointed at Harvard, title must have been formally terminated for at least 2 years
- **Impartial Reviewer ('arm's length')** = An individual outside Harvard without a close personal or professional relationship that could compromise objectivity in assessing the candidate's work. Professional examples include:

An evaluator is NOT considered impartial if:

- They or the candidate were a major author on a shared publication
- Were co-middle authors with the candidate on a publication within the past 10 years
- Collaborated with the candidate on grants, projects, or other efforts within 10 years
- Had direct, regular interactions with the candidate on committees, boards, or working groups
- Trained together with the candidate in the same program, department, or lab
- Are current or former colleagues in the same unit
- Had a sustained mentoring relationship with the candidate (as mentor or mentee)

An evaluator may be considered impartial if:

- Had professional interactions with the candidate at conferences or courses without ongoing collaboration or mentorship
- They hosted/invited the candidate for a speaking engagement without other close interactions

Promotion to Associate Professor: (e.g., internal promotion from Assistant Professor)

- At least 6 letters – evaluators must hold an active title of Associate Professor or Professor at an academic institution, and their primary status cannot be Emeritus/Emerita or Adjunct.

At least 2 internal

At least 2 external; at least one of these letters must be impartial (see above for definition of impartial)

The 5th and 6th letters can be internal or external

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First Appointment as Associate Professor: (e.g., appointment from Member of the Faculty)

- At least 6 letters – evaluators must hold an active title of Associate Professor or Professor at an academic institution, and their primary status cannot be Emeritus/Emerita or Adjunct.
- Members of the Search committee that selected the candidate are not eligible to provide letters.

At least 2 external letters from outside prior home institution(s); at least one of these letters must be impartial (see above for definition of impartial)

3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th letters can be internal or external

If candidate has been at HMS/HSDM for at least 2 years, soliciting at least one internal letter from a Harvard faculty member is **strongly encouraged**