

Policy Regarding Potential Conflicts of Interest in the Hiring of Research Assistants

1. The University generally discourages faculty from employing research assistants with whom they have a close personal relationship (familial or otherwise). However, it recognizes that there may be instances in which such highly qualified personnel are, in the view of an externally-funded principal investigator (PI), best suited to carrying out specific research tasks.
2. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the PI to proactively disclose to the Associate Vice-President (Research) their relationship with the proposed Research Assistant.
3. The Associate Vice-President (Research) will meet with the PI to discuss the research tasks to be performed and the qualifications of the proposed RA. To facilitate this meeting the AVPR will solicit documentation they deem necessary to reach a decision regarding the merit of the potential hire. Such documentation will include, at minimum i) the RA's curriculum vitae; ii) a written statement from the RA outlining their qualifications for the position; iii) a written statement from the PI outlining any processes undertaken to fill this position with someone other than the proposed RA and providing a detailed explanation of how the proposed RA's skill set fits with the required research tasks.
4. The Associate Vice-President (Research) will endeavour to reach a decision within 10 business days.
5. The decision of the Associate Vice-President (Research) may be appealed to the Vice-President (Academic & Research) who will endeavor to review the file within 10 business days. The decision of the Vice-President (Academic & Research) is final.
6. If the request to hire the RA is granted, appropriate measures will be put in place to mitigate (the perception of) any conflict of interest. Such measures will include:
 - a) the PI will relinquish signing authority over the RA's reimbursement and payroll submissions to the Associate Vice-President (Research). The Vice-President (Academic & Research) will assume the AVPR's counter-signing duties on such submissions.
 - b) the RA and PI will provide the AVPR with regular reports (the frequency of which will be agreed upon by the PI and the AVPR), and any other documentation the AVPR requests, to document the quantity and quality of the research tasks performed.
 - c) Payroll submissions must be in the form of bi-weekly timesheets.
 - d) The Associate Vice-President (Research) may, from time to time, schedule meetings with the PI to discuss any concerns regarding the quality and quantity of the research output produced by the RA.
 - e) The decision to terminate the RA's employment for cause rests with the Associate Vice-President (Research). Such a decision may be appealed to the Vice-President (Academic & Research) who will endeavor to review the file within 10 business days. The decision of the Vice-President (Academic & Research) on this matter is final.