



Institutional Reference Checks: FAQs for HR Professionals

<p>Why is this program being introduced as a pilot program?</p>	<p>The three-year pilot program, effective July 1, 2023, will allow the Office of Human Resources (OHR) to conduct Institutional Reference Checks (IRCs) on the final candidate in a given search for academic appointments conferring tenure. At the end of the second pilot year, a Faculty Senate Administration workgroup will be convened to examine the results of the program and consider converting the pilot program into policy.</p>
<p>Where can I view the “UW–Madison Authorization to Release Information” form that candidates must complete and upload?</p>	<p>The “Authorization to Release Information” form can be viewed on the web page for candidates at hr.wisc.edu/institutional-reference-check.</p>
<p>What are the typical job titles for which IRCs are required?</p>	<p>This program applies to the final candidate in a given search for academic appointments conferring tenure. Job titles that are subject to Institutional Reference Checks may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assistant Professor (FA040)• Associate Professor (FA030)• Professor (FA020)• Academic Program Director (CC004)• Assistant Dean (CC007)• Assistant Academic Program Director (CC006)• Associate Dean (CC008)• Associate Academic Program Director (CC005)• Dean (EX008)• Department Chairperson (OT005) <p>The program may also apply to other similar positions; please check with the Administrative Services Unit (ASU) in the Office of Human Resources at irc@ohr.wisc.edu if you need clarification.</p>



<p>Are IRCs required for final candidates with current or prior UW–Madison appointments?</p>	<p>Yes. The Institutional Reference Check program applies to final candidates for any appointment conferring tenure, regardless of current or prior UW–Madison appointments.</p> <p>However, the program does not apply to an individual who currently holds an academic appointment at UW–Madison that confers tenure and who becomes a final candidate for another academic appointment at UW–Madison that confers tenure.</p> <p>This program includes candidates for any appointment conferring tenure, whether the candidate is being considered for appointment following an open recruitment posted on or after July 1, 2023, or as the result of a search waiver offered on or after July 1, 2023.</p>
<p>What is the best time to request an IRC on a final candidate?</p>	<p>When the decision of the final candidate has been made by the department and Dean, Division HR should notify the candidate of the selection and inform the candidate that the IRC will be initiated. This should be done as promptly as possible. The candidate will have the opportunity to self-disclose misconduct or withdraw their application. The IRC service email (irc@ohr.wisc.edu) should be provided to the final candidate in this notification so that the candidate can communicate directly with ASU on this confidential matter.</p>
<p>If the current or most recent employer of the final candidate does not respond to UW–Madison’s request for information about the candidate, what are the next steps?</p>	<p>If an institution does not respond, OHR will make the request a second time, and, if no response to the second request, OHR will make the request a third time. After the third request, OHR will not make another request of the employer for that candidate. If an institution does not respond after three requests, the hire can proceed.</p>



<p>Do final candidates have an opportunity to self-disclose misconduct as defined under UW–Madison’s IRC program?</p>	<p>Yes. All final candidates for faculty appointments that confer tenure will have an opportunity to self-disclose misconduct by answering the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you been found to have engaged in misconduct? For the purposes of these questions, “misconduct” is defined as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Any violation of employer policy addressing misconduct. Such policies may address, but are not limited to, discrimination, harassment, assault, bullying, inappropriate relationships with subordinates or students, violation of ethical duties, theft, financial mismanagement, research misconduct, insubordination, or absenteeism not protected by laws relating to medical leave or disability accommodations.• Did you leave employment during an active investigation into allegations that you engaged in misconduct, as defined in question one?
<p>What type of information is included in the IRC dossier?</p>	<p>The individualized IRC dossier assembled by OHR will contain all information received, including the nature and duration of the conduct (if any), the length of time passed since the conduct occurred, and any corrective action taken. The dossier will also include any explanations offered by the candidate.</p>
<p>Can we extend an offer if the IRC has not been completed?</p>	<p>Yes. If the IRC is not completed before an offer is made, the offer letter must state that the offer will be withdrawn or the employment terminated if the individual’s IRC results are unacceptable. This contingency language can be found in the offer letter template. This contingency language can be found in the offer letter template in the Recruitment Toolkit (hr.wisc.edu/toolkit/recruitment).</p>
<p>What is the process for handling institutional reference check requests about current or prior UW–Madison employees from other institutions?</p>	<p>Requests for institutional reference checks that are received centrally will be forwarded to the appropriate Division HR contacts. This is similar to the process used by UW–Madison for requests from other institutions related to the sexual harassment or sexual violence reference checks.</p>



<p>Who should I consult if I have questions?</p>	<p>Any questions regarding this pilot program may be directed to the Administrative Services Unit (ASU) within OHR at irc@ohr.wisc.edu.</p>
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