SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
ADMINISTRATIVE & PROFESSIONAL
JOB DESCRIPTION

Position Title: Pension and Benefits Specialist
Department: Human Resources
Reports to [title]: Director, Pension & Benefits
Employee Group: APEX
Position #: 00122488, 00001132
Reports to {position #}: 00001127
Grade: 7

POSITION SUMMARY

The Pension and Benefits Specialist (Human Resources Professional II) provides administration, support and technical services in the Human Resources area of pensions and benefits, ensuring the accuracy of information provided to plan members and their beneficiaries. The Specialist will administer the defined benefit and defined contribution pension plans, group RRSPs, TFSA's, and RRIF/LIFs in accordance with provincial and federal legislation and pension plan texts. Responsibilities also include oversight of pre- and post-retirement health and welfare benefits, agreements, policies, and special contracts for staff and faculty.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provides administrative oversight and technical expertise relating to pension services for both the staff and faculty pension plans by:
   - providing pension projections to employees and final pension benefit calculations and options to retiring and terminating employees and authorizing and processing payouts as required
   - conducting meetings with retiring employees to explain the various benefit plans available and the options for transferring pension from the pension plan
   - providing support and information on continuation of pension payments and benefits to those retirees experiencing the loss of a spouse
   - monitoring employee eligibility for entry into the pension plan; maintaining monthly pension registers by ensuring new additions/terminations are made and balancing enrollment in plan on a monthly basis which is used for surveys and annual pension plan reports
   - participating in the ongoing maintenance and development of the pension system to ensure programs execute according to the requirements of existing policy, procedures and collective agreements and performing testing when modifications have been made
   - maintaining accuracy of interest rates and other pertinent data in the system
   - monitoring pension system to ensure that both pension and solvency payments are made to active and deferred members within legislated timelines
   - performing annual calculation of increases to the retired employees monthly pension benefit based on the National Consumer Price Index and forwarding to custodian as appropriate
   - performing reconciliations to fund statements and updating Financial Services with payment and year end data as required
   - liaising with financial institutions and investment companies to obtain appropriate forms and authorizations
   - providing pension summary reports to Payroll and to the Pension Board of Trustees on a monthly basis
   - liaising with plan actuaries and providing statistical data for plan valuations or other purposes

2. Provides administrative oversight and technical expertise relating to benefit services for staff and retiree health and welfare plans by:
   - interpreting underwriting contracts and determining benefits entitlement in accordance with plan documents, collective agreements, and policies
   - participating in the maintenance and development of the benefits tables within the Human Resources system to ensure programs execute according to the requirements of existing policy, plan documents and collective agreements and performing testing when modifications have been made
   - liaising with insurance carriers and consultants on plan changes and new developments. Providing benefit costing for negotiations and input into carrier contract renewals and proposals arising out of the collective bargaining process.
   - providing information to families of deceased employees and initiating, coordinating, completing, and authorizing life insurance claim forms
   - providing information to potential retirees related to the various benefit plans available, transferring enrollment as required and processing premium payments as required
   - monitoring benefit arrears, requesting payment on delinquent accounts and liaising with Payroll on discrepancies in
Pension and Benefits Specialist

- ensuring that retiree benefit payments are paid, updated and reconciled against invoices on a monthly basis using a third party banking system

3. Provides administrative support relating to pension and benefit services by
   - preparing data for external auditors as required
   - coordinating the distribution of Annual Pension Statements
   - initiating and maintaining records as they relate to pension payments and benefit deductions
   - maintaining accurate lists of retirees addresses for the retiree reception invitations and the SFU Retiree Association
   - organizing the retiree reception
   - coordinating and implementing changes to benefit communications ensuring accuracy in accordance with contract, policy and rate changes
   - preparing meeting material for the Pension Board of Trustees, as necessary
   - attending Pension Board of Trustees meeting as the recording secretary
   - maintaining the HR website to ensure accuracy of all pension and benefit information

4. Administers the group RRSPs, TFSA, and RRIF/LIFs by
   - ensuring proper documentation has been provided to enroll employees, transfer from other institutions, and withdrawals or deposits of lump sum payments
   - liaising with the carrier to clarify discrepancies on the employee’s behalf

IMPACT OF DECISION MAKING

The Pension and Benefits Specialist is responsible for:
   - Interpreting and reconciling benefits plan documents
   - Clearly communicating options to staff and faculty for retirement
   - Clearly communicating options upon employee or dependent death
   - Ensuring accuracy of data received and recorded
   - Making recommendations for process improvement and policy revision
   - Meeting deadlines as set out by pension and benefits plans and related governing bodies

RELATIONSHIPS

Establishes and maintains relationships with HR peers, industry contacts and key business partners. Shares information and advice on how to get things done and who to involve. Seeks assistance and feedback in the problem solving process. Partners with others to achieve expectations.

UNUSUAL WORKING CONDITIONS

Must occasionally provide services to individuals during periods of profound grief.

QUALIFICATIONS

Completion of the CEBS (Certified Employee Benefits Specialist), Retirement Plans Associate (RPA) and four years of related experience or an equivalent combination of education, training and experience.

- Good knowledge of pension benefit legislation and government retirement benefits and programs
- Good knowledge of benefits administration, principles and practices
- Excellent analytical reasoning and problem solving skills
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively as a member of a team
- Excellent interpersonal and communication (oral and written) skills
- Ability to perform arithmetic calculations with a high degree of accuracy
- Ability to establish priorities and meet deadlines
- Ability to work with large datasets with attention to detail
- Proficient in the use of word processing, spreadsheet and database applications
- Excellent client service skills and an ability to exhibit a high level of tact and diplomacy

Initial Effective Date: October 5, 2001
Latest Revision Date: October 3, 2017