



StFX Recruitment Guide for Non-Union Positions

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Issues to Consider Before Advertising

Related University Policies

It is advisable that before embarking on any recruitment process, that one becomes familiar with both the [HR Policy #101 – Standards of Conduct Policy](#) and the [HR Policy #109 – Conflict of Interest Policy](#), as both may have significant impacts on the processes of recruitment and selection.

Updated Job Description

Before requesting Human Resources to post an opening for a job, the hiring manager should review and update the job description for the role. This is extremely important because the job description will be required for salary benchmarking the position, for interview question creation and for information to the applicants, should they request it. Should any revisions need to be made to the job description on file, the updated job description should be sent to HR with the job posting request.

Contract Length and Benefits Eligibility

Before advertising, a decision should be made as to whether the position is a short term or permanent contract. If the role provides a function that will be needed on an ongoing basis, then the role should be offered as a permanent position. By making a permanent opening you will ensure a higher quality candidate pool since high quality applicants will not leave secure positions to take up short term contracts. There are clauses in the standard contract template which will allow the University to terminate employment, should factors arise that necessitate the position not continuing.

There are also benefits eligibility requirements that will need to be taken into consideration at this time.

Please refer to the StFX Employee Handbook (Non-Union) for benefits information:
[StFX Employee Handbook \(Non-Union\)](#)

Hiring a Non-Canadian without Permanent Residency Status

Another important issue to consider before advertising is applicant nationality. Citizenship and Immigration Canada has legal requirements for employers who offer and hire a non-Canadian without permanent residency. Generally, *Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)* has to grant a positive Labour Market Opinion (LMO) before an offer can be made to non-Canadian without permanent residency status. Among other criteria, the *HRSDC* looks at the wording of the ad, how long the position was advertised, where it was advertised, how many Canadians applied for the position, why the Canadians who applied were not eligible etc. This area of law can be complex and there are numerous exceptions to the need for a Labour Market Opinion. Please refer to the Human Resources website under the menu item Careers@X for information on [Hiring a Non-Canadian without Permanent Residency Status](#) for information and links to the HRSDC website.

Advertising

When deciding to advertise a position, be sure to strategize about timelines. You will need to take into consideration when the position is required to start, ad submission deadlines and printing dates of advertising media, length of time for application submission, closing date, application review and short-listing time after closing, interview scheduling time, time for actual interviews, possible employment notice periods for candidates and possible relocation time. All positions of significant length and impact need to be advertised.

After taking into consideration the strategic issues mentioned above, you will need to decide on what press exposure will be of best value. StFX advertises internally and externally simultaneously. Will local exposure suffice or will web exposure and provincial or national advertising be required?

You will need to develop a draft employment ad for submission to HR. Because there may be multiple StFX job ads placed in papers, on websites and in magazines, it is important for the ads to have consistent aesthetics. Please ensure that all ads meet one of two standard formats. See an example in the Appendix for your reference. The HR Assistant can provide you with an electronic version of these files to edit. *Note: For temporary/short-term contracts of less than six months, HR may not be required to be involved in the interview process and ads may stipulate that applications go directly to the hiring manager.*

When your ad is ready for posting, send it to the HR Assistant with the account to be charged. Ads will always be placed on the StFX HR website and you may instruct the HR Assistant to also place the ads with Career Beacon or Workopolis etc. Advertising through all specialized press outlets (Canadian Counseling Association, Charity Village etc.) is the responsibility of the individual departments.

Shortlisting and Selection

Ideally, organizations should have one public point of contact for employment issues. With that in mind, all queries concerning and applications for open positions should come to the HR department. The HR Assistant can then securely manage applications according to best practices and privacy legislation requirements.

Shortlisting

On the closing date of your opening, the HR Assistant will email you the electronic versions of the applications for your review. You will then need to provide the HR Assistant with a shortlist of the top three qualified candidates and your preferred interview date(s). Shortlisting decisions should be based solely on objective job competency criteria. The shortlisting criteria were decided when you compiled the essential and desirable criteria and duties in the Job Description.

To ensure that you have an audit trail of the shortlisting process, you should record your shortlisting decisions. To assist you in doing this, we recommend that you use the Shortlisting Form (see Appendix or HR Website). If you have not already done so, you should also consider ranking your essential and desirable criteria at this point. This will help you narrow down your short-list and assist you when you compare candidates after the interview.

At this stage, you should consider how you will deal with any late applications; if you are going to accept them and up until which date before the interview panel meets.

Interview Panel

The interview panel should consist of no more than three people; the hiring manager, the HR representative and, if required, one more manager who is a key stakeholder of the open position or who has specialized knowledge of the role requirements. Panels should not include future colleagues or direct reports of the successful candidate. There is confidential and managerially sensitive information to be considered in the hiring process which employees should not be privy to (personal information of applicant, managerial approaches, possible performance issues, department dynamics, future department strategies, salary recommendations etc).

Coordinating the Interviews

The HR Assistant will contact all shortlisted candidates and coordinate the interview booking. There will be an MS Outlook meeting request sent to all panelists to confirm interview dates and times. Each calendar entry will also have attached the applicant's CV, interview questions and job ad. All panelists are required to bring their own copies of these to the interviews. All interviews are booked to take place within the Department that is hiring by default. If there is not sufficient private space for the interviews please contact HR for suggestions.

Recruitment – Discrimination and the NS Human Rights Act

StFX continually strives to be an employer of choice and in doing so, we must ensure that our recruitment and selection practices follow best practices and are in line with current legislation requirements. Every hiring manager must realize that asking the wrong interview questions or making improper inquiries can lead to discrimination or wrongful-discharge lawsuits and these suits can be won or lost based on statements made during the interview process. Thus, it is important to incorporate risk management into our interviewing process to help minimize the University's exposure to employment practices liability.

The Nova Scotia Human Rights Act is a provincial law that affirms every person is free and equal in dignity and rights without regard to age, race, colour, religion, creed, sex or gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, ethnic, national or aboriginal origin, family or marital status, source of income or political belief, affiliation or activity. The act also prohibits sexual harassment in all areas of public life. There are specific protections in Nova Scotia's Human Rights Act that mean it is against the law to be treated unfairly in key, protected areas under the province's authority. Workplaces are one such protected area.

Developing Legal and Consistent Interview Questions

As an employer of choice, we must assess job candidates on their merits. Evaluation criteria should not include broad, subjective impressions but should be based on more objective, demonstrable factors.

The University could be accused of asking improper interview questions or making discriminatory statements or comments that reflect bias. It is also possible to make assurances or promises during an interview that can

be interpreted as binding contracts. Recognizing these potential danger areas is the best way to avoid saying the wrong thing during an interview.

It is critical to have standardized procedures to ensure consistency. We do have a standard interview question-list and scorecard (see Appendix) which helps to ensure that we use objective, consistent criteria. Managers must add *job-specific questions* to the standard ones and submit to HR prior to interviews. These standard questions and scorecards ensure consistency between interviewers and create documentation to support the hiring decision if a discrimination charge is later filed by an unsuccessful applicant. The HR Assistant will forward you a copy of this along with the submitted applications.

Organizations that use "best practices" in interviewing and that are extremely effective in consistently hiring top performers, use standard behavioral, situational or knowledge based interview guides. Their interview questions remain consistent in their line of questioning of each applicant.

Using the Job Description for the role, a manager can distill the objective criteria for interview questions including core competencies, experience, skills, thinking and decision making styles and specific knowledge areas that are required for a person to be successful in the position.

This process of question creation establishes a hiring "benchmark" or interviewing "guide" to follow. This benchmark, custom to each position, leads the manager to define the core line of behavioral interview questions that will uncover the critical competencies as they directly relate to the job requirements.

Here are a few examples of legally-defensible questions that will assist in uncovering core competencies.

- What has been a particularly demanding goal for you to achieve? (This interview question taps into the candidate's achievement orientation and requires them to explain the obstacle and their thought process and actions to overcoming the obstacle.)
- Can you think of a situation in which an innovative course of action was needed? What did you do in this situation? (This interview question allows you to uncover whether the candidate can develop innovative solutions to work-related problems, and identify potential opportunities and ways to capitalize on them.)
- What are the typical customer/client/public interactions you have in your present position? Can you think of a recent example of one of these? (This interview question focuses on the candidate's customer service orientation.)
- Have you ever been in a situation where you have had to take on new tasks or roles? Describe this situation and what you did? (This interview question allows you to probe into the candidate's degree of flexibility.)
- In your present position, what standards have you set for doing a good job? How did you determine them? (This interview question allows you to uncover if the candidate has high work standards.)

Conducting a job description audit to objectively identify the core competencies required for a given job and then customizing a list of behavioral-based interview questions like the ones mentioned above to identify those competencies, can significantly reduce our exposure to employment practices claims and increase our potential for hiring top performers.

To minimize the risk of discrimination, it is important for interviewers to be familiar with topics that are not permissible. For example, one should not ask a female applicant detailed questions about her husband,

children and family plans. Such questions can be used as proof of sex discrimination if a male applicant is selected for the position. Older applicants should not be asked about their ability to take instructions from younger supervisors or their ability to keep up with a younger work force. Similarly, candidates should not be asked whether they are married to any current employee at the University, as this line of questioning could be used as proof of discrimination against unsuccessful candidates based on family or marital status.

The following are examples of interview questions that should be avoided in interviews because they may be alleged to show illegal bias.

- Are you from around here?
- Do you have a visual, speech, or hearing disability?
- Are you planning to have a family? When?
- Do you have children? Will your childcare responsibilities affect your ability to do this job?
- How many days of work did you miss last year due to illness?
- What off-the-job activities do you participate in?
- Would you have a problem working with female (or male, or older, or younger etc.) colleagues?
- Are you married to a current employee?
- What year did you graduate from high school?

As you can see, these rather simple and seemingly non-threatening questions can easily violate one of the aforementioned areas when conducting interviews.

**See the article entitled "What you can't ask when hiring" in the Appendix.*

Statements which may make binding contracts

It is also important to avoid making statements during the interview process that could be alleged to create a contract of employment. When describing the job avoid using terms like "permanent," "career job opportunity," or "long term."

Interviewers should also avoid making excessive assurances about job security. Avoid statements that employment will continue as long as the employee does a good job. For example, suppose that an applicant is told that "if you do a good job, there's no reason why you can't work here for the rest of your career." The applicant accepts the job and six months later is laid off due to personnel cutbacks.

The prior statement made during the interview could lead to a breach of contract claim where the employee asserts that he or she cannot be terminated unless it's proven that he or she did not do a "good job." Courts have, on occasion, held that such promises made during interviews created contracts of employment.

Interview Format

Ideally, panelists should arrive at least 15 minutes before the interview is scheduled to begin. This allows for the panel to get situated before asking the candidate into the office. The interview format should consist of an introduction of the panelists, a review of the interview format for the candidate, a job overview given by the hiring manager, round-robin questioning (lowers candidate anxiety), time for the candidate to ask questions and time for scoring after the candidate has left. After all candidates have been interviewed, the panel will review the candidates' interview performances and levels of selection criteria and make a hiring decision.

References

It used to be common practice during selection processes to contact references of all or many of the interviewees and use the information given to come to a hiring decision, however, according to current Human Resources best practices, references should only be obtained for successful candidates. The panel should only contact references for the candidate to whom they intend to make an offer of employment. The HR representative will contact at minimum two (2) references and ask the questions as outlined on the Reference Check Questions form.

Contacting the Candidates

After a letter of offer has been drafted and approved, HR will contact the successful applicant. The successful candidate and hiring manager may wish to touch base in order to discuss arrival time on first day, location of office etc. Only after an acceptance of employment has been received will the unsuccessful applicants be contacted by HR. If HR does not participate in the selection panel, it is the responsibility of the hiring manager to contact all unsuccessful applicants.

Letters of Offer / Employment Contracts

Who Writes Letters of Offer

Letters of offer become binding employment contracts when they are signed by both the University representative and the successful employment candidate. Because these letters are legally binding contracts, it is extremely important that all letters of offer be drafted and/or reviewed by StFX HR *before* they are presented to successful candidates. HR has standard contract templates which apply but which also must be edited to reflect the unique needs/requirements of each opening. In many instances, HR will need to advise on a starting salary range for the opening.

Note: Verbal confirmations may also form a legal contract, in some circumstances, and therefore members of management should be extremely careful when discussing employment related issues without the benefit of advice from HR and/or a formal written letter.

Letters of offer must be drafted, reviewed and approved before being presented to the successful candidate. HR will make an offer of employment and present the offer as outlined in the offer letter and agreed to by the Manager.

Important elements in all letters of offer include:

- Type of contract (short term or permanent)
- Start date
- End date
- Official Job Title
- Direct-line manager
- Salary
- Salary review date (*Note: short term contracts are not eligible for the annual salary increase*)
- Weekly hours
- Vacation entitlement

- Benefits entitlement
- Probation period
- Performance expectations and reviews
- Notice Period Clause (*Note: Required on all contracts and is substantially generous compared to the NS Labour Code minimum requirements*)

Payroll Requirements

Due to auditing requirements, the Payroll department requires (for all new hires except students) a copy of the signed employment contract, a completed Payroll Request Form signed by the relevant hiring manager, a completed New Hire Form and a void cheque or account confirmation form from a bank. With the hiring manager's signature, HR will assume proper authorization from the director or VP. All items must be submitted together in order for the new hire to be entered to the payroll system. ([All current payroll forms may be found on the Payroll section of the HR Website](#))

All Payroll Request Forms indicating changes to current employee pay information such as salary, title, hours worked per week etc must be submitted to Payroll. Without exception, deadline for Payroll submissions is 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday the week before the pay.

For students to be paid, Payroll will require the Student Worker and Research Assistant Letter of Appointment ([on Payroll section of the HR Website](#)) which includes the New Hire Information and Payroll Request Forms.

Workspace and Employee Technology Account

Appropriate workspaces and equipment should be available on the new employee's first day of work. It is important that you arrange for a dedicated workspace and ensure that there is a technology account ready so that the employee will have a productive first day. The Technology Support Group requires a minimum of 3 working days to process new account requests. The Employee Account Request Form is included in the [Department Orientation New Employees](#) (see Appendix or HR website).

Orientation:

New hire orientation at StFX occurs in two phases in order to enable new employees to receive both a macro and a micro view of the University and the new position.

The primary purpose of a comprehensive orientation program is to make the transition to StFX University employment a smooth and positive one and to ensure that the new employee is fully informed about her/his new job and workplace. An orientation program also serves as a means of ensuring a good employee-organization "fit" for the longer term. The program requires a coordinated effort between the Human Resources Department (providing the university level orientation) and the individual academic or service departments (providing departmental orientation). Our comprehensive, university-wide orientation program for staff employees helps to:

- *Reduce anxiety* - by familiarizing new employees with the University, its goals, mandates and philosophies, and the expectations for particular positions. This will reduce the learning curve that is

present with any new position and can therefore help decrease the non-tangible costs of a long learning curve.

- *Reduce employee turnover* - by illustrating the value the University places in new employees and providing them with the tools necessary to perform the job in an effective and efficient manner.
- *Reduce demands on supervisors and co-workers* - the better the initial orientation, the more knowledge the new employee has to meet the challenges set by the new job without an undue reliance on others in the immediate workplace.
- *Develop realistic job expectations* – proper orientation develops positive attitudes and job satisfaction, leading to increased employee morale and increased productivity.

The *Department Orientation* will be conducted at the departmental level at the time the new employee commences his/her employment with StFX University, or at the time an employee is seconded or temporarily assigned to the department from elsewhere in the University. Managers may find the [*Department Orientation for New Employees - Guidelines for Supervisors*](#) on the HR website.

Managers will want to have a purposeful and detailed discussion with new hires early on in their employment to discuss job and performance expectations, probation and method of probation/performance review. If addressed up front and clearly, expectations are managed pro-actively and serve to set the employee up for success in the role. Refer to the current job description during the meeting as a guideline for expectations.

University Orientation sessions will be held in one-on-one sessions with new employees for all substantial contracts of one year or longer. Prior to the new employee's first day in office, the hiring manager should schedule a meeting time with the HR Officer. The HR Officer will welcome the new employee to StFX, present an orientation package and go over information such as University management structure, important contacts, the Non-Union Employee Handbook, general benefits eligibility based on employment contract, review employment policies etc.

Posted on April 19, 2012



Admissions Advisor – Recruitment & Admissions (one year term)

St. Francis Xavier University is a top-ranking Canadian university focused on academic excellence, innovation in teaching and research, service to society and international outreach. We invite applications for the following position:

The department of Recruitment and Admissions is seeking charismatic, results oriented individual to join our team as Admissions Advisor and help us continue to attract great students from around the world. Reporting to Manager, Recruitment, this is a one year term position commencing in May 2012 to May 2013.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Extensive travel across Canada and internationally to attend post-secondary events, education fairs and high school visits.
- Deliver presentations to prospective students, parents, guidance counsellors and other groups.
- Work in collaboration with academic faculties, student services, marketing and communications and alumni.
- Assist in the delivery of campus tours.
- Deliver comprehensive reporting on program status and impact.
- Administrative tasks.
- Evening and weekend hours are occasionally required to attend recruitment related events.

Qualifications and Skills

- Undergraduate degree. StFX graduate is preferred.
- Excellent communication skills (written, verbal and in person).
- Confident speaker and a desire to share the StFX story.
- Strong ability to work as part of a team as well as independently.
- Excellent financial management skills.
- Possesses superior judgment and decision-making skills.
- Skilled in the design and delivery of presentations, workshops and information sessions.
- Experienced user of standard MS Office applications.
- Superb time management skills and ability to multi-task.
- Valid driver's license.

Closing date for applications is May 1, 2012 by 1:00 pm. To express your interest in this role, please send a cover letter and CV in confidence to:

Human Resources
St. Francis Xavier University
Email: careers@stfx.ca

Only those selected for an interview will be contacted. In accordance with Canadian Immigration requirements, Canadian citizens and permanent residents will be given priority. If you are selected for an interview for the advertised position, proof of Canadian citizenship or permanent residency is required. StFX respects diversity and welcomes applications from visible minority group members, women, Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities, and members of sexual minority groups.

SAMPLE



Interview Questions – Position: _____

Date of Interview: _____ Applicant Name: _____

Creating questions:

Please add all job-specific questions in addition to the questions listed below. Refer to the current job description for the position and ensure to ask questions about all required skill sets for the role in order to rate the candidates properly. If a flexible work-week is required, we must make the candidate aware of this and ask if it poses a problem.

****Questions cannot be included or discussed during interviews, which refer (directly or indirectly) to: race, ethnicity, age, gender (including having any children), marital status (including to whom they are married), sexual orientation or where the candidate is from (local, regional or international).**

Interview Format:

HR Specialist provides an overview of the interview format and introduction of the interview panel. The Manager then opens with an overview of the role and starts questions. Round-robin questions until the end. HR will close the interview with timelines for response. Interview panel completes scorecard for each candidate.

1. What attracted you to this particular opening and what excites you about this position?

2. What are your professional goals? Where do you see yourself in the future?

3. Describe in detail *all* strategies and technical tools that you use for time management, for meeting important deadlines and for prioritizing competing high level demands.
4. Please tell us, in detail, about your skills with Excel, Word, Outlook Calendar, PowerPoint.
5. Please explain how you would deal with multiple concurrent requests that you are receiving from walk-in clients and via phone and e-mail.
6. Please describe how you would handle situations in which a Student is upset and tell us about the skills that you have acquired that would enable you to do so.
7. Please talk to us about your professional relationship building skills and describe for us any situations where you have liaised effectively with other departments.
8. What is your understanding of the goals and objectives of the **enter department here** and how this position can contribute?
9. Please talk about the communications skills that you will bring to this position and why such skills are important in this line of work.
10. Please tell us a little bit about your understanding of confidentiality, protection of privacy and information security.

11. Is there anything you would like to tell us regarding your work experience or skills that you think would help us make a decision?

12. Do you have any questions for us?

13. What is your availability for starting should you be offered the position? What are your salary expectations? *(If not in the posting)*

Candidate Assessment Scorecard – Must be used to provide consistent assessment of suitability. Ideally, a “5” would constitute the highest applicable attributes for the role:

Area	Score 1–5	Comments
<p>Education and/or Designations – Directly applicable and required education and professional training.</p>		
<p>Experience – Directly applicable experience.</p>		
<p>Skills – Demonstrated the core competencies for the role as per the job description.</p>		
<p>Leadership and/or Communication – How well did the candidate express him or herself and articulate knowledge? Was the candidate clear? Did the candidate directly answer the questions asked?</p>		
<p>Development Potential – Showed passion for the function. Articulated a desire to grow and develop in this area. Expressed eagerness for further training/learning in this area.</p>		
<p>Retention Risk – (Higher risk = lower score). Do you feel the candidate will stay and complete contract or be a long term employee? Is the candidate using this opening as a step towards gaining another position? Is the candidate overqualified for the role?</p>		
<p>“X” Factor – Emotional investment. Why work here and do this job rather than anywhere else in the same function? Dedication to</p>		

StFX as an organization.		
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