

## **Students Nova Scotia Operations Policy**

Approved July 12, 2016

### **Human Resources**

- 1 Students Nova Scotia will, at all times, meet or exceed the labour standards of the province of Nova Scotia.
- 2 Should a section of this policy conflict with Students Nova Scotia bylaws, the bylaws shall hold authority, unless they violate the labour laws of the province of Nova Scotia.
- 3 The Executive Director shall maintain working personnel files on all employees with respect to the following: staff evaluations, position profiles, and employment contracts; information relating to the administration of health and dental plans; and, records pertaining to vacation days, sick days, and other absences.
  - a. These files shall be maintained at the Students Nova Scotia offices
  - b. Students Nova Scotia shall ensure that all personnel files are kept secure and confidential, in compliance with federal privacy legislation.
- 4 All payroll functions shall be the responsibility of the Executive Director.
  - a. Specifically, the Executive Director shall ensure that all payroll taxes and remittances are submitted in a timely manner.
- 5 Students Nova Scotia employees shall be categorized as one of the following:
  - a. Full-Time, where the employee under contract is expected to work between thirty-five (35) and forty (40) hours per week;
  - b. Part-Time, where the employee under contract is expected to work less than thirty-five (35) hours per week; or
  - c. Extraordinary, where the employee is on a short-term contract (less than 182 days) or does not fit the descriptions outlined in a. or b.
- 6 The Executive Director shall create, and maintain within the office, a position profile for each employee. The position profile shall include, but not be limited to:
  - a. Title;
  - b. Reporting Structure;
  - c. Organizational Status (Full-Time, Part-Time, Extraordinary);
  - d. Compensation (Salary, Wages, Honorarium);
  - e. Position summary;
  - f. Required qualifications;
  - g. Responsibilities and duties; and
  - h. Signature of the Chair and Executive Director.

- 7 Students Nova Scotia will strive to maintain an ample budget for professional development for staff, corresponding approximately \$1000 per full-time staff-member.
- 8 Students Nova Scotia employees will be encouraged to approach the Executive Director with professional development opportunities they wish to pursue, leaving discretion to the Executive Director over which activities to finance.
- 9 All Students Nova Scotia employees are eligible for health and dental insurance with costs shared between the employee and employer. This are currently provided through the Saint Mary's Student Association.

***Leave***

- 10 Recognized office holidays shall be observed in according with the labour laws of the province of Nova Scotia, and shall be identified in the contract of employment.
- 11 Vacation time accorded to the employee shall be identified in the contract of employment.
- 12 At the discretion of the Executive Director, employees may be given time in lieu in recognition of overtime and extra hours worked.
- 13 The offices shall be closed from December 24<sup>th</sup>, until the first work day following New Year's Day of each year.
  - a. This period shall not count as vacation time for employees.
- 14 Sick leave shall be defined as the absence of work due to illness or accident.
- 15 Employees must inform their immediate supervisor of their absence due to sick leave.
- 16 Where an employee is on sick leave for more than three (3) consecutive days, or where the employee has missed more than five (5) days due to sick leave within the last month of work, the employee may be required to provide their immediate supervisor with medical evidence or certification of illness from a certified practitioner.
- 17 Any employee suspected of abuse of sick leave time may be required to provide medical evidence of illness to the Chair. Any Students Nova Scotia employee found to be abusing sick leave time will be disciplined. Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, suspension without pay, deductions of pay for time missed, and dismissal.

- 18 All full-time and part-time employees shall qualify for Maternity/Paternity Leave.
- 19 Employees requesting Maternity/Paternity Leave must present the Executive Director a certificate from a qualified medical practitioner, stating that they (the employee) is pregnant, or partner, and specifying the anticipated date of delivery.
- 20 Upon receipt of the certificate, the Executive Director shall grant the employee leave without pay in accordance with the labour laws of Nova Scotia.
- 21 The start date of the Maternity/Paternity Leave will be the date requested by the staff member in their application to leave. For example, where the staff member is unable to physically perform their job or where the staff member is unable to continue their job due to illness, the Executive Director may approve a change in the start date of their leave.
- 22 Staff members on Maternity/Paternity Leave shall not be entitled to paid leaves of absence during the period of Maternity/Paternity Leave.
- 23 A staff member on Maternity/Paternity Leave who decides not to return to their former employment shall give the Executive Director as much notice as possible, but not less than two (2) weeks written notice prior to the expiration of the leave.
- 24 The employee shall continue to receive medical and dental benefits for the duration of Maternity/Paternity leave.
- 25 All full-time and part-time employees shall qualify for Parental Leave. Employees are entitled to Parental Leave in accordance with the labour laws of Nova Scotia.
- 26 Employees shall receive two (2) days paid leave to attend the birth of their child.
- 27 A staff member on Parental Leave who has decided not to return to their former staff position within Students Nova Scotia shall give the Executive Director as much notice as possible, but not less than two (2) weeks written notice prior to the expiration of the leave.
- 28 Employees shall be entitled to receive special leave under the following circumstances (appropriate length indicated):
  - a. Illness within the immediate family (4 days);
  - b. Bereavement (3 days);
  - c. Travel time for illness within the immediate family or bereavement (2 days);
  - d. Administration of the Estate (2 days);
  - e. Disaster conditions (2 days);
  - f. Examinations for courses approved by employer (1 day);
  - g. Funerals (1 day);
  - h. Adoption proceeding of child (2 days);
  - i. Formal hearing to become a Canadian Citizen (1 day);

- j. Recognized religious holidays (as required);
  - k. Jury Duty (as required);
  - l. Personal move (1 day);
  - m. Death of a friend/family member (as required);
  - n. Employee Marriage (discretion of the Executive Director); and
  - o. Other special leaves as approved by the Executive Director.
- 29 Employees may take leave without pay under the following circumstances:
- a. To participate as candidates in Federal, Provincial, Municipal, and local School Board elections;
  - b. For good and sufficient cause, as determined by the Executive Director, provided leave is requested and approved in writing by the Executive Director;
  - c. Medical reasons, including pregnancy. Requests for medical leave shall be accompanied by a physician's certificate stating the medical reason for the absence as well as the probable date of confinement. Extended medical leaves shall be reviewed at such time as the employee's attending physician certifies that it is unlikely that the employee will be able to return to work on a full-time basis. A physician's certificate stating the employee is able and fit to return to work will be required prior to returning to work;
  - d. For extenuating medical circumstances or bereavement within the immediate family; and
  - e. For religious holiday or celebration, as recognized by the employee and requested in writing to the Executive Director.

### ***Hiring***

- 30 Hiring of all Students Nova Scotia employees shall be conducted by the Executive Director, and where necessary, the outgoing employee. The Executive Director will strike a hiring committee in an advisory role, including at least one (1) Board officer, to advise on the selection of candidates for hire. The Executive Director will retain discretion in selecting the new employee.
- a. Where an officer is unable to participate in the hiring process, the membership shall select another member to replace this officer on the hiring committee.
  - b. The membership shall strive for diversity in experience in members on the hiring panel.
  - c. Any officer whose participation would create a conflict of interest shall excuse themselves from the process.
  - d. If a member feels that a participant in the hiring process has not declared a conflict of interest where one exists, they shall raise this matter with the Chair, or where necessary, the Treasurer.
  - e. The Chair (or the Treasurer) shall rule on the appropriateness of the member's participation in the hiring process.

- f. Students Nova Scotia shall not differentiate or discriminate on the basis of gender, race, origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, mental or physical disability.
  - g. All selections shall be made on the basis of merit.
- 31 All hiring procedures will be conducted in confidence and will remain in confidence, to protect the candidate, current Students Nova Scotia employees and officers, and the integrity of the process.
- 32 All available positions shall be suitably advertised.
- 33 All job postings will contain the following:
- a. A description of Students Nova Scotia;
  - b. A job description, introducing the position and its significance within the organization;
  - c. Duties and responsibilities;
  - d. Qualifications;
  - e. Conditions of employment including starting date, length and conditions of contract, hours of work, salary, benefits (health and dental coverage);
  - f. Application information including contact information for a Students Nova Scotia staff person, the application deadline, a reference number, the method of application, and other details; and
  - g. Notice that Students Nova Scotia is an equal opportunity employer and an invitation for individuals from traditionally excluded communities to self-identify.
- 34 Prior to the commencement of the interview process, criteria for short-listing the applicants shall be created by the Executive Director, under the advice of the hiring committee, and all applicants shall be evaluated against these criteria.
- 35 For the purpose of scheduling and conducting interviews, a shortlist of no less than two (2) and no more than six (6) candidates shall be prepared.
- a. In the event that the Executive Director deems there to be less than three (3) qualified candidates, they will have the option of interviewing two (2) candidates, or reposting the position for a minimum of three (3) and maximum of ten (10) business days.
- 36 The scheduling and coordinating of interviews shall be the responsibility of the Executive Director.
- 37 The Executive Director shall be responsible for preparing in advance a format, and list of questions, for the interview. The other members of the selection committee shall have the opportunity to review and recommend changes to the questions.
- 38 All interviews shall be conducted either in person or via teleconference.

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**Comment [1]:** If we are saying this here, than the comment above about two principal genders needed for the hiring process should be changed

- 39 Before a suitable candidate is offered employment, the Executive Director or designate shall complete reference checks.
- 40 Where the successful candidate declines the offer of employment, the Executive Director has the option to either offer the position to another interviewee, or to reopen the position.
- 41 Immediately upon the acceptance of employment by the successful candidate, the Executive Director or designate shall notify the unsuccessful candidates.
- 42 An employment agreement shall be drawn up and signed by the employee and Executive Director.
- 43 Whenever possible, all efforts shall be made to coordinate a structured and comprehensive orientation between the outgoing and incoming employee. In the event that the outgoing employee is either unwilling or unavailable to provide an orientation, the Executive Director shall arrange for formal training of the incoming employee.
- 44 Prior to the commencement of employment, the incoming employee shall meet with the Executive Director to discuss, among other issues, employee benefits, internal policies, salary and wages, and position profile.

#### ***Performance Evaluation***

- 45 All employees shall receive an annual performance evaluation, to be completed by the Executive Director.
- 46 The employee shall meet with the Executive Director to discuss the evaluation.
- 47 Copies of all performance evaluations shall be kept on file in the possession of the Executive Director.
- 48 If performance issues persist, or if the actions of the employee are considered to be of a magnitude that verbal discussion is not considered an adequate response, a formal written warning will be issued. The following procedure will govern the process:
  - a. The Executive Director, or immediate supervisor, shall have a formal discussion with the employee with respect to their inadequate or inappropriate performance as an employee of the Students Nova Scotia;
  - b. Within five (5) working days, the Executive Director, or immediate supervisor, shall provide the employee with a letter outlining the reasons for dissatisfaction, the corrective measures required, the date by which must

- demonstrate these corrective measures, and the disciplinary measures that may follow if corrective action is not taken;
- c. If prescribed corrective action is not demonstrated by the date specified, then a second written warning shall be issued, following the same procedure outlined above; and
  - d. If there is continued concern, the Executive Director shall reserve the right to either suspend or dismiss the employee.
- 49 If a staff member feels they are receiving unfair treatment from the Executive Director, they may seek mediation by the Officers of the Board of Directors, in a letter to the Chair.
- 50 Excepting the Executive Director who is supervised by the Chair and the Board of Directors, Staff members whose immediate supervisor is not the Executive Director must first discuss a grievance with their supervisor with the Executive Director before approaching the Officers of the Board of Directors.

### **Office Administration**

- 51 Students Nova Scotia shall retain and operate an office for the activities of its staff, and when necessary its officers and members.
- 52 Whenever possible, Students Nova Scotia will aim to have its office operating during regular business hours Monday to Friday, i.e. 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM in September-April and 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM in May-August.
- 53 The administration and operation of its office shall be the responsibility of the Executive Director.
- a. In the absence of the Executive Director, administration and operation of the office shall be the responsibility of the Chair, or at the Chair's discretion, a designated officer or staff member.
- 54 The responsibilities of administering and operating the office will include, but not be limited to:
- a. Securing and maintaining a lease;
  - b. Ensuring prompt and scheduled payment of rent and other costs associated with the operation of office;
  - c. Ensuring that Students Nova Scotia and its employees are supplied with the necessary material resources for the functioning of the organization, and the responsibilities of its staff members; and
  - d. Maintaining, organizing and securing as necessary any records and files pertinent to the operation of Students Nova Scotia.

- 55 Students Nova Scotia will maintain an inventory of all Students Nova Scotia property, including particularly electronic equipment, books, furniture and relatively valuable promotional materials.
- 56 Students Nova Scotia will maintain a Dropbox account with separate files to ensure that all Students Nova Scotia files are accessible to Staff and Board Members as necessitated by the By-Laws or required by the Executive Director or Board Members, but also respecting confidentiality requirements.
- 57 Students Nova Scotia will ensure all electronic files are safely backed-up at all times.
- 58 Students Nova Scotia will ensure all computers used by its staff function adequately, such that they do not unduly cost staff time due to break-downs, glitches, etc. This includes purchasing new equipment when necessary.
- 59 Students Nova Scotia will ensure that all other electronic equipment is maintained and stored safely when not in use.
- 60 When appropriate to Students Nova Scotia's needs, Students Nova Scotia will pay staff \$20 per month to use their private laptop for Students Nova Scotia work, provided they meet the following conditions:
- a. The computer meets Students Nova Scotia's standard for operability and efficiency, as determined by the Executive Director, including virus protection;
  - b. The employee saves all their work for Students Nova Scotia in Students Nova Scotia Dropbox accounts;
  - c. The computer is equipped with the necessary software to complete the employee's work for Students Nova Scotia, notably including Microsoft Office;
  - d. The employee does not need to use software of which Students Nova Scotia would need to retain possession after the employee leaves the organization, such as the In-Design Suite; and
  - e. The staff member accepts that they will remain responsible for maintaining their computer, and Students Nova Scotia will only cover repair costs in cases where damage of the computer clearly is a consequence of the employee fulfilling their responsibilities for Students Nova Scotia.
- 61 Students Nova Scotia will always retain at least one (1) functioning computer belonging to the organization itself.

### **Travel**

- 62 Students Nova Scotia recognizes that at times its employees will have to travel, both inside and outside of the Metro Halifax Area.



- 63 Any employee traveling on behalf of Students Nova Scotia shall have all necessary costs of the travel covered. Necessary costs include, but are not limited to, transportation, accommodation, and food.
- 64 Employees have the choice of using their own personal vehicle for travel, or renting a vehicle.
- 65 Where an employee uses their own vehicle, the employee shall:
- a. Be reimbursed at the same rate as provincial government employees;
  - b. In 2016, the mileage rate will be 42.31 cents/kilometer; and
  - c. Assume all liability with regards to the vehicle.
- 66 Where an employee rents a vehicle, the employee shall:
- a. Purchase the appropriate collision insurance; and
  - b. Rent an appropriate sized vehicle for the number of passengers.
- 67 Where using public transportation, the employee shall:
- a. Make all efforts to obtain discount pricing; and
  - b. Make arrangements at the earliest possible convenience, while seeking the most affordable rates.
- 68 Travel expenses within the Halifax Metro Area will be recognized and/or reimbursed by Students Nova Scotia only on those occasions when such travel is necessary for the conduct of Students Nova Scotia business.
- 69 When employees are traveling outside the Metro Area, and are required to stay overnight, they shall attempt to minimize costs by boarding with members, friends, or relatives, if possible.
- 70 Where employees are required to stay in a hotel, they will seek the most affordable rates.
- 71 Sharing of rooms to minimize costs is encouraged.
- 72 Employees shall be responsible for the cost of any incidentals (phone calls, food not covered by their per diem, etc.) that are incurred.
- 73 Employees shall be entitled to a daily per diem fifty (50) dollars daily when traveling outside the Metro Area. This represents:
- a. \$10 for breakfast,
  - b. \$15 for lunch, and
  - c. \$25 for dinner.
- 74 If meals are provided as part of the meeting/conference, then the value of the meals as outlined in points 72a. to 72c. shall be subtracted from the per diem.

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**Comment [2]:** If we are using 'Students Nova Scotia' throughout the paper it is good to maintain consistency

- 75 Employees shall be issued a cheque for the total value of their per diem upon return to Students Nova Scotia's offices.
- 76 At the discretion of the Executive Director, employees may also receive a per diem while conducting extraordinary business within the Metro Area.

### **Expense Claims and Reimbursements**

- 77 Any Employee or Board Officer may submit an expense claim to the Executive Director, in order to reclaim any personal expenses that would normally be covered by Students Nova Scotia.
- 78 Any Employer or Board Officer wishing to be reimbursed must fill out a reimbursement form and submit it to the Executive Director. Additionally, either the original, or a copy of the receipt for the expenditure must be included.
- 79 The Executive Director shall review the appropriateness of the claim.
- 80 The Executive Director may dispute any expense claims, and refuse to reimburse the member or officer.
- 81 Any member, employee or officer who feels their expense claim has been dealt with improperly may bring the matter before the Officers for resolution.
- 82 All claims must be made within twelve (12) weeks of purchase to be considered valid.
- 83 Students Nova Scotia should always maintain one (1) copy of expense claims at the main Students Nova Scotia offices and transmit one (1) copy with receipts to the Students Nova Scotia accountants.

### **Students Nova Scotia Credit Card**

- 84 Students Nova Scotia shall obtain a credit card or appropriate substitute (i.e. Global Payments Card), to be in the possession of the Executive Director.
- 85 The Executive Director shall have sole authority to use the card.
- 86 The card shall be used solely for the purpose of Students Nova Scotia-related expenditures.
- 87 Any use of the card for personal purposes is prohibited.

- 88 It is the responsibility of the in-coming Executive Director to collect the card from the departing Executive Director before their final day of employment, and to terminate authorization of the credit card within twenty-four (24) hours of the removal or replacement of the departing Executive Director.
- 89 The Executive Director must retain receipts from all expenses, to be filed with card statements in the Students Nova Scotia Accounts. The Students Nova Scotia Treasurer will review all statements and may dispute any charges to the account.
- 90 The Treasurer shall invoice the Executive Director for any inappropriate charges to the account. The invoice is due within thirty (30) days.
- 91 If the Executive Director feels that the Treasurer is incorrect in disputing any charges, they may bring the matter before the Officers for resolution.
- 92 Students Nova Scotia reserves the right to cancel the card at any time.
- 93 Any abuse of the card, for personal expenditures or otherwise, may lead to reprimands, up to and including termination.

### **Insurance**

- 94 Students Nova Scotia shall maintain insurance coverage at all times for Commercial General Liability, Non-Owned Automobile Liability, Employers' Bodily Injury Liability, and Directors' and Officers' Liability.
- 95 Students Nova Scotia's insurance shall cover liability for Students Nova Scotia Staff and Board Members and Officers as appropriate.

### **Social and environmental impact**

- 96 Students Nova Scotia shall strive to purchase Nova Scotia-produced products and services whenever possible, consistent with our desire to encourage local economic development that improves graduate opportunities, and retention.
- 97 Students Nova Scotia shall strive to minimize the environmental footprint of its operations at all times, including through car-pooling, sustainable transit, limited use of non-recyclable materials, and purchasing.

### **Communications**

- 98 All Students Nova Scotia communications must respect the Students Nova Scotia style guide, including appropriate use of the logo, font, colours, and tone.

- 99 No Students Nova Scotia communications materials may include statements that are derogatory or offensive based on ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, ability/disability, educational background, or other characteristic identified by the Executive Director or the Board of Directors.
- 100 All reasonable measures should be taken to ensure a high editorial standard for written Students Nova Scotia materials – including on the web – and materials for public use must be reviewed prior to publication by at least two (2) Staff or Board Members including the author.