

Panel Governance Guidelines

Organisation: Northbridge Advisory Partners **Applicable To:** All Promotion Calibration Panels □ current panel cycle **Issued By:** HR Director, People & Culture **Version:** 2.1 **Effective Date:** Current panel governance version

1. Panel Composition

Quorum

- Minimum three voting panel members required for any promotion decision.
- At least one panel member must be from a practice other than the candidate's home practice (cross-practice representation).
- The HR Business Partner attends as a non-voting facilitator.

Conflict of Interest

- Panel members who served as the nominating manager for a candidate must recuse themselves from voting on that candidate's case. They may present the case and answer questions but cannot cast a vote.
- Panel members with a direct reporting relationship to the candidate must declare the conflict before the session begins.

Open item: The prior-cycle guidelines also required recusal for panel members who co-authored the candidate's review pack. This clause was removed in Version 2.0 but has been raised for reinstatement by the Employee Relations Specialist. The HR Director has not yet issued a ruling. Panels should apply their judgement on co-authorship conflicts until the policy is clarified.

2. Evidence Standards

Admissible Evidence

- Performance review pack (all sections: goal attainment, manager narrative, peer feedback, capability gap summary)
- 360-degree feedback summaries (where submitted)
- Client satisfaction survey results attributed to the candidate
- Published deliverables, case studies, or knowledge-sharing session records
- Formal mentoring agreements or team development documentation

Inadmissible Evidence

- Anecdotal testimony not documented in the review pack
- Compensation data (compensation is reviewed in a separate cycle per HR16)
- Tenure or time-in-role as a standalone justification
- Comparisons to candidates from prior promotion cycles

Evidence Completeness

If a required section of the review pack is missing (e.g., peer feedback not collected, 360-degree results not submitted), the panel must note the gap in the Promotion Panel Outcomes document. The panel may still proceed with a decision, but the missing evidence must be explicitly flagged as a limitation on the assessed criteria.

3. Decision Categories

Panels must assign exactly one of the following categories to each candidate:

Category	Definition	Required Action
Promote	Candidate meets the promotion readiness threshold. Evidence is sufficient across the required criteria.	HR Business Partner processes the promotion effective next quarter. Nominating manager communicates the decision.
Defer with Development Plan	Candidate shows strong potential but has documented gaps that should be addressed before promotion is granted.	HR Business Partner and nominating manager agree a 90-day development plan. Candidate is eligible for re-review at the next cycle.

Category	Definition	Required Action
Do Not Promote	Candidate does not meet the promotion threshold at this time. Evidence is insufficient across multiple criteria.	Nominating manager provides feedback. No re-review commitment □ candidate may be re-nominated in a future cycle at the manager's discretion.

4. Calibration Process

Step 1 □ Case Presentation (5 minutes per candidate)

The nominating manager presents the candidate's case, summarising the evidence basis and proposed decision. Panel members may ask clarifying questions.

Step 2 □ Evidence Review (10 minutes per candidate)

Panel members review the Promotion Evidence Matrix and Comparative Case Analysis. The HR Business Partner highlights any flagged gaps or inconsistencies from the Justification Strength Report.

Step 3 □ Panel Discussion (10 minutes per candidate)

Open discussion focused on evidence quality, criteria consistency, and any conflict-of-interest considerations. Panel members should specifically address:

- Whether the evidence meets the threshold for each criterion
- Whether the same standard is being applied as to other candidates in the session
- Whether any gap is addressable within a 90-day development plan

Step 4 □ Vote and Record (5 minutes per candidate)

Each voting panel member states their decision category. Majority rules. In the event of a tie, the Panel Chair casts the deciding vote. The HR Business Partner records the final decision, rationale, and any dissenting views.

Timing note: The 30-minute allocation per candidate (Steps 1□4) is a guideline, not a hard limit. In the prior cycle, panel sessions consistently overran the scheduled time, leading to compressed discussion for candidates reviewed later in the session. The HR Director recommends scheduling no more than four candidates per two-hour session to allow adequate time for each case. However, this guidance has not been formalised as a rule for the current panel cycle.

5. Documentation Requirements

During the Panel

- The HR Business Partner must record the final decision category for each candidate within 24 hours of the panel session.
- Each decision record must include: candidate identifier, final decision, evidence summary (2□3 sentences), acknowledged gaps, panel rationale, and any dissenting views.
- The Promotion Panel Outcomes document must be reviewed and signed by the Panel Chair within 48 hours.

After the Panel

- The Promotion Panel Outcomes document is shared with the HR Director for final approval.
- Nominating managers are notified of decisions within 5 business days.
- Candidates are notified by their nominating manager within 10 business days of HR Director approval.
- All panel materials are retained in the HRIS for 3 years per the Northbridge data retention policy.

6. Confidentiality

- Panel discussions are confidential. Panel members must not disclose individual candidate decisions or discussion content outside the panel.
- Review packs and evidence matrices are shared via the secure HRIS portal only □ do not circulate via email or shared drives.
- GenAI tools may be used to prepare evidence matrices and comparative analyses, but candidate performance data must not be entered into public or unapproved tools. Use approved enterprise GenAI tools only.

Appendix: Changes from Version 2.0

Section	Change	Reason
1 (Conflict of Interest)	Removed co-authorship recusal clause	Simplification □ under review for reinstatement
4 (Timing)	Added recommendation for max 4 candidates per 2-hour session	Response to prior-cycle over-runs
5 (Documentation)	Extended Panel Chair sign-off from 24 hours to 48 hours	Align with cross-timezone panel logistics