

# UW System Administration Recruitment Policy and Procedures



**SUBJECT:** Recruitment

---

**Original Issuance Date:** July 1, 2015  
**Last Revision Date:** January 1, 2019

**Policy Purpose:** The purpose of the University of Wisconsin System Administration (UWSA) recruitment policy is to establish procedures for hiring UWSA employees (NOTE: This policy excludes student employment recruitments). UWSA developed the formal recruitment procedures in accordance with the University Personnel System ([UPS](#)) [Operational Policy: TC 1 Recruitment](#). The UW System utilizes merit selection principles in the hiring and decision making process.

## **Policy Definitions:**

“Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity” (AA/EEO) means “an active effort to improve the educational and employment opportunities of members of minority groups and women.”

“Final candidate” as stated in [Wis. Stat. § 19.36\(7\)\(a\) and \(b\)](#) means “... each applicant... whose name is submitted for final consideration to an authority for appointment...” For executive searches the top five applicants are considered finalists. For all other types of recruitments, the individual selected is considered the finalist.

“Merit selection” is the process of selecting the applicant deemed most suitable based on the qualifications, experience, standard of work performance, and capabilities relevant to the performance of the defined duties.

“Scope of recruitment” means how broadly a position is advertised and who is eligible to apply. Possible options include:

- UW System Internal. Available for UW System institutions only (both those employees with an expectation of continued employment and temporary employees).
- Open. Available for all applicants – internal within the UW System, and external outside the UW System.

## **Policy and Procedures:**

These procedures are meant to represent a system of meritorious selection principles. UWSA strives to ensure that our workforce is selected based on technical expertise and job competence in a fair, inclusive and equitable process. The following steps provide an overview of the expectations throughout the recruitment process; however, it is important to keep in mind that the conversation and collaborative effort between UW System Human Resources (UWSHR) and the hiring supervisor is critical not only to start the recruitment but also throughout the entire lifecycle of the process.

## 1. Preliminary Conversation

- a. UWSHR and the hiring supervisor or designee will discuss the functions required of the position, the FLSA status, and the appropriate position title.
- b. UWSHR determines what type of appointment is appropriate. If the appointment is temporary, identify the duration of the need for the position.

## 2. Approval to Fill

- a. The supervisor must ensure that the position description (PD) is accurate and up-to-date. UWSHR reviews the PD to determine the appropriate Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) status and title. ([See Appendix A: FLSA Status Review Procedures.](#))
- b. UWSHR reviews and makes a determination regarding Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) eligibility for Affordable Care Act (ACA) purposes. If the position is not expected to be WRS eligible, work with UWSHR's benefits staff and the hiring supervisor to determine appropriate alternatives and/or additional approvals required.
- c. The supervisor will initiate and route the Personnel Action Form (ePAF) (see Appendix B: Personnel Action Form) for approval to the appropriate UWSA Vice President. The approval is required for all existing and newly created vacancies.
- d. When the completed ePAF and PD are received in UWSHR, the recruitment process can begin.

## 3. Recruitment Planning

- a. Scope of the recruitment: It is generally the expectation that all UWSA recruitments will be open and not limited in the scope of recruitment. If an exception to an open recruitment is desired, UWSHR and the hiring supervisor or designee will discuss the following options:
  - i. Systemwide only recruitments: to limit a recruitment within the UW System, the CHRO, or designee, must review and approve narrowing the scope of the recruitment. System wide recruitments include distributing the announcement to all of the UW Institutions within the UW System.
  - ii. Recruitment Waiver Requests: exceptions to the recruitment process for a position may be made in some circumstances. ([See Appendix C: Recruitment Waiver Reasons](#) for more information.) The supervisor must provide a written request, including a justification to waive the recruitment, to the appropriate Vice President, and to UWSHR for approval.
  - iii. A disabled veteran with a 30% or more service-related disability rating may be considered for appointment without a recruitment. (See [UPS Operational Policy: EEO 3 Employment of Veterans](#) and UWSA's Veterans Employment Plan of Action.)
  - iv. Give consideration to UWSA employees in layoff status if appropriate.
- b. Compensation and pay range: compensation and pay range may be identified in the position announcement. Internal equity in compensation should be considered.
- c. Recruitment plan: a recruitment plan that includes sourcing strategies, diversity efforts, and advertising placement. Includes places to advertise, taking AA/diversity efforts into consideration. ([See Appendix D: Sample Recruitment Plan](#)).
- d. Role of the search and screen committee: where the search and screen committees' involvement begins and ends (e.g., development of screening criteria, level of participation in all stages of the recruitment process, etc.).
- e. Supervisor involvement: Discuss the supervisor's role in the screening process.
- f. Timeline: the overall timeline of the recruitment. ([See Appendix E: Sample Search Timeline](#)).

- g. Overall steps in the recruitment: review the overall steps and each responsible party in the recruitment process.

#### 4. Advertising the Position

- a. Applications for open positions are received through the TAM system. Recruitments for open positions follow these generally suggested timeframes:
  - i. University Staff: 2 weeks or 14 calendar days
  - ii. Academic Staff: 3 weeks or 21 calendar days
  - iii. Assistant Director or above and Limited Appointments: 4 weeks or 28 calendar days
- b. University staff temporary and Academic Staff fixed term terminal position announcements may be published for a minimum of 5 days and should be determined in part by the expected length of the position. See the [UPS HR 7: University Staff Temporary and Project Appointments](#) for more information.
- c. All announcements will include the statement:  
*"The University of Wisconsin System will not reveal the identities of applicants who request confidentiality in writing, except that the identity of the successful candidate will be released. See [Wis. Stat. § 19.36\(7\)](#)."*
- d. All announcements will include the statement:  
*"The University of Wisconsin is an AA/EEO employer committed to achieving a diverse workforce and inclusive community that welcomes and values a climate supporting equal opportunity and difference among its members."*
- e. All vacancy announcements (including advertisements) should contain the statement:  
*"Employment will require a criminal background check. It will also require you and your references to answer questions regarding sexual violence and sexual harassment."*
- f. [See Appendix F: Sample Job Announcement](#) for suggested wording.
- g. Shortly after the job announcement deadline, the HR representative conducting the recruitment will review the summary data of the composition of the applicant pool.

#### 5. Screening Criteria

- a. The screening criteria is directly related to the knowledge, skill, ability, education, and experience requirements listed on the job description and must be consistent with those advertised.
- b. Minimum requirements should be identified in collaboration with UWHR.
- c. Educational requirements should be identified; in limited circumstances, experience in lieu of degree may be an option. Note: a degree may also be included as a preference instead of a minimum requirement.
- d. Measurable screening criteria should be developed that are consistent with the duties identified in the position description and should be included in the position announcement. The screening criteria will be determined through collaboration between the supervisor and UWHR representative. [See the Appendix G: Screening Criteria Template.](#)

#### 6. Search and Screen Committee

- a. The supervisor will identify desired search and screen committee members and select a Chair.
- b. The responsibilities of the Chair are outlined in [Appendix H: Committee Chair Key Responsibilities.](#)
- c. The search and screen committee should have a minimum of three members. Please note that the supervisor is not a member of the search and screen committee.

- d. Every effort will be made to ensure that the search and screen committee has diverse representation in terms of race, gender, veteran, disability status, organizational unit as appropriate, and/or employee type/relationship to the position. ([See the Appendix J: AA-EEO Checklist for Recruiting](#)).
  - e. UWSHR will review and approve the search and screen committee members.
  - f. Committee members who travel in order to participate will be reimbursed for related travel expenses.
  - g. The search and screen committee is responsible for evaluating applicant materials using the previously developed screening criteria to determine if the applicant should progress to the next stage of the interview process. Upon request, a preliminary screen for a minimum qualification may be done in UWSHR.
  - h. The review process will kick off with a Charge Meeting. This meeting is for the hiring authority to charge the committee with the knowledge, skills and abilities that the hiring authority desires to see in the applicant pool that meets their priorities for the finalist applicants. A UWSHR member will also present information to the search and screen committee on how to avoid unconscious bias when screening out applicants.
- 7. Confidentiality of the Search Process:** Confidentiality of the search process is critically important, not only for the hiring department, but also for the applicants as well.
- a. The UWSHR representative must ensure that all committee members sign the “Search and Screen Member Statement of Ethics” form. ([See the Appendix K: Statement of Ethics](#)).
  - b. The HR representative will communicate to everyone involved in the search process that they **may not**:
    - i. Email about applicants
    - ii. Discuss applicants outside of the committee membership even after the recruitment is closed.
- 8. Corresponding with Applicants**
- a. All parties that correspond with applicants must be professional, timely, and courteous in their communications.
  - b. Applicants will receive confirmation of the receipt of their application materials through the TAM system. If TAM is not used, the UWSHR representative will contact the applicant directly.
  - c. Applicants should be contacted by the UWSHR representative if the recruitment is extended or delayed.
- 9. Evaluating Applicant Materials**
- a. Applications will be evaluated based on the screening criteria developed.
  - b. The Search and Screen Committee will equally apply the screening criteria to all applicants to determine whether to exclude or include applicants in the next stage of the process.
  - c. Identify the applicants that should move forward in the process and submit to the UWSHR Affirmative Action Officer. NOTE: The applications should be submitted in unranked order.
  - d. The Search and Screen Committee will identify semi-finalists and/or finalists depending on the size of the applicant pool.
  - e. The HR representative needs to communicate with all applicants no longer being considered for further review. ([See the Appendix L: Sample Non-Select Letter](#)).

## 10. Interviews

- a. Once it is determined who is being recommended for further consideration (finalists or semi-finalists), interviews will be conducted. The interviewers can be the same individuals as those reviewing the applications.
- b. There is flexibility in the process to determine how many rounds of interviews are appropriate, as well as what the format of the interview (e.g. phone interviews, job skill assessment, etc.).
- c. The UWSHR representative can provide assistance in developing interview questions. [See Appendix M: Interview Questions Guideline](#) for additional information.
- d. Note: Applicant interview travel expenses may be reimbursable, upon approval of the hiring supervisor. See the [UW TravelWise](#) web page for more comprehensive information. Review the guidelines prior to any discussion with the candidate about reimbursement. Contact UWSHR if you have any questions.

## 11. Mandatory Questions for Final Candidates

Before an offer (verbal or written) may be given, the HR professional responsible for the recruitment must send the final candidate(s) (i.e., anyone who is invited for an onsite interview) a Qualtrics survey that includes the following questions:

- In any previous employment, have you ever been found to have engaged in any sexual violence or sexual harassment?
- Are you currently under investigation for or have you ever left employment during an active investigation in which you were accused of sexual violence or sexual harassment?

## 12. Reference Checks

- a. On-list reference checks, which are references provided by the applicant, can be conducted by committee members or the supervisor.
- b. Off-list reference checks, which are references other than those provided by the applicant, should be conducted only on the finalists and should be done by the supervisor after notifying the applicants. When an off-list reference check will be conducted, the applicant may be asked to sign an “Authorization for Prior Employer to Release Information” form. The applicant should, for example, be asked to sign a release if the current employer refuses to provide a reference without a release. ([See Appendix N: Reference Check Release Template](#)).
- c. Consult with the UWSHR representative for assistance in developing reference questions. ([See Appendix O: Sample Reference Check Questions](#)).
- d. It is recommended that a second person be present to hear the reference check discussion.
- e. **Note:** [UPS Operational Policy: GEN 32](#) – Personal Internet Account Access, prohibits requesting or requiring an applicant for employment, as a condition of employment, to disclose access information for the personal internet account of the employee or applicant or to otherwise grant access to or allow observation of that account or to refuse to hire an applicant for employment because the applicant refused to disclose access information for, grant access to, or allow observation of the applicant’s personal internet account.
- f. Compliance with the [UPS Operational Policy: TC 1 Recruitment Policies](#) requires that references for final candidates must be asked certain questions. Compliance with that requirement will be accomplished by using Qualtrics surveys. The following required questions will be asked in the surveys and should be answered prior to hire:
  - Was the candidate ever found to have engaged in any sexual violence or sexual harassment?
  - (current employer) Is the candidate currently under investigation for allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment?

- (previous employer) Did the candidate leave employment with you prior to the completion of an investigation into allegations of sexual violence or sexual harassment against that candidate?

Reference checks must be conducted with a final candidate's most recent employer and with UW System and other State of Wisconsin employers that employed the candidate during the previous seven years. If the above questions are not answered, a hiring decision may be based on what is known.

### 13. What to do When There is a Finding that a Candidate Engaged in Sexual Misconduct

If it is learned that the candidate was found to have engaged in sexual violence or sexual harassment, there must be consultation with legal counsel at the Office of General Counsel. Past misconduct does not automatically disqualify an applicant. Reference information that reveals past misconduct (including any violation of sexual violence or sexual harassment policies) must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis prior to making any hiring decisions.

### 14. Criminal Background Checks (CBC) and Degree Verification

- Background checks are required for all candidates recommended for hire and is performed via the UW System criminal background check firm, HireRight. For more detailed information, refer to [Regent Policy Document \(RPD\) 20-19](#) and [UPS Operational Policy: GEN 4 Criminal Background Checks](#).
- For movement within the UW System Administration, persons moving from a Limited Appointee position to another Limited Appointee position should have an additional background check conducted.
- Director level positions and above should have a media search performed through HireRight.
- If a degree is required for the position, it will be verified through HireRight.

### 15. Making an Offer



- An offer (verbal or written) may not be made until the two required sexual misconduct questions are asked of a final candidate, and until a concerted effort is made to ask the required questions when conducting reference checks with a current employer and (when appropriate) with former employers.
- The hiring supervisor will make a final hiring decision and will discuss the decision, the salary offer, and the start date with the UWHR representative **prior** to making an offer. This will include a discussion of why this individual was determined to be the best qualified individual for this position.
- The supervisor can make a verbal offer contingent upon the successful completion of the CBC.
- The HR representative will draft the offer letter for the supervisor's signature (the letter must include the assigned operational area and may be delivered by email). The supervisor will e-mail the offer letter to the finalist. The signed letter indicates acceptance of the offer; it should be sent back to the supervisor, and a copy should be forwarded to the UWHR representative for placement in the employment file.
- The supervisor will complete and route the Personnel Action Form (ePAF) ([see Appendix B: ePersonnel Action Form](#)) for the hire.



- f. Note: Upon approval of the hiring supervisor, relocation expenses for the successful applicant may be covered. See [UW System Administrative Policy 240: Relocations \(Household Moves\) and Temporary or Indefinite Work Assignments](#) for more information for comprehensive information.
- g. **Note:** If the movement is internal and the individual is going from university staff to academic staff, the start date must be on the first of the month.

## 16. Closing the Recruitment

- a. The supervisor or designee should contact semi-finalists via phone or email that were interviewed but not selected. The supervisor should preferably contact the finalist candidates that are not selected via a phone call.
- a. The screening tool can be submitted to UWHR at the conclusion of the search or can be shredded by the search and screen committee member. Search and screen committee member's personal notes which were not shared with other search and screen committee members should be purged. There can only be one recruitment file.
- b. The recruitment file needs to include:
  - i. Completed ePAF with the appropriate signatures
  - ii. FLSA Analysis
  - iii. Position Description
  - iv. Position Announcement
  - v. Search and Screen Committee Members
  - vi. Signed Statement of Ethics Form
  - vii. Recruitment Activity Plan
  - viii. Screening Criteria Tool
  - ix. Interview Questions (Semi-finalist if relevant, and Finalist)
  - x. List of Applicants
  - xi. List of Finalists
  - xii. Appointment Letter
  - xiii. Sample of Non-select Communication

## Contact Information

For information about recruitment procedures, contact UW System Human Resources at [uwshr@uwsa.edu](mailto:uwshr@uwsa.edu).

## Reference Documents:

Veterans Employment Plan  
Records Retention Schedule

## Appendices: Supporting Documents:

- A. FLSA Status Review Procedures
- B. Personnel Action Form (ePAF)
- C. Recruitment Waiver Reasons
- D. Sample Recruitment Plan
- E. Sample Search Timeline
- F. Sample Job Announcement
- G. Screening Criteria Template
- H. Committee Chair Key Responsibilities
- J. AA-EEO Checklist for Recruiting
- K. Search and Screen Member Statement of Ethics
- L. Sample Non-select Letter

- M. Interview Question Guidelines
- N. Reference Check Release Template
- O. Sample Reference Check Questions