

Recruiting (Exempt and OPSEU) Policy

Category: Human Resources

Approval: PVP

Responsibility: Associate Vice-President, Human Resources

Date: October 2006, Last Revised January 2016

Scope of this Policy:

The policy does not apply to filling of an academic rank (i.e., instructor, lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor), academic administrative positions (e.g., department chair or dean), post doctoral fellowships and persons employed and paid from grant funds.

Policy Statement:

The hiring of employees will be based on a fair and equitable recruitment and selection process, consistent with related University policies, procedures, collective agreements, and current employment legislation: such as the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Employment Standards Act and Employment Equity.

Trent provides equal treatment with respect to employment without discrimination because of age, ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, disability, family status, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, record of offences, sex, and sexual orientation.

The University encourages promotion from within its ranks.

Staffing Procedures

When a regular position is newly created or becomes vacant, the Hiring Manager should assess the vacancy as it relates to all of the positions in the department.

The options in dealing with a vacancy include:

- filling the position without any change in the number or level of positions in the department;
- modifying the qualifications or responsibilities of the position, which may result in salary savings or additional funding requirements;
- changing the position to part-time, contract or term appointment rather than full-time continuing;
- eliminating the vacant position and discontinue the responsibilities performed by the position;
- or
- abolishing the vacant position by reorganizing a part or parts of the department and distributing the work among the other staff.

The Human Resources Website will contain up-to-date and detailed information for all of the steps listed in the Policy.

1. Finalize Job Description

A job description must be created for all OPSEU and Exempt positions. New or significantly revised descriptions require re-evaluation by the Job Evaluation Committee.

2. Hiring Request Form

The Hiring Request Form is required when filling any vacancy; it is also the means by which authorization is granted by the Vice-President and Financial Services.

3. Posting Positions

Once the Hiring Request is approved by the appropriate VP and the Finance Department, Human Resources will post the position on designated bulletin boards and locations, including the Human Resources website.

The cost of external advertising is the responsibility of the Hiring Department. The Department of Human Resources must approve all external advertising templates, to ensure it meets the University's branding guidelines, and legislative requirements.

4. Establishing a Selection Committee

Once a position is posted, the Hiring Manager will form a Selection Committee. Generally for regular/recurring positions, interview committees should consist of three Managers/Supervisors. One Manager/Supervisor must be external to the hiring department. For contract positions, a minimum of two Managers/Supervisors are required.

OPSEU members cannot participate as an active member of the interview committee, but may be allowed to sit in on the interview as an observer (with approval by Human Resources).

The Hiring Manager may choose to have more members on the committee (i.e. for higher level positions). There should be a balance of individuals including members from designated employment equity groups (i.e., women, visible minorities, aboriginal peoples, and persons with disabilities).

Staff from Human Resources may participate on selection committees at the invitation of the Hiring Manager, to provide advice and guidance on candidate evaluation, interview questions and relevant legislation.

5. Developing Interview/Testing Questions

The Hiring Manager and/or Selection Committee is responsible for developing the interview questions, employment testing, and assigning scoring weightings. Employment tests are not always required, but their use is encouraged whenever applicable. At the request of the hiring department, Human Resources can arrange for testing on a variety of software packages. A skills test should be limited to job-related skills and abilities and should not be gender or culturally biased. Tests may be conducted before, during or after the interview. The Ontario Human Rights Code prohibits interview questions not related to the applicant's qualifications or ability to perform the essential duties of the position. A list of permitted questions is outlined in the Employment Equity Policy. Human Resources must review and approve the interview questions,

testing questions, and scoring weightings prior to sharing the applications with the Hiring Manager and/or Selection Committee.

6. Screening

Human Resources will receive and record all applications received before the posted deadline. Staff members who wish to be considered for a vacancy must submit a covering letter and résumé to Human Resources within the time limit indicated. For OPSEU positions, applications from external candidates will not be reviewed until internal applicants are considered. External applicants must submit an application form, a covering letter and résumé.

Applicant Categories:

- **Internal Applicants:** Internal applicants are defined as employees currently holding a regular/recurring position within the same employee group (i.e. Exempt or OPSEU).
- **External Applicants:** External applicants are defined as all individuals not holding regular or recurring positions. Contract or Temporary Casual employees and Limited Term Appointments (LTA) working for Trent are considered external candidates. Employees in bargaining unit groups are considered external when applying for a position in a different employee group.
- **Terminated Employees:** Employees who have been dismissed for cause are ineligible for re-employment at Trent in any capacity.
- **Laid Off Staff:** Employees who retain seniority rights under a collective agreement may have priority consideration subject to their qualifications for a position.
- **Retired Employees:** Employees who have retired from the University are ineligible for re-employment at Trent in any position which is or may become eligible for participation in a pension plan.

7. Interviews

The purpose of the interview process is to assess the candidate's qualifications and suitability for the position, as well as providing the candidate with an opportunity to further assess the position and the University environment.

The selection of applicants should be conducted in an objective manner from predetermined criteria as outlined in the position description and/or the job posting. Candidates should be individually assessed against those criteria. When assessing candidates, the Hiring Manager should apply the process consistently for all applicants and ensure that full consideration is given to non-Canadian education and experience, where applicable.

Members of the Selection Committee should attend each interview in its entirety: ask only job related questions; ask the same questions of each candidate and take independent notes.

Human Resources must be advised of the candidates the Selection Committee wishes to interview and date/s of the interviews. At the request of the Selection Committee, Human Resources may assist with setting up the interviews/testing.

When scheduling interviews, candidates must be given:

- as much notice as possible (preferably at least 48 hours' notice);

- clear instructions on the time, location and contact person;
- information relating to testing procedures, presentations, etc.;
- offer accommodation for all applicants, in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

When interviewing external candidates who may be required to travel to the University, the hiring department should consider reimbursement (at its own expense) of reasonable costs associated with travel, accommodation and meals.

It is important that those communicating about the position with the applicant create a favourable impression. This initial impression, as well as that formed during the interview, may have a profound impact on the candidate's subsequent decision whether to accept or decline a job offer. In preparation for the interview, those participating in the selection process should:

- review applications, resumes and other related material submitted for consideration;
- decide who will ask which questions in advance.

The interview format is usually structured, with all applicants being asked the same questions which are prepared before the interview. Prepared questions should be based on job-related criteria with a few additional questions based on individual resumes. Human Resources can provide assistance and expertise in providing appropriate interview questions.

The interview process should be conducted in three stages:

- the opening phase or rapport-building stage;
- the eliciting-of-information phase;
- the closure of the interview.

During the opening phase, taking time to put the candidate at ease will facilitate the interview and encourage a communicative, effective meeting with the applicant.

The Hiring Manager will normally begin the interview by introducing committee members and ensuring that the candidate is comfortable. The Hiring Manager should begin to move the process forward to the next phase by outlining the purpose of the interview and describing the procedure for the interview. He/she should explain that notes will be taken during the interview as notes help in recalling the candidate qualifications. Good notes and thorough documentation are important in situations where the final decision is challenged.

The eliciting-of-information portion is the focal point of the interview. The interviewer should guard against rushing the candidate and should allow the candidate time to prepare an answer. During the interview, in order to gain as much knowledge about the candidate's qualifications as the time will allow, the candidate should be doing most of the talking.

Near the end of the interview, time is allotted for the applicant to ask questions about the position and the organization. In addition to providing information useful to the candidate, the question period will provide the interviewers with an indication of candidate interest in the position.

In the interview closure stage obtain a list of references from the candidate and let the applicant know the approximate time when the decision will be made as well as the process for letting candidates know the outcome of the interview. In closing the interview, it is important to maintain a

courteous and congenial approach with both those the committee has assessed highly for the position as well as those appearing less qualified for the position.

Ensure time has been allotted to assess the candidate immediately following the interview. This is particularly important when doing a number of consecutive interviews.

8. References

The reference check is an important means of verifying the information provided by the candidate and to gain insight into the candidate's suitability for the position.

It is the responsibility of the Hiring Manager to verify credentials and conduct all references, to ensure consistency.

The Hiring Manager should prepare a list of key questions to be asked of all references in line with the position level and job posting requirements. Questions must be approved by the Department of Human Resources in advance. A generic reference form template is available on the Human Resources website.

Prior to any offer of employment, the successful applicant must have a reference check of at least three work related individuals. Two of the references should be from someone who has supervised the candidate directly. The preference would be to contact the present and one previous supervisor/manager. References for external applicants should be confirmed by the candidate. In the case of internal applicants, the Hiring Manager should review the applicant's previous work history at Trent, including information from former and current supervisors. Reference checks should be done by someone who has the ability to fully assess the candidate's past work record in relation to the position being offered. References should normally be checked after completion of the interview process. All questions asked of a referee must be work-related; any information received which is not work-related should be disregarded. In the situation where a letter of reference is provided by the candidate, if the intention is to use the letter as a formal reference, the Hiring Manager must contact the writer of the reference letter directly to "verify" the information presented.

Information obtained from references should be shared with the hiring committee before the final hiring decision is made. All reference information must be documented and included in the recruiting file with the interview documentation and forwarded to Human Resources. No offer of employment can be made without Human Resources reviewing all of the documentation and giving final approval.

9. Hiring Recommendation

The Hiring Manager must tabulate all the scores from the Selection Committee and forward them with the supporting interview and reference documentation to Human Resources to review.

Human Resources must review the committee's documentation and recommendation prior to an offer being made.

10. Offers of Appointment

The offer of appointment forms an agreement regarding the terms and conditions of employment and, as such, is a legally binding document.

Every job offer shall be in writing and will include all key terms of employment.

Prior to making any offer of appointment for non-academic hires, all authorizations are required and the terms/conditions of employment must be verified and confirmed by Human Resources.

After all the selection documentation has been reviewed and approved by Human Resources, the Hiring Manager may make a verbal offer to the candidate. Human Resources will draft an offer letter for review by the Hiring Manager. The Appointment Letter will include the following:

- position title, salary band and salary range
- start date and end date (if applicable)
- full-time or part-time (with hours per week defined)
- normal hours of work
- probationary period or assessment period
- starting salary, including any differentials (e.g., shift differential); any further salary adjustments
- eligibility for benefits and vacations
- required notice of end of employment, including procedures for the early cancellation of term appointments
- other conditions of employment as applicable (goals or specific expectations during the probationary period)
- mandatory training requirements

In order to signify the successful candidate's acceptance of the offer, he/she is requested to sign a copy and return it for inclusion in his/her personnel file.

If the successful candidate is already employed at the University, the Hiring Manager's will facilitate a mutually agreeable date on which the successful candidate will leave his/her present position and report to the new position. The successful candidate should be released from his/her present position as soon as possible but normally within twenty(20) working days of notification of his/her selection. If the successful applicant is not employed at the University, Human Resources will confirm a suitable starting date with the Hiring Manager.

11. Notifying Unsuccessful Candidates

The Hiring Manager may contact the unsuccessful candidates after Human Resources has reviewed the hiring documentation. If requested by the Hiring Manager, Human Resources may also send a formal letter to the unsuccessful candidates. Internal OPSEU applicants, who are not interviewed or successful, may request the reasons for the decision. If the reasons are requested by the applicant, the letter is prepared by the Manager/Supervisor in consultation with Human Resources.

Contact Officer:

Associate Vice-President,
Human Resources

Date for Next Review:

January 2021

Related Policies, Procedures & Guidelines

- a) N/A

Policies Superseded by This Policy:

- a) N/A