Remote interviewing via videoconferencing

If you are moving forward with your recruitment, you may now be at interview stage, and wondering how to proceed. The interviewing process is a powerful tool in helping you find the candidate that will best fill the vacancy in your department. Now that video conferencing is more prevalent, you may not even need to meet an applicant in-person and could proceed with a remote interview via Zoom. This helps create a personal connection despite the distance.

The Zoom platform lets you have online real-time sessions with your colleagues and others outside of UVic. All current University of Victoria faculty, staff and students are automatically provisioned with access. The service can be accessed by logging in with your primary Netlink ID at uvic.zoom.us. For more details on how to use this platform, please go to:
https://www.uvic.ca/systems/services/avmultimedia/zoomvideoconferencing/index.php

How to prepare for a remote interview

Many candidates are nervous with job interviews at the best of times. Thus, performing for a camera can add additional anxiety, making them harder to read. Do your best to keep them feeling comfortable and relaxed. Ask your questions slowly and clearly, and give extra time to answer.

To help you conduct a positive and engaging remote interview, here are some best practices to consider:

1) Prepare your technology and your candidate

   Online interviews require some preparation. It can reflect poorly on you and your department if you struggle to use your video conferencing platform. To avoid frustration, conduct a trial run with a colleague ahead of the interview. Be sure to check that your computer's microphone and camera are set at proper levels, check your Wi-Fi connection and ensure your equipment is charged and ready to go. Troubleshoot any issues that might arise, e.g. dropped connections, video lags, or echoes on the line. If you require assistance, contact the UVic Computer Help Desk at helpdesk@uvic.ca or 250-721-7687. Webcam tips can be found at:
   https://www.uvic.ca/hr/manager-support/working-remotely/working-remotely-toolkit/webcam-tips/index.php

   You will need to prepare candidates for their interview as well. Remember that they might not be familiar with Zoom or your platform of choice. Provide them with step-by-step operating instructions and access procedures. For instance, do you have to provide them with a password, link, and dial-in details? You should supply a backup phone number and/or email address as a precaution, in case they experience technical problems.

2) **Minimize distractions, look professional and be prepared**

Switch off any alerts and chats during the interview. Avoid having remote interviews in high-traffic areas of your home. Dress professionally, and ensure that the background the candidate will see during the interview is neutral and free of anything distracting. Have a printout of the candidate's resume and your list of questions. You might want to log in a few minutes early so you know all the technology is working and you are not rushing when the interview begins.

Speak clearly, but also be sure you smile and laugh when appropriate, just like you would in person. You want to demonstrate to the candidate that you are engaged in the conversation. Remember to look at the camera when you are speaking, not your own image or the other person's image.

3) **Closing the interview**

When the remote interview concludes, tell the candidate what will happen next in the process and ask them if they have any questions. Be sure to thank them for their time as well. Ensure they leave the call before discussing the interview with the panel.

Remember that you are representing your department and the University during a remote interview. Clearly communicating the details of the meeting will put the candidate at ease and make the entire process run more smoothly.

Good luck!