



# UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

University of Toronto  
Governing Council

## **Policies for Post-doctoral Fellows**

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## Policies for Post-doctoral Fellows

### Description

A post-doctoral fellowship (PDF) provides an important stage in the transition from graduate student to independent scholar. Post-doctoral fellows are, in essence, trainees, who contract with the University to provide their services in exchange for developmental opportunities provided by the University. They are not employees. In light of the transitional nature of their status, post-doctoral fellowships are time-limited and are not ongoing.

### Criteria

A post-doctoral fellow must meet the following criteria:

- The post-doctoral fellow was recently (normally within 5 years) awarded a Ph.D. or equivalent degree.
- The engagement is temporary.
- The engagement involves providing research or scholarship services on a full-time basis.
- The engagement is preparatory for a full-time academic and/or research career.
- The services of the PDF must meet the standards set by a faculty member ("the faculty supervisor").
- The post-doctoral fellow is not registered in another training program (e.g. clinical post-graduate training).

### Term

The maximum initial term of engagement is three years. In special circumstances, a further extension of up to three years is permitted with Decanal approval in multi-department faculties, and Provostial approval in single-department faculties. The engagement shall expire, without any further payment obligations by the University, on the date specified in the letter of engagement. However, it may be terminated at any time by the University for cause (a material failure to meet the specified service standards), in which case the post-doctoral fellow is not entitled to any further payments beyond those earned for services provided up to the date of the termination of the engagement. Early termination of the engagement may also occur if either party provides two months' notice in writing to the other party, or, in the case of the University, if it provides a payment in lieu of notice equivalent to the stipend that would have been earned over the course of the notice period.

### Terms and Conditions

Administrative procedures for engagement of post-doctoral fellows will be set by the Office of the Provost and reported to the Academic Board. The procedures will include the mechanisms for engagement, terms of engagement letters, and describe stipend levels and other support. As a trainee providing services as an independent contractor, rather than as an employee, the post-doctoral fellow is responsible for his/her own tax obligations, and the stipend paid by the University is not subject to withholding by the University for income tax, Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance or similar payments.

The conduct of post-doctoral fellows is to be governed by the appropriate policies and procedures as applied to graduate students (with changes as necessary to reflect their status as trainees), including, but not limited to, the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, the Code of Student Conduct and the Policy on Ethical Conduct in Research.

In the event of a dispute with the University's employees, whether the supervising faculty member or others, post-doctoral fellows have access to a dispute resolution procedure as follows.

- In the first instance, the Chair/Director (or Dean's designate in single-departmental faculties) should meet with the post-doctoral fellow and the faculty supervisor on an informal basis to endeavour to resolve the dispute.
- The Chair/Director should submit a written report within 20 calendar days (excluding statutory and university holidays) of the meeting.
- If unresolved, the dispute can be submitted by either party in writing to the Dean within 20 calendar days (excluding statutory and university holidays) of receipt of the Chair/Director's written report.
- The Dean will meet with the parties and issue a decision in writing within 20 calendar days (excluding statutory and university holidays) of the meeting.
- If either party is not satisfied with the response, the parties shall arrange mediation by a senior faculty member from another Division, who is drawn from a list of individuals nominated by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.
- If mediation is not successful, there is no appeal or other further step in the dispute resolution process, and the University's decision at that point stands.

May 27, 2002