

## Employment Practices Policy

**Office of Administrative Responsibility:**

Associate Vice-President, People and Chief  
Human Resources Officer

**Policy Owner (Sponsor):**

TBD

**Approving Body:**

Board of Governors

**Category: Equity and Employment****Policy Number:****Last Revision Date:**

February 8, 2002

**Effective Date:**

February 8, 2002

**Next Review Date:**

TBD

**Purpose:**

As an institution which is funded almost entirely from public funds, the University has an obligation to adopt a policy that avoids favoritism or perceived favoritism based on personal relationships in its employment practices. These practices include, but are not limited to, the hiring, supervision, and remuneration of staff.

The policies of many organizations proscribe the employment of members of the same family or require some form of independent approval where such conflicts of interest occur. The problem of this approach is to define all the personal relationships that could lead to preferential treatment of particular individuals. As an example, the hiring of a next door neighbor or a fellow club member, for that reason alone, is just as insidious and damaging to an organization's reputation and public image as the hiring of a member of the same family in similar circumstances.

**Policy:**

This policy should be read in conjunction with Policy "[Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)."

It is not suggested that **relatives** and associates of University employees be disqualified from employment at the University. Such individuals should not, however, be in a favored position by virtue of those relationships.

One of the University's human resource objectives is to hire the best candidate available for each vacancy, taking into consideration other requirements contained in collective agreements and legislation. While a personal relationship between the candidate and hiring official may serve in some circumstances as a useful recruiting or screening function, this relationship should not be the basis for an employment decision.

Instead of attempting to identify those relationships which could lead to charges of favoritism, the University policy requires all persons involved in hiring, supervision, or remuneration decisions to disclose any personal association they may have with an employee or prospective appointee which could be seen by an independent observer as creating a potential conflict of interest or as a cause for favorable treatment.

Such personal associations are to be interpreted broadly and should be defined to include third-party relationships where a reasonable person might suggest the existence of favoritism.

Provisions regarding the employment of members of the same family to the academic staff and the appointment of relatives to positions financed from research grants as stated in section 5.13 of the *Faculty Information Handbook 1973* remain unchanged:

5.13 Employment of Members of the Same Family Members of the same family may apply for and be considered, in competition, for academic positions on the University staff. All opportunities and benefits accruing normally to a position of faculty will obtain where such an appointment is made. The President must approve of the employment of members of the same family on the faculty or staff of the same Department.

A faculty member may not employ any member of his or her immediate family, in any capacity, on a research grant which he or she holds except in special circumstances approved by the President.

Additional provisions with respect to employment decisions are found in the Collective Agreement with the Faculty Association and are listed in the index to the document under "Conflict of Interest."

Provisions regarding appointments of members of the same family to the administrative staff remain unchanged. Article 13 of the Collective Agreement with the Administrative and Supervisory Personnel Association reads:

#### Article 13 - Employment of Members of the Same Family

- Persons of the same family may apply for and be considered in competition for Association positions at the University. All opportunities and benefits accruing normally to a position will apply where such an appointment is made.
- The President and the Associate Vice-President (Human Resources) (only) must approve the employment of persons of the same family on the faculty or staff of the same department in accordance with University guidelines.

The onus to ensure that employment practices are fair rests with each University employee responsible for determining which candidate will be hired into a position managed within the University structure. These provisions apply to all positions including those financed by research contracts or grants (including funds provided by NSERC, SSHRC, or CIHR) and other grants and contracts administered through the University.

#### **Procedure:**

The President has delegated the power to approve exceptions under this policy to the Associate Vice-President (Academic) for faculty appointments and to the Associate Vice-President (Human Resources) for other types of appointments.

In all circumstances where any or all of the candidates for a position may be seen by a reasonable observer to be in a favored position, a selection process, such as a search committee, should be

implemented that will focus on the selection of the most appropriate candidate, regardless of relationship.

It is recognized that there is a great diversity in the employment relationships within the units of the University. Recognizing that fact, the authority to determine the most appropriate procedures to avoid favoritism or the perception of favoritism will rest in the offices of the deans and the senior managers of administrative units.

In those circumstances where employment decisions cannot be made by deans or other senior administrative managers because of actual or perceived conflict of interest, the Associate Vice-President (Human Resources) will seek to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to avoid favoritism or the perception of favoritism.

The Human Resources Division of the University will review and audit selection and other employment processes and application of the processes to seek as much conformity within the University as possible. The Human Resources Division will work with the dean or the senior administrative manager to eliminate any problems identified by them or by this audit process.

Complaints or concerns about the employment practices of the University should be directed to the Associate Vice-President (Human Resources).

**Related Policies and Documents**

[Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy](#)  
[Academic and Curricular Nomenclature](#)

**Revision History**

Please list the historical information in chronological order from oldest to newest.

<b>Date initially approved and date(s) re-formatted or revised</b>	<b>By who and what type of revision</b>	<b>Maintained by</b>
Feb 8, 2022	Associate Vice-President (Human Resources), Updated Policy. Specifics not available.	Associate Vice President, People and Chief Human Resources Officer
Oct 1, 1973	N/A, Policy established	Associate Vice-President (Human Resources)