

Complete Policy Title

Policy on Recruitment and Selection of Faculty Members

Policy Number (if applicable):

SPS A1

Approved by

Senate /  
Board of Governors

Date of Most Recent Approval

April 8, 2020 / April 16, 2020 (effective July 1, 2020)

For the version of the policy effective  
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Date of Original Approval(s)

Supersedes/Amends Policy dated

December 11, 1996 (SPS 2)

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Responsible Executive

Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Policy Specific Enquiries

[Provost and Vice-President \(Academic\)](#)

General Policy Enquiries

[Policy \(University Secretariat\)](#)

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*If there is a Discrepancy between this electronic policy and the written copy held by the policy owner, the written copy prevails.*

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## I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1. This Policy furthers academic excellence by ensuring equitable, inclusive and meritocratic consideration of prospective applicants for faculty appointments through the preparation, advertising, assessment, and selection phases of search processes.
2. The Policy applies to all classes of faculty appointment, excluding full-time Clinical Faculty and those individual appointments that fall within the purview of [SPS A3 – Procedures for Other Appointment \(except in Health Sciences\)](#) or [SPS A4 – Procedures for Other Appointments within the Faculty of Health Sciences](#). The Policy is intended for use principally by Departments, but some aspects also apply at Faculty and Senate levels. Under certain exceptional circumstances, and where there is a strong hiring rationale, the Provost may approve a hiring process that deviates from this Policy.
3. There are some exclusions to the application of this Policy, including:
  - a) faculty recruitment which would fall under the provisions of [SPS A7 – Spousal Hiring](#);
  - b) faculty appointments converted to a different stream which fall under the provisions of [SPS A2 – Conversion of an Individual Faculty Appointment](#); and
  - c) special strategic recruitment programs (e.g. accelerated diversity and inclusive excellence recruitment programs), which require the approval of the relevant Faculty Dean and Provost and Vice-President (Academic), in consultation with the Associate Vice President Equity and Inclusion, and the Assistant Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer, to ensure the programs are in compliance with University policies and human rights legislation.
4. Department Chairs<sup>1</sup> and Search Committees are expected to consult the companion *Faculty Recruitment and Selection Handbook* (“the Handbook”) for guidance on how to implement the Policy through all four phases of the search process. For ease of reference, the procedural tools and resources in the Handbook are organized under relevant headings and subheadings which are aligned with those used in the Procedures section of this Policy.
5. This Policy and Procedures shall be reviewed in three years in consultation with the McMaster University Faculty Association (MUFA). Any revisions must be endorsed by the MUFA executive and the Senate Committee on Appointments before being presented to the Senate.

## II. ACCOUNTABILITY

6. Department Chairs are accountable to their Deans, and Deans to the Provost & Vice-President Academic (“Provost”) for following this Policy.
7. Department Chairs are responsible for maintaining Search Committee documentation, including ensuring completion of the online *Search Summary Report*, which Deans will need to review before finalizing an offer and appointment.

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<sup>1</sup> “Department Chair” also means “Director” of a School or an Area Chair.

### III. PRINCIPLES

#### Inclusive Excellence

8. McMaster's faculty hiring processes aim to attract a diverse talent pool from which to identify qualified candidates who are suited to position requirements, and to the strategic goals of the relevant Department, Faculty and the University. To achieve this aim, faculty hiring processes will be guided by inclusive excellence principles, which maintain that diversity is integral to quality and which call for expanded ways to assess merit in research, teaching and service.

#### Fairness and Equity

9. The qualifications for positions and criteria for assessing merit will be established in a fair, equitable and transparent manner, which seeks to surface and mitigate explicit or implicit biases. If, among the selection finalists, there are self-identified members of *equity-seeking groups*<sup>2</sup>, departments shall consider the University's employment equity gaps and goals in the active recruitment of women, persons with disabilities, First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, persons who are members of racialized communities [visible minorities], and LGBTQ+ identified persons, thereby advancing inclusive excellence. Aggregate-level data on the representation of *equity-seeking groups* is available from Human Resources Services.

#### Confidentiality

10. Hiring processes involve the disclosure of personal information. All personal information relating to the search for and appointment of faculty is to remain strictly confidential and shared only among the Search Committee membership. Any personal information collected, stored, used or disclosed in a hiring process under this Policy will be managed in accordance with the University's [Statement on Collection of Personal Information and Protection of Privacy](#) (Policy Statement) and any other applicable information management and security policies.

### IV. PROCEDURES

#### Preparation for the Search Process

##### Review Applicable Policies/Consider Workforce Gaps

11. Department Chairs and Selection Committee Chairs should familiarize themselves with this Policy and the [Employment Equity Policy and Recruitment Statement](#), and be guided by the resources and tools outlined in the companion Handbook.
12. Preparation for the search should include reviewing relevant Workforce Analysis Summary<sup>3</sup> reports to identify institutional, Faculty, and, where feasible, Departmental workforce representational gaps in relation to *equity-seeking groups*.

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<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this policy, the term "*equity-seeking groups*" will refer to groups of people who have historically faced, and continue to face, barriers in the labour market. The Employment Equity Act identifies these groups as: women, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples, persons with disabilities and persons who are members of racialized communities in accordance with the Act's definition of "visible minorities". McMaster University also recognizes persons who identify as LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and sexual orientation and gender identity minority identities) in employment equity strategies.

<sup>3</sup> A Workforce Analysis Summary compares self-identification data from members of equity-seeking groups in the University's workforce (collected through McMaster's Diversity Counts: Employment Equity Workforce Census) with external labour market availability of equity-seeking groups (compiled by Statistic Canada).

Drafting the Advertisement

13. Position postings should:
  - d) be accurate and informative;
  - e) use inclusive, welcoming, and unbiased language; and
  - f) include reference to any policies which make McMaster more competitive in the search for members of equity-seeking groups.
14. The Department Chair shall take steps to ensure that the proposed advertisement meets the institution's goal of inclusive excellence, including consulting with the Employment Equity Specialist and/or the Employment Equity Facilitator as needed.
15. Advertisements for faculty positions must include the following:
  - a) the proposed rank and title of the position, and may also include a statement indicating that salary and academic rank will be commensurate with experience;
  - b) the expectations of the role/nature of duties;
  - c) the range of qualifications sought;
  - d) the campuses/locations from which the incumbent will be expected to work;
  - e) specific details on the documentation that applicants must submit as part of the application package;
  - f) an invitation to provide a full *CV and* to describe the impact that career interruptions have had on research productivity, if applicable;
  - g) a request to submit a brief statement describing the contributions they have made or plan to make to inclusive excellence in teaching, research, or service in academic, professional or community contexts;
  - h) unless the Department employs a discipline-specific job applicant site/portal, a request that all documentation be provided through the Mosaic career opportunities application process, and the contact information for a person to whom inquiries should be addressed;
  - i) external postings must include the link to the Mosaic posting, and/or the posting number;
  - j) McMaster's standard statement of commitment to employment equity as outlined in the [McMaster University Employment Equity Policy and Recruitment Statement](#);
  - k) McMaster's standard immigration statement; this statement is required by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and does not preclude the ability to advertise and recruit simultaneously in Canada and abroad;
  - l) McMaster's templated invitation to complete a voluntary online self-identification survey through Mosaic; and
  - m) McMaster's standard accommodation statement as required by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
16. The Department Chair must determine, prior to posting the job advertisement, when letters of recommendation (typically three to five) will be required and reviewed by the Committee.

- a) If letters of recommendation will be requested only for candidates who have been selected either for the long list, for those on the short list, or for the finalists instructions not to submit letters of recommendations with the application should be clearly outlined in the job advertisement. Chairs will reach out to referees at the appropriate point in the process and send a templated communication to each referee.
  - b) If letters of recommendation are requested as part of the job application, the job advertisement will include instructions for candidates to guide referees' focus on qualifications to mitigate unconscious bias.
17. Formal or informal references from external sources will not be solicited without the explicit consent of candidates.
  18. Unsolicited references or recommendation letters provided by or received about a candidate will not be considered or shared.
  19. In the Faculty of Health Sciences, advertisements must be approved by the office of the Dean and Vice-President. In all other Faculties, advertisements must be approved by the Office of the Provost before being posted.

*Obtaining Approval to Recruit and Budget Authorization*

20. Department Chairs must submit a request to the Dean for each faculty position to be recruited, including expectations regarding rank, salary, space, and proposed start date. Departments should also include expected distribution of time (e.g., teaching, research, service and administration, as applicable). Any additional resource implications should also be provided if known. A draft advertisement should accompany this request.
21. Budget authorization by the Provost and President (where applicable) must be obtained before the search commences. Approval of the recruitment is completed through Mosaic. Once all parties agree to the financial details and the content of the advertising, the position will be posted.

*Assembling and Training the Search Committee*

22. Members of the search committee should be thoughtfully chosen for their expertise in the field and experience working constructively on a committee, as well as their capacity to promote inclusive excellence through the hiring process.
23. The Chair of the Search Committee will be identified by the Department Chair and approved by the Dean of the Faculty.
24. The Committee Chair is responsible for implementing a selection or election process that ensures the constitution of a Committee that values and embodies diversity. The Committee Chair shall strive to constitute a Committee which includes representation from *equity-seeking group* members. The Committee membership will be approved by the Department Chair and Dean of the Faculty.
25. The Committee Chair should engage an individual trained to act in an Employment Equity Facilitator capacity, to consult with the Selection Committee to ensure that equity and inclusion best practices are followed throughout the search and that committee members are appropriately kept informed and engaged in these efforts.

26. Committee members are expected to complete the University's recruitment and selection training, as updated from time to time.

#### Establishing Job Criteria and Developing an Evaluation Guide

27. Departments shall carefully consider and determine what qualifications are relevant for the position before the search commences.
28. Job criteria to be evaluated should be specific, measurable, and aligned with the requisite knowledge, skills and demonstrated performance required to teach, undertake research, and/or perform scholarly activities in the advertised field at the university level.
29. Contributions to equity, diversity and inclusion as well as inclusive excellence shall be assessed relevant to the criteria established by the Department.
30. The Search Committee shall discuss the job criteria, and how the candidates' qualifications will be assessed in relation to the criteria in order to avoid unstated, vague or shifting standards and priorities among committee members. The job criteria to be assessed should be documented.
31. All aspects of the evaluation shall be applied equitably to all candidates throughout the process.

### **Advertising and Outreach**

#### Finalizing and Placement of the Advertisement

32. The advertisement placement plan should aim to reach the broadest range of qualified applicants. Utilizing diverse recruitment platforms and networks will achieve a larger pool of applicants from which to make a selection decision.
33. Positions should be advertised through professional societies, industry groups, research organizations and associations of *equity-seeking groups* both in Canada and internationally. Departments should consult with the Provost's Office (or the FHS Faculty Relations office) regarding advertising strategies that comply with current ESDC regulations.
34. As faculty searches are open to international candidates, positions must be posted for a minimum of four weeks through Mosaic and two additional national or international sites or journals, to ensure sufficient time for exposure of the vacancy to Canadians and permanent residents as required by the Ministry of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada to obtain a positive Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) and avoid delays in international recruitment, unless a waiver of advertising has been approved by the Provost or the Dean of Health Sciences.
35. To encourage online applications external postings must reference the Mosaic posting number.

#### Active Targeted Recruitment Strategy

36. If there is access to data, past departmental searches should be reviewed by the Department Chair to determine how many members of *equity-seeking groups* applied as a percentage of the total applicant pool and what work may need to be done to improve the size and diversity of the pool of candidates.

37. Search committee members are encouraged to use their existing national and international networks to encourage broad and targeted advertising and outreach to equity-seeking groups.
38. The Chair of the Department shall establish protocols for off-site recruitment activities (e.g., job placement events, conferences, networking opportunities, etc.), which shall adhere to principles of confidentiality, fairness and equity.

## Assessment of Applicants

### Screening Applicants

39. The Committee will utilize an equitable and efficient screening process to eliminate applications that are not viable (e.g., do not meet credential/level of education requirement, etc.). The Committee may assign viable applications to a subset of its members, who will work independently to screen assigned applications using agreed upon screening criteria, if not the evaluation guide.
40. The Committee Chair will review, with the Employment Equity Facilitator, the aggregate self-ID data of the viable applicant pool to assess the representation of *equity-seeking groups*, as determined by comparisons with Labour Market Availability data collected by Human Resource Services. The Department Chair may discuss the aggregate self-ID data with the Dean as required.
41. If, in the opinion of the Committee Chair and in consultation with the Employment Equity Facilitator, the applicant pool does not include a sufficient proportion of self-identified members of *equity-seeking groups* underrepresented at the Faculty/Department Level **or** the institutional level, the Committee Chair in consultation with the Dean, will examine possible contributing factors and determine whether to:
  - a) extend the timelines of the search process to allow for more broad- reaching and targeted recruitment;
  - b) carry on with the search process and document the rationale for doing so; or
  - c) restart the process, making necessary changes.

### Developing the Longlist (if applicable)

42. On the basis of Committee screening of applicants, the Committee Chair will develop a preliminary long list for committee discussion.
43. The aggregate self-ID data of the longlist indicating the representation of *equity-seeking groups should be reviewed* in contrast with the Labour Market Availability data collected by Human Resources Services.
44. If, in the opinion of the Committee Chair, and in consultation with the Employment Equity Facilitator, the longlist does not include a sufficient proportion of self-identified members of *equity-seeking groups*, the applicant pool will be re-examined to add any strong *equity-seeking group* applications to the longlist for further discussion among the Committee.

### Preparing the Shortlist of Candidates to be Interviewed

45. The Committee will assess the applicants to determine which of them most fully meet the job requirements in order of their importance. This will be based on the job criteria assessment guide established in the planning stage.

46. The Committee will consider all of the criteria relevant to the department's goals and strategic priorities, including the advancement of equity and inclusion priorities.
47. The Committee will adhere to agreed-upon criteria and evidence informed assessments to mitigate evaluation bias.
48. On the basis of search committee member assessment of applicants, a shortlist will be developed for committee discussion.
49. The Committee Chair will review, in consultation with the Employment Equity Facilitator, the aggregate self-ID data of the shortlist to assess the representation of *equity-seeking groups* in contrast with the profile of the longlist pool.
50. If, in the opinion of the Committee Chair, and in consultation with the Employment Equity Facilitator, the shortlist does not include any or have a sufficient proportion of self-identified members of *equity-seeking groups*, the Chair will review the applications of strong candidates from *equity-seeking groups* and consider adding them to the shortlist for interview.
51. If a Department employs a "Committee of the Whole" approach to the search, the Chair of the Department shall establish a process whereby all department faculty members and other invited academic community members who choose to provide feedback on the merits of applications may do so in a manner that adheres to principles of confidentiality, fairness and equity, including informing candidates in advance if their CVs and/or other application materials will be shared with the entire membership of the Department.

#### Interviews and Associated Activities

52. When inviting a candidate to interview, the Committee Chair must clearly communicate who the candidate may contact should they require accommodations to participate in the hiring process.
53. Each short-listed candidate should be provided with advance details of the interview process, including an itinerary.
54. All Committee members and any additional individuals involved in the interviewing process will receive information about those areas where questioning is prohibited by the Ontario Human Rights Code.
55. All short-listed candidates must be asked consistent interview questions, which have been vetted to ensure adherence to the Ontario Human Rights Code.
56. A list of suggested interview questions will be developed by the Committee Chair in consultation with the Employment Equity Facilitator and circulated to the committee for comment, revision, and approval.
57. The Committee may undertake preliminary video-conference or tele-conference interviews.
58. The Committee Chair must strive to ensure that all interview and campus visit processes are accessible.
59. All short-listed candidates should have equal opportunities to meet and interact with potential colleagues through the selection process.

60. All short-listed candidates should have at least one interview opportunity with the Committee.
61. The interview experience should be designed to provide an equivalent opportunity for engagement by each short-listed candidate, and to enable equal methods for collecting opinions and evaluating them. For example:
  - a) if one candidate is asked to give a lecture on an aspect of their research, every candidate should be asked to give a lecture of this kind;
  - b) all candidates shall normally be asked the same questions in the committee interview.
  - c) supplemental or probing questions related to the specific questions asked are encouraged to ensure completeness of responses from candidates; and
  - d) the Committee Chair should strive to ensure that the structure and format of additional candidate meetings with individual committee members, other departmental colleagues or academic community members are relatively consistent with each other.
62. Feedback from the above meetings or lectures will be provided, in confidence, to the search committee for consideration in the committee's deliberations and finalist(s) recommendations to the Faculty Appointments Committee.
63. If appropriate at this stage in the search process, the Committee Chair will notify the finalist(s) that they are being actively considered and that letters of recommendation will be requested from their referees. The finalist(s) will be asked to submit the names of 3-5 referees they consent to be approached; the Committee Chair will send a templated communication to each referee.

### Selection of Finalist(s)

#### The Employment Offer

64. When the assessment of the candidates' qualifications, based on the previously established criteria, is complete, the finalist(s) who are best qualified to meet the requirements of the job, the needs of the Department, and the priorities and goals of the Faculty and University, shall be recommended to the Faculty Appointments Committee.
65. If several candidates are found to be relatively equally qualified, preference will be given to candidate(s) of an *equity-seeking group*, considering the greatest gaps in representation of *equity-seeking groups* within the Department, Faculty and institution, thereby enhancing the University's ability to reach its employment equity goals and advance inclusive excellence.
66. If the selected finalist is not a Canadian citizen or Permanent Resident, the University must apply for a labour market impact assessment<sup>4</sup> (LMIA). When such a candidate is selected, the offer letter must explicitly state that employment at McMaster University is contingent upon the individual obtaining and maintaining the appropriate authorization to live and work in Canada. Full details will be relayed in discussion with the Provost's Office or the Faculty of Health Sciences Faculty Relations Office.

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<sup>4</sup> International workers may be LMIA exempt if they are eligible for a work permit through the provisions of a free trade agreement.

67. In the Faculty of Health Sciences, preliminary letters of offer are made by the Department Chair, with the approval of the Faculty Dean. In all other Faculties, preliminary employment offers are made by the Faculty Dean, with formal offers drafted by the Provost's Office, signed by the President, and presented by the Provost's Office. Terms of employment in the offer must comply with all relevant statutes and University policies.
68. All offers of employment will notify the successful applicant of McMaster's policies and program for accommodating and supporting employees with disabilities, as required by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
69. Chairs and Deans are responsible for implementing and documenting strategies to avoid inequities in negotiations related to the level of institutional support provided to faculty upon acceptance of the position, including: starting salary; expected distribution of time between teaching, research, service and administration; availability of additional research funds, an RA-ship or other forms of administrative support, office space, lab equipment, mentoring, etc.

### Record Keeping

70. Each stage of the recruitment and selection process, and the rationale for decisions made, shall be documented.
71. The documentation shall include aggregate self-ID data, pertaining to *equity-seeking groups* who have applied, been shortlisted, offered, accepted or declined a position. The data should be used to inform future recruitment processes to ensure greater equity, diversity and inclusion.
72. As an accountability mechanism to ensure consistent application of best practices outlined in these Procedures, a Search Committee Summary Report shall be completed by the Committee Chair at the conclusion of the search process, submitted by the Department Chair to the Dean for their review and endorsement, and presented to the Senate Committee on Appointment for information. The Employment Equity Specialist will have access to the Summary Reports for Employment Equity reporting and analysis.
73. Records should be kept for a minimum of two years to comply with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act of Ontario. In the case of a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA), all records and any other documents that demonstrate compliance with the program conditions set out in the LMIA decision letter and annexes must be kept for six years.