

Guidelines for Arm's-Length and/or Fresh Status of External Referees/Evaluators for Professor in the Practice

The following qualifications and criteria serve as general guidelines for arm's-length and/or fresh status. Chairs are encouraged to discuss with the relevant [divisional dean](#) the application of these guidelines to specific cases.

Note: In some fields, traditional referee letters may not be a conventional form of professional evaluation. In such cases, published reviews or other forms of journalistic criticism, committee or jury reports with appropriate clearance, formal critiques, or other modes of field-specific critical evaluation are permitted.

Qualifications

- In general, to qualify as **arm's-length**, a referee must not have been the candidate's teacher, mentor, advisor, or collaborator, and must not have a close personal relationship with the candidate.
- In general, to qualify as **fresh**, a referee must not have written a letter for the candidate for a prior appointment or promotion at Yale.

Criteria

In general, persons with the following relationships would not have arm's-length status:

1. Co-collaborator on a professional project or competition submission
2. Co-chair of a conference or festival
3. Co-author or co-editor of an article, script, screenplay, book chapter, or book
4. Co-presenter of a conference paper or poster
5. Advisor/PI or dissertation committee member (in either direction)
6. Instructor, co-instructor, student
7. Chair of a department where the candidate was appointed as junior faculty or promoted (because a mentoring relationship would be assumed)
8. Co-PI or grant research collaborator (being paid from the same grant/working on the same project)
9. Close personal relationship

In general, the following relationships would not on their own disqualify someone from having arm's-length status:

1. Reviewer of published, produced, performed, created or other professional representations of work
2. Co-member of an editorial board or an evaluative committee or jury
3. Co-participant in a conference or festival panel
4. Editor of a book in which the candidate has published a chapter
5. The candidate's teacher in a short seminar/workshop (not for credit)

In the event that a candidate has created professional work with multiple collaborators or co-authored a publication with a large number of co-authors, this large collaboration may be considered arm's length at the discretion of the divisional dean, in consultation with colleagues in the FAS Dean's Office.

For initial appointments/promotions: In rare cases, there will be an acute trade-off between the requirement that referees/evaluators be arm's-length and the need for referees/evaluators who are among the foremost experts in the relevant areas. In these cases, the divisional dean, in consultation with colleagues in the FAS Dean's Office, may adopt a modified interpretation of arm's-length and/or grant that up to 2 letters/evaluations may be non-fresh.