

Job Description

Job Title:	Director, Labour Relations
Department:	Human Resources
Reports To:	Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO)
Jobs Reporting:	None
Salary Grade:	USG 16
Effective Date:	April 2025

Primary Purpose

The Director, Labour Relations, plays a key role in fostering a positive and constructive work environment within the University. This position is accountable for overseeing employee and labour relations including collective bargaining, bargaining strategy, contract administration and grievance resolution in consultation with the CHRO. The Director, Labour Relations ensures compliance with labour laws, collective agreements, and University policies while proactively designing and implementing best practice labour relations protocols that address labour-related challenges and support a positive work environment. The Director is a key member of the Human Resources senior leadership team and is responsible for contributing to the long-term strategic direction for employee relations across the University.

Key Accountabilities

Remain current and conversant with compliance requirements, trends, and best practices

- Maintains awareness of legislation, regulations, and standards related to area of responsibility to ensure compliance
- Maintains awareness of best practices and emerging issues related to area of responsibility
- Monitors trends in higher education and HR to proactively address emerging workforce challenges
- Maintains a strong grasp on the industry through participation in industry groups, networking with peers and conference attendance to gain insights into trends as well as employment arrangements of comparable entities
- Participates in professional development to aid in ongoing knowledge and skills acquisition
- Responsible for the Memorandum of and Collective Agreements with the Associations and Unions to deliver against corresponding commitments; discusses issues requiring attention with the Chief Human Resources Officer

Ensures the effective utilization, deployment and development of resources

- Establishes the direction and priorities and builds the Labour Relations strategy ensuring alignment with the University strategic plan
- Develops, monitors and adheres to the established bargaining mandates and budgets.
- Promotes team spirit, cohesiveness, motivation and commitment to customer service and continuous quality improvement
- Manages more complex escalated labour relations matters
- Accountable for identifying and executing continuous improvement and service delivery excellence opportunities throughout portfolio by identifying and adopting best practices

Leads the execution of delivery for Labour Relations

- Leads collective bargaining negotiations with union representatives, ensuring alignment with University priorities and established bargaining mandates.

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- Develop negotiation strategies and prepare bargaining mandates and budgets in collaboration with University leadership.
- Partners with internal and external legal counsel on bargaining strategy and contract interpretation.
- Oversee the administration and interpretation of collective agreements for non-faculty employee groups
- Leads the resolution of grievances, arbitrations, and other labour disputes for non-faculty employee groups
- Represents Human Resources in mediation, arbitration, and Human Rights Tribunal cases.
- Works with the Chief Human Resources Officer and legal counsel to negotiate settlements and releases.
- Develop strong partnerships with Legal and Immigration Services and Faculty Planning and Policy Office
- Develops strong and effective working relationships with UWSA, FAUW, OPSEU, and CUPE.
- Works closely with union representatives and University leadership to ensure fair and effective resolution of disputes.

Provides Employee and HR Strategy Support

- Works closely with HR staff and management to align labour relations activities with the organization's strategic plans.
- Partners with University Leadership, departments, and academic units to provide HR advice and guidance on employment-related matters.
- Investigates and resolves complex labour relations issues, providing guidance to HR partners and managers.
- Provides leadership to improve the overall employee experience across departments.
- Analyzes and measures employee relations processes to ensure alignment with HR strategic targets.
- Develop and maintain partnerships that respond to evolving organizational needs.
- Develops and delivers value-added HR services aligned with both HR and University strategic plans.
- Research, recommend, and manage initiatives to ensure continued operational excellence.

Represents the University of Waterloo on Human Resources matters

- Liaises externally with professional, local and university community and government organizations, and agencies on behalf of the University on matters related to area of responsibility
- Anticipates risks, develops strategies, and provides recommendations to ensure the University avoids unnecessary legal challenges regarding employment issues.
- Works alongside stakeholders and legal counsel, develop recommendations for defense and work with ministry officers and others for successful outcomes while mitigating risk to the University.
- Develops and maintains partnerships to respond to changing needs and promote the professionalism of Human Resources
- Cultivates effective working relationships with senior management and leadership, University resources, and the employee stakeholder groups (i.e., UWSA, CUPE, OPSEU and FAUW).

Provides leadership and insight to various committees and sub-committees

- Participates in HR Leadership Team meetings in developing both the short- and long-term Human Resources plans in accordance with the strategic plan of the Vice-President, Administration and Finance as well as the broader University's strategic plan
- Research and monitor trends, reviews and/or conducts analyses, identifies and develops reports and exhibits for university level committees in accordance with annual workplans or special initiatives; implements changes as determined by the Committees.

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- Chair of the Union Management Committee
- Working member of the Staff Relations Committee (SRC)
- Chair of the SRC Organizational Change – sub committee
- Ad hoc resource to various other committees for area of responsibility representing the views and interests of the University including the Faculty Relations Committee (FRC) and policy development/revision committees, as required

**All employees of the University are expected to always follow University and departmental health and safety policy, procedures, and work practices. Employees are also responsible for completing all health and safety training, as assigned. Employees with staff supervision and/or management responsibilities will ensure that assigned staff abide by the above, and actively identify, assess, and correct health and safety hazards, as required.*

Required Qualifications

Education

- University undergraduate degree combined equivalent experience
- Certified Human Resource Leader (CHRL) designation

Experience

- 8-10 years of progressive Labour Relations experience including direct experience of collective bargaining, bargaining strategy development, grievance resolution, and arbitration.
- Experience of working within post-secondary education is preferred.
- Policy development experience at a senior level working with a diverse group of constituents
- Experience leading, supervising, motivating and directing the work of others
- Experience designing, implementing and delivering organizational initiatives

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Excellent communication and facilitation skills with demonstrated experience with Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) techniques
- Intermediate skills in Microsoft Office suite
- Experience working with Human Resources Information Systems (Workday)
- Strong business acumen and strategic decision-making ability to support business case design and development and HR portfolio planning
- Ability to translate vision and strategy into tactical execution plans ensuring the most efficient and effective use of resources and deliverables
- Solid analytical ability, judgment, and creative thinking skills to solve complex issues, which may include building consensus through brokering and facilitating effective solutions.

Nature and Scope

Contacts: Internally, communicate with senior leadership and other senior employees across all areas (Faculty, Staff, CUPE, OPSEU) to deal with, influence (SRC, Union Management), motivate and settle highly sensitive, confidential matters for the entire organization. Externally, this position will have significant contacts with customers and suppliers and will be involved in developing recommendations to settle highly sensitive, confidential matters that are critical to the deliverables of the University of Waterloo (Human Rights Tribunal Ontario (HRTO), negotiation with external legal counsel, CUPE Regional and National, Labour Board, WSIB etc.).

- **Level of Responsibility:** The position is responsible and accountable for the results of the labour relations portfolio and is responsible for meeting the HR objectives. The position is also expected to be forward-looking, aware of trends and bring innovative and creative concepts and opportunities to the Chief Human Resources Officer.

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- **Decision-Making Authority:** Responsible and accountable for executing the HR priorities for the Labour Relations area and addressing changes to plans by consulting directly with the Chief Human Resources Officer.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal physical and mental demands expected of a leadership role in an office setting
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a leadership position exposed to stress and pressure associated with senior level responsibilities.