

<b>POLICY NAME</b>	<b>POLICY ON INDIGENOUS MEMBERSHIP/CITIZENSHIP VALIDATION</b>
Approving Body	Senate Board of Governors
Initial Approval Date	Senate (May 8, 2024) Board of Governors (May 16, 2024)
Date of Last Review	n/a
Date of Next Review	Spring 2027
Initial Sponsor	Provost and Executive Vice-President (Academic)

<b>Related Documents</b>	<a href="#">Procedures Related to the Policy on Indigenous Membership/Citizenship Validation</a>
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## STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

McGill’s pathway towards reconciliation is outlined in the 2017 Provost’s Task Force Report on Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Education. This report, which was McGill’s response to the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s 94 Calls to Action report, outlines 52 Calls to Action (CTAs) that support increased Indigenous representation and opportunities across our campus community. Notably for the purposes of this Policy, CTAs #44 and #52 of the Report outline specific targets for increasing the number of Indigenous faculty and staff and supporting their flourishing McGill. To ensure that McGill is responding to these CTAs and respecting the inherent and constitutional rights of Indigenous Peoples, the aforementioned opportunities and spaces must be advanced with care, reflecting specific commitments to truth and reconciliation and to broader Indigenization and decolonization efforts.

The University seeks to adopt a robust and equitable process to validate claims of Indigenous membership/citizenship, which is based on clear evidence and is grounded in Indigenous knowledge, lived experiences, and community recognition, and supported by relational hiring practices. Through this Policy, McGill recognizes the deep and persistent legacies of colonialism, notably the harms caused by the Indian Residential School system, which continue to burden many Indigenous people.

The University is situated on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Rotinonhsón:ni<sup>1</sup> and Algonquin Anishinabeg nations. McGill's physical footprint on Kawennote Tiohtià:ke<sup>2</sup> begets specific responsibilities to Kanien'kehá:ka<sup>3</sup>, the custodians and stewards of these lands. It is with respect to the Kanien'kehá:ka responsibility for Tiohtià:ke that this Policy acknowledges the values embedded in the ceremonies, protocols and teachings, the most notable of which is the Edge of the Woods ceremony, that Kanien'kehá:ka carry regarding what it means to come into relations with these lands, and thus to be in relation to the University as an Indigenous person.

The teachings that ground this Policy are:

*We care for one another by being truthful and transparent in our relations;*

*Honesty is healing and dishonesty causes harm;*

*It is important to uphold and protect the integrity of Indigenous spaces, knowledges and epistemologies, and of claims about Indigenous membership, citizenship and belonging;*

*Accurately representing oneself and honoring one's heritage is an important demonstration of self-respect and accountability to community; and*

*Decisions must be made considering their impact on seven generations to come.*

## **Section 1 – Purpose**

**1.1** This Policy seeks to preserve opportunities anchored to truth and reconciliation. It further seeks to validate claims of Indigenous membership/citizenship in situations where that claim is directly relevant to a person's employment by the University.

**1.2** For greater clarity, this Policy does not aim to investigate or address fraudulent claims of Indigenous identity among persons employed at the University at the time of this Policy's adoption. Fraud, or intentional misrepresentation to gain a material advantage, is misconduct in any case, regardless of the claim in question. It can be, and is, addressed through the University's existing regulatory framework outside of this Policy.

**1.3** In carrying out the purpose set by section 1.1, the University recognizes the diversity of identities, lived experiences, and perspectives of Indigenous persons, within and beyond the McGill community.

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<sup>1</sup> Haudenosaunee peoples

<sup>2</sup> The name of Montréal Island in Kanien'kehá:ka, which translates to, "where the group divided/parted ways."

<sup>3</sup> The Mohawk People

## **Section 2 – Scope**

**2.1** This Policy and its Procedures apply to Indigenous persons who are:

- Aboriginal persons as defined in Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution, that is, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis persons.
- American Indian or Alaskan Native persons who are enrolled members of federally recognized Indian tribes whose reservation boundaries or traditional territories are intersected by the Canada-United States border<sup>4</sup>.

**2.2** McGill recognizes the diversity of Indigenous Peoples as there are thousands of unique Indigenous cultures around the world. The fact that an Indigenous person does not fall within the scope of this Policy does not mean that they are not Indigenous, nor does it prevent them from self-identifying as Indigenous according to their respective Indigenous protocols.

**2.3** McGill, as an institution that is both international in character and committed to truth and reconciliation, pursues the objectives of this Policy while fully recognizing and supporting the success and belonging of academic staff who are from Indigenous communities around the world.

## **Section 3 – Situations Where Indigenous Membership/Citizenship will be Validated**

### **3.1** Candidates for employment

**3.1.1** A person who applies for an employment position at the University and who falls within the scope of this Policy set by s. 2.1 must provide documentation through a validation process set out in the Procedures that accompany this Policy where the position, as expressly stated in the position posting/advertisement:

- a) is tied to the 52 CTAs of the Taskforce on Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Education; or
- b) requires or gives preference to Indigenous membership/citizenship; or
- c) requires future or ongoing, or recognizes prior, engagement with Indigenous communities.

### **3.2** Persons Entering into Relations with the University

**3.2.1** A person who self-identifies as an Indigenous person and falls within the scope of this Policy set by s. 2.1 and is invited to enter relations with the University as a speaker at a major lecture (e.g., Beatty Lecture) or a major awardee (e.g., honorary doctorate), whose invitation is expressly

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<sup>4</sup> This inclusion acknowledges that the Canada-United States border intersects specific Indigenous Nations and/or their respective communities. It respects the kin relations and pre-confederation Indigenous Nation to Indigenous Nation relationships, treaties, protocols, and agreements that have and continue to be honoured by First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples.

to their Indigenous lived experience, must provide documentation through a validation process set out in the Procedures that accompany this Policy.

### **3.3 Current Employees**

**3.3.1** A University employee who self-identifies as an Indigenous person and who falls within the scope of this Policy set by s. 2.1 must provide documentation through a validation process set out in the Procedures that accompany this Policy where the employee applies or accepts a nomination for, or seeks the assignment of a new position, major award (i.e., value of \$10,000.00 or more), opportunity, or responsibility at the University that expressly:

- a) is tied to the 52 CTAs of the Taskforce on Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Education; or
- b) requires or gives preference to Indigenous membership/citizenship; or
- c) requires future or ongoing, or recognizes prior, engagement with Indigenous communities.

**3.3.1.1** Subject to rules or requirements that may be set by external bodies (e.g., Tri-Agency) that may apply in a given situation, this Policy does not apply to any member of the academic staff already carrying out activities or holding a position, opportunity, or award enumerated by s. 3.3.1 who seeks to continue holding or to renew any such position, opportunity, or award.

**3.3.2** This Policy does not affect the criteria for reappointment, tenure, or promotion of current academic staff.

**3.3.3** This Policy does not derogate from or supersede the University's *Policy on Academic Freedom*. As such, this Policy does not preclude any member of the University's academic community to engage with topics about Indigenous issues, regardless of their identity.

**3.3.4** This Policy does not limit academic units' ability to recruit or recommend the academic appointment, in any discipline or area of study, of Indigenous faculty who do not fall within the Policy's scope.

## **Section 4 – Consequences of a Failure to Meet Validation Requirements**

**4.1** Where a person who is asked to validate their self-identification as an Indigenous person does not meet the requirements established through the Procedures that accompany this Policy, the body charged with evaluating and making a decision on the position or opportunity concerned will give this outcome due weight. That body shall further be guided by the principles and the university's commitments to reconciliation.

**4.2** A person who is asked to validate their self-identification as an Indigenous person but does not meet the requirements established through the Procedures that accompany this Policy will not be, solely by virtue of not meeting the requirement, deemed to have committed fraud.

## Section 5 – Promotion of Awareness

**5.1** The University, principally through the Office of Indigenous Initiatives, shall develop education initiatives about this Policy and its purpose.

**5.2** Notice of this Policy and its Procedures will be provided through the University’s online platforms related to employment and other materials related to the 52 CTAs.

## Section 6 – Policy Reporting and Review

The Provost, or the Provost’s delegate, shall report annually to Senate and the Board of Governors on the implementation and application of this Policy. This report will include information about the number of instances where validation requirements were met and not met and about measures taken to pursue the education objectives of this Policy.

A triennial review of this Policy shall be conducted by a working group chaired by the Provost (or delegate) and comprised of at least one (1) Indigenous faculty member, one (1) Indigenous staff member, and three (3) Indigenous community representatives with at least one (1) being Haudenosaunee and one (1) being Algonquin Anishinaabe. This review shall assess and make recommendations on the Policy’s educational measures.

***Legislative History:***

***Approved:***

Senate

Board of Governors

May 8, 2024

May 16, 2024

Minute IIB4

Minute 11.1.2