



**POLICY & PROCEDURE DOCUMENT**

**NUMBER:** 4.2205  
**DIVISION:** General University  
**TITLE:** Recruitment and Employment of Faculty and Staff  
**DATE:** January 3, 2000  
**REVISED:** February 2, 2005; July 1, 2012; October 2, 2017; June 12, 2024  
**POLICY FOR:** All Faculty and Staff Positions  
**AUTHORIZED BY:** Department of Human Resources

**I. Purpose and Scope**

As an institution of higher learning, Western Kentucky University ( W K U ) seeks to employ individuals with the requisite skills and abilities necessary to assist W K U in accomplishing its mission and strategic objectives.

**II. Recruitment Philosophy and Compliance**

Consistent with WKU's policy and applicable federal and state regulations, employment decisions will be made based on principles of equal employment opportunity, without regard to race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, marital status, age, uniform service, veteran status, or physical or mental disability, and consistent with WKU's Affirmative Action Plan. Western Kentucky University's goal is the recruitment and employment of the best qualified individual(s) based upon position requirements and other factors determined to be relevant for the position and hiring unit.

All full-time and regular part-time positions, with an expected duration of more than six months, are subject to this policy. Specific situational exceptions are noted in section IV (Exclusions). Any deviations from this policy, other than those noted in section IV, must be approved in writing (and in advance) by the office of Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action/University ADA Services (EEO), the Department of Human Resources (Human Resources), and the respective Senior Divisional Administrator.

All recruitment and employment activities conducted by WKU are to be carried out in accordance with applicable state and federal laws, principles of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, and established WKU policies. Department/Unit Heads are responsible for ensuring that all activities related to the hiring process are administered within these guidelines.

All persons desiring employment at WKU must follow specific application instructions found in each job posting. Job applications are only accepted in electronic format through the online system accessible at <http://www.wku.edu/hr/careers>. Individuals interested in applying for positions at WKU are encouraged to contact Human Resources at (270) 745-5360 for assistance. Comprehensive faculty and staff job vacancy information is updated continuously and may be accessed at this website: <http://www.wku.edu/hr/careers/>.

### III. Procedure

#### 1. Recruitment Procedures

- a) All openings for regular full-time and regular part-time positions, with an expected duration of more than six months, shall be filled through an open and competitive search process except as otherwise allowed in this policy.
- b) The *primary means* of communicating (advertising) position vacancy information is through <http://www.wku.edu/hr/careers/>. Upon administrative approval to fill a vacancy, Human Resources shall be responsible for posting job vacancy information on the website and for initiating application procedures. In consultation with the Hiring Official, Human Resources will determine the time period for positions to be advertised based on the position classification. Recruitment may involve a variety of sourcing and outreach efforts and shall be continued until the position is filled or other action is taken.

- c) All vacancy announcements shall contain the following policy statement:

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to a policy and practice of providing equal employment and educational opportunities to all individuals. In accordance with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Revised 1992, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, no form of discrimination or harassment will be tolerated at WKU on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, marital status, age, uniformed services, veteran status, genetic information, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, or physical or mental disability in admission to career and technical education programs and/or activities, or employment practices.

- d) The office of EEO is authorized to review and determine adequacy of a given applicant pool.
- e) Kentucky state law requires all public institutions of postsecondary education to conduct pre-employment criminal background checks to determine suitability for employment. This process will be handled through a partnership of communication between Human Resources, the department/hiring unit, and the individual offered a position of employment.
- f) For searches where there is a reasonable likelihood a foreign national may be selected, Hiring Officials should contact the International Legal Affairs

Specialist/Assistant General Counsel as soon as possible for procedures regarding visa sponsorship and immigration status

## 2. Use of a Previous Applicant Pool

A department/hiring unit may request to use a previous applicant pool to fill the same or a similar position, with respect to qualifications, under the following conditions: (a) if the request is made within a period of 90 days from the date of vacancy publication on the University's website, and (b) if the vacancy has similar job qualifications. Applicants will be notified about the use of a previous applicant pool request and provided with an opportunity to be considered for the additional vacant position(s).

## 3. Positions Requiring Search and Screen Committees

- a) In order to ensure objective and fair hiring decisions, Search and Screen Committees are required for all exempt staff positions and all faculty positions. Search and Screen Committees may be utilized for other vacancies at the option of the Department/Unit Head.
- b) Each Search and Screen Committee shall be comprised of a minimum of three individuals who reflect the diversity of WKU's campus community. Search and Screen Committee members, in consultation with the Hiring Official (Department Chair/Director), should agree on an effective means for evaluating candidates. A part of evaluating candidates **must** include reference checks, which may include listed and unlisted references.

Search and Screen Committee members, and/or Hiring Officials, must attempt to contact both *listed* references (e.g., provided by an applicant) and *unlisted* references (e.g., former employers). While the University preserves its right to contact all references without receiving prior approval from an applicant, Search and Screen Committee members and/or Hiring Officials should exercise due consideration when contacting *current employers* of an applicant. The Committee Chair or Hiring Official should advise each applicant in advance of such contact. All applicants have the option to withdraw their candidacy, if they do not wish for WKU to contact their current employer.

- c) The Search and Screen Committee Chair is responsible for presenting the committee's analysis of strengths and weaknesses of the applicants interviewed. Search and Screen Committees shall not provide any "order ranking" of candidates, nor any recommendations to hire a specific candidate. All Search and Screen Committee deliberations and documentation shall remain and be considered confidential/personnel information.
- d) As soon as they become aware, Search and Screen Committee members must notify the Hiring Official that he or she knows (or has worked with) any of the applicants for the position and describe the nature of the connection (e.g., casual acquaintance, co-author, former student). The Hiring Official must then determine whether or not it is in the best interest of the search process for the individual to remain a member of the committee.

If the Hiring Official determines that the nature of the connection between the committee member and the applicant(s) will not impact the member's ability to serve appropriately, the Hiring Official or Committee Chair must inform the other committee members of the existence and nature of the connection.

No individual may serve on a Search and Screen Committee if a relative, as defined by Policy 4.2302 *Employment of Relatives*, is an applicant for the position being searched.

- e) Individuals who anticipate being a candidate, or who submit an application for a given vacancy, shall not serve on a Search and Screen Committee for such position. Individuals who apply for a given vacancy, after serving as a Search and Screen Committee member for that vacancy, must immediately remove themselves from the committee.
- f) It is the responsibility of the Search and Screen Committee Chair or Hiring Official to notify candidates, who were selected for an interview, of the final search outcome

#### 4. Internal Searches

In some circumstances, an internal search may be conducted at WKU. Such exceptions must be in the best interest of WKU and approved by the Senior Divisional Administrator and Human Resources. Internal search vacancy notices will be published on <http://www.wku.edu/hr/careers/>. All individuals who are currently employed, in full-time or part-time regular positions, are eligible to apply for internal searches.

### IV. **Exclusions**

#### 1. Up to Six Month Appointments

Departments/Units may appoint individuals in full-time or part-time staff positions for up to six months without any formal search/recruitment requirements.

#### 2. Temporary Full-Time Faculty Appointments

Occasionally, faculty vacancies occur too close to the start of a term to permit a full search process to take place. In such circumstances, academic departments/units may appoint individuals in full-time faculty positions for up to one academic year without any formal search/recruitment requirements. Examples where this is appropriate include but are not limited to: the unexpected resignation of a faculty member, the unexpected need of a faculty member for an extended leave of absence, or unanticipated course demand, which cannot be met using current full-time or part-time faculty.

#### 3. Grant or Contract Positions

Principal investigators may name, in grants or contracts, uniquely qualified individuals who may be critical to being awarded the grant or contract. In such cases, and following confirmation of the grant or contract, these individuals may be placed in positions for a defined and limited time period (e.g., fixed term of appointment) without a competitive search process. The proposal to hire the individual(s) named in a grant or contract must be approved in writing through administrative channels including the Senior Divisional Administrator. Human Resources is notified upon final approval.

#### 4. Visiting Scholars and Research Collaborators

Individuals may be hired in roles of visiting scholars and researchers for finite periods of time in agreement with the funding source (e.g., Fulbright scholars, scholars funded by foreign institutions). The proposal to hire a Visiting Scholar or Research Collaborator must be approved in writing through administrative channels to the respective Senior Divisional Administrator. Human Resources is notified upon approval by the Senior Divisional Administrator.

#### 5. Strategic Opportunity/Critical Need Hires

On rare occasions, WKU may identify an individual whose expertise and skills are particularly aligned with pressing WKU needs, strategic priorities, unique opportunities, or other circumstances. Under these circumstances, the Senior Divisional Administrator may recommend to the President, for review and approval, the hiring of such an individual on a non-competitive basis. The proposal to hire an individual in this category must be presented in writing by the Senior Divisional Administrator to the President, along with any supporting documentation to help justify the hiring decision. Human Resources is notified upon approval by the President.

### **V. Right to Deviate**

Western Kentucky University reserves the right to deviate from this policy in rare instances when the best interests of the University are served.

### **VI. Related Policies**

See also:

*0.2040 Discrimination and Harassment Policy*

*0.2070 Title IX - Sexual Misconduct/Assault*

*4.2000 Employment Authorization and General Working Conditions*

### **VII. Reason for Revision**

June 12, 2024 - Updated vacancy announcement policy statement. Removed unnecessary text on notification of candidates not selected.

