



MEMORANDUM 2014 #1

Updated June 2017

From: Office of the Chair

Engaging or Renewing a Postdoctoral Researcher University Policies

Faculty members who wish to engage a postdoctoral researcher are encouraged to review the Revised Engagement Details on the [Vice-Provost's website](#) and also to become familiar with the [official policies for postdoctoral researchers](#) established by Governing Council.

Best Practices

While the Vice-Provost's office has established the ground rules for engaging a postdoc, there are a number of best practices for faculty and staff when engaging or renewing a postdoc.

1. Postdocs are understood to be fully engaged in their research. If funding is not available for a year or the research project itself will not be of long duration, a shorter fellowship period should be considered.
2. Postdocs should not be engaged prior to a successful defence although, in some instances, postdocs may be engaged prior to meeting all their degree requirements. Letters of engagement should stipulate that all requirements for the degree must be completed by a certain date (usually within six months of the start date of the fellowship); otherwise, the offer should be considered null and void.
3. Because of immigration issues, it may not be possible to engage international postdoctoral researchers prior to the completion of all degree requirements. In most cases, the Canadian embassy will issue a work permit only when the applicant can supply a statement from their home institution attesting to the fact that the individual has met all degree requirements. The point at which such a letter can be provided will vary greatly among institutions. U of T will issue such a letter only after a defended and corrected thesis has been submitted to the electronic repository.
4. Postdocs should be engaged with at least the minimum funding of \$27,500. This funding may be obtained by the postdoc as an award or fellowship, through the supervisor's operating grants, or through departmental funds (or any combination thereof). Postdocs must NOT be self-funded (i.e., here on their own private funds). Care must be taken to ensure that postdocs who have obtained funding from an external agency, inside or outside Canada, meet the minimum funding requirement in Canadian dollars. Money obtained through a teaching appointment should NOT be considered as part of the minimum funding amount.

5. In the case of an international postdoc whose engagement is renewed, OHIP will not be extended until the postdoc can produce the new extended work permit. It takes at least four months from the application date to receive the new work permit, so renewal letters should be given to international postdocs as far in advance as possible. Postdocs can continue their research in Canada on "implied status" if they applied 30 days prior to the end date of their original work permit, but they may not be able to re-enter the country on such a status if they leave Canada during this period (e.g., for a conference or over the December holiday) or receive health care, as mentioned above.

Postdoctoral Registration System

All on-campus postdocs, regardless of the source of their funding, and all off-campus postdocs paid through U of T payroll, must be registered in the Postdoctoral Registration System (PRS). The person responsible for postdoctoral matters at the unit level (Assistant to the Chair, Psychology UTSC) may access the database.

Engagement Letters

Engagement letters will be generated automatically once all relevant information is entered onto the Postdoctoral Registration System (PRS). Once all signatures have been obtained (supervisor, chair, and postdoctoral researcher), confirm the engagement on the database. This step will initiate an exchange of information overnight between the PRS and UTORAUTH; UTORIDs will be assigned through this process.

Letters to obtain library access may be requested by postdocs the day following a confirmation in the PRS, up to one week ahead of the start date of the engagement. The engagement letters should not be adjusted! Our legal counsel has reviewed them carefully to make sure they contain appropriate information and language. Please email the [Postdoctoral Office](#) if you think a change is necessary.

Minimum Stipend

The minimum stipend is \$33,000 (May 31, 2017) plus the health benefit of approximately \$720 (single coverage for one year).

Engagement of International Postdoctoral Researchers

All international postdocs must have a work permit, regardless of the length of their stay or the nature of their research. Postdocs must provide proof that they have applied for a renewed work permit before the current permit expired in order to continue working in Canada (on "implied status"). Postdocs who leave Canada on implied status lose that status upon returning to Canada and can no longer work or receive pay until their new permit arrives. For more information on the department's role in inviting and renewing an international postdoc, please visit the [Immigration Resources](#) page on the HR & Equity website, or [email](#).

More information for international postdocs is available under [New to Toronto](#).

Registration at the Postdoctoral Office

Postdocs must visit the Postdoctoral Office to:

- enrol in the University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP) (if international);
- enrol in the Green Shield benefit (if paid through U of T payroll); and
- obtain a letter to access University of Toronto Libraries' system.

Graduate units should not issue letters for library access, but should advise PDFs to visit the office after they have been confirmed in the database.

Teaching Appointments

Departmental chairs and faculty are requested to review the CUPE 3902 Unit 1 Collective Agreement prior to engaging a postdoctoral fellow. Postdocs may not teach under Unit 3.

Postdocs who undertake duties such as teaching responsibilities while engaged at the University will fall under the provisions of the collective agreement. Union dues will be deducted on earnings for the teaching portion of the postdoctoral activities. If teaching responsibilities are a requirement of an external grant or award, the postdoc would still fall under the CUPE 3902 collective agreement for the teaching portion of his/her engagement; in this instance, Labour Relations should be contacted regarding posting provisions. Please consult the [CUPE 3902 Collective Agreement](#) and/or email [Labour Relations](#) for further information.

Teaching appointments are separate from the postdoctoral engagement, and the remuneration from such appointments is not calculated as part of the minimum stipend amount unless the teaching is a requirement of an award.

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW (PDF) ENGAGEMENT FORM

Name of Supervisor: _____

The following is a prompt sheet to be used when verbally engaging a PDF. This information will be required by administrative staff in order to generate an offer of engagement letter; a letter cannot be produced if any of the following information is omitted.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Given Name(s): _____
Surname: _____
Gender: _____
Date of Birth¹: _____
Name of University where Ph.D.
or equivalent degree was obtained: _____
Year Degree Awarded: _____
Legal Status in Canada: _____
Country of Citizenship: _____
Permanent Address²: _____

ENGAGEMENT INFORMATION

Engagement Start Date: _____
Engagement End Date: _____
Return by Date³: _____
PDF Stipend Amount (incl. fund/cost
#s)⁴: _____
PDF Award Amount⁵: _____
Name of Award: _____
External Award⁶: _____
Name of External Funding Source: _____

Return this document to the administrative staff person responsible for PDFs so that an appropriate letter of offer may be generated. Please note that PDF funding may come from a variety of sources, but must still meet the minimum annual stipend amount of \$33,000 in Canadian currency.

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¹ Required for generation of a UofT ID

² Address should include street address, apartment number, city, province and postal code

³ The date the letter should be returned to the administrative office, signed by the PDF; the offer should otherwise be considered void

⁴ Amount provided to PDF via supervisor's or departmental funds.

⁵ Award obtained by PDF but funnelled through UofT payroll.

⁶ Funding obtained by PDF and paid directly to him or her.