Athabasca University

Professional Job Position Description

Section I: Position information

Effective date 2026-11-21 ☒ Update only ☐ Classification review	
Position title	Lead, Talent Acquisition
Position number	998795
Classification level	Excluded Professional C
Position affiliation	☐ AUFA ☒ Excluded
Location	Virtual with Place Based Functions - Athabasca
Department	Human Resources
Reports to	Director, Human Resources

Position summary

Briefly describe the main purpose(s) of the position.

Reporting to the Director, Human Resources, the Lead, Talent Acquisition is responsible for the development, implementation, and continuous improvement of talent acquisition initiatives aligned with Human Resources priorities in support of the University's Strategic Plan, Academic Plan and Athabasca Holistic Impact Plan. The position is responsible for contributing to advancing AU's recruitment and retention strategies, to support institutional talent needs, community workforce development initiatives, and outreach activities.

The Lead, Talent Acquisition develops, implements and champions the University's hiring and recruitment strategy and framework, ensuring the attraction, selection, and retention of diverse, high-calibre talent. This role supports Athabasca University in its commitment to the mission of human resources by promoting best practices in recruitment and selection, fostering an exceptional candidate, employee, and hiring manager experience. The incumbent ensures recruitment processes are effective, inclusive and aligned with the University's values and long-term objectives.

Duties and responsibilities

Organize by key responsibility area and include % of time spent where possible.

Recruitment (40%)

In collaboration with the Director, Human Resources, the Lead, Talent Acquisition is responsible for the development and implementation of AU's recruitment and retention strategy and framework.

The incumbent is responsible for full-cycle recruitment of budgeted positions, including approvals, job postings, calendar scheduling, shortlists, interviews, reference checks and onboarding.

The position will provide training, support, and guidance to line managers of assigned academic and non-academic departments/units on recruitment policies and procedures as well as share expert knowledge regarding the best ways to source candidates for difficult to fill positions.

The Lead, Talent Acquisition will lead the development of training for hiring managers and panel members so that they understand the process and roles and responsibilities of all parties.

Employment Initiatives, Community Partnerships & Athabasca Holistic Impact Plan Support (25%)

The Lead, Talent Acquisition works in collaboration with the office of the CHRO to advance the Athabasca Holistic Impact Plan. Through active participation in community events, career fairs, workshops, and networking initiatives, the incumbent promotes Athabasca University as an employer of choice and enhances the University's visibility and reputation within the region.

The Lead, Talent Acquisition develops and executes targeted recruitment strategies to attract, engage, and retain talent, with a focus on increasing employment opportunities for Albertans residing in Athabasca County.

In support of the university's strategic plan, the incumbent advances institutional commitment to Indigeneity, reconciliation, inclusion, and belonging in all hiring and retention practices. The incumbent contributes to the development and implementation of inclusive recruitment and talent attraction strategies that support workforce diversification, reduce systemic barriers to employment, and foster a welcoming and inclusive workplace culture that reflects the values and priorities of Athabasca University.

Supervision (30%)

The Lead, Talent Acquisition creates and positive and learning atmosphere within the TA team which motivates team members and fosters a leadership culture to help team members to provide their highest contribution to the University and community it serves. The Lead, Talent Acquisition will oversee the daily activities of the recruiting team, monitor their performance, track key performance indicators (KPIs), and provide guidance as needed on difficult recruitment tasks.

The Lead, Talent Acquisition will review any issues requiring escalation from the recruitment team and will present solutions to the Director, Human Resources to review and approve.

The Lead, Talent Acquisition will regularly review and enhance existing recruiting procedures, including job application processes and onboarding protocols. Ensuring they align with best practices and requirements from the collective agreements.

Projects (5%)

Leads, coordinates, and implements talent acquisition and human resources projects and initiatives as assigned by the Director, Human Resources, ensuring objectives are achieved through effective planning, interest holder engagement, and project execution.
Prepares and analyzes recruitment, workforce development, and talent acquisition metrics and reports to support decision-making and planning.

Occupational health and safety

Employees:
Responsible to participate in the AU OHS program as required.

Supervisors:
Responsible for awareness of one's OHS Responsibilities as an AU employee and supervisor, for participating in the AU OHS Program as required, and for ensuring the participation of employees in

the AU OHS Program as required.

See: https://ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/li008

Classification factors

Communication

The Lead, Talent Acquisition demonstrates exceptional written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills, conveying information in a clear, concise, and professional manner across a variety of audiences. The incumbent actively listens to understand the perspectives, needs, and concerns of candidates, hiring managers, leaders, and community interest holders, fostering trust and productive working relationships. The Lead, Talent Acquisition communicates with confidence and credibility when conducting interviews, facilitating recruitment discussions, negotiating employment offers, and providing guidance and feedback to stakeholders. The incumbent adapts communication approaches and messaging to meet the needs of diverse audiences, effectively representing Athabasca University at community events, networking opportunities, and industry engagements. Through effective communication and relationship-building, the Lead, Talent Acquisition promotes collaboration, strengthens interest holder partnerships, and enhances Athabasca University's reputation as an employer of choice.

Supervision

The Lead, Talent Acquisition leads, motivates, and supports a high-performing team of professional recruiters, setting clear goals. The Lead, Talent Acquisition provides constructive feedback identifying areas for improvement and change and recommends professional development opportunities for the team. They also train new recruiters and coach them to grow their stills.

Impact of service or product

The Lead, Talent Acquisition has a significant impact on Athabasca University's ability to attract, recruit, and retain a highly qualified, diverse, and engaged workforce. Through the development and implementation of strategic and innovative talent acquisition practices, the incumbent ensures the University is well positioned to recruit candidates with the knowledge, skills, experience, and values required to support institutional and academic excellence, including in hard-to-fill and specialized roles.

The effectiveness of this role directly influences the quality of hiring decisions, workforce planning outcomes, and the overall employee experience. By implementing equitable, efficient, and candidate-centered recruitment processes, the Lead, Talent Acquisition enhances the University's ability to attract talent that aligns with Athabasca University's culture, mission, and strategic priorities.

In partnership with HR leadership strong community engagement, workforce development initiatives, and strategic partnerships within Athabasca County, Indigenous communities, and other underrepresented groups, the Lead, Talent Acquisition strengthens Athabasca University's reputation as an employer of choice. These efforts increase the University's visibility, expand access to diverse talent pools, and advance institutional commitments to Indigeneity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging, ultimately contributing to a workforce that reflects the communities AU serves.

Independence of action

The Lead, Talent Acquisition operates with a high degree of independence, receiving strategic direction from the Director, Human Resources while maintaining accountability for the planning, coordination, and implementation of the University's talent acquisition programs and recruitment activities. The incumbent exercises considerable discretion and judgment in managing day-to-day recruitment operations, prioritizing initiatives, interpreting policies and procedures, and providing expert advice to hiring managers on recruitment-related matters.

The role requires strong critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills to assess complex recruitment situations, identify appropriate solutions, and ensure compliance with University policies, collective agreements, employment legislation, and best practices. The Lead, Talent Acquisition is expected to independently resolve routine and moderately complex issues and make recommendations that support institutional objectives and workforce needs.

Matters involving significant risk, policy implications, precedent-setting decisions, or potential impact to the University are escalated to the Director, Human Resources for consultation and direction. Through the effective exercise of independent judgment, the Lead, Talent Acquisition ensures consistent, equitable, and strategic recruitment practices across the University.

Complexity

The Lead, Talent Acquisition performs work of considerable complexity that requires the integration of strategic thinking, sound judgment, and a comprehensive understanding of talent acquisition best practices within a complex post-secondary environment. The incumbent is responsible for managing multiple recruitment priorities simultaneously, often balancing competing organizational needs, changing workforce demands, and tight timelines while ensuring an exceptional candidate and hiring manager experience.

The role requires the interpretation and application of University policies and procedures, collective agreements, employment legislation, and recruitment best practices to ensure fair, equitable, and compliant hiring decisions. The Lead, Talent Acquisition must assess complex situations, identify risks and opportunities, and provide recommendations that support both operational requirements and the University's strategic objectives.

The incumbent collaborates closely with Human Resources colleagues and institutional partners to analyze and interpret recruitment and workforce data, identify trends, evaluate the effectiveness of talent acquisition initiatives, and inform evidence-based recruitment strategies. Success in this role requires the ability to synthesize information from multiple sources, navigate ambiguity, and develop innovative solutions to address workforce challenges, particularly in specialized or hard-to-fill positions.

Planning

The Lead, Talent Acquisition requires exceptional planning, organizational, and time-management skills to effectively manage multiple recruitment initiatives and community engagement activities in a dynamic environment where priorities, interest holder needs, and timelines frequently change. The incumbent is responsible for coordinating complex recruitment activities across the University

while advancing workforce development and talent attraction initiatives that support Athabasca University's strategic objectives.

Working closely with hiring managers and organizational leaders, the Lead, Talent Acquisition develops comprehensive recruitment plans that align with operational and strategic workforce needs. This includes identifying role requirements and candidate competencies, determining appropriate talent sourcing and attraction strategies, and developing targeted approaches for specialized or hard-to-fill positions. The incumbent establishes and manages recruitment timelines, coordinates selection activities with hiring committees and interest holders, anticipates potential challenges, and implements proactive solutions to ensure recruitment processes remain on schedule and organizational staffing objectives are achieved.

In addition, the Lead, Talent Acquisition plans and coordinates community engagement and outreach activities designed to strengthen Athabasca University's presence as an employer of choice. This includes developing annual outreach and recruitment plans, identifying and cultivating partnerships with community organizations, Indigenous communities, educational institutions, workforce development agencies, and local interest holders, and coordinating participation in career fairs, networking events, workshops, and other talent attraction initiatives. The incumbent evaluates the effectiveness of these activities and adjusts strategies to enhance the University's ability to attract diverse and qualified candidates, with a particular focus on supporting workforce development initiatives in Athabasca County.

Through effective planning, prioritization, and stakeholder coordination, the Lead, Talent Acquisition ensures talent acquisition and community engagement activities support workforce continuity, succession planning, diversity and inclusion objectives, and the University's long-term strategic goals.

Signatures for section I

Incumbent signature		Date Select a date.
Supervisor signature		Date Select a date.

Section II: Qualifications

Qualifications

Includes education, experience, skills, abilities, and any other special qualifications required. The qualifications relate to the position not the incumbent.

The successful candidate requires a four-year undergraduate degree in Human Resources (or a related field) plus a minimum of 5 years related experience. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered.

Experience with full-cycle recruitment and supervising employees is required. Demonstrated ability to build relationships with community interest holders is required. Strong communication and organizational skills are also required.

Experience in a unionized environment is an asset. Strong knowledge of HRIS and information technology as well as a strong functionality of Microsoft Office Suite and database computer programs is preferred.

Signatures for sections I and II

Department Head signature		Date Select a date.
Executive Officer signature		Date Select a date.
Human Resources review		Date Select a date.