



Inspiring Innovation and Discovery

## **Faculty Recruitment Toolkit**

### **Tenure/Tenure-Track & Permanent/Teaching-Track**

### **Internal Procedures**

The Faculty Recruitment Toolkit has been developed to assist Academic Chairs, Directors, and members of the selection committees in recruiting, interviewing, and selecting the best candidate for tenure/tenure-track and permanent/teaching-track faculty positions. This guide provides the necessary tools to develop a selection process that is bias-free, complies with all provincial and federal legislation about human rights and privacy issues and the federal regulations on hiring foreign academics. It is intended to serve as a best practice guide to effective, fair and equitable recruitment and selection of new faculty members at McMaster University. Chairs are directed to review the [Faculty Recruitment Checklist](#) to assist them as they progress through the recruitment process.

Faculty recruitment typically involves the following steps:

#### **A. Approval to Commence the Recruitment Process**

- Review guidelines on the web
- Establish link to Faculty and Department Academic plan
- Analyze the position requirements
- Complete budget form and obtain approval to recruit

#### **B. Preparing the Advertisement**

- Obtain approval from the Provost's Office

#### **C. Establishing the Selection Committee**

- Advertise the Position

#### **D. Selection Process: General Guidelines**

#### **E. Selection Process: Screening Applicants**

#### **F. Selection Process: The Candidates' Visits and Interviews**

#### **G. Selection Process: Identifying the Successful Candidate**

- Make the Case for Hiring a Foreign Academic, if appropriate
- Provide Feedback to Candidates

## H. Finalizing the Appointment Process and Offer

### I. Foreign Academic Package

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If you would like further assistance with understanding recruitment, equity, and/or immigration policies, information is available by contacting:

Mara Giannotti, Manager  
Faculty Appointments and Records  
Office of the Provost  
905 525-9140, ext. 23065  
([giannot@mcmaster.ca](mailto:giannot@mcmaster.ca))

or Karen Dion (for Health Sciences)  
Faculty Recruitment Officer  
Faculty of Health Sciences  
905 525-9140, ext. 22101  
([dionk@mcmaster.ca](mailto:dionk@mcmaster.ca))

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The information provided in this Toolkit was informed by the following University policies, other pertinent University offices and appropriate legislation:

- [McMaster University Revised Policy and Regulations with Respect to Academic Appointment, Tenure and Promotion \(2007\)](#)
  - [Procedures for New Faculty Appointments \(SPS 1\)](#)
  - [Guidelines on the Recruitment and Selection of Faculty Members \(SPS 2\)](#)
  - [Policy on Advertising Appointments](#)
  - [Policy on Relocation Expenses](#)
  - [Policy on Spousal Hiring](#)
  - [McMaster University Faculty Association \(MUFA\) Information for Academic Candidates](#)
  - [McMaster's Advertising Guidelines and Policies](#)
  - [Ontario Employment Standards Act, 2000](#)
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## **A. Approval to Commence the Recruitment Process**

The goals of the University are founded on the values of integrity, quality, inclusiveness and teamwork in everything we do (*Refining Directions*). As with all academic policies and processes, these values form the foundation of all the corresponding guidelines and procedures that are in place to guide recruitment activities.

Approval to commence the search and hiring process for all tenure/tenure-track, permanent/teaching-track faculty must be obtained in writing from the Provost and President for each position. Chairs must submit a recommendation to the Dean for each new faculty position, including rank expectations, salary expectations, space and other resource information, and expected start date, together with the draft advertisement.

The most important and influential components of the recruitment process are the criteria developed for each stage in the process. Criteria inform the content of the advertisement to set out the requirements and expectations of the position. Criteria are used to develop the core interview questions that each candidate should be asked. Criteria provide the basis to evaluate each of the applicants in a fair and consistent manner. The consistent application of the criteria will provide for a defensible decision in choosing the successful candidate. Criteria should be determined by actual occupational requirements that are job-relevant, objective and measurable. Chairs/Directors, together with the selection committee members, will need to establish objective, measurable criteria, such as education and experience that will help determine a candidate's chances for success in a specific position. Consider criteria such as the ability to work with diverse students and colleagues and experiences with a variety of teaching methods and curricular perspectives. Weigh the criteria in terms of their relative importance to the particular position being recruited.

## **B. Preparing the Advertisement**

All academic positions must be advertised in a manner that ensures that qualified Canadians and permanent residents have an opportunity to learn of the vacancy. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) is not stipulating the form or the medium to be used for this advertising but will require the University to justify that the medium is appropriate for that discipline. Advertising should run for a reasonable period of time, which would usually be one-month in duration.

The advertisement should be prepared in accordance with [McMaster's Advertising Guidelines and Policies](#) that govern how the University appears in all media. The draft advertisement should be forwarded to the Dean as part of the initial request.

Language used to identify qualifications required for the position should refer to the standards of excellence expected for a McMaster University faculty member. The following are some ways to ensure that ads are relevant to the broadest group of potential applicants:

- use inclusive language
- advertise for excellent scholarship in broad disciplines and specify areas that might be of particular interest to diverse faculty
- identify a range of disciplines that may be relevant to an inter-disciplinary or problem-focused area
- ensure that people whose work is at the edge of their fields or who are working in emerging fields can see a fit with their work

- advertise for demonstrated excellence in teaching and research and describe what constitutes a complete application, e.g. CV, three reference letters, sample publications, teaching dossier that includes course outlines, evaluations and a statement of teaching philosophy, research plan, etc.
- use objective, measurable criteria

Advertisements should be in narrative form and must include the following information:

Title/Rank of Position  
 Qualifications required  
 Nature of duties  
 Salary to be commensurate with qualifications and experience  
 Person to whom inquiries should be addressed  
 Effective date of appointment  
 Deadline for receipt of applications  
 All documentation on candidates must be in writing and should include a curriculum vita and at least three letters of recommendation  
 McMaster's diversity and immigration statement:

*All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadians and Permanent Residents will be given priority. McMaster University is strongly committed to employment equity within its community, and to recruiting a diverse faculty and staff. The University encourages applications from all qualified candidates, including women, members of visible minorities, aboriginal persons, members of sexual minorities, and persons with disabilities.*

While a Canadian's-first statement is required by HRSDC, the ability to advertise and recruit simultaneously in both Canada and abroad is available in all disciplines to universities across the country.

In an effort to advertise to the broadest audience possible to attract the most qualified candidates, utilize the Canadian Association of University Teachers and University Affairs and alternate media of interest to the designated employment equity groups. Consider advertising positions through the Chronicle of Higher Education, Academic Careers Online, a global database of career opportunities in academia, Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW) or other specialized professional publications. Within McMaster, faculty positions are advertised on the web on the [Academic Postings](#) page. Faculty positions at McMaster are also required to be advertised with the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 3906. The Provost's Office ensures that the ad is forwarded to CUPE.

Although all vacancies should be advertised, use additional means to encourage qualified applicants, such as contacting colleagues at other universities. Free list serves and professional associations may also provide advertising opportunities. Encourage all members of the Department to make recruitment part of their activities at professional meetings, and contact prominent members of diverse communities in your field and ask them to identify candidates.

### C. Establishing the Selection Committee

The best practice is to establish the selection committee as soon as the position is approved. The Chair/Director must ensure that all members of the selection committee understand their roles in the selection process and their roles as representatives of the University.

There should be an agreement among those making selection recommendations on the relative importance of individual job criteria, how the candidates' qualifications will be assessed in relation to the criteria, and at what point references will be taken up. There should be documentation of the selection criteria to be used and of their relative importance. Procedures and criteria must be established well in advance of the review of applicants' materials.

Ensure that selection committee members understand the importance of maintaining confidentiality and that no one has any conflict of interest with the candidates, such as personal relationships. Materials from the candidates (curriculum vitae, letters of reference, samples of scholarly work) should remain confidential to members of the selection committee only.

All people participating in the selection process are expected to consult the provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code, the requirements of Employment Equity Legislation, and the Employment Equity plans of the Faculty. It is expected that selection committees will include both women and men and should include members of visible minorities. If the department does not have diverse representation for selection committee membership, consider inviting a member from a related department to assist in the selection process. Diverse hires are more likely to occur when search committees also contain diverse representation.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has produced a useful resource in *Hiring? A Human Rights Guide* available on their website at -  
<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/english/publications/hiring-guide.shtml.#employment>.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission provides a helpful guide to appropriate and inappropriate questions in their document – *Guide to Screening & Selection in Employment* – on the web at –

[http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca/publicatons/screening\\_employment-en.asp](http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca/publicatons/screening_employment-en.asp).

The selection committee should seek to inform itself about issues of diversity and excellence by:

- examining the distribution of existing faculty, recent hires of the last number of years and the representation of women and members of visible minorities in the pools of potential applicants
- agreeing on ways that the search process will reflect commitments to inclusion, diversity and excellence

- articulating the purpose of the position (e.g., replacement in an area of scholarship that has become vacant due to the departure of a faculty member or development of a new area of scholarship or teaching)
- informing itself of new scholarship that may increase faculty diversity
- establishing the criteria for developing the short list of candidates

It may be useful to designate different people to take responsibility for specific areas, e.g. developing the outreach plan, identifying developing areas of scholarship, assessing teaching excellence, etc.

Ensure that all selection committee members are available to interview all candidates to ensure that each candidate is given an equal opportunity to demonstrate his/her suitability for the position.

#### **D. Selection Process: General Guidelines**

Keep a factual record of the recruitment and selection process to ensure an objective and transparent process. This record must include the basis for all decisions made. Include copies of advertisements as well as descriptions of special measures to recruit members of designated groups. You may be required to produce evidence that your hiring process was fair. Records must be kept for a period of two years from the time of the interview and should be filed in a secure place.

If a foreign academic is hired, it must be explained why Canadian and permanent resident applicants did not meet the advertised qualifications. Please review *Section I. Foreign Academic Package*, contained in this document, for further information.

#### **E. Selection Process: Screening Applicants**

Review and evaluate each application against the established criteria. Establish a short list of candidates based on those who meet the minimum advertised qualifications. Departments must be able to document and justify the way in which they developed the short list.

It is important to ensure that applicants are not unreasonably excluded who have qualifications or experience acquired in non-traditional ways; rather, look for diversity in background, experience, and research. Ensure that part-time and sessional faculty are not unreasonably excluded from the search process.

If members of designated employment equity groups (women, aboriginal people, visible minorities and persons with disabilities) do not make the short-list, review the applications to ensure that the list does not reflect bias. For example, stereotypical assumptions about the importance of an uninterrupted work record may disadvantage women, persons with disabilities, or recent immigrants. Pose the question: is an uninterrupted work record a valid test of a candidate's ability to meet the requirements of a position?

Keep applicants informed about the progress of the search, either by email or letter. All applicants must receive a written acknowledgement that their application has been received. Courteous and timely communication, including informing candidates when they are definitely eliminated, reflects upon McMaster and your department.

## **F. Selection Process: The Candidates' Visits and Interviews**

Prior to the interview, develop a set of questions for the short-listed candidates and ask all candidates, including internal ones, the same questions. Apply consistent procedures in interviewing all candidates and equal methods for collecting opinions and evaluating the candidates. Provide the candidate with an interview schedule in advance that outlines the basic framework, and informs each candidate of what to expect. All candidates should have equal opportunities to meet and interact with potential colleagues and students. All people charged with making the selection recommendation shall have equivalent information about each candidate. For example, if one candidate is asked to give a lecture on an aspect of his or her research, every candidate should be asked to give a lecture of this kind.

Some departments make arrangements to meet the candidate at the airport. This provides a good opportunity to shape the visit. Candidates also report that being invited to a future colleague's home has a significant impact, however, if one candidate is invited to a future colleague's home, all candidates should be extended an invitation.

Remember that candidates are also making decisions about McMaster University. Be prepared to arrange meetings between candidates and campus resources. Also, provide information on the *McMaster University Faculty Association (MUFA)* which is available on their [website](#). Provide all candidates with information on opportunities available to new faculty, such as professional development allowance, start-up research grants, and relocation expenses. This information is available on McMaster's [Things to Know Before You Arrive](#) web page.

*Contacts:* Candidates should have opportunities to meet with excellent students, and key faculty in related research areas outside the department, if appropriate. Candidates for tenure-track, Assistant and Associate level, or teaching-track, meet with the Provost's delegate, the Special Advisor to the Provost (Academic Affairs). The Provost meets with candidates considered for tenured positions at the level of Professor. In addition, the President meets with potential appointments to the ranks of Professor and tenured Associate Professor.

*Library Resources:* If it is appropriate for your field, you might consider including an appointment with the relevant resource librarian as part of the visit.

*Benefits:* McMaster's benefit plans are very attractive and provide coverage for same sex partners. Our maternity/parental/adoption leave policies should also be noted as beneficial. An appointment can be arranged with McMaster's Human Resources office for a brief or more detailed introduction to the benefit

and pension plans. Human Resources staff can also provide information about health care coverage.

*Special Needs:* Communicate to all candidates in advance that you would be happy to ensure that special dietary or accessibility requirements are met during the visit.

*Recreation and Athletic Facilities:* Most candidates are hosted at the University Club at some point during their visit. They may also be interested in a tour of the athletic facilities.

*Spousal Hiring:* This refers to the resources available to accommodate and assist dual career couples. Please refer to the [Spousal Hiring Policy](#) on our website.

Schedule the candidates' presentations so that all voting committee members can attend. Should committee members miss meetings or presentations, ensure that there are notes or tapes available.

Department Chairs are reminded that, in accordance with FIPPA legislation, a [Notice of Collection \(Appendix A\)](#) about personal information must be signed by the candidates.

The *Ontario Human Rights Code* offers protection from discrimination on the basis of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offences, marital status, same-sex partnership status, family status or disability. Asking questions at any time that relate directly or indirectly to one of the prohibited grounds is generally inappropriate; unless there is a clear and direct link to an essential job requirement (this will be rare).

Be aware that employers may legally discriminate against candidates on the basis of "bona fide occupational requirements" (BFORs), but these occupational requirements must be applied in good faith and relate objectively to candidates' ability to perform essential aspects of a specific position. BFORs must be applied consistently to all candidates.

A question that can provide a vehicle for a discussion of accommodation needs that is within the bounds of the *Human Rights Code* might be: "This position generally involves (identify features like hours, teaching load, location of classes and meetings, luncheon meetings, travel, etc. as appropriate). Would you be comfortable performing these functions?" If this inquiry is thought to be necessary, it is critical that every candidate be asked this question in a similar way. In particular, avoid asking this question of only those applicants who are perceived to need some form of accommodation. Such a question may elicit a discussion of specific accommodation that individuals may need in scheduling, location, travel arrangements, etc. This kind of disclosure must not influence the decision to hire. The selection committee should establish the University's willingness and openness to making reasonable accommodations.

## **G. Selection Process: Identifying the Successful Candidate**

The Department Chair will request a meeting of the selection committee to identify the successful candidate. When the assessment of the candidates' qualifications, based on the previously established criteria, is complete, the position should be offered to the applicant who is best qualified to meet the requirements of the job, the needs of the Department, and the goals of the University.

Consider offering positions to citizens and permanent residents of Canada, if qualified and meet the selection criteria, before offering them to foreign candidates. In the event that you hire a foreign academic, you must explain why Canadian and permanent resident applicants did not meet the advertised qualifications.

It is recommended that Department Chairs or a designated member of the Selection Committee perform a thorough reference check of the successful candidate by telephone. Note that only references provided by the candidate should be contacted unless the candidate has given permission to contact others. Department Chairs are reminded that, in accordance with FIPPA legislation, the candidate must sign an [authorization for McMaster to contact any or all of the referees \(Appendix B\)](#) that have been provided for the purposes of assessing and verifying their qualifications for an employment opportunity.

Whether interviewed or not, all unsuccessful applicants must be notified in writing that they were unsuccessful prior to the public announcement of the hire.

A new search process should be started if an excellent candidate is not found.

## **H. Finalizing the Appointment Process and Offer**

The Department Chair is responsible for preparing the necessary documentation for submission to the Dean. All recommendations for appointment are approved by the Faculty Appointments Committee prior to being discussed with the candidate. The Faculty Appointments Committee consists of the Dean, Provost, Associate Vice-President and Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Chair of the Department.

Incomplete files delay the process and cause unnecessary frustration to all concerned. If there is urgency, e.g., the candidate has a competing offer, advise the Dean so that the materials can be prepared quickly. The final offer letter of appointment to the candidate is prepared by the Office of the Provost (Mara Giannotti) or, for Health Sciences faculty, by the Faculty Recruitment Officer (Karen Dion) for the President's signature.

## **I. Foreign Academic Package**

For the appointment of all foreign academics, specific immigration-related documents must be completed by the Office of the Provost, Mara Giannotti, Manager, Faculty Appointments and Records or, for Health Sciences faculty, by the Faculty Recruitment Officer, Faculty of Health Sciences, Karen Dion. The Office of the Provost or the

Health Sciences Faculty Recruitment Officer will submit an application for a Labour Market Opinion (LMO) which includes the Recruitment Summary form to Human Resources & Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) as soon as the offer to the foreign candidate has been accepted. After receiving the application, HRSDC will issue a 'letter of confirmation' to a maximum of 3 years which will allow the foreign academic to apply for a work permit. The work permit will normally be issued for the duration of the Labour Market Opinion, however, there are other factors, such as passport expiry date and job offer that the immigration officer will take into account when issuing a work permit. The new recruit should begin the process of applying for permanent residency as soon as possible after taking up the position at McMaster University. More information is available on McMaster's [Immigration Procedures](#) web page.

Foreign spouses/partners and dependents of Canadian candidates are subject to immigration regulations, and are not eligible for the government's Spousal Program. There may, however, be alternative means that will enable these non-Canadians to work in Canada. For further information, please contact the Office of the Provost (as listed above) or refer to the Customs & Immigration Canada (CIC) website at <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/sponsor/spouse-apply-who.asp> on sponsoring family members.