Operational Strategy
2023-2027

Human Resources

McMaster University

ADVANCING McMASTER'S PEOPLE AND CULTURE PRIORITIES

It is my privilege to be a member of our innovative and inclusive McMaster community which welcomes the diverse talents of approximately 15,000 faculty, research, staff and student employees.

McMaster understands that people are the university's most valuable asset. No matter your role, McMaster is better because you are here. The human resources service department is here to support you with everything from onboarding to health & safety to your own development and career growth.

I'm honoured to lead our HR team through this period of further aligning our focus to the greater needs of the university, collaborating across the organization and delivering service excellence.

We look forward to partnering with you as we continue to make McMaster a wonderful place to learn, work and thrive.

Wanda McKenna, AVP and CHRO

Our HR Vision

To advance a healthy, safe, and inclusive culture that inspires a diverse and talented McMaster community to contribute to a Brighter World.

Our HR Mission

We cultivate a community in which every employee's experience is that of acceptance, inclusion, belonging, and meaningful connection with the University's mission and institutional priorities. We do this through our following four Strategic Pillars.

STRATEGIC PILLAR 1	STRATEGIC PILLAR 2	STRATEGIC PILLAR 3	STRATEGIC PILLAR 4
Championing University People and Culture	Collaborating with our University and Community Partners	Advancing Service Delivery and Operational Excellence	Promoting Learning, Development and a Growth Mindset

1. Championing University People and Culture

We champion sustainable people and culture strategies, in support of an inclusive, psychologically healthy & safe work culture and employee experience

KEY OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY ACTIVITIES
Align HR (People and Culture) initiatives with university strategy, arising internal priorities and critical external trends	• Enhancing the McMaster brand and global reputation through progressive HR planning, people initiatives and new programming that drives organizational goals (focus on recruitment/retention, compensation/ benefits) • Ensuring McMaster has an effective and aligned HR Operating Model and resource agility to address arising needs and ensure harmonized decentralization • Facilitating and participating in opportunities to inspire creativity, innovation and excellence across our community regarding employee experience and workplace priorities • Handling complex employment issues with a view to early and effective dispute resolution and a fundamental commitment to protecting human rights
Champion an inclusive, psychologically healthy and safe work culture of belonging in alignment with leading global practice	• Building new strategies and leadership capability to enable a positive workplace culture which promotes community and belonging • Partnering in the development and delivery of Employment Equity and institutional Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility (DEIA) priorities, Indigenous strategies and initiatives to promote inclusive excellence • Ensuring ongoing feedback mechanisms are in place to assess and enhance the employee experience at McMaster • Modelling McMaster Values, our new Finance and Operation Division Values and McMaster Leadership Capabilities
Ensure people and culture sustainability through fiscal responsibility	• Delivering value-added, competitive and progressive HR programs and services • Building new compensation and benefits strategies • Generating bargaining outcomes within established mandates • Identifying new opportunities for revenue generation and cost savings • Expansion of internal and external partnerships to enhance and complement services

2. Collaborating with Our University and Community Partners

We ensure ongoing communication and consultation through inclusive and collaborative partnerships, forums, and community engagements to help inform HR initiatives and enhancements

KEY OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY ACTIVITIES
Maintain focus on understanding the diverse and arising HR needs across our community	• Supporting ongoing review of strategic and operational plans of our various faculties and departments • Facilitating regular discussions with university leaders and administrators to understand common and unique needs and to solicit feedback • Leveraging insights from interactions, new embedded HR Strategic Partner roles/ HR teams to inform planning
Promote alignment and awareness of HR policies, programs, processes, and initiatives	• Facilitating HR Governance to ensure ongoing review of priorities, arising needs and required changes • Delivering on a robust HR communications and community engagement strategy • Enhancing community access and transparency to HR policies, processes, resources and information • Identifying and actioning synergies with university partners to create efficiencies and enhance experiences
Build HR presence and reputation through trusted community partnerships	• Continuing to expand and enhance internal partnerships to support new HR, DEIA, Indigenous and Talent strategies (i.e. mental health, student to staff, early career, internal mobility, agile/gig workforce, retiree returns) • Ensuring regular connection with key university partners, employee group representatives and committees • Offer community Town Halls/Forums to share ongoing updates and gain insights • Expanding opportunities for community collaboration on HR Operations matters • Evolving external partnerships to expand available program and service offerings

3. Advancing Service Delivery and Operational Excellence

We are committed to continuously reviewing and progressing our policies, programs, processes, and professional HR services as we strive for operational excellence and seamless delivery.

KEY OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY ACTIVITIES
Explore and leverage technology to advance HR services and efficiency	• Driving effective and efficient HR operations, systems, and processes that demonstrate stewardship of HR resources • Leveraging technology, machine learning and innovation to streamline HR processes and improve the employee experience • Scaling up services to meet growing employee and department/faculty needs • Refining and measuring service delivery performance and effectiveness
Use evidence-based data approaches to inform HR planning and design	• Building new data functionalities and move away from traditional reporting. • Working with UTS to design innovative workforce data architecture, storage and access • Advancing People Analytics strategy and maturity through robust data governance, and developing new tools to widen data access and support self-service data sourcing • Achieving operational excellence through a clear, effective and sustainable people analytics strategy, define the guiding vision for HR data transformation journey
Enable innovation and continuous improvement	• Identifying and developing synergies with other functional streams • Conducting ongoing external research and best practice reviews • Ensuring proactive internal process reviews, audits, and compliance • Providing mechanisms for community feed-back and engagement in needs identification, solution development and implementation • Facilitating agile project teams to work on identified gaps, solutions, and enhancements
Communicate the HR Operating model, define service levels and update as required	• Evolving specializations and role scope within the HR Operating model in alignment with arising priorities and available resourcing • Continuing to build self-service capability, knowledge bank and resources for our community to support people related activities

4. Promoting Learning Development and a Growth Mindset

We promote a community of continuous learning and belonging where our employees contribute their strengths and expertise, can be their authentic selves, have the opportunity to grow personally and professionally, and be celebrated for their accomplishments.

KEY OBJECTIVES	PRIORITY ACTIVITIES
Provide innovative and inclusive employee development opportunities for each phase of their career journey	• Continuing enhancements to existing programming to ensure inclusive, hybrid offerings • Enhancing orientation and onboarding processes, resources, and training to create positive and inclusive experiences for new employees to the university • Continuing to automate and integrate Health & Safety and other mandatory training • Designing new and promoting available development opportunities • Modernizing learning and development related policies and programs
Advance leadership capability and capacity	• Refreshing McMaster leadership capabilities for use by all academic and administrative leaders • Managing external vendor solutions and partnerships to enable development programming (i.e., multi-rater, assessments, mentoring, coaching) • Implement new opportunities for shared learning and to showcase successes • Building infrastructure to support leader mobility and career paths • Updating tools, resources and training to support leaders in managing employee development
Promote a culture of belonging and recognition	• Facilitating and participating in Communities of Practice, affinity groups, focus groups to build networks and promote belonging • Continuing to enhance recognition related programming in alignment with new organizational values and leadership capabilities • Creating opportunities for connection and discussion on key topics for our community • Enhancing annual review and merit processes
Continue to grow HR team expertise and engagement	• Continuing to advance "One HR" team culture and alignment of activities across teams • Formalizing a talent strategy and ongoing reviews • Enabling targeted team and individual development opportunities • Continuing to review team engagement activities