

RPT FAQ

- How should external reviewers be selected?
 - External reviewers should be selected in consultation with your unit leader. Faculty members should provide their unit leader with a list of potential reviewers and those that they feel should not be requested to provide a review. External reviewers may not be close collaborators, co-PIs, former students, mentees, or mentors. External reviewers must be at, or above, the sought rank, and an active (i.e., non retired) faculty member employed principally at a peer* higher education institution within the United States.**
 - *Peer institutions are defined by MSU as “research-intensive universities of international scope such as the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA).” Outside of the BTAA, MSU generally considers other [Association of American Universities \(AAU\) institutions](#) to be considered peers. Another helpful resource for identifying potential institutions is [the listing of R1 institutions](#).
 - **there may be some exceptions to this requirement for RPT candidates with assignments, or from units, that are non-traditional among peer institutions. Any exceptions to this requirement should be discussed with college leadership prior to requesting the external reviewer.
 - If there are external reviewers who should not be contacted to write you a letter, you can put them on a list for the chair to exclude.
- What materials go to the external letter writers?
 - The materials that go to external letter writers are a description of the person’s assignment, CV, and their reflective essay. Although not a requirement, unit administrators may also include sample publications.
- What is the first part of my RPT packet I should work on?
 - The best practice is to keep a working file up to date as one goes. In other words, update each section as something relevant occurs. If a new publication is accepted, update your IV B. It is also advisable to draft the reflective essay early, and to receive feedback on it from mentors, unit leaders and peers well before the packet is submitted.
- What is the timeline for promotion to Professor?
 - There is no official timeline for promotion to Professor. MSU provides the following concerning promotion from Associate Professor to Professor: a recommendation for promotion from associate professor to professor in the tenure system should be based on several years of sustained, outstanding achievements in scholarship and education across the mission, consistent with performance levels expected at peer universities. Moreover, it is an expectation that individuals should provide leadership within the department, mentorship to junior faculty and graduate students, teaching of undergraduates, service on committees, and contribute to a flourishing intellectual life for those in the broader discipline, unit, college, and Institution. A reasonably long period in rank before promotion is usually necessary to provide a basis in actual performance to permit endorsement of the individual as an expert of national and international stature and to predict continuous, long-term, high-quality professional achievement and University service.
- What is the timeline for promotion for fixed term faculty?

- There is no set timeline for promotion of fixed term faculty. Applying for promotion is at the discretion of the faculty member. The timelines for promotion of tenure system faculty can serve as approximate timelines.
- How should my contribution to grants be documented?
 - Include both successful and unsuccessful proposals. The transmittal on each grant records the percentage contribution. Your unit financial officer should be able to produce a report showing credited amounts over the review period; candidates can also use the links at the bottom of the form to produce a copy of MSU's information about their proposals. Each entry in section IV E of the Form on Progress and Excellence should include the MSU-assigned proposal ID number. Grants that are not recorded by MSU Contract and Grant Administration (CGA) should not be included in section IV E. Only the proposals since the last personnel action (hire, reappointment, or promotion) should be included in section IV E.
- How will DEI be incorporated into the RPT process going forward?
 - Faculty are strongly encouraged to include discussion of their contributions to DEI in their reflective essay. Instructions for reporting on DEI contributions may be found on the college RPT website.
- Can I still submit a COVID impact statement with my dossier?
 - Yes (as of 2023).
- Can I go up for tenure early?
 - Yes, faculty members may seek a tenure review ahead of their scheduled review. MSU says the following concerning "early promotion/tenure" review: A promotion or tenure action is **not** considered "early" if justified by a record of performance at another university or during a fixed term appointment at MSU that is required by immigration regulations or other relevant reason, provided the performance meets MSU standards. Early promotion/tenure is based on an exceptional record of accomplishments at MSU that is based on department/school/college and University criteria. Early promotion/tenure is reserved for extraordinary cases.
- How are SIRS scores and student comments considered in the RPT process?
 - The unit administrator will often comment on teaching evaluations in their letter accompanying the promotion packet. A summary of SIRS is included in the dossier.
- How are the non-research parts of my appointment evaluated in the RPT process?
 - All aspects of an individual's assignment are considered in the RPT process, with attention to the percentage assignment in each. The non-research aspects are considered based on unit leader perspective, the reflective essay, external reviewer comments, and other evidence presented, for example on the CV.
- How many publications do I need to have to be promoted?
 - There is no set answer to this question. The publication record is considered with respect to percentage research assignment, quality, quantity, disciplinary standards, candidate role in the publication, and whether a candidate's graduate students are co-authors.
- Is it possible to get 'credit' for time spent at another institution or in another position at MSU?
 - Yes, but it is expected that candidates demonstrate ability to perform at MSU through several years of sustained outputs.