

Equitable Hiring Practices Toolkit

In accordance with Unity Health Toronto's Recruitment and Selection Policy, hiring leaders are accountable to ensure that all individuals that they choose to participate on their interview panel review this Toolkit. It is expected that all hiring leaders and selection panel members will review this Toolkit at least once prior to participating in any recruitment and selection decisions at Unity Health Toronto.

Acting in the capacity of a hiring manager or participating on a Unity Health Toronto interview panel is an important role. By participating in the hiring process in this way, you are helping to select talent that will shape our workforce and influence the quality of care we provide our patients for years to come.

Unity Health is committed to creating an environment where all of our people feel welcome and valued while being themselves. By participating in the hiring process you play a critical role in helping to promote this aspiration and your responsibility is to be aware of your biases and actively work in partnership with others involved in the hiring process to identify and remove barriers and inequities in the recruitment of talent.

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Toolkit Objective

The practices described in this toolkit will support individuals involved in hiring decisions by:

- Providing an overview of equitable hiring considerations;
- Describing and supporting the mitigation of unconscious/implicit bias;
- Ensuring best-practices are adhered to for hiring the best candidate based on bona fide occupational job requirements tied to job performance.

Processes to Consider

1. The hiring leader is accountable for ensuring that all panel members have reviewed the *Equitable Hiring Practices* section of the *Recruitment & Selection Policy* as well as Unity Health Toronto's Equitable Hiring Practices Toolkit prior to participating in the recruitment decision-making process.
2. Hiring leader should consider the composition of their search panel and ensure diversity on the selection committee.
3. Devote time to the process. The amount of time you give to plan and set-up your recruitment process directly correlates to the quality of applicants who apply.
4. Consult with the Talent Acquisition team for support and guidance.

Confidentiality

All information including interview questions and responses, candidate details, interview notes, conversations and discussions about applicants are considered confidential and should not be shared with anyone outside of the Interview Panel.

Conflict of Interest

Individuals must disclose and be excluded from participation in any hiring decisions/related processes if they are in a family relationship or Intimate Relationship with a person being considered for employment or engagement with Unity Health. No member of an Interview Panel may accept gifts or benefit materially from the applicant under consideration as a result of their participation in the selection process. It is a conflict of interest if a candidate is advantaged in the selection process as a result of a personal relationships they may have with a member of the selection committee. All recruitment activity must be in accordance with Unity Health Toronto's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Legislative Requirements

A number of legislative and Collective Agreement provisions govern recruitment and selection. The Talent Acquisition team will provide guidance to hiring leaders and panel members.

It is essential that all panel members are aware of current Human Rights Legislation. Unity Health Toronto strictly adheres to the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) and does not discriminate in employment with respect to race, ancestry, religion, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, record of offences, marital status, family status or disability.

Interview panels should not ask questions which may solicit information from any candidate pertaining to any of the prohibited grounds listed above. Please review to *Appendix A - Addressing the OHRC Protected Grounds* for guidance as to how to avoid asking questions about prohibited grounds during the candidate selection process.

Unity Health Toronto’s commitment to anti-racism, equity and social accountability is essential to our ability to provide exceptional care experiences and to drive research and academic excellence.

Required Learning Module 1: Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC)

All interview panel members are required to read the guidance from the Ontario Human Rights Commission on Interviewing and Making Hiring Decisions at the following location in advance of participating in any recruitment decision:

<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/iv-human-rights-issues-all-stages-employment/5-interviewing-and-making-hiring-decisions>

Equitable Hiring Best Practices

Prior to the interview

The Hiring Manager is encouraged to utilize *Appendix B: Diversity Checklist for Hiring Panels* in order to ensure that they have selected and prepared their Interview Panel appropriately prior to conducting interviews.

Interview panel members must ensure that any information shared with individual candidates in the recruitment process is shared with all candidates being considered. Often times, candidates may approach panel members looking to engage in a discussion about the role they are being considered for. Panel members can engage in these discussions, but must ensure that any information shared with one candidate is also provided to all candidates being considered. The Talent Acquisition team can assist with the sharing of this information with all candidates.

When scheduling interviews, hiring leaders should ensure that accessibility is considered. Providing candidates with details on accessible entrances and facilities located in and

around the interview location support accessibility in the interview process. The Talent Acquisition team can support hiring leaders when determining how best to promote accessibility in the recruitment process.

Unconscious Bias

Panel members are encouraged to reflect on what unconscious biases they may hold and how these biases may shape the lens they view candidates through.

According to the Canada Research Chairs “An unconscious bias is an implicit attitude, stereotype, motivation, or assumption that can occur without one’s knowledge, control, or intention. Unconscious bias is a result of our life experiences and affects all types of people. Examples of unconscious bias include gender bias, cultural bias, age bias, language and institutional bias. Unconscious biases are important to recognize in instances when quality, relevance, and competence are being evaluated.

Required Learning Module 2: Toronto Initiative for Diversity and Excellence (TIDE)

All hiring leaders and interview panel members must review the University of Toronto TIDE Unconscious Bias Education Modules. <https://www.toronto-tide.ca/education-modules/>

Biases Common in Recruitment Decisions to Consider

Best fit: Using **best fit** to describe a candidate, as we may focus on individuals who are similar to us and believe they are a better fit for the department than other candidates. This engages the **affinity bias** (where we get along better or socialize more easily with people who are similar to ourselves)

Time to speak: Allowing the interviewee to speak for a minimum of 80% of the interactions as a consistent rule that should be applied to all candidates.

Wishful thinking: Believing racism, sexism and/or discrimination doesn’t occur in your department, hospital, or field. Engaging with wishful thinking often limits our ability to think critically during the recruitment and selection process in a way that promotes proactively managing our biases.

Cloning: Linked to best fit and affinity bias, replicating oneself by hiring someone with similar attributes or background. Also refers to the undervaluing of a candidate’s qualifications because they are not familiar, as well as expecting candidates to resemble someone whom the interview panel is replacing. Cloning limits the scope and breadth of approaches and perspectives in research, teaching and service.

Snap judgements: Making judgements about the candidate with insufficient evidence. Dismissing the candidate for minor reasons or labelling a candidate “the best” and ignoring positive attributes of the other candidates. Having a covert agenda furthered by

stressing something trivial or focusing on a few negatives rather than the overall qualifications. This often occurs when the hiring process feels rushed.

Fit/Bad Fit: While it may be about whether the person can meet the skills and qualifications for the position, it often is about how the hiring panel promotes inclusivity and values candidates with diverse experiences and backgrounds.

Negative Stereotypes: Characterized by assumptions of incompetence. The work of members of marginalized groups is scrutinized much more than majority applicants.

Positive Stereotypes: Dominant group members are automatically presumed to be competent. Candidates from dominant groups often receive the benefit of the doubt, negative attributes are glossed over, and success is assumed. Also called the “original affirmative action” because dominant group members are automatically presumed qualified and thereby given an unearned advantage.

Elitist Behavior (also called “Raising-the-bar”): Increasing qualifications of people from marginalized groups because their competency does not strike committee members as trustworthy. Downgrading the qualifications of people from marginalized groups, based on accent, dress, and demeanor. In short, uneven expectations based on a candidate’s social identity.

Best Practices During the interview

- At the beginning of the interview all panel members should introduce themselves and share their preferred pronoun. Sharing this information invites candidates to do the same.
- Candidates should be asked to pronounce their name and panel members may wish to write this down as a reference for the remainder of the interview.
- Be sensitive to issues related to cross-cultural communication. Consider differences in accents and speech patterns, differences in greetings, or preferences around physical touch (e.g. handshakes) that may lead to direct or indirect discrimination.
- Speak slowly and clearly for all applicants to ensure that your tone and annunciation is understood by candidates.
- Exercise caution not to ask questions which could solicit information related to any of the above-noted prohibited grounds (*see section titled Legislated Requirement*). Unprompted information shared by a candidate related to prohibited grounds during an interview process should not be recorded in interview notes nor should

they be considered as factors when evaluating a candidate and when making a hiring decision.

Following the interview

- Panel members are to score the interview individually and in an objective and equitable way.
- Reflect on what assumptions you might have made prior to or during the interview.
- Consider each of the common forms of bias and work to determine if any of these may be influencing your hiring decision.
- Ensure that hiring decisions are being made on objective job-related information shared by the candidate.

Appendix A: Addressing the OHRC Protected Grounds during an Interview

| Protected Grounds | Prohibited Questions | Alternative Questions | Comments |
|------------------------|---|--|--|
| Family Status | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •number of children or dependents •child-care arrangements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Can the candidate work the required hours and possibly overtime | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Contacts for emergencies or details on dependents can be determined after selection |
| Gender Identity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •specific titles such as Mr., Mrs., Miss or Ms.on an application or anything that asks the candidate to identify their gender (i.e., leave it up to the candidate to offer a prefix and avoid boxes which force a candidate to choose a gendered prefix) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •While not necessarily indicative of gender identity, it is strongly recommended for panel members to introduce themselves with their names and pronouns (she/her,he/him, they/them etc.), and to invite candidates if they're comfortable to do the same. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Asking for pronouns (not gender identity), avoids accidental misgendering of candidates. It should always be voluntary for candidates. |
| Disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •whether candidate has received workers 'compensation •whether applicant has ever received psychiatric care or been hospitalized for emotional problems •whether candidate drinks or uses drugs •a list of all disabilities, limitations and health problems | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •employer should disclose any information on medically related requirements or standards early in the application process •ask whether the applicant has any conditions that could affect their ability to do the job •a disability is only relevant to the job ability if it threatens the safety or property |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| | | | of others or prevents the applicant from safe and adequate job performance even when reasonable efforts are made to accommodate the disability |
| Creed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •if candidate will work on a specific religious holiday •about religious affiliation • references from a clergy or religious leader | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •It is the employer's responsibility to provide accommodation for employee's religious belief. This duty to accommodate precedes the hiring decision, so accommodation needs can be determined following the hiring decision. |
| Accommodations | <p>It is illegal to ask questions or discriminate a candidate/employee based on these grounds unless it is a bone fide occupational requirement. Employers are expected to accommodate the employee and candidate to the point of undue hardship.</p> | | <p>The one exception to this is that employers in Ontario are required according to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act to provide employment candidates with the opportunity to identify whether they require accommodation for a disability in the hiring procedure and to make such accommodations available.</p> |

Adopted from University of Waterloo Office of Equity. Equitable Recruitment and Selection Toolkit.

Appendix B: Diversity Checklist for Hiring Panels

Preparing a building a diverse hiring panel is one way to promote recruiting and hiring the best qualified candidates for positions. With a well-prepared and diverse hiring panel, it is more likely that alternate perspectives will be considered, and that candidates will be evaluated with a strengths-based approach.

This checklist is a useful tool to be intentional about the ways the hiring panel embeds equity in the recruitment process.

| | Yes | No <i>(If no, panel should reflect on reason and consider making changes)</i> |
|--|-----|--|
| The hiring panel is made up of diverse individuals in terms of professional backgrounds, identify, race, ability, sexual orientation, indigeneity, etc. | | |
| All panel members have reviewed the Equitable Hiring Practices Toolkit. | | |
| Any information shared with individual candidates has also been shared with all candidates being considered. | | |
| All panel members have reviewed Unity Health Toronto's Conflict of Interest Policy and any conflicts have been declared. | | |
| All candidates being considered have been objectively reviewed against the bona fine requirements of the role. | | |
| Hiring panel has consulted stakeholders where appropriate (i.e., Patient & Family Partners, Talent Acquisition team). | | |

Adapted from University of Waterloo Office of Equity. Equitable Recruitment and Selection Toolkit.

Appendix C: Equity & Inclusivity Related Interview Questions

The following Equity and Inclusivity questions should be scored according to the system utilized for the relevant interview tool.

| Care and Service | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Sample Questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you tell us about your experience with providing inclusive patient care? |
| Desired Responses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates active listening skills to understand the perspectives and experiences of others • Takes a person-centred approach to determining care objectives and approaches • Promotes individualized care experiences tailored to the need of the patient and family |

| Leadership | |
|-------------------|---|
| Sample Questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you foster an environment where people who come from diverse backgrounds know you value their ideas? • Give us an example of what you have done to create an environment that is welcoming, inclusive, and increasingly diverse? • Tell me about a time that you adapted your style in order to work effectively with those who were different from you. |
| Desired Responses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated awareness of impact actions have on others • Leads by example in promoting diverse thought and ways of working • Appreciation of individual lived experiences • Self-awareness of biases and commitment to reflect on how individual experiences have shaped opinions, beliefs and opportunities |

| Team and Community | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Sample Questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unity Health Toronto is committed to equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism. Can you tell us about your experience working with marginalized groups and the impact of those experiences? • What do you see as the fundamental characteristics of organizations that create an inclusive environment? • Tell us with a clear example of how you have fostered diversity and inclusion in the past? |
| Desired Responses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience collaborating, fostering and developing diverse teams • Interest and willingness to learn from the experiences of |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commitment to building allyship• Creates environments in which differences are valued• Demonstrates respect for the individual |
|--|--|

Appendix D: Additional Equitable Hiring Practices Resources

Self-Assessments, Videos, Lectures

[Harvard Implicit Association Test \(30 minutes\)](#)

The IAT measures implicit attitudes and beliefs that people are either unwilling or unable to report." This tool was developed by a group of researchers from Harvard University and has proven validity.

[Implicit Association Test Discussion \(13 minutes\)](#)

Harvard Professor Mahzarin Banaji on detecting the strength of associations, indirect measures of cognition, and how to find the truth about our mind. This explains some of the psychological principles behind the construct of the IAT.

[Exploring Unconscious Bias in Academic Medicine \(30 minutes\)](#)

This is a discussion with Howard Ross that normalizes implicit bias and provides some suggestions for how to mitigate its effects.

[Kimberlé Crenshaw: The urgency of intersectionality | TED Talk \(20 minutes\)](#)

Kimberlé Crenshaw uses the term "intersectionality" to describe this phenomenon; as she says, if you're standing in the path of multiple forms of exclusion, you're likely to get hit by both. In this moving talk, she calls on us to bear witness to this reality and speak up for victims of prejudice.

Articles

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Bottom Line. Support of Gender Inclusive Pronouns. (n.d.) [Support of Gender Inclusive Pronouns | Bottom Line](#)

Toolkits from Other Organizations

[Association of American Medical Colleges- Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit Resources](#)

[Conference Board of Canada - Employers' Toolkit. Making Ontario Workplaces Accessible to People With Disabilities](#)

[Dominican University - A Toolkit for Faculty and Academic Affairs Search Committees: Increasing Excellence and Inclusion Based on Best-Practices](#)

[Sunnybrook Research Institute - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research](#)

[Human Resources Professional Association: Inclusive Hiring Best Practices](#)

[Duke School of Medicine - Inclusive Leadership Interview Questions](#)

[McMaster University- Faculty Recruitment and Selection Handbook](#)

[University Health Services, University of California Berkeley- A Toolkit for Recruitment and Hiring a More Diverse Workforce](#)

[University of Waterloo Office of Equity - Equitable Recruitment and Selection Toolkit](#)

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