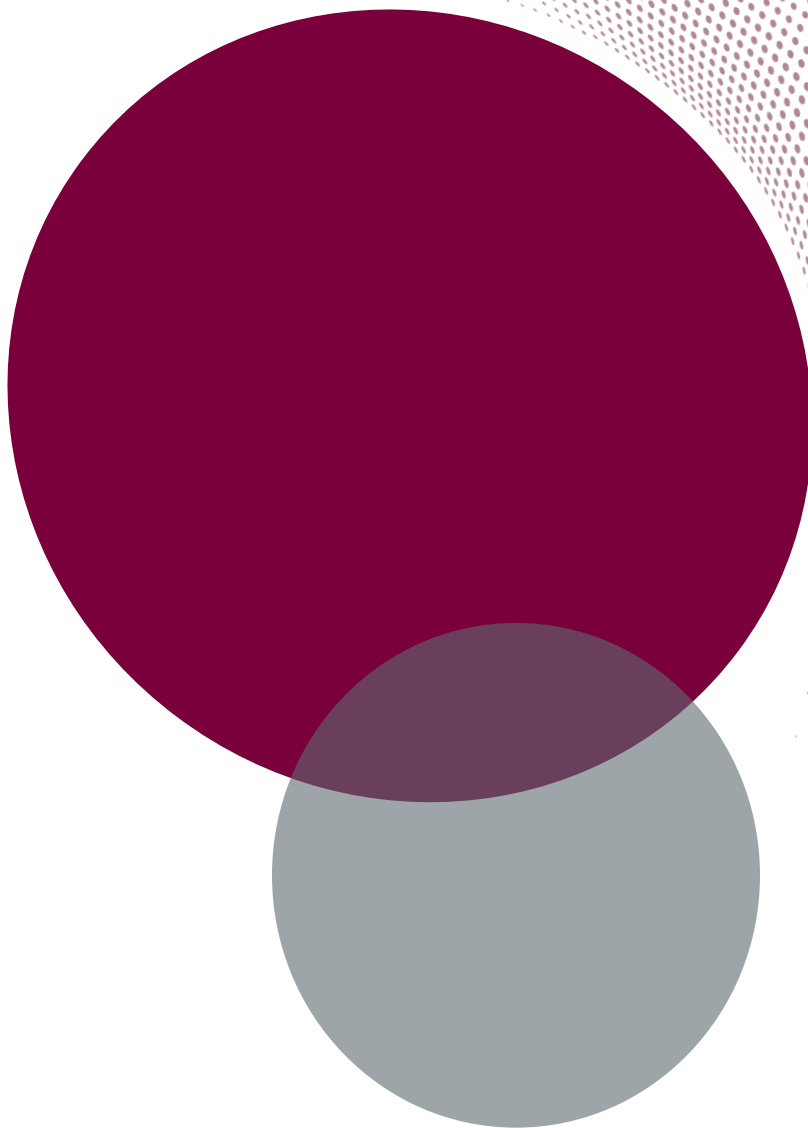


FHS Ambassador Program GUIDE



Introduction

The Faculty of Health Sciences recognizes the importance of welcoming new employees to the Faculty, helping them establish a sense of belonging and building a personal connection to the Faculty and University community right from the start. The FHS Ambassador Program is a volunteer initiative, led by Health Sciences Human Resources, that connects current employees – who have a pride in and passion for working in the FHS, with new hires to provide advice and guidance during the orientation period. The goal of the program is to make the new employee feel welcomed and part of our Faculty, reduce some of the initial uncertainty around starting in a new organization, and help them integrate into their new environment with ease and confidence.

The role of the FHS Ambassador is to connect with new employees during their first week, providing an open, positive space for conversation and to be a contact for general information on norms and day-to-day life in the Faculty. Ambassador’s time commitment is minimal and entirely volunteer-based, with supervisor support.

Benefits

The FHS Ambassador Program helps to build an immediate personal connection between the new employee and the Faculty. The Ambassador can make the new employee feel welcome, answer questions and navigate the organization’s culture. This leads the new employee to feel comfortable sooner, gain more confidence, and become more productive faster. Additional benefits of the FHS Ambassador Program include:

Ambassador	New Employee	FHS
Recognition as a strong performer	One-on-one assistance	Increased employee engagement and retention
Expand network	Jump start on networking in the FHS	Increased communication among faculty and staff
Opportunity to encourage and engage others	Single point of contact for questions	Enhanced employee development
Fresh perspective	Knowledge of Faculty culture	Enhanced quality work processes
Enhanced leadership and communication skills	Smoother acclimation and orientation period	Increased employee productivity

Process

An FHS Ambassador is a dedicated member of the Faculty of Health Sciences that partners with new employees during their first months working in the Faculty. The Ambassador may offer advice and provide encouragement and guidance as they introduce the new employee to the Faculty culture. The FHS Ambassador-New Employee relationship should be open, confidential, positive and supportive.

FHS Human Resources

1. Prior to new employee’s start date, HR will invite one of our Ambassadors to take part in the employee’s orientation.
2. During the new employee’s Welcome Meeting with HR, they will be provided the opportunity to participate in the FHS Ambassador Program.
3. HR will make the initial introduction between the new employee and the FHS Ambassador.

FHS Ambassador

1. Once selected, will be periodically invited to take part in a new employees orientation as their FHS Ambassador, and may accept or decline based on availability at the time.
2. Will receive email introduction to new employee from HR.
3. Set up initial meeting with new employee over coffee/tea (covered by FHS HR).
4. Continue contact over the next 30-60 days, based on need and interest from new employee.

Selection

Any member of the FHS staff or faculty community may volunteer to be considered as an Ambassador. An application form (available online) must be completed and approved by the individual's supervisor to be considered. Manager's may also nominate anyone on their team to be an FHS Ambassador, that they feel would be a good fit for the volunteer position. This allows Managers the opportunity to recognize strong performers, and provide new employees with an excellent resource to ease their transition to their new role. Ambassador candidate's managers may be contacted as a reference.

Selection Criteria:

- Committed to the Faculty and understands the University culture.
- Knowledgeable of appropriate points of contact and location of resources within the Faculty and University.
- Part of the Faculty for minimum of two years.
- Able to provide the time to the new employee.

Key Characteristics

- Proud to work for the Faculty of Health Sciences and McMaster University
- Wants to be an FHS Ambassador
- Friendly, with a positive attitude
- Well regarded and respected by others
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Demonstrated high performance
- Understand the Faculty culture and environment
- Will make time to be accessible and available to the new employee

What an Ambassador is NOT

An FHS Ambassador is a volunteer, and is not required or expected to assume the role of a Mentor or a Manager. An FHS Ambassador is not responsible for an employee's personal and professional development. They are also not meant to replace any formal training or orientation processes that are

already in place. Should any conflicts arise, an FHS Ambassador is not in a position to resolve the matter and must direct the employee to his/her manager for guidance on the relevant issue.

Expectations

An FHS Ambassador serves as a valuable resource to new employees by providing them access to a trusted and motivated individual who will help them feel welcome and reaffirm their decision to join the Faculty.

Ambassador Responsibilities:

- Provide an open, positive space for conversation always respecting confidentiality
- Be a contact for general information on norms and day to day life in the Faculty
- Be professional and maintain a high level of respect and trust
- Follow up with the new employee on a weekly basis
- Make the new employee feel welcome by answering questions and helping navigate the organization's culture

First Meeting

The first meeting between the FHS Ambassador and the new employee should be informal and introductory in nature. This initial introduction should occur as close as possible to the employee's first day. The FHS Ambassador will email/phone the new employee, offering invitation to first meeting over coffee/tea (complimentary).

Suggested Discussion:

- Learn about each others' background, experience, interests, etc.
- Respond to any immediate questions the employee may have
- Agree on parameters for future meetings (length, frequency, method of communication)
- Provide tour of campus/buildings

Ambassador Tips

- Give your full, undivided attention to the new employee
- Don't worry about being perceived as the "expert"; answer as many questions as you can and make sure to follow-up with questions that you could not initially answer
- Try your best to adapt to the new employee's personality and communication style
- Don't be judgemental; only offer feedback that will reinforce continuous, open communication
- Always be patient and positive and don't try to force a relationship;
- Remember, your experience with the Faculty and University is what's most important to the new employee!

Concluding the Relationship

Ideally, the Ambassador-New Employee relationship will continue throughout the new employee's first few months. However, the nature and length of this relationship is entirely dependent on the needs/wants of the new employee and may continue on past the employee's first few months, or conclude at any mutually agreed upon time.

*The FHS Ambassador Program was adapted from the Duke University Buddy Program and Guidelines, MIT Buddy Guidelines for Human Resources and Hiring Managers, NYU Buddy Guidelines, and the University of Pennsylvania Penn Pal Program.