

## Guidelines for Honorary Postdoctoral Fellows

**Principles:** Memorial University of Newfoundland recognizes that Honorary Postdoctoral Fellows (PDF-Hs) are an integral part of Memorial University and make a significant contribution to the research and teaching environment and mission of the University. As members of the research community, they contribute to the nation's research and enhance the stature of the University.

Postdoctoral appointments provide recent doctoral degree recipients with an opportunity to:

- 1) develop further the research skills acquired in their doctoral programs under the sponsorship of established researchers,
- 2) learn new research techniques or embark on new research programs with guidance from and in consultation with an experienced faculty member,
- 3) make significant individual contributions to their chosen field,
- 4) strengthen their publication records and curricula vitae, thereby building a reputation and enhancing their chances of securing a more permanent faculty or research position, and
- 5) gain teaching and supervisory experience where appropriate.

**Purpose:** The general purpose of these guidelines is to outline the responsibilities, obligations, expectations, services and procedures which relate to PDF-Hs, to establish orderly relations between Memorial University and its PDF-Hs, and to establish principles of mutual respect and cooperation.

**Scope:** All PDF-Hs at Memorial University.

**Definitions:** An honorary Postdoctoral Fellow (PDF-H) is one who meets all the following criteria:

- 1) The appointee receives no salary from Memorial University sources and therefore is not subject to the collective agreement between University and LUMUN on behalf of postdoctoral fellows (PDFs).
- 2) The appointee is funded from external awards. Salary ranges may be governed by the regulations of funding agencies.
- 3) The appointee has a Ph.D. or equivalent degree.
- 4) The appointment is temporary.
- 5) The appointment primarily involves research.
- 6) The appointment is viewed as preparatory for a full-time academic and/or research career.
- 7) The appointee works under the guidance and sponsorship of a faculty member at Memorial University.
- 8) The appointee has the freedom, and is expected, to publish results of his or her research with appropriate acknowledgment of Memorial University affiliation except where this right has been limited by prior written agreement.
- 9) The appointment is not part of a clinical training program.
- 10) The appointment may involve undergraduate and graduate teaching and mentoring.

**Recruitment Selection and Appointment:** In recognition of the Principles above, Memorial University appoints scholars with the title of PDF-H and provides services to meet their needs. PDF-Hs must comply with Memorial University policies and procedures including but not limited to [Intellectual Property](#), [Sexual Harassment](#), [Integrity in Scholarly Research](#), [Protected Disclosure](#) and [Respectful Workplace](#) policies.

PDF-Hs must acknowledge their affiliation with Memorial University in their publications and in their participation in scholarly meetings and endeavours.

Honorary postdoctoral candidates come to the attention of and are selected by supervisors through a number of appropriate venues, including direct communication with candidates and/or colleagues. When recruiting PDF-Hs, faculty members must adhere to relevant policies. Fellowships funded by external agencies may be awarded through an adjudication process established by the external agency and are subject to the terms and conditions specified by that funding agency.

Normally, appointments occur within three to five years of being awarded the doctoral degree or within ten years of being awarded the MD degree, depending on the number of PDF positions already completed. These periods may be extended under special circumstances.

All PDF-Hs, regardless of how paid, are appointed by Memorial University. All PDF-Hs will receive a letter of appointment issued by the appropriate Dean, or at Grenfell Campus, the Associate Vice-President (Grenfell Campus) Academic, or at the Marine Institute, the Associate Vice-President (MI) Academic and Student Affairs. A template letter of appointment for PDFs is available from Faculty Relations and is posted on the website of the School of Graduate Studies.

PDF-Hs are excluded from the terms of the collective agreement between Memorial University and LUMUN on behalf of PDFs. Their terms and conditions of employment must be outlined in their letter of appointment and be in accordance with these *Guidelines for Honorary Postdoctoral Fellows*.

**Immigration:** See the *Employing and Hosting of Foreign Nationals* policy.

**Research Collaboration:** A PDF-H will be associated with one or more faculty colleagues for the purpose of research collaboration. The supervisor may be responsible for the direct financial resources required in support of research activities, as well as primary mentoring of research and professional activities. Departmental resources and responsibilities vary. Memorial University provides basic services in support of research and collegial interaction.

**Orientation:** The supervisor is responsible for orientation to the worksite and introduction to appropriate unit personnel and policy. The supervisor should also provide information about performance expectations, standards for work hours, safety procedures, and ethical/scholarly integrity issues, mindful of university policy, procedures and guidelines as they exist. In addition, the School of Graduate Studies shall invite PDF-Hs to participate in an orientation session for new PDFs that shall be held at least once each academic year.

**Professional Development:** A variety of professional development opportunities are available to PDF-Hs which are provided to the broader university community. In addition, the School of Graduate Studies shall invite PDF-Hs to participate in professional development training specific to the needs of PDF-Hs at least once each academic year.

**Teaching:** It is recognized that some PDF-Hs wish to obtain teaching experience. It is also recognized that PDF-Hs are an intellectual resource in the University and that both undergraduate and graduate programs benefit from their participation. PDF-Hs may be involved in undergraduate and graduate lecturing, laboratory instruction, tutorials, and assistance with the supervision of graduate and undergraduate students. Any teaching will conform to requirements of existing collective agreements.

**Benefits:** PDF-Hs are not members of the bargaining unit and thus are not eligible for university group benefits as defined in the collective agreement between Memorial University and LUMUN on behalf of PDF who are employees (PDF-Es).

PDF-Hs are eligible for the following:

- 1) *Vacation*: PDF-Hs shall be entitled to three (3) weeks annual vacation, prorated for the period of appointment. PDF-Hs shall schedule vacation at times mutually agreeable to the PDF-H and his or her supervisor.
- 2) *Statutory holidays*: PDF-Hs shall not be required to work on any of the following days:
  - Labour Day
  - Thanksgiving Day
  - Remembrance Day
  - Christmas Eve
  - Christmas Day
  - Boxing Day
  - New Year's Eve
  - New Year's Day
  - Second January Holiday
  - Good Friday
  - Memorial Day
- 3) *Workers' Compensation Coverage*
- 4) *Library privileges and internet access equivalent to faculty*
- 5) *Access to services provided by Research Grants and Contract Services* (i.e. information on research funding sources and review, including negotiation as needed, of research funding arrangements) will be on the same basis as that provided to faculty members.
- 6) *MUN Identification Card*

Note: PDF-Hs are not eligible for funding to cover the costs of tuition for credit courses

**Leaves:** Where no other agreement applies, a PDF-H may be considered for the following leaves:

- Sick Leave and Family Responsibility Leave
- Bereavement Leave
- Compassionate Care Leave
- Pregnancy, Adoption and Parental Leave
- Reservists Leave
- Court Leave

A PDF-H shall discuss with his or her supervisor any absence with as much advance notice as possible in order to reach a mutual agreement.

**Achievement and Evaluation:** Completion of a research project, presentation of its findings at university seminars and conferences, development of a patentable or licensable product, and preparation of this work for peer-reviewed publication are typical standards of achievement. It is expected that PDF-Hs will be appropriately recognized for their contributions in publications and patents. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to develop a clear understanding of rights and obligations under Memorial University's policies and practices with the PDF-H at the start of the appointment.

A PDF-H who wishes to have a formal evaluation of his or her work should discuss this with their supervisor. The purposes of evaluation are to document the work and the research performed by the PDF-H, to assess the performance of the PDF-H and to provide feedback on their research skills and abilities.

An exit interview or online consultation reviewing the period of employment shall be conducted by the School of Graduate Studies.

**Renewal:** Supervisors should give reasonable notice, normally three months, to a PDF-H on the intention to renew or not to renew an appointment.

**Grievances and Complaints:** It is preferable to resolve problems through discussions among those persons directly concerned. To this effect, a PDF-H is encouraged to discuss any difference(s) with his or her supervisor as soon as possible after the PDF-H becomes aware of the incident giving rise to the difference(s).

Unresolved problems may be brought in confidence to the attention of the Dean of the Faculty/School. In the case of Arts, Science, and Engineering, the first routing will be the Head of Department. If an issue cannot be resolved by the Department Head, it may be brought in confidence to the attention of the Dean. If not resolved at the Faculty/School level it may be brought to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. In the event of a conflict of interest, e.g. the supervisor is the Department Head, Dean, a mutually-agreed third party may substitute for the administrator. Ultimate responsibility for resolution of a dispute rests with the Provost and Vice-President (Academic). PDFs who are working in a location remote from the department will be informed by the supervisor as to how and to whom a complaint may be directed.

**Discipline and dismissal:** No PDF-H shall be disciplined or dismissed except for just cause. The PDF-H shall be provided with an opportunity to be heard during any discipline or dismissal process.

In the unusual circumstance of the termination of a PDF-H's contract before its expiry, the termination will be initiated by the supervisor, and will require approval by the Department Head with notification to the Dean and to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and shall include reasons. Should the PDF-H elect to terminate the contract, a notice of one month will be given to the supervisor and Department Head.

**Gross Misconduct in Academic Research:** The University shall advise PDF-Hs of their responsibilities to maintain the highest levels of integrity in scholarly research. Any allegations of misconduct covered by the University policy on [Integrity in Scholarly Research](#) shall be dealt with in accordance with such policy, as amended from time to time. Gross misconduct in academic research means:

- (a) fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism but not factors intrinsic to the process of academic research, such as honest error, conflicting data or differences in interpretation or assessment of data or of experimental design; or
- (b) willful or deliberate destruction, or destruction resulting from the failure to take reasonable measures to ensure the safety, of one's own research data within a period of five (5) years after publication of the research results, or the deliberate tampering with or destruction of the research of another; or
- (c) once the results of the research have been published, refusal without good and sufficient reason, to provide access to the data that resulted in the published document, for the purpose of verification by bona fide academic researchers for a period of five (5) years from the date of publication; or
- (d) failure to respect agreements concerning privileged access to information or ideas obtained from confidential manuscripts or applications; or
- (e) the use of unpublished scholarly work of others without their permission when that permission is explicitly required; or
- (f) significant failure to comply with relevant federal or provincial statutes or regulations or national or international standards for the protection of researchers, human subjects, or the

health and safety of the public, or for the welfare of laboratory animals, or significant failure to meet other legal requirements that relate to the conduct of research; or

(g) failure to reveal any relevant and substantial conflict of interest to the agencies funding the Postdoctoral Fellow's University research, to those who commission such research, to an editor or to an agency requesting the Postdoctoral Fellow to undertake reviews of research grant applications or manuscripts for publication, or to an agency requesting the Postdoctoral Fellow to test products, processes or services for sale or distribution to the public; or

(h) failure to reveal to the University any material financial interest, either by the Postdoctoral Fellow or a close relative, in a company that contracts with the University to undertake research, or to supply goods or services directly pertaining to the Postdoctoral Fellow's University research. Material financial interest includes ownership, substantial stock holding, a directorship, substantial honoraria or consulting fees, but does not include routine stock holding in a large publicly traded company.

The University shall take such steps as may be necessary and reasonable to protect the reputation and credibility of Postdoctoral Fellows wrongfully accused of gross misconduct in academic research including written notification of the decision to all agencies, publishers, or individuals who were informed by the University of the investigation.

**Approval Date:** September 15, 2014

**Authority:** Academic Council of the School of Graduate Studies