

Policy for Probation Review and Contract Renewal of SMP Academic Staff on the Teaching & Research track

This policy outlines the procedures for evaluating academic staff in the School of Mathematics and Physics (SMP), for (i) the six-month probation review, (ii) the first three-year contract renewal, and (iii) the second three-year contract renewal. This policy should be read in conjunction with the relevant sections in the XJTLU Staff Handbook.

i. Six-month probation period

- A. The evaluation is carried out by a review committee, which is normally composed of the Head of Department (HoD) and four faculty members nominated by HoD.
- B. The review committee will evaluate and decide based on probation targets set by the HoD and the reviewee.
- C. Documents required for review: a completed Probation Review Form, extracted from X-HR system provided by HR.

ii. Contract Renewal for the first Three-Year Term

A. Faculty on the Teaching & Research track:

Faculty who are in Teaching & Research track must be “Research Active” (refer to the School Research Active Policy), and must have one significant major research outcome at the international level. Moreover, the faculty must have no “Below Expectation” in his/her PDR records. The conditions above are necessary; but not sufficient.

- HR Notification to initiate a contract renewal review.
 - 1) Remind the HoD and School Dean about those staff whose contract will expire within six months.
 - 2) Remind academic staff to prepare documents for contract renewal review within two weeks after they receive this reminder:
 - a) Updated Curriculum Vitae
 - b) A self-evaluation that highlights research/teaching/service achievements during the review period
 - c) All Module Questionnaire results in the review period
 - d) All Peer Observation Forms in the review period
 - e) A list of six to ten external reviewers (including name, position, affiliation, and email address). These reviewers must be in the reviewee’s primary or secondary research fields, they must be from institutions ranked in the QS

Top 500, and they must have no clear conflict interest with the reviewee, such as being a family member, a former supervisor/student/line manager, or a project collaborator within the past five years. At least half of the reviewers must be based outside mainland China. Three of the reviewers will be selected to call for reviews.

- f) Optionally, the faculty under review may provide a list of up to three researchers that are to be excluded from the review process. If such a list is provided, the committee will not ask these researchers for a review.
- g) The faculty must identify one, two or three representative publications, which will be evaluated by the external reviewers. At least one of these publications must have XJTLU as the first affiliation of the faculty. When a publication has more than eight authors, faculty must be the main contributor with supporting letters from all authors. The faculty must provide the PDFs of these publications. For each of these publications, the faculty must provide a one-sentence statement that clearly describes what his/her contribution to the publication is.
- The report from the contract review committee is an important component of the documentation that is used in the decision-making process. The review committee is typically composed of the HoD (chair) and 4 faculty members which are nominated by the HoD and approved by School Dean.
- HR organizes a meeting with committee and dean to review the contract renewal documents within two weeks after receiving all documents including the external review letters. The reviewers will be provided the representative publications of the faculty, as well as the corresponding statements of contribution to the publications. Review letters should focus on these major research contributions. The review committee will be in charge of selecting the qualified external reviewers. The committee chair generates a final report, which must include reasons for supporting or not. The committee submits this report to the School Dean.
- The School Dean makes the final decision based on the above report, within one week after the committee review.

B. Timeline for Faculty Evaluation and Committee Review:

- Six months before staff's contract expiration date: HR sends an e-mail reminder to the School Dean, the HoD, and the faculty member, to initiate the contract renewal process.
- Within two weeks of receiving the HR Reminder:
 - 1) Faculty member prepares and submits the required documents.
 - 2) HoD establishes the review committee
 - 3) Review committee identifies an additional 10 potential external reviewers, and sends this list to the dean. At least half of the reviewers must be based outside mainland China. The dean selects 6 external reviewers, and sends this list to the committee chair, who forwards the list to HR. Among these, 3 external reviewers are selected from the list provided by the faculty member, and 3 external

reviewers are selected from the list provided by the review committee.

- 4) HR helps sends out review invitations, copies HoD, and collect the comments from external reviewers.
- Within two months of receiving the HR Reminder:
 - 1) HR organizes a meeting with the review committee and the School Dean to review all documents. The review committee submits the final report to the School Dean.
 - 2) Dean will make the final decision based on the final report generated by above review meeting.
- Three months before faculty's contract expiration date:
 - 1) Depending on the final decision, HR initiates the new contract signing, or alternative further steps.

iii. Contract Renewal for the Six-Year Term:

Procedures and requirements are identical to those of the first three-year contract renewal described above, but with one exception. The only difference is for the second contract renewal, additional university-level approval is required after approval by the School Dean.

iv. Miscellaneous

This policy shall take effect from the date of publication, and specific provisions may be adjusted based on the school's actual circumstances.

APPROVAL AND REVISION LOG

Date	Approval	Description
Dec 12, 2024	SSMT	Approved
Dec 19, 2024	SSMT	Clarified which materials need to be provided by the faculty and HR will collect all the materials with confirmation of the HoD.
Jan 8, 2025	SSMT	Added examples for clear conflict of interest.
Feb 18, 2025	SSMT	Clarified again the selection of 6 external reviewers.
Feb 25, 2025	SSMT	Added item f) at the bottom of the list of required documents.
Mar 28, 2025	SSMT	a. Added item g) at the bottom of the list of required documents. b. Added that at least half of the reviewers must be from abroad. c. More consistent terminology for references, referrers, and reviewers.

Sep 18, 2025	SSMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Added 'The conditions above are necessary; but not sufficient.' in ii. A. b. Removed 'by the review committee' in ii. A. e). c. Changed 'The report from the contract review committee is an important component of the documentation that is used in the decision-making process' in ii. A. d. Optimized the selection of external reviewers in ii. B. e. Added requirements on the proportion of external reviewers based outside China f. Language improvements.
Oct 9, 2025	SSMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Added 'At least half of the reviewers must be based outside mainland China.' for the list of staff in ii. A and unified the descriptions for the list of the Committee in ii. B. b. Language improvements (referee->reviewer, etc.).