
Type:	A (Educational - Board)	Last Approved: Feb. 27, 2020
Executive Responsibility:	Provost & Vice President Academic	
Administrative Responsibility:	Associate Vice-President, Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity; Associate Vice-President, Human Resources	Procedure: 31.16

1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to:

- define the eligibility requirements for a Postdoctoral Fellowship appointment at Vancouver Island University (VIU);
- outline the process for appointing a Postdoctoral Fellow (PDF);
- establish the responsibilities of the Faculty member as the Research Supervisor;
- establish the responsibilities of the PDF; and
- outline the support provided by VIU.

2. Types of Postdoctoral Fellowships

There are two types of Postdoctoral Fellowships:

i. Type 1 PDF - External Award Holder (unpaid appointment)

A Type 1 PDF External Award Holder is a research trainee who is awarded a competitive fellowship and receives funding directly from an external sponsoring agency. A Type 1 PDF holds an unpaid PDF appointment with Vancouver Island University and is given the same privileges as a paid PDF. A Type 1 PDF has chosen to work independently under the supervision and mentorship of a VIU Faculty member (Research Supervisor) to conduct their research at Vancouver Island University.

ii. Type 2 PDF - Grant-Funded Postdoctoral Fellowship (paid appointment)

A Type 2 PDF Grant-Funded Postdoctoral Fellowship is funded through an external grant administered at VIU and held by a Faculty member, a Faculty group, or a researcher, who then directly recruits, hires, and supervises the qualified postdoctoral researcher on a specified research project. A Type 2 PDF holds a paid PDF appointment with Vancouver Island University.

3. Authority

The Provost and Vice-President Academic (Provost) has primary responsibility for the administration and revision of these procedures and the policy. Postdoctoral Fellowship terms and conditions of appointment (including remuneration) are set, at least in part, by external agencies. The policies of that agency will apply to Type 1 PDF holder(s). In the absence of specific policies provided by the external agency for Type 1 PDF holders and for all Type 2 PDF holders, the applicable VIU policies and procedures will apply. Policies with respect to conduct will apply to all PDFs.

The Research Supervisor is the individual holding the grant funding and who has budget signing authority. If there is more than one grant holder, the grant holders will decide who among them will be the designated Research Supervisor. The Research Supervisor has primary responsibility for the recruitment, the negotiated employment terms and conditions, in conjunction with Human Resources (HR) and Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity (SRCA), and the supervision and mentoring of the PDF.

The Dean must endorse the Research Supervisor's appointment recommendation for both Type 1 and Type 2 PDFs. The Dean of International Education is to be informed of any non-Canadian PDF appointment. All appointments are subject to the approval of the Associate Vice-President, Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity (AVPSRCA).

4. Selection of a Postdoctoral Fellow

The selection of Type 1 PDF External Award Holders (unpaid) are approved by the AVPSRCA on the recommendation of the Dean and Research Supervisor.

The selection of Type 2 Grant-Funded PDFs (paid) are approved by the AVPSRCA and may be recruited by whatever method is chosen by the Research Supervisor and Dean.

For non-Canadians, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) rules and protocols in effect at the time will apply.

5. Terms and Conditions of Postdoctoral Fellow Appointments

A Letter of Offer outlining the terms and conditions of appointment will be provided to the PDF upon selection. Acceptance of the Letter of Offer must be in writing from the potential PDF. The PDF must be legally eligible to work in Canada at the commencement and for the duration of their appointment and provide copies of their documentation demonstrating their eligibility.

6. Appointment and Renewal Process

All PDFs must be provided with a Letter of Offer. The Letter of Offer outlines the conditions of the appointment. The Letter of Offer template is available from the SRCA website. Instructions for completion and approvals are embedded within the template.

A PDF appointment at VIU is normally for a maximum term of three years, with the possibility of a longer term determined by the AVPSRCA on a case-by-case basis, for example in the case of

maternity and/or parental leave. Any renewal or extension is to be considered annually. Funding agency guidelines may dictate the length of the PDF appointment.

Renewals are subject to satisfactory research progress, compliance with VIU guidelines for academic conduct, the availability of funds, and work permit limitations, if any.

The Research Supervisor is responsible for initiating, with appropriate lead time, the annual renewal of the PDF appointment (Type 1 and Type 2 PDFs). Annual extensions to PDF appointments require a Letter of Offer – Extension (template available from the SRCA website) and, for Type 2 PDFs only, a new appointment in the HR appointment system.

6.1 Pre-Approval

The Research Supervisor will check funding agency guidelines prior to recommending a PDF appointment and/or extension request. The Research Supervisor will negotiate the terms of the appointment directly with the PDF abiding by any applicable VIU policy and procedures and will consult with HR and SRCA as required. Exceptions to the term of appointment must be approved by the AVPSRCA. Any negotiated items, along with expectations, must appear in the draft Letter of Offer.

The Draft Letter of Offer is prepared by the Research Supervisor and circulated to their Dean for approval, along with the PDF's Curriculum Vitae, proof of credentials (original transcripts), and any other relevant documents. It is then circulated to SRCA for AVPSRCA endorsement. If the PDF is a non-Canadian, the Draft Letter of Offer must also be reviewed and endorsed by the Dean of International Education.

Once all approval signatures are obtained, SRCA will prepare the final Letter of Offer and forward it to the Research Supervisor's Dean for signature. The Dean's Office will send the final Letter of Offer to the PDF for signature. Upon return, the Dean's Office will provide a fully signed copy of the Letter of Offer to SRCA and HR.

6.2 Post-Approval Processing

Upon receipt of the fully signed Letter of Offer from the Dean, SRCA will either: 1) prepare the HR appointment (Type 2 PDFs only) and provide the necessary payroll forms to the PDF for completion; or 2) complete an Affiliate form (Type 1 PDFs only) to allow the PDF to be identified in VIU's HR appointment system which allows them access to VIU facilities and services such as a network computer account, library borrowing privileges, parking in employee lots, etc.

SRCA will maintain a documentation file for each PDF.

7. Compensation

Type 1 PDFs are unpaid appointments where the PDF is paid directly by a sponsoring agency.

Type 2 PDFs may be fully or partially funded from research contracts, grants or endowments. The salary for a Type 2 PDF will normally be based on the minimum amount listed for Postdoctoral Fellowships in the funding agency guidelines. Where no specific salary range is

mandated, compensation is based on the PDF's relevant qualifications, experience and responsibilities and is negotiated between the Dean (in consultation with the AVPSRCA, the Research Supervisor, and HR) and the PDF.

Salary payments to Type 2 PDFs will follow the normal bi-weekly pay schedule. All required statutory (non-discretionary) deductions will be applied. All compensation and required employer mandatory remittances will be charged to the Research Supervisor's grant account(s) on record.

8. Health and Welfare Benefits and Pension

Type 1 and Type 2 PDFs are not eligible to participate in VIU health and welfare or pension plans. PDFs must arrange and pay the cost of their own health and medical benefits coverage.

9. Research Supervision

The Research Supervisor, in consultation with the Dean, is responsible for orienting the PDF to the University and for providing supervision and direction as required for the duration of the appointment.

If research and/or disciplinary problems arise, the Research Supervisor, in consultation with the Dean and HR, has full management discretion and responsibility.

If funding is withdrawn or shortened for a Type 2 PDF, the Research Supervisor will inform SRCA and notify the PDF, or in lieu of notice, abide by the terms of the Employment Standards Act of BC.

The Dean and AVPSRCA must be notified of any disciplinary concerns or alterations in the PDF funding.

10. Responsibilities of Postdoctoral Fellows

Postdoctoral Fellows embark upon research projects during their appointment. The work is done with guidance from, and in consultation with, experienced faculty and their Research Supervisor. The PDF is expected to work collegially with other faculty and staff, adhere to all applicable university policies, procedures and practice, and uphold VIU values. The PDF is responsible for the satisfactory and safe performance of the research activities and any other related work duties they undertake. Failure to do so may result in termination.

Postdoctoral Fellows must become familiar with VIU policies and procedures applicable to PDFs and research including, but not limited to:

- Postdoctoral Fellowships - Policy 31.16 and Procedure 31.16.001;
- VIU Research Ethics Board – Policy 31.03 and Procedure 31.03.001;
- Animal Care Committee - Policy 31.07 and Procedure 31.07.001;
- Integrity and Conduct in Scholarly Activity - Policy 31.10 and Procedure 31.10.001 and Misconduct in Research and Scholarly Activity – Procedure 31.10.002;
- Intellectual Property - Policy 31.13.

Although Type 1 PDFs are unpaid appointments, they are expected to work with the AVPSRCA, or designate, on issues of policy and relationships with other external funding agencies.

11. Teaching Appointments

Teaching appointments are in accordance with the relevant collective agreement.

If applicable, teaching activities will result in a change to the term and/or compensation of Type 2 PDF appointments at the mutual consent of the relevant parties.

12. Interpretation

Questions of interpretation and application of this procedure or its accompanying policy are referred to the AVPSRCA whose decision is final.

Related VIU Policies and Procedures:

Policy 31.03 and Procedure 31.03.001 - VIU Ethics Research Board

Policy 31.07 and Procedure 31.07.001 Animal Care

Policy 31.10 and Procedure 31.10.001 Integrity and Conduct in Scholarly Activity

Policy 31.13 Intellectual Property

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