

# Selection Committee Guidelines

A search committee that provides diverse perspectives and expertise is an effective way to support a fair, equitable and transparent recruitment process. This also supports the university's goals of objectivity and diversity, and minimizes bias.

## Composition

The size and composition of your search committee will vary, depending on the level and complexity of position being filled. There may also be mandated requirements, should the vacancy be a position associated with a union. Please review the [collective agreements](#) to understand your obligations.

When you select your search committee members have you considered:

- Diversity
- Representation from your department?
- Representation from the broader UVic community (where appropriate), students, faculty, staff?
- Stakeholder representation (where appropriate), clients or peers from other departments?

**NOTE:** Please contact EQHR or your HR Advisor if you have any questions or concerns regarding committee composition.

## Membership

When you choose your committee members, consider how to best represent:

- Diversity: women, minority members
- Your department
- UVic community: other departments, students, staff, faculty members
- Stakeholders: clients, peers from other departments.

## Roles and responsibilities

The roles of individual members may vary depending on your recruitment. In some cases, members are assigned specific roles to keep the committee on task and moving forward.

### Chair

Leads the committee, sets the appropriate tone and attitude of the committee, involves all members and ensures that members are encouraged and engaged to effectively participate.

### Diversity and Equity Leader

Ensures that the recruitment activities are carried out in an equitable way and in accordance with legislation and university policy related to diversity, equity, human rights and accommodation.

### Recorder

Ensures that the records and documentation are created, maintained and managed.



## Applicant Contact

Ensures that applicants understand the position being recruited for and that their overall experience is a positive one. As primary contact, responds to questions and provides information or additional instructions in a timely manner.

## Common Knowledge

Every committee member requires an understanding of the need for the recruitment. This common knowledge should be established at the onset of your recruitment efforts. Initial discussions include:

- Committee and members' roles, responsibilities, expertise  
It is critically important that the panel composition remains constant throughout the process. Anyone agreeing to serve on the committee must commit to attend all meetings and interviews.
- Position's roles, responsibilities and qualifications
- Importance of an objective, fair and transparent process
- Related practices, policies, legislation, mandates, resources
- Understanding of diversity and equity and how they will be supported
- Understanding and identification of biases within the committee and approaches to mitigate their effects

## Operating Principles

- Each member is **responsible** to assert his or her observations, thoughts and opinions.
- Each member **respects** the right of each other member to express his or her opinions.
- The proceedings of the meetings are **confidential**.
- Members will respect and **abide** by the ruling of the Chair to assure orderly and productive results are achieved.

### Note on Confidentiality Principle

Confidentiality has been defined as: *"An intimacy of knowledge shared by a few who do not divulge it to others...a contract of trust to maintain private information"*.

For our purpose it is vital that members clearly understand what confidentiality means and agree to uphold it. **We need to protect the privacy of personal and professional information about candidates and ourselves.** A comment shared inadvertently can have damaging effects on a candidate's professional reputation or may lead to a grievance.

The safest way to handle questions that challenge confidentiality is to say: *"I'm sorry, all information is confidential; I can't talk about it. If you have a concern I suggest you contact the Committee Chair"*.

## A Few Words on Consensus

**Consensus** - a general agreement accepted by everyone involved in the decision-making process. Reaching consensus depends on the willingness of all participating to arrive at a cooperative solution. For the period of time consensus decision-making is in place, all participants act as equals.

Consensus may be seen as:

- unanimity - 100% agreement
- lack of dissension - those who disagree can live with the solution



- agreement by the vast majority - those who do not agree are willing to abide by the majority's decision.

The responsibility of a participant dissenting is to articulate their position and declare if they can "agree to disagree". The dissenting party is then expected to live with the decision.

When consensus is impossible, another decision-making process needs to be established.

### Protocol for Notations Regarding the Candidates:

In the interests of FOI/POP, any handwritten notes regarding the candidates or copies of resumes are to be submitted to the Supporting Office for appropriate filing or shredding. It is recommended that notes not be made directly onto the resumes, as those notes would become part of the official record.

### Internal Candidates

It is important to stress not just the confidentiality, but the sensitivity around internal candidates. Should any of the Committee members feel they are too close to the candidate, they should consider removing themselves from the Committee.

### Information to Short-Listed Candidates:

It may be useful for the panel to agree on what kind of information will be provided to short-listed candidates (i.e. departmental plan, college calendar, web site, strategic plan, search panel names/roles, college and department organizational charts, etc.)

### Definitions:

*Screening Criteria:* The minimum set of requirements derived from the candidate profile and position description.

*Screening Process:* Applying the screening criteria in order to establish the long-list of qualified candidates.

*Selection Criteria:* The set of requirements derived from an expansion of the candidate profile.

*Selection Process:* Applying the selection criteria in order to determine a short list of candidates for interviewing, and final selection.

### Recommended Steps

1. Describe search process
2. Explain & clarify roles and responsibilities
3. Review of Guidelines
4. Develop Communication Plan
5. Review Job Description
6. Establish screening criteria
7. Establish selection criteria
8. Determine interview, evaluation and testing methods
  - Presentation question?
  - One member asks the questions or a number of members?
  - Are follow-up questions allowed?



9. Develop interview questions
10. Establish Reference Check Process
  - all short-listed candidates?
  - before or after the interview?
  - on top two candidates only?
11. Establish Final Selection Process
12. Establish small group to apply the screening criteria and develop a long-list of applicants
13. Results of screening process presented
14. Selection of short-listed candidates
15. Establish information to be sent to short-listed candidates
16. Interview schedule established
17. Short-listed Candidates contacted for interviews
18. Review of interview protocol
19. Interviews
20. Candidate selection discussion
21. Reference checks conducted
22. Final selection discussion
23. Offer and Acceptance