

# Beyond checklists: HR compliance for higher ed



## How lean HR teams stay audit-ready without slowing down

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Compliance in higher education protects what matters most: the trust of students, faculty and the public.

For resource-strapped HR teams managing faculty contracts, student employment and seasonal hiring, the stakes could not be higher. One missed deadline or documentation gap, such as failing to submit Title IX training records, can trigger funding reviews, accreditation issues or legal exposure. Maintaining airtight compliance is essential to preserving accreditation, which underpins your institution's credibility, eligibility for federal aid and student enrollment.

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Here are three key areas where HR teams can strengthen compliance without adding to their workload.





# Lock down data without locking up productivity



Faculty contracts, researcher details and student worker records scattered across departmental spreadsheets create more than inefficiency. They introduce privacy gaps that expose institutions to FERPA risk.

The solution isn't more oversight, but centralized platforms with role-based permissions that respect both operational needs and compliance boundaries.

- Department chairs need access to adjunct pools without seeing salary data
- Academic affairs needs enrollment verification or student workers without accessing performance reviews

Modern HR platforms like People First powered by MHR enable this control while maintaining audit trails. When sensitive data lives in one secure environment, faculty and staff can update their own information. This frees HR to focus on support while improving accuracy. Mobile-friendly portals let adjuncts teaching at multiple campuses update records once instead of repeating the process across offices.

When sensitive data lives in one secure environment, faculty and staff can update their own information.

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# Pay transparency meets the needs of educators



People First manages these complexities within its unified platform, ensuring consistency whether hiring a grant-funded researcher or a tenured professor.

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## Navigating multi-layered, year-round compliance



HR in higher education never gets a compliance break. Teams manage ACA eligibility for adjuncts, Title IX training for graduate assistants, grant reporting deadlines and union contract requirements that vary by bargaining unit.

Accreditation and compliance reviews can happen at any time, and missing documentation risks both funding and reputation. Federal grant audits arrive on their own schedules, while state employment law changes add another layer of unpredictability.

Traditional responses like spreadsheet tracking break down when managing hundreds of part-time instructors across departments.

Automated alerts for contract renewals, compliance deadlines and policy changes transform this into manageable workflows. Centralized dashboards that track ACA, FMLA, FERPA and Title IX requirements in real time help teams stay prepared for audit season:

- The system flags when an adjunct's teaching load triggers benefits eligibility
- Grant-funded positions requiring documentation are flagged before the next drawdown

With the right tools in place, compliance shifts from reactive to strategic.

Which adjuncts crossed the ACA threshold this semester, and have all faculty completed Title IX training, including those on sabbatical?

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## People First is built for higher ed

People First was purpose built for educational institutions managing multi-campus operations, seasonal staffing and grant-funded environments. It isn't just corporate software adapted for academia.

System integration is critical for colleges. People First unifies HR, payroll, recruiting, onboarding and talent management in one audit-ready system. AI-powered tools support lean teams with:

- Sentiment tracking
- Onboarding prompts
- Payroll anomaly detection that spots potential issues early

In higher education, compliance safeguards the credibility your institution depends on with students, faculty, boards and accrediting bodies. When HR systems anticipate audits, adapt to new regulations and maintain transparency, teams are free to focus on what matters most: supporting student success and the educators who make it possible.



## Want to go deeper?

Explore more ways to build resilience, streamline operations and future-proof your HR strategy.

[Download our Reinventing HR eBook](#)

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## About MHR

MHR has been driving innovation across the HRIS space for over 40 years. We don't just meet the industry standard, we exceed it. Engineered by the latest SaaS technology, our product, People First enables increased employee productivity and organizational growth with a demonstrable return on investment.

People First is guided by what our customers and the market demand in a rapidly changing world.

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