

Effective Practices for Conducting Interviews

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Workshop & Webinar Sequence

Preparing for Next Year's Hiring (Spring)

- > Forming and informing search committees
- > Drafting job ads and rubrics
- > Planning for outreach

Effective Practices for Assessing Faculty Application Materials (Fall)

- > Brief review of bias in assessment
- > Committee dynamics and high functioning teams
- > Criteria consensus
- > Prevention strategies
- > Records management

Effective Practices for Interviewing (Fall)

- > Preliminary Interviews
- > Final interviews and campus visits



Today's topics

- > Review of current policy, political and legal climate
- > Preliminary interviews
- > Final interviews and campus visit
- > Questions and discussion



Current Policies

EO81: Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct

- > **This order establishes the University's standards . . . including compliance with applicable federal and state laws, which include but are not limited to:**
 - Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964,
 - Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972,
 - Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and Jeanne Clery Act,
 - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and
 - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act,
 - Washington State Civil Rights Initiative (I-200), and
 - Washington Law Against Discrimination (WLAD).
- > <https://policy.uw.edu/directory/po/executive-orders/eo-81-prohibiting-discrimination-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/>



UW Executive Order 81: Nondiscrimination

“The University prohibits discrimination in all programs and activities, including education, employment, and patient care, based on an individual’s actual or perceived protected characteristics. Protected characteristics include race, color, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship, sex, pregnancy, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, disability, or veteran status. Upon learning of conduct that may constitute discrimination, the University will take prompt and effective action to address it, remedy its effects, and prevent recurrence.”

<https://policy.uw.edu/directory/po/executive-orders/eo-81-prohibiting-discrimination-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/>



<https://www.washington.edu/civilrights/policies-and-guidance/compliance-checklists/employment-practices/>



The screenshot shows the University of Washington Civil Rights Compliance Office website. The header features the University of Washington logo and navigation links for Students, Parents, Faculty & Staff, and Alumni. A secondary navigation bar includes Home, Seeking Support, Making a Report, Resolution Options, Prevention & Education, Policies & Guidance, and About Us. The main banner displays "CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE OFFICE" over a background of pink flowers. Below the banner, a breadcrumb trail reads: Home / Policies & Guidance / Compliance Checklists / Human Resources and Employment Practices Checklist. The page title is "Human Resources and Employment Practices Checklist". Under the heading "On this page", a list of checklist topics is provided, including links for Question 1 through Question 7, frequently asked questions, and a consultation request. A sidebar on the right, titled "Compliance Checklists", lists three checklists: Programs and Activities Checklist, Admissions and Scholarships Checklist, and the currently selected Human Resources and Employment Practices Checklist. The footer states: "University policy and federal and state law prohibit discrimination".

W UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

Students / Parents / Faculty & Staff / Alumni

HOME SEEKING SUPPORT MAKING A REPORT RESOLUTION OPTIONS PREVENTION & EDUCATION

POLICIES & GUIDANCE ABOUT US

CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE OFFICE

Home / Policies & Guidance / Compliance Checklists / Human Resources and Employment Practices Checklist

Human Resources and Employment Practices Checklist

On this page

- Checklist topics:
 - [Question 1: Employment Practices, Generally](#)
 - [Question 2: Recruiting and Job Postings](#)
 - [Question 3: Diversity Statements from Applicants](#)
 - [Question 4: Hiring Plan](#)
 - [Question 5: Assessment for Hiring, Selection, and Promotion](#)
 - [Question 6: Training \(Onboarding and Ongoing\)](#)
 - [Question 7: Performance Management, Merit and Awards](#)
 - [Frequently asked questions](#)
 - [Request a consultation](#)

Compliance Checklists

- Programs and Activities Checklist
- Admissions and Scholarships Checklist
- Human Resources and Employment Practices Checklist**

University policy and federal and state law prohibit discrimination



Human Resources and Employment Practices Checklist

Permissible

Assessing applicants based on job-related criteria

Asking questions about leadership, unique perspectives, or other job-related factors

Not Permissible

Considering applicants' protected characteristics in any way

Asking questions about how applicants' protected characteristics have shaped their identity

<https://www.washington.edu/civilrights/policies-and-guidance/compliance-checklists/employment-practices/>



Human Resources

Home > EOAA > Pre-employment inquiries

Human Resources

EOAA

Mission and vision

Affirmative Action program
and placement goals

Equal Opportunity
statements and reasonable
accommodation

Pre-employment inquiries

Affirmative Action data form
guidance

Search waiver request policy

Frequently asked questions

Community

HR Programs

HR Tools

Workplace policies

Professional Staff Program

Nonpermanent employment

HR News

Workplace posters

UW holiday calendar

Guidelines for pre-employment inquiries

Last updated: September 22, 2023

Pre-employment inquiries which discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, age, protected veteran or disabled status, or genetic information are prohibited by the University of Washington's policy and state and federal laws. Further, pre-employment inquiries which objectively convey to a reasonable person that the information will be used in connection with a discriminatory purpose are prohibited. Hiring officials must ensure that all pre-employment inquiries made of job applicants, whether written or oral, are lawful and fair.

Department administrators/search committees should take the following steps to comply with the University's equal opportunity policy:

- Direct all individuals who participate in any part of the hiring pre-employment process to comply with the guidelines provided below.
- Review all hiring procedures and related forms for compliance with these guidelines.
- Direct all individuals who make inquiries to obtain candidate information or recommendations to comply with the guidelines below.

Note: The guidelines chart applies to inquiries made of any applicants to the UW. This includes contract covered, classified, professional, academic, nonpermanent, student, or any other employee type within the University.

Chart for Fair and Unfair Pre-employment Inquiries

Search:

Subject	Fair Inquiry	Unfair Inquiry
Age	Inquiry related to birth date and proof of true age.	Any inquiry not necessary to establish that applicant meets a minimum legal age requirement, including any inquiry that implies an age preference for persons under 40.
Arrest/Conviction	Request criminal conviction history information in compliance with UW practices.	Other inquiries concerning convictions and imprisonment will not be considered justified by business necessity if they do not reasonably relate to the job duties.
Citizenship	Whether applicant can be lawfully employed in this country because of visa or immigration status; whether applicant can provide proof of legal right to work in U.S. after being hired.	If the applicant is a citizen; requirement before hiring that applicant present birth certificate, naturalization, or baptismal record; any inquiry into citizenship that would tend to divulge applicant's lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, or birthplace.

<https://hr.uw.edu/eoaa/pre-employment-inquiries/>



Fair and Unfair Inquiries

- > Subjects with Fair and Unfair Inquiries
 - Age, Arrest/Conviction, Citizenship, Credit, Disability, Family, Military/Veteran Status, Name, National Origin, Organizations, Photograph, Pregnancy, Relatives, Residence
- > Subjects with No Fair Inquiries
 - Height/Weight, Marital Status, Race or Color, Religion or Creed, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Expression, or Gender Identity
- > What if the applicant raises identity-related information in their application?





 > Records Related to Faculty Searches

Records Related to Faculty Searches

To be compliant with state law, every employee has the legal responsibility to demonstrate proper care and management of the records they create, handle, and receive. This is especially important when it comes to handling the records relating to the search process for new faculty appointments. This resource is meant to assist all three campuses of the University of Washington with how to manage the records created and received throughout each stage of the faculty search process and the specific roles faculty, staff, students, and leadership play at each stage.

Search Committee - Preparation Stage

Search Committee - Outreach & Assessment Stages

General Participants - Selection Stage

Eligible Voting Faculty - Recommendation Stage

Hiring Authority - Recommendation Stage

Records Management:

<https://finance.uw.edu/recmgt/resources/records-related-faculty-searches>



Updated Handbook of Best Practices for Faculty Searches

<https://ap.washington.edu/faculty-inclusive-excellence/faculty-recruitment/handbook-of-best-practices-for-faculty-searches/>

🏠 / [Faculty Inclusive Excellence](#) / [Faculty Recruitment](#) / Handbook of Best Practices for Faculty Searches

Handbook of Best Practices for Faculty Searches

Compliance Checklists Available

The University has published updated compliance checklists for units to facilitate compliance with civil rights laws relating to employment practices: [Compliance Checklists – Civil Rights Compliance Office](#). Please refer to the checklists for the most current compliance guidance while the Handbook and Toolkit content is being updated.

Last updated: **October 2025**.

This document is meant to serve as a concise Handbook of Best Practices for running effective and efficient faculty searches across the three campuses of the University of Washington. The Handbook is supported by an online [Toolkit](#) of sample materials and additional resources for search committees and unit leaders.

Introduction	Introduction
Part 1: Preparation	
Part 2: Outreach	
Part 3: Assessment	
Part 4: Recruitment	
Part 5: Retention	

In addition to offering a broad overview of best practices, the Handbook points readers to **relevant university policies and resources**, such as the UW Civil Rights Compliance Office's Human Resources and Employment Practices [Checklist](#), launched in autumn 2025. The Checklist offers the university's most up-to-date guidance on compliance with civil rights laws related to employment, and the Civil Rights Compliance Office is available for consultation on any compliance questions.

Units may want to "localize" the Handbook's suggestions to the needs, conventions, or timelines of their particular academic disciplines. All unit-level practices, however,

Faculty Recruitment	↑
Handbook of Best Practices for Faculty Searches	
Online Toolkit for Faculty Searches	
Request a Search Committee Workshop	



Preliminary Interviews

Creating the “Long” Short List for Preliminary Interviews

- > Select 8-12 candidates for the “long” short list
 - use preliminary interviews to take low-stakes risks on interesting candidates
- > Before the preliminary interview, do you need or want additional information?
 - additional sample of research or scholarship
 - sample syllabi or lesson plans
 - expanded teaching philosophy
 - sample student or peer teaching evaluations
 - other



Best Practices for Preliminary Interviews

- > Conduct all interviews in the same format
- > Conduct all interviews under similar conditions
- > Have the same committee members present
- > Ask the same set of standard questions, in the same order
- > Make sure all interview questions comply with federal and state hiring laws and the HR Employment Practices Checklist
 - Fair and unfair inquiries: <https://hr.uw.edu/eoaa/pre-employment-inquiries/>
 - Checklist: <https://www.washington.edu/civilrights/policies-and-guidance/compliance-checklists/employment-practices/>



Thinking about Preliminary Interview Questions

- > What does the hiring committee not know that it wants or needs to know to select finalists?
- > Do you want candidates to be able to prepare for questions, or do you want to see how they think “on their feet”?
- > How will you assess achievements relative to opportunity?



Can applicants be asked how they can contribute to the University's long-standing commitment to diversity?

Yes! "Questions should focus on the applicant's relevant skills, experiences, and qualifications."

Permissible examples of diversity-related questions or prompts include:

- > *"Our University is committed to creating a community where individuals from all backgrounds and experiences have equal opportunities to participate, succeed, and feel a sense of belonging. Describe how your academic, extracurricular, or other relevant experiences support this commitment. Include specific actions, challenges faced, and lessons learned."*
- > *"Describe how your experiences have prepared you to contribute to a welcoming and inclusive environment at the University."*

<https://www.washington.edu/civilrights/policies-and-guidance/compliance-checklists/employment-practices/#question5>



Preliminary Interviews with Internal or Other Known Candidates

Three key questions to address:

- > How can you maintain fairness?
- > How can you maintain the perception of fairness?
- > How have you addressed any potential COI, bias, or perception of bias?
 - How close is too close?
 - Do you need to adjust your interview structure?



Final Interviews and Campus Visits

Final Interviews / Campus Visits

- > Unit's final **assessment** activities
 - What information does the committee need to make its final evaluations and recommendations?
 - Assessment activities should be uniform across finalists.

- > Beginning of finalists' **recruitment** activities
 - What do finalists need to know to make their selections?
 - Recruitment activities should be uniform in most respects, but they can also be tailored to specific finalists' needs or desires.

- > Finalists (and unit members) should be aware of which is which



Developing a comprehensive plan for final interviews

- > What is essential? What might be left behind?

Pacing of interviews, presentations, and meetings

- > Inquisition-style/conversational interviewing vs. focused group conversation
- > The importance of scheduling real breaks
- > The importance of scheduling transit time (including within a building)

Casual events

- > What do you want to accomplish?
- > Consider pressure on finalists' schedules



Making what is implicit in your process explicit **(assessment)**

Articulating strategies for

- > helping finalists present their best selves
 - clear expectations for performance
 - reasonable demands on time
- > helping our colleagues present their best selves
 - clear expectations for engagement
 - clear criteria for assessment



Making what is implicit in your process explicit **(recruitment)**

Querying finalists before the final interview and campus visit

- > How would the finalist like to be introduced?
- > What accommodations and dietary requirements do they need?
- > What would they like to see or know?
- > With whom would they like to meet?
- > What questions do they have about the visit and process?



Best Practices for Final Interviews / Campus visits

- > Itineraries should be as similar as possible
- > Itineraries should clearly distinguish **assessment** activities from **recruitment** activities
- > Try to provide venues for finalists to ask questions they might not feel comfortable asking the search committee or hiring authority
- > Certain categories of questions are always off limits
 - Fair and unfair inquiries: <https://hr.uw.edu/eoaa/pre-employment-inquiries/>
 - HR Employment Practices Checklist: <https://www.washington.edu/civilrights/policies-and-guidance/compliance-checklists/employment-practices/>
- > Everyone who will interact with finalists needs to be informed about the process — and the criteria for assessment



Distinguishing Unit's and Finalist's Needs

Unit's **assessment** needs:

- > Research presentation
- > Teaching demonstration
- > Meeting with search committee
- > Meeting with department chair
- > Meeting with dean
- > Meeting with colleagues
- > Meeting with graduate students

Finalist's **recruitment** needs:

- > Tour of campus
- > Tour of research facility or lab
- > Meeting with potential peers
- > Information about relevant campus opportunities
- > Information about unit climate
- > Information about UW, Seattle, etc.

Prioritize elements based on decision making needs

- > Meetings with leadership (chair or director, dean, etc.)
- > Meetings with faculty (clarity of purpose)
 - 1:1 vs. group meetings
 - Structured vs. unstructured meeting topics
 - Meetings with specific committees (e.g., unit's curriculum committee)
- > Meetings with graduate students



The “all important” job talk

Think through appropriate—and *useful*—length and format

- > What are you trying to learn about the finalist?
- > What are you trying to signal about the hiring unit?

Strategies for facilitating effective Q & A

- > Settings norms and expectations for engagement
- > Pre-screened questions
- > Questions in real time: moderator



Consider the potential “gray” areas of campus visits

- > Meals on or near campus (e.g., finalist lunches)
 - > Meals off campus (e.g., finalist dinners)
 - > Social gatherings (e.g., finalist coffees or receptions)
 - > Transit to and from official events
-
- > Do finalists know when they are being evaluated?
 - > Do colleagues know when they are expected to evaluate?



Final Interviews / Campus Visits with Internal or Other Known Finalists

Similar issues can arise as in the preliminary interviews:

- > fairness
- > perception of fairness
- > COI, bias, perception of bias

How do you maintain the integrity of the interview process for *all* participants?

How do you create the best possible scenario for the hiring unit *and* for your potential new colleague?



Advice from successful finalists

Imagine the experience from the finalist's perspective.

- > Reduce the number of meetings
 - avoid making finalists repeat themselves over and over
- > Reduce the length of meetings
 - how much time is necessary?
- > Schedule real breaks
 - at least 30 minutes, preferably an hour or more
- > Casual events and social opportunities are important



Key Takeaways

Key Takeaways

- > Become familiar with EO 81 and HR Checklist
- > Articulate what *must* be the same, and what *can* be different
- > Clarify what is and what is not being evaluated
 - Differentiate between **assessment** and **recruitment** activities
 - Communicate this clearly with your unit and the finalists
- > Anticipate potential complications with internal and other known finalists



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