

# Employment Equity Policy

**Category:** Human Resources

**Approval:** PVP

**Responsibility:** Associate Vice-President, Human Resources

**Date:** August 1997

## Purpose/Reason for Policy:

The concepts of equal employment opportunity, employment equity and affirmative action are all related to each other, and to the concept of non-discrimination. However, there are some subtle differences among them.

Equal employment opportunity is generally used in the context of hiring. It indicates an intention to assess candidates objectively, on the basis of merit, and without regard to personal characteristics that are protected under human rights laws, such as race, sex, religion, and disability.

Employment equity and affirmative action both refer to programs that seek out minority members for employment opportunities. Again, these are often used in the context of hiring, although both concepts encompass much more than hiring alone. Often, these programs may involve preferential hiring of qualified candidates who are minority group members. Affirmative action is usually voluntary, while law, or a contract compliance program that is applied to all businesses that wish to obtain contracts from a certain source, such as the federal government, usually mandates employment equity. Affirmative action can apply to any protected group that is regarded as disadvantaged, while employment equity applies to the four designated groups of Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, visible minorities and women.

## Policy Statement:

Trent University affirms its commitment to establishing equal opportunities of employment. The University will strive to create an environment that is free of discrimination. The University's goal is to achieve and maintain a representative workforce through the full participation of groups which are found to be under-represented, especially women, persons with disabilities, visible minorities, and aboriginal peoples. The University will seek to identify and remove discriminatory barriers in employment areas including recruitment, hiring, training and promotion practices. Where necessary, the University will develop proactive employment equity measures with the concurrence of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, the bargaining units, and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has provided guidelines for interviewing. Please see the following for examples.

## QUESTIONS AT EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEWS

Category	Appropriate	Inappropriate
Birthplace, Ancestry, Ethnic origin, Place of Origin	A special interest organization serving people identified by a prohibited ground of discrimination may inquire about such status if having that status is a genuine and reasonable requirement for the job in question.	All other inquiries.
Sex, Sexual Orientation, Marital Status, Family Status	An applicant may be asked his or her relationship to other employees if the employer has a nepotism or anti nepotism policy regarding spouses, children or parents of the employer or an employee.	All other inquiries. Note: Inquiries which are pertinent to an employee superannuation, pension or insurance plan may be made after hiring.
Age (18-65)	An applicant may be asked his or her age if it is a genuine and reasonable requirement for the job in question.	All other inquiries. Note: After hiring, the employee may be asked for proof of age, and inquiries may be made about age which are relevant to an employee superannuation, pension or insurance plan.
Race Colour	Nil.	Inquiries which would elicit information about race or colour, such as physical characteristics -- colour of eyes, hair, height and weight.
Religion, Creed	Nil.	Inquiries about religious affiliation, churches attended, religious holidays, customs observed, willingness to work on a specific religious holiday.
Citizenship	You may ask "Are you legally entitled to work in Canada?" as Canadian citizens or permanent residents will be given preference among candidates whose qualifications are judged to be relatively equal.	S.I.N. may contain information about an applicant's place of origin or citizenship status. A S.I.N. may be requested following a conditional offer of employment.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Appropriate</b>	<b>Inappropriate</b>
Education	Job-related inquiries designed to determine the merits of an applicant's qualifications, including verification of educational background.	Inquiries designed to elicit information about any prohibited ground of discrimination.
Records of Offences	Inquiries to determine whether an applicant is bondable if this is a genuine and reasonable qualification of the job.	Inquiries about record of offences which are not job-related.
Handicap	Inquiries which are directly related to an applicant's ability to perform the essential duties of the job, and type of accommodation which may be required. If the job requires the operation of a motor vehicle, proof of a valid driver's licence may be asked for during the interview.	Medical examinations, or inquiries about health which are not directly related to the applicants ability to perform the essential duties of the job, may constitute evidence of unlawful discrimination.
References and Memberships in organizations	Nil.	Applicants should not be required to provide references that would identify his or her religious affiliation.

## PROCEDURES

### RESPONSIBILITY

Equality in employment will be achieved only by the dedicated commitment and integrity of all employees. Every manager, supervisor and all other decision makers are responsible for helping to attain this goal at Trent University.

### EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PROGRAM

Trent University's Employment Equity Program will revise, establish and update policy and procedure guidelines on an ongoing basis in the following areas:

1. Recruiting --Hiring procedures will be reviewed and regularly evaluated to ensure that standards, tests and other selection criteria do not inappropriately limit job opportunities for any prospective employee.
2. Training --All qualified employees will be encouraged to take advantage of training and development initiatives such as university sponsored education, supervisory/managerial training and development.
3. Career Development --Special efforts will be made to inform employees of career opportunities within the university and related requirements. Objective promotion and career development criteria will be established to ensure fair competition for all employees.

4. Compensation --Total compensation and performance management programs will be reviewed to ensure that job evaluation criteria and salary and benefit structures are equitable measures of job worth and that promotions and rewards are based on qualifications and merit.
5. Working Environment --reasonable physical accommodation will be provided to enable qualified handicapped people to become part of Trent University and to achieve satisfactory job performance. Every effort will also be made to ensure that no employee is subject to sexual harassment.
6. Administration --Trent University's Employment Equity policy and procedures will be approved, by the President and the Executive Committee implemented and monitored by the Human Resources Department and carried out by the management and supervisory team.

**Implementation:**

The University will take the following steps to act on its commitment and concern:

- communicate this policy, and programs and procedures developed under it, to all University employees, including supervisory and managerial personnel, who will be responsible for its implementation;
- examine and alter as necessary any policies and practices that have the result of unreasonably preventing or limiting the provision of equality in employment in hiring, promotion, remuneration, training or working conditions;
- recognize, in addition to educational qualifications, other forms of training and skills gained through experience and records of accomplishment in other endeavours;
- monitor University documents and other official communications to ensure that they are free of discriminatory language and sex-role or other stereotyping;
- foster and endorse attitudes and behaviour that advance employment equity.

While remaining alert and sensitive to the issue of employment equity for all, the University has an immediate and special concern with the role and experience of groups who are known to experience disadvantages in employment in Canada, including women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities and aboriginal peoples.

These special measures will include:

- determination of the representation of women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities and aboriginal peoples within the University's workforce by a process of self- identification;
- development of new opportunities to assist qualifiable members of those designated groups within the University's workforce to compete on equitable terms for available positions;
- active recruitment to enlarge the pool of women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities and aboriginal peoples as candidates for employment and for promotion into employment levels and categories in which they may be under-represented;
- establishment of tracking systems to monitor the effectiveness of the University's employment equity policies and practices.

To measure progress towards approved goals and objectives consistent with the spirit of this Policy, the results of initiatives undertaken pursuant to the above will be documented and reported to the University community on an annual basis.

**Contact Officer:**

Associate Vice-President, Human Resources

**Date for Next Review:**

May 2020

**Related Policies, Procedures & Guidelines**

- a) Recruitment Policy

**Policies Superseded by This Policy:**

- a) N/A