

Preferential & Limited Hiring

Overview of key elements of using these hiring tools at UVic

Equity and Human Rights: eqhr@uvic.ca

What is preferential and limited hiring?

Preferential and limited hiring are legally approved tools.

- Legally approved tools to bring in employees from particular groups to meet institutional needs
- UVic has approval by the BC Human Rights Commissioner under provincial human rights law to use these hiring methods
- Because of this approval, preferential and limited hiring cannot be considered to discriminate

**What are some reasons to
use preferential or limited
hiring?**

There are many reasons to use preferential or limited hiring

- Fill gaps in knowledge, skills or workload
- Increase diversity of the unit
- Fill representation gaps within the unit/ discipline/ field of work
- Add employees who can act as mentors or work with particular populations

**What foundational work is
needed before using
preferential or limited
hiring?**

Preferential and limited hiring are not a substitute for meaningful engagement with equity

- If a unit/department does not build an inclusive culture and have a clear plan and ongoing action to advance equity, they will not be a welcoming environment for a new hire
- Someone hired in this way may leave owing to hostile climate or simply lack of appropriate support
- This hiring should only be done in conjunction with overall commitment to and action on equity, diversity and inclusion
- Consider preferential and limited hiring as one piece to a larger commitment units have to make if they truly want to advance equity and retain diversity

**What are the differences
between preferential and
limited hiring?**

Differences between preferential hiring and limited hiring

Preferential hiring

- first review all applications by the preferred group(s)
- if you do not find a candidate that meets the criteria, then review applications by those who did not self-identify in the preferred group(s)

Limited hiring

- only review applications by candidates who self-identify as a member of the listed group(s)
- if you do not find a successful candidate from among these, need to initiate a new search process

**What groups can be
identified for preferential or
limited hiring?**

There are 4 groups currently recognized for preferential & limited hiring

Women

Indigenous peoples

Members of visible minorities

Persons with disabilities

**Why are these the identified
groups for preferential and
limited hiring?**

“... they are groups that have been seriously under-represented in the workplace. The legislation aims towards the achievement of equality so that no person should be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability.” (ref. <https://pipsc.ca/labour-relations/stewards/pocket-guides/pocket-guide-employment-equity#employmentequity>)

In the future, we may be able to add other groups to this list, pending approval of an additional special program under the Office of the BC Human Rights Commissioner.

**How do you know if
someone is a member of
the group for which you are
hiring?**

Self-identification is how UVic assesses membership.

Ask applicants to self-identify in their application materials if they are a member of the selected group(s)

Build aspects of identity that are relevant to job performance into the criteria.

**What similarities are there
between preferential and
limited hiring and all other
hiring at UVic?**

All types of hiring at UVic have a lot in common:

- Require a position profile and an approved job ad
- Are based on criteria for success in a role
- Involve a multistage interview process with review of applications and an interview
- Only hire if someone meets all the core criteria for the position
- Ideally, consider the needs of an entire unit as well as the responsibilities of a specific position

**What are some best
practices to support
preferential and limited
hiring?**

Best practices for preferential and limited hiring:

- Belief in the ability of the process to find an excellent candidate
- Use of clear criteria with identity contributions embedded as key contributions
- Inclusive definition of “fit” that creates space for a wide diversity of people
- Intersectional understanding of identity that recognizes the diversity within any one group and works to avoid biases within the process based on multiple aspects of identity
- Welcoming interview process with detailed information and clear communication of expectations and norms at the university
- Comparable treatment of all candidates at each stage
- Building support in the unit for doing this work, and plan for retention

Conclusions and reflections

What are some important things to know about preferential and limited hiring?

What are some ways to do it well?