

UNIVERSITY OF THE FRASER VALLEY SELECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROCEDURES (STAFF)

This document outlines the purpose and procedures the University has established in consultation with the Faculty and Staff Association for its selection advisory processes, and is intended to assist selection advisory committee members in fulfilling their responsibilities.

The Chair of the SAC must provide each member of the committee with a copy of these procedures, and review the procedures at the first meeting of the SAC. Committee members who are unsure of their role or the process should request clarification from Human Resources.

THE ROLE OF THE SELECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The members of a university selection advisory committee, both elected and appointed, represent the university in serving on the committee. The work of the committee is to provide a considered recommendation to the dean or administrator who has authorized their work. To meet this requirement all committee members must participate fully in each stage of the process and all decisions must be deliberated by the committee as a whole.

The university will rely on the records kept by its selection advisory committees. It is critical, therefore, that the committee document the entire process followed and the decisions made, including the results of reference checks and the methods used to assess or measure applicants against each other and against weighted selection criteria at each stage in the process.

All individuals involved in any university selection advisory process must be familiar with relevant legislation and the university's policies as they relate to the search and selection process. The section immediately below provides a guide to understanding applicable legislation and policies. The information provided is not exhaustive; for more information and guidance on the application of legislation and policy to a specific circumstance contact Human Resources.

A. EMPLOYMENT LEGISLATION AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

CONFIDENTIALTY

The collection and use of personal information by a university through its recruitment and appointment processes is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA).

Confidentiality is paramount in all activities of the selection advisory committee. SAC members are expected to maintain the confidentiality of all information presented to the committee, and of the deliberations and decisions taken. SAC members must not discuss proceedings with the candidates or other persons outside the SAC. SAC members who violate this fundamental requirement may be removed from the committee.

Members of an SAC who believe there has been a violation of due process in the committee proceedings should seek advice from an Human Resources administrator or from an officer of the FSA. SAC members may be interviewed concerning process violations by either Human Resources or, on notice to the SAC Chair by Human Resources that notice of grievance has been filed, by the relevant contract administrator of the FSA.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Selection advisory committee members are required to disclose to the SAC Chair any potential conflicts of interest which may arise from their participation as soon as they become aware of the potential conflict. Where a conflict of interest or the reasonable perception of one due to their participation exists, the SAC Chair will ask the individual to step aside. The SAC Chair or any member of the SAC may seek advice concerning conflicts of interest from Human Resources.

Some examples of conflicts of interest which would disqualify an individual include the following:

- When a relative has applied for the position (if the relationship is distant, Human Resources should be notified and an exception may be made).
- When a close friend has applied (for the purposes of an SAC, a close friend is defined as someone an observer of the SAC might reasonably expect had gained an advantage through the relationship to the SAC member).
- When an employment advantage may be gained through selecting a particular candidate.
- When an SAC member currently supervises a candidate. The exception is the case of a SAC Chair who supervises the position being selected for as well as one or more of the applicants for that position.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Members of UFV selection advisory committees are expected to treat all applicants with respect for human rights and dignity, and to be aware of practices and attitudes which create discriminatory barriers to employment.

The BC Human Rights Code prohibits discrimination based on the race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, age of an individual, or because an individual has been convicted of a criminal or summary conviction offence that is unrelated to the employment. An excellent resource for selection advisory committee members can be found at <http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/human-rights-protection/pdfs/EmployerInfo.pdf>

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

The University of the Fraser Valley is a registered federal employment equity employer and requires the members of its selection advisory committees to respect the university's commitment to employment equity. The university believes a supportive environment of equitable employment is one in which employment systems are based on merit, alignment with strategic directions, and are without barriers to the recruitment, selection, and retention of members of systemically disadvantaged groups, especially Aboriginal people, people with disabilities, visible minorities and women.

Every vacancy should be considered an opportunity for a department or an area to achieve employment equity goals. In cases where members of employment equity groups are not represented or significantly under-represented in a department, consideration should be given to 'preferential hiring'; i.e., advertisements which state that preference will be given to candidates from one or more of the designated employment equity groups. Such consideration is justified when there is clear under-representation of Aboriginal people, members of a visible minority, people with disabilities or women.

DUTY TO ACCOMMODATE AND BONA FIDE REQUIREMENTS

Employers in Canada have a legal **duty to accommodate** the needs of individuals where these needs stem from one of the prohibited grounds under Human Rights. This is called the duty to accommodate and its goal is to create equality of opportunity and treatment in the workforce.

Bona fide occupational requirements are those skills, abilities and academic credentials required for the applicant to perform the essential components of the job. They are limits that must relate directly to job performance and be necessary for the job to be done effectively and safely.

It is not discriminatory to apply a refusal, limitation, specification or preference based on a bona fide occupational requirement where the abilities necessary to perform the essential job tasks are related to

one or more of the prohibited grounds of discrimination. Human Resources will advise committees on the application of bona fide requirements and the duty to accommodate.

UFV INTERNAL APPLICANT RIGHTS

Selection advisory committee members are expected to be aware of what determines Faculty and Staff Association internal applicant status (Article 11.4), of the rights this status confers under the collective agreement, and to act consistently with procedures for dealing with internal applicants.

Internal applicants are Type A and Type B employees, including those on the lay-off list, and sessional faculty, Type C staff and Type D staff employees hired pursuant to a SAC. Sessional faculty, Type C staff and Type D staff who have completed probation also have internal status.

The SAC chair is responsible for identifying internal applicants to the members of the SAC. SAC Chairs are expected to contact Human Resources for assistance.

FSA AND EMPLOYER OBSERVERS ON SELECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The FSA or the Employer may appoint an observer to a Selection Advisory Committee when there are internal applicants applying for a position.

An observer is not a member of the SAC, plays no role in the duties of the members of the SAC, and has neither voice nor vote in any of the SAC procedures. The observer must not influence the decisions of the members of the SAC, and must abide by the Conflict of Interest provisions for members of the SAC.

If, in monitoring the procedures of the SAC for compliance with the Collective Agreement, the observer notes a violation of these procedures, the observer may request a break in the proceedings in order to bring the matter to the attention of the SAC Chair. It is the responsibility of the SAC Chair to ensure any appropriate adjustments are made to restore the process.

FOREIGN WORKER REQUIREMENTS AND IMMIGRATION

The Federal Government of Canada requires the university to provide preference for Canadian citizens and landed immigrants in its recruitment and appointment practices. All UFV postings include the following statement: "All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority."

Committees who recommend the hiring of a non-Canadian must document why Canadian applicants did not meet the advertised qualifications before Immigration Canada will grant permission to offer employment to a foreign worker.

Additionally, anyone who is not a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident must be authorized to work in Canada. The initial permit will be for a temporary appointment; conversion to a permanent position with UFV will occur when the status which permits this has been obtained by the individual. Human Resources will advise SAC Chairs on the implications for foreign worker candidates under consideration, and will assist in obtaining necessary permits.

B. SELECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

FORMING A SELECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Once a position has been posted, Human Resources will request the appropriate senior administrator to identify the SAC Chair of the selection advisory committee.

The SAC Chair will advise Human Resources of the number of elected university representatives required, understanding that elected representatives must comprise at least 50% of the SAC, and be drawn from any type 'A' contract staff member, or any 'B' faculty member of the department/functional area in which the vacancy occurs.

Human Resources will carry out the nomination and election process for university representatives to sit on the SAC, and will consult with the SAC Chair about the need for additional appointments from outside the area once the composition of the SAC is known.

The university expects all committee members to participate in the interview process for each candidate, in assessing the results of the reference checking process, and in the deliberations leading to the recommendation to the dean or administrator. At the beginning of the selection advisory process, therefore, all committee members should agree upon dates for discussions, debriefs, and interviews, to help ensure the decision making timelines are tight and committee members remain consistent.

SETTING SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection criteria describe the requirements for competent performance in the position as described in the posting, and must be objective and measureable. Criteria must relate to the duties of the position and the committee should collectively agree to, and understand, the criteria which will be used to evaluate candidates.

The selection criteria must be weighted in order of importance prior to beginning the screening process. While this weighting may be difficult to establish, it is an important exercise to enhance and clarify the committee's goals before meeting the candidates. Optional qualifications and competencies are those that individuals bring with them as functions of their personality, work and study experiences; these may be included but must be considered complementary only.

Selection advisory committees may include "fit" as a criterion. "Fit" refers to a candidate's ability to make a positive contribution to the departmental environment. Committees must ensure that "fit" is not used inappropriately to indulge personal biases or to discriminate against candidates from groups protected by human rights legislation; committees who include "fit" are advised to understand and agree collectively to the means by which they will assess this criterion.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Before beginning the screening process, the committee must develop appropriate questions directly related to the criteria for the position.

The committee should ensure that the right emphasis is placed on each criterion – the more important the criterion, the more questions may be needed to allow effective assessment.

Questions should be designed to encourage candidates to use actual examples from their work-related situations that demonstrate the required skills and core competencies.

Questions that encourage descriptive answers instead of 'yes' or 'no' responses are generally useful. These are often open ended questions that begin with words such as 'describe', 'talk about', or 'elaborate.'

Questions should be consistent enough to ensure a fair evaluation between candidates yet flexible enough to permit exploring their differences. Follow-up questions need not be defined prior to the interview stage, but committees should remain mindful of the need for fair and consistent treatment of every candidate.

Keeping in mind that each candidate must be asked the same questions in the same order, the committee should come to a consensus about essential questions to be asked of all candidate. The ordering of the questions should be well thought out, as spacing questions which evaluate a particular criterion may be advisable in some cases; in others, grouping same criteria questions may be effective.

All members of the committee should understand all questions to the extent that they would recognize acceptable answers.

PREPARING THE SHORTLIST

The criteria and questions to be used must be submitted to Human Resources before the committee begins reviewing the applicant file. On completion of this step, all SAC members will be provided access electronically to the applications.

The SAC Chair is responsible for ensuring that every committee member is provided with a complete copy of all material submitted by each applicant prior to the committee meeting to develop a short list.

The committee must ensure internal applicants to the position have been correctly identified. The committee SAC Chair will contact Human Resources to verify the status of individual applicants with respect to this status. (see UFV Internal Applicant Rights, and Collective Agreement Article 11.4).

The committee is responsible for reviewing and verifying the academic credentials and any other relevant information provided by applicants. Formal verification of academic credentials is part of the short listing process, and must be completed before candidates are invited for an interview. The Chair will contact Human Resources, who will carry out the verification process. No SAC recommendation will be accepted until formal verification of credentials has been completed.

The committee screens and evaluates applicants against the established criteria in order to develop a short list of interview candidates. This must be a consultative process in which all members participate. While the process is normally through a meeting at which all members are present, electronic meetings may be an acceptable alternative provided a documented record of the joint consideration is maintained.

Selection committees are encouraged to develop a selection matrix of criteria and candidates to assist SAC members in ranking candidates against each criteria. One final form is included with the recommendation, with the results determined by all members.

The SAC composes the short list of candidates, keeping in mind that when there is a minimum of four internal candidates who meet the essential criteria, these candidates will be considered to constitute the first round of interviews. The SAC Chair will provide Human Resources with the list of short listed candidates prior to setting up interviews. If an internal applicant is not short listed, rationale will be provided as to how the applicant did not meet the established criteria. Human Resources will conduct credential verifications on positions that require a minimum of a degree for the education requirement.

Careful records should be kept as committees must be able to document and justify the way in which they develop the short list.

INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES

Remember that candidates are also making decisions about UFV, and how they are treated before, during and after the interview process may make the difference between a decision to join UFV and accept an offer elsewhere.

The SAC Chair should provide applicants with sufficient notice for the interview, and ensure that there is someone charged with greeting candidates on arrival at the campus and guiding them to the interview room. Directions to the campus and information about parking should be provided.

During the interview, the committee members should listen carefully and let the candidate do most of the talking. Interviewers should talk less than a third of the time; the rest of the time should be spent listening and taking brief notes to enable later assessment of the match between the candidate's qualifications and the requirements of the position. If the candidate's response to any question is incomplete or unclear, SAC members may expand on the question. questions asked of any candidate should be relevant to the criteria, and be related to the candidate's application submission.

The committee should conduct the session as an interview, not an interrogation. Candidates are also evaluating the situation, and how they are treated may determine whether or not they accept the position. Even those who are not offered a position should come away from the experience with a positive view of the department, and the University.

The candidate should be provided with an opportunity to ask as well as answer questions.

At the conclusion of each interview, thank the candidate for coming and inform them of the time frame for the selection decision.

EVALUATING CANDIDATES

As soon as possible after the last candidate for a position has been interviewed, the Selection Advisory Committee should meet to evaluate the candidates and make a decision on the recommendation for appointment.

Applicants must be judged on criteria related to the position and the pre-determined selection criteria.

The committee must uphold the rights of internal candidates in evaluating candidates. When internal applicants have been interviewed, the SAC Chair must remind the committee that where candidates are determined to be equally qualified, internal candidates are to be given preference.

The committee should be mindful that a face-to-face interview is only one source of information. In arriving at a decision, committees are expected to use all the sources of information: the interview, resume, evaluations and references.

Discussion of an applicant's personal character must be conducted with respect. Irresponsible or unsupported allegations concerning any applicant should be challenged and the SAC Chair should instruct the committee to disregard the allegations. Human Resources should be notified if this occurs, and the necessity of modifying the composition of the SAC in order to protect the integrity of the decision making process will be determined.

REFERENCE CHECKING

References are to be solicited on the understanding that they are confidential to the Selection Advisory Committee and the university administrators who will recommend the appointment to the appropriate administrator.

References provide valuable information to the committee in its assessment of candidates. All candidates should be asked for the names of at least three people who will provide references on request. Referees should be individuals who have first-hand knowledge of the candidate's work and abilities. Often they are direct supervisors of the candidate. Reference checking should be done at the conclusion of the interview, using a consistent process developed in consultation with Human Resources. In addition, if applicable, the SAC Chair asks Human Resources for the latest evaluation of recommended candidate.

When telephone references or reference checks are conducted, it is important that the caller take detailed notes, rather than relying on memory to convey information to other members of the committee. A summary should be prepared to provide a record of the telephone interview. The referee can also be asked to confirm the accuracy of the notes or summary. Telephone calls are often essential to clarify certain issues and to confirm or dispel concerns.

Awkward situations may arise when the most obvious individuals are missing from the list of potential references provided by the candidate; for example, when candidates still in a position do not provide the name of their supervisor. In such cases, you may wish to ask the candidates directly for the name of a referee who would be familiar with their work at this place of employment.

Candidates who cite employment history but do not provide the name or names of direct supervisors to be contacted need to be advised that this is an essential step in completing the reference checking process; however, the committee must be sensitive to the timing of this step, and the SAC Chair is expected to consult with the candidate as to when these contacts will appropriately be made. Exceptions to this step will be made only on the approval of the Provost. SAC Chairs are responsible for ensuring permission for exception has been obtained.

The same set of questions should be asked of all referees, although these questions may be supplemented by specific questions where needed (e.g., to clarify information in the application).

Although typically referees are asked to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates, specific questions may elicit more useful information; for example: Would you hire (or appoint) this person? How would you describe the teaching performance of the candidate in relation to others with a similar level of experience?

Committees should seek information on questions that relate to the pre-determined criteria for the position as developed by the search committee.

MAKING THE RECOMMENDATION

The SAC reaches a consensus on the ranking of candidates, and on the decision to recommend a candidate for the position, and the SAC Chair carries forward to the Dean/Senior Administrator the recommendation of the SAC. If the SAC cannot agree on a #1 candidate, or on whether this candidate is suitable for recommendation, the SAC Chair contacts Human Resources for assistance.

A letter of recommendation will be written by the SAC Chair, supplemented by the related hiring documents (job posting, application documents, shortlisting document tool). This is forwarded to the appropriate Dean/Senior Administrator. The letter will include the following:

1. a. The full and legal name of the candidate recommended for the position
- b. A summary of qualifications of the candidate as they pertain to the criteria established for the position, including documented evidence of verified credentials and education;
- c. A summary of the qualities of the candidate as they pertain to the objective criteria for the position
- d. The names of the internal and external referees, their relationship to the candidate as it relates to their ability to offer valid and objective assessment of the candidate, and a summary of their assessment.
2. An overview of the other candidates interviewed for this position, including identification of internal candidates interviewed and a summary of the reasons related to the criteria the candidate was not recommended for the position.
3. A descriptive summary of the interview process.

The SAC Chair informs Human Resources of the successful candidate and forwards the completed SAC package and letter of recommendation to Human Resources once the Dean/Senior Administrator has signed off the recommendation of the SAC. Human Resources contacts the successful candidate(s), and the SAC Chair, contacts the unsuccessful candidates.

All SAC members retain their notes, or give them to the SAC Chair for safe keeping, until the hiring process and/or grievance matters are complete.

CONCLUDING THE SELECTION ADVISORY PROCESS

At the conclusion of the Selection Advisory Committee process, the SAC Chair will collect and compile all documents related to the process. All documents, including all copies of resumes and other applicant personal information must be returned to Human Resources.