

PERSONNEL/CONFIDENTIAL

November 2025

To: Heads of Department
cc: Heads of Administration and Finance

Recognition of Distinction Exercise 2026

In parallel with the annual Recognition of Distinction (RoD) exercise for full professorial title, each of the academic divisions now have approval to consider, alongside the RoD, senior individuals who may be awarded the Professor of Practice (PoP) title.

As before, we do not expect a large volume of applicants but like RoD, this will be an applicant led process where individuals may put themselves forward for consideration by the MSD Distinctions Committee. Members of the Distinctions Committee may also make a recommendation for the POP title to be awarded to someone who has applied for full title but is unable to demonstrate the relevant evidence against all three criteria. Further details are shown below.

Professor of Practice - MSD

A Professor of Practice will have an international standing and reputation in their field that will enhance the division's reputation for excellence in teaching, public engagement and/or research. They will have a significant and influential track record of senior professional experience beyond the higher education sector; a range of published outputs recognised as world-leading in the context of professional practice; a demonstrable commitment to education; and the ability to deliver effective teaching.

Applications are therefore invited from high-calibre practitioners who combine intellectual distinction with practitioner experience, and have international standing and reputation in their field that will enhance the division's reputation for excellence in teaching, public engagement and/or research.

Applicants who show outstanding contribution to two of the RoD criteria but do not meet (or have reasonable prospect of fully meeting) the third criterion may be considered for the title of Professor of Practice.

The following specific points regarding the roles of heads of department are drawn to your attention:



- **Individuals are strongly encouraged to take advice on their potential application from their Head of Department, wherever possible.** The Head may refer them to other senior members of the department for such advice. However, it should be noted that encouragement to apply cannot guarantee a successful outcome.
- **Heads of Department are asked to engage fully in this exercise and will be expected to attend, observe and answer any questions that may arise within the MSD Divisional RoD Committee discussions due to take place on 13 May 2026, when individual applications from departments will be considered. Please make a note of this date in your diary. Heads of Department will also be required to attend any feedback meetings for those whose applications have been unsuccessful. You should consider carefully whether the applications fully meet two of the three criteria below and where in doubt, encourage applicants to defer to a future exercise if appropriate. Your reference for each applicant should also be explicit about the level of support you have given, and whether in your opinion they meet the published criteria for the award of title at Oxford:**

Research

An ongoing research record characterised by a significant influence on the field of study, of a high order of excellence and international standing, and the quality of which in terms of research distinction is at least equal to that expected of those appointed to full professorships at other leading international research universities.

Teaching

An ongoing record of effective teaching for the University and for colleges concomitant with the duties of the University post and the college fellowship (where one is held).

Good citizenship

An ongoing record of involvement in University and/or college administration concomitant with the duties of the University post and the college fellowship (where one is held), and demonstrable competence in such administration.

Please let relevant individuals within your department know about this option and encourage them to apply using the stated RoD procedure. As ever, special attention and support for underrepresented groups is strongly encouraged.

Applications, references and timescales will be exactly the same as for RoD 2026. Any queries should be sent initially to distinctions@medsci.ox.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Screatton'.

Professor Gavin Screatton
Head of the Medical Sciences Division