

Postdoctoral Fellows Policy

Sponsor: Senate Research Committee
Responsible Unit: Vice-Principal Academic and Research or Designate
Approval Authority: Senate
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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to specify the appointment eligibility, procedures, and rights and responsibilities for Postdoctoral Fellows (PDFs) at Bishop's University. Specifically, this policy aims to:

- Outline the privileges and obligations of PDFs.
- Outline the responsibilities of a Faculty Member as the Mentor/Supervisor of PDFs.
- Outline the PDF appointment procedure.

This policy only applies to Postdoctoral Fellows at Bishop's and does not cover Visiting Scholars, Research Assistants or Adjunct Professors. An individual invited to offer temporary services at Bishop's such as short-term lecture or teaching services is not considered a PDF unless appointed through the procedures specified in this policy. No tuition or registration fee is applied for being a PDF.

The appointment and management of PDFs will be made solely in accordance with the provisions outlined below. The Vice-Principal Academic and Research (VPAR) has the authority to interpret this policy and make final decisions on its implementation.

1. Overview

Bishop's University welcomes national and international scholars to join the academic community as Postdoctoral Fellows, given their significant contribution to the University's research mission including research excellence, mentoring and training opportunities for students, and promoting collaborations and networking.

PDFs fall into two categories for purposes of this policy:

- a) Postdoctoral Fellow Employees

The following conditions apply to Postdoctoral Fellow Employees:

- i. They are employed by Bishop's University grant holders on a contract basis and are paid through funds from grant holders, with Bishop's University as the employer of record. They work on a research team directed and sponsored by the supervising faculty member.
- ii. They receive a T4 for earnings and will be taxed at source automatically.
- iii. They are subject to all statutory deductions including but not limited to the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), Employment Insurance (EI), Régie de rentes du Québec (RRQ), Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST).
- iv. They are subject to working conditions in compliance with the *Quebec Act respecting Labour standards* (1980).
- v. They do not have access to group insurance and pension plans available to Bishop's University employees.
- vi. They may take a leave of absence granted by the VPAR, but there are no benefits or remuneration for such a leave from Bishop's University.

b) Postdoctoral Fellow Scholars

The following conditions apply to Postdoctoral Fellow Scholars:

- i. They do not have an employment relationship with Bishop's University.
- ii. They receive financial support from a sponsoring organization or hold an externally-awarded postdoctoral fellowship for which Bishop's is the explicitly designated institution for tenure of the award.
- iii. They are independent researchers.
- iv. They receive T4A for earnings from Bishop's if their fellowship is administered by Bishop's.
- v. They are not subject to statutory deductions for CPP or EI and are not eligible for the related benefits.
- vi. They do not have access to group insurance and pension plans available to Bishop's employees.
- vii. They may be allowed a leave of absence depending on the regulations of the funding agency from which they receive their fellowship.

The Graduate Studies Coordinator in the Office of Research and Graduate Studies (ORGS) will keep a central registry of PDFs at the university and will be the point of contact for PDFs and their supervisors regarding university research policy and relationships with funding and other external agencies.

2. Appointment Eligibility

Regardless of their designation, PDFs typically meet the following requirements:

- a) They have been awarded a Ph.D. or equivalent terminal degree within the five years preceding their date of appointment at Bishop's.

- b) They are appointed for a limited period of time not exceeding three years.
- c) They are involved in full-time research and scholarship.
- d) They work under the supervision of one or more faculty mentors/supervisors at the University.

3. Appointment Procedures

Appointment as a PDF is made with specified start and end dates for a period of no less than six (6) months and no longer than three (3) years. The length of appointment may later be extended to a maximum two (2) additional years, following approval by the VPAR. For international Postdoctoral Fellows, the term of PDF designation may not exceed the period of their visa.

Faculty Members are responsible for recruiting/appointing PDFs and may use any appropriate method such as personal contacts, response to inquiries, and advertisement in local, national or worldwide media. Faculty Members are required to coordinate in a timely fashion any recruitment/appointment of PDFs with the Director of the Office of Research and Graduate Studies (DORGS) who acts as the point person in all matters related to PDFs.

PDF status can be revoked by the VPAR on behalf of the University at any time, including specifically in the case of violations of Bishop's University policies or regulations.

The following procedures apply to the appointment and renewal of external appointments as PDFs.

- a) The Mentor/Supervisor validates with their academic area, Dean and the Office of Research and Graduate Studies that sufficient funding is available to permit the hosting of the PDF and that any space and facilities required for the PDF's research will be available.
- b) The Mentor/Supervisor submits the request for a PDF appointment to their Dean, in accordance with the specified format required by the ORGS. This request must clearly outline how the appointment will contribute to the scholarly needs of the academic area and confirm the support of the academic area and Dean, and be accompanied by:
 - i. the applicant's CV;
 - ii. a copy of the applicant's passport pages showing name and date of birth;
 - iii. a copy of the applicant's degrees or equivalent;
 - iv. a letter of acknowledgement from the home institution or organization clarifying their affiliation and status, if applicable;
 - v. evidence of funding, if a PDF Scholar.
- c) Taking into account the advice of the Dean, the VPAR (or designate) will approve or deny the request.
- d) If approved, the Graduate Studies Coordinator with the ORGS will issue a letter of offer that includes the following elements:
 - i. The start and end date of the employment/appointment.
 - ii. The name of the Mentor/Supervisor.
 - iii. The nature of the research to be undertaken as part of the PDF.
 - iv. The status of the PDF (Employee or Scholar).

- v. Any source of dedicated funding for the PDF, and the salary/stipend arrangements and methods of payment.
 - vi. Any particular benefits that are confirmed for the PDF (e.g., availability of an office).
 - vii. The rights and responsibilities of PDFs outlined found in this document.
- e) Applications for renewal/extension of appointments must be made no later than three months prior to the end of the current appointment. Such requests follow the same process outlined in steps (a) – (d) in this policy. The length of appointment may be extended to a maximum two (2) additional years, following approval by the VPAR.

4. Postdoctoral Fellows Privileges

All individuals appointed as PDFs of Bishop's University have the following rights and responsibilities:

- a) They will be provided with a Bishop's University ID Card.
- b) They will be provided with access to the Library Learning Commons and have Library borrowing privileges comparable to that of a regular BU Faculty member.
- c) They will be provided with computing privileges, including access to email, photocopying services, and a full (A3) license for Microsoft 365.
- d) They will be provided with access to office space or research facilities, including access to a computer, depending upon availability and approval from the relevant academic area.
- e) They will be covered by Bishop's University liability insurance.
- f) They have the obligation to share with Mentors/Supervisors any data collected or produced while working under their supervision.
- g) They must follow all regulations and policies of any Funding Agencies that provide them with funds for research support, either directly or indirectly, through the Mentor/Supervisor's research agreement.
- h) They are expected to publish the results of the research projects they conduct during the PDF appointment.
- i) They must recognize authorship rights of their Mentor/Supervisor in proportion of their intellectual contribution.
- j) They are expected to acknowledge their affiliation with Bishop's University in any publication resulting from the PDF appointment and in their knowledge mobilization activities.
- k) They are expected to submit a final Postdoctoral Fellow Report, describing tangible achievements made during the appointment.
- l) They will receive a certificate of Postdoctoral Study issued by the ORGS, provided that the PDF has submitted the Postdoctoral Fellow Report, describing tangible achievements made during the appointment.
- m) They may access University recreational and other facilities, including the University Sports Centre, which may require payment of a fee.
- n) They may access parking on the University campus for a fee.

- o) They must return all issued office or laboratory keys, computers or other equipment, their University ID card, and all other credentials at the end of their appointment.
- p) They are required to comply with all Bishop's University established policies and regulations including but not limited to those on intellectual property (IP), research ethics, research integrity, conflict of interest, responsible use, and harassment and discrimination.

The following limitations apply to all appointments as PDFs:

- q) They are responsible for all of their own expenses, including visa fees, if applicable.
- r) They must provide their own health insurance throughout their stay if they are international PDFs as they are not eligible for Bishop's student or employment health benefits.
- s) They may be required to obtain a visa to enter Canada if they are international PDFs.
- t) They are responsible for securing their own housing.
- u) They do not participate in Bishop's University governance at any level.
- v) They are not covered under the terms of the Full-time or Contract Faculty Collective Agreements, except in regard to any teaching undertaken in accordance with the terms of the Contract Faculty Collective Agreement.
- w) Any course to be taught by a PDF may only be assigned in accordance with the provisions of the current Contract Faculty Collective Agreement. All terms and conditions associated with such teaching are to be under the provisions of the current Contract Faculty Collective Agreement.
- x) PDFs and/or their dependents who register in courses at Bishop's are subject to all normal tuition fees and other charges.

5. Mentor/Supervisor Responsibilities

The Mentor/Supervisor should begin the application process at least six months before the start date of the visit to allow for internal approval and, if necessary, for an international PDF to secure a visa. The time required to secure a visa varies depending on the country of origin.

The Mentor/Supervisor has the following responsibilities:

- a) They are responsible for recruiting the PDF, and are expected to review references and letters of recommendation carefully.
- b) They must follow all relevant legislation, including the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and all federal and provincial immigration rules and regulations.
- c) They act as the PDF's primary point of contact, and notify the Office of Research and Graduate Studies as soon as the PDF arrives on campus.
- d) They are responsible for providing their PDFs with information on University services such as Human Resources, ITS, Library, and Health Services.
- e) They are responsible for offering details on performance expectations, safety protocols, ethical/scholarly integrity issues, and attendance expectations.
- f) They are expected to integrate the PDF into the academic life of the academic area and the University, including faculty social events, and to create an inclusive research environment.

- g) They ensure that any complaints raised by the PDF or about the PDF concerning University's policies or regulations are promptly addressed.
- h) They must arrange for another faculty member to take on the formal obligation of Mentor/Supervisor if they plan to take any leave or sabbatical that will keep them away from the University for an extended period.
- i) They ensure that appropriate acknowledgement and recognition is provided to contributions to research made by PDFs in publications and public presentations.
- j) At the conclusion of the appointment, they must submit to the Department Chair and the Dean a report on the work of the Postdoctoral Fellow describing tangible achievements made during the fellowship.
- k) They notify the Office of Research and Graduate Studies at the time of the PDF's departure from the University at the end of the visit, and ensure the PDF returns all issued office or laboratory keys, computers or other equipment, their University ID card, and all other credentials at the end of their appointment.

6. International Postdoctoral Fellows

To fulfil their fellowships, International Postdoctoral Fellows (IPDFs) must relocate to Canada and legally be allowed to work in Canada.

IPDFs must obtain a work permit in order to legally work in Canada. To that end, the Graduate Studies Coordinator will issue them an appointment letter as well as an LMIA-exempt employer number. This information is necessary to obtain the necessary authorization to work in Canada. The cost associated with obtaining the LMIA-exempt employer number will be charged to the Mentor/Supervisor's research account, unless other arrangements are made with the Director of the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

IPDFs must apply for a temporary work permit from the nearest Canadian Immigration Office as soon as they obtain the appropriate information from the Graduate Studies Coordinator. Costs associated with obtaining a work permit, including immigration fees related to family members, are borne exclusively by IPDFs.

IPDFs must consult Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC) website for more information on [how](#) and [where](#) to apply. Given that processing times vary by IRCC office, and that it can take several months to review their applications, IPDFs are advised to consult the website of their local Canadian Immigration Office for information on processing times and required documents.

7. Funding of Postdoctoral Fellowships

a) Postdoctoral Fellow Employees

Postdoctoral Fellow Employees will be paid from the grant or research resources of their faculty supervisors. When determining the PDFs' compensation, faculty supervisors must keep in mind that the base salary will be increased by 14% to provide fringe benefits.

b) Postdoctoral Fellow Scholars

Before beginning their appointment, Postdoctoral Fellow Scholars will have acquired financing from external granting agencies. Compensation amounts and applicable policies vary depending on the funding agency.

c) Other funding sources

The Graduate Studies Coordinator can provide information about other current funding opportunities available for Postdoctoral Fellows.

Postdoctoral Fellows may teach courses while at Bishop's, under the terms of the Contract Faculty Collective Agreement. Teaching and other associated responsibilities are remunerated separately.

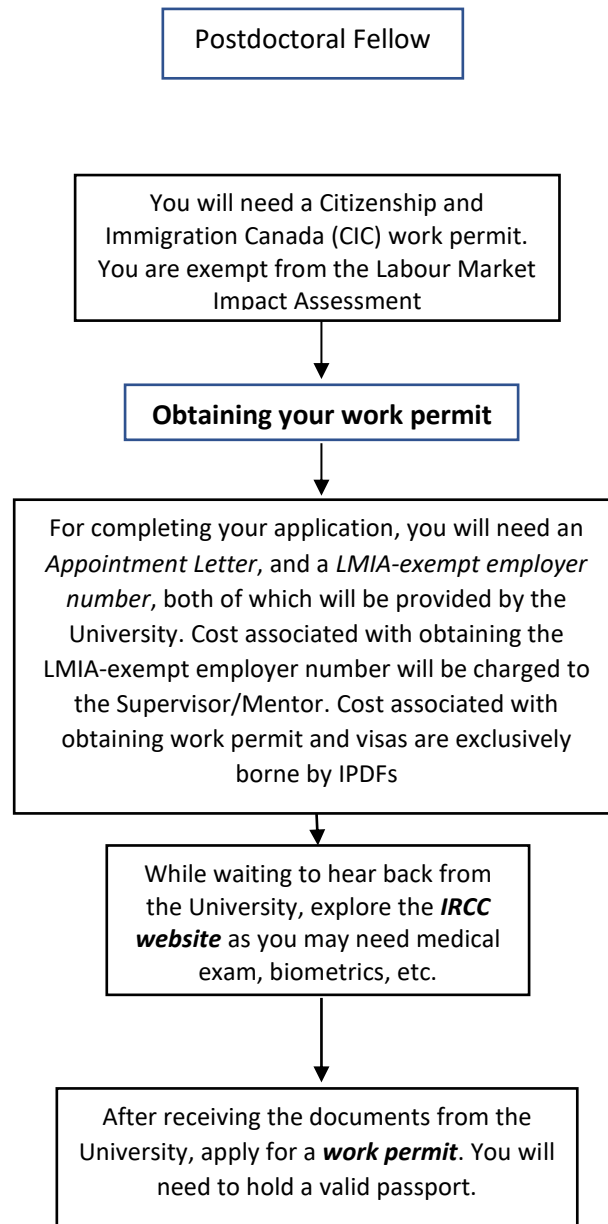
8. Conflict Resolution

Disputes between PDFs and their Mentor/Supervisor should be resolved in the first instance by discussion between the parties. It is the Mentor/Supervisor's obligation to determine if a resolution of the problem can be reached as quickly as possible once the dispute is identified.

If the Supervisor and PDF are unable to reach an agreement, the following dispute resolution procedure should be followed:

- a) Bring the unresolved dispute to the attention of the Department Chair, who will assist with conflict settlement.
- b) If a disagreement cannot be settled at the level of the academic area, it should be submitted to the Dean for resolution.
- c) If the Dean is unable to resolve the dispute, it may be referred to the Vice-Principal Academic and Research.
- d) Following receipt of comments from both the PDF and the Faculty member, the Vice-Principal Academic and Research may take action to resolve the issue.
- e) The Vice-Principal Academic and Research's decision on any such dispute is final within the University.

Appendix - Postdoctoral Fellow Immigration Flowchart



For questions, contact: researchoffice@ubishops.ca

IRCC website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship.html>

Work permit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada.html>