

# AAC Training Manual

Updated 08/29/2016

## What is an AAC?

Each college or administrative unit has an affirmative action coordinator (AAC). The coordinators provide knowledge and expertise to:

- Explain affirmative action requirements to members of search committees and others who express interest or concern
- Help search committees develop the required documentation for recruitment and screening procedures
- Brief Director, Employee Development & Workforce Diversity on issues that arise during the search process related to affirmative action and equal opportunity employment

## Why are they important?

AACs have the opportunity to educate search committees and managers about advertising, screening, interviewing, conducting reference checks, and other recruitment and employment practices. AACs are located within each unit and can refer UI employees and supervisors to the appropriate resources such as HR, Civil Rights & Investigations, or EAP.

## Contacts

Human Resources is available to support you in responding to many questions throughout the search process. Please reach out to your HR Business Partner for more information. For a complete list of HR Business Partners, please visit: <http://www.uidaho.edu/human-resources/about-us/meet-our-people>. A list of current HR Business Partners is attached to this packet.

A list of current AACs is housed on the HR website at: <http://www.uidaho.edu/human-resources/employees/aac>

The Director, Employee Development & Workplace Diversity (or their designee) approves all classified, exempt, and faculty searches for affirmative action and provides guidance throughout the search process on diversity. The Director, Employee Development & Workplace Diversity (or their designee) will review recruitment strategies to ensure the search has encouraged a diverse pool of applicants. Questions may be directed to Elissa Keim at 208-885-2322 or [ekeim@uidaho.edu](mailto:ekeim@uidaho.edu).

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the hiring process and thereafter. AACs, search chairs, and search committee members must observe strict confidentiality with and about all application materials, interview responses, reference check information, and/or any other communication surrounding the search.

## Statement of Intent on Equal Opportunity:

The University of Idaho recognizes that previous discrimination in employment based upon race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran has foreclosed

economic opportunity to a significant number of people in the United States. To correct this inequity and to afford everyone the opportunity to participate without discrimination, UI pledges to eliminate all vestiges of policy that tended, intentionally or otherwise, to discriminate on the grounds prescribed by federal and state laws and, in order to eliminate all traces of discrimination, to take affirmative action to recruit, employ, and promote qualified members of those groups formerly excluded. (FSH 3060)

**University of Idaho Policies of Interest to AACs:**

Chapter 3 of the University of Idaho Faculty Staff Handbook, located at [http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/fsh/Chapter%203/Chapter\\_3.htm](http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/fsh/Chapter%203/Chapter_3.htm) describes and outlines Employment Information Concerning Faculty and Staff. Sections especially pertinent to the role of Affirmative Action Coordinators, Search Chairs, and Search Committee Members include but may not be limited to:

3060 Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity

3065 Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Hiring

3080 Classification and Appointment of University Positions

3085 Recruitment Procedures for UI Employees

3090 Temporary Help Employment

3420 Faculty Salaries

3440 Compensation of Classified Employees

3490 General Salary Information

Additionally, AACs should be familiar with 50.16 APM regarding Criminal Background Checks

**Roles and Duties**

Affirmative Action Coordinator (AAC)	Each responsibility center (unit, department, college as appropriate) has an AAC. The coordinators are trained to (a) explain affirmative action requirements to members of screening committees and others who express interest or concern, (b) help screening committees develop the required documentation for recruitment and screening procedures and, (c) brief Employment Services, as appropriate, on issues that arise during the search process related to affirmative action and equal opportunity employment (FSH 3065, B-5)
Search Committee Chair	In consultation with the departmental faculty and/or staff, the department administrator appoints a search committee chair. The chair of every search committee should be familiar with the affirmative action and equal employment opportunity requirements of the UI. The chair should also consult with Human Resources and their Affirmative Action Coordinator for help with how to conduct a search that maximizes the potential for attracting a diverse pool of applicants. (Ref: FSH 3065, APM 50.01, 50.02)
Search Committee Members	At least 3 members should be appointed to the committee and should include both racial and gender diversity. Committee membership may include staff and/or faculty from the department or from other departments who regularly interact with the individual selected to fill the position. The committee assists the chair to identify a qualified pool of candidates through an evaluation process (Ref: FSH 3065, APM 50.01, 50.02)

**Hiring Process for Temporary Employees**

Effective May 12, 2016 temporary hires at the University of Idaho may use a streamlined recruiting process. Temporary hires include: students, postdoctoral fellows, research and teaching assistants, temporary faculty (lecturers, visiting faculty, acting faculty, adjunct faculty, affiliated faculty, and emeritus faculty), and any other hire lasting less than 1,385 hours or one year (whichever comes first). Positions expected to last longer than 1385 hours or greater than one year will not be considered temporary and are subject to the same recruitment requirements as regularly funded positions.

Supervisors and hiring authorities are not required to use PeopleAdmin for temporary hires (as defined above). To hire a temporary employee, a supervisor is not required to post the position, obtain a search committee, nor use pre-approved screening forms or interview questions.

A supervisor may now hire temporary employees without a search and without a waiver. However, hiring authorities must still follow all federal, state, and local laws as well as university policies and procedures. HR and AACs will be key resources for supervisors who wish to use this new process.

Supervisors are still required to conduct criminal background checks as deemed necessary for new temporary hires. All employees must complete an I-9 with Human Resources on or before their first day of work, as required by the Department of Homeland Security.

All documents related to the search must be retained for 5 years in a secure location. AACs may choose to store this information or may delegate the retention of files to the supervisor and/or search chair.

EPAFs must be submitted to add the new temporary employee to payroll.

Please call your HR Business Partner with questions regarding this policy. A list of HR Business Partners is available at: <http://www.uidaho.edu/human-resources/about-us/meet-our-people>

### **Instructions for Approving Searches**

Ideally, a supervisor or search chair will initiate a conversation with the AAC before creating a position and/or search on PeopleAdmin. This prompts the AAC to watch the queue for new positions or postings.

*What to do when a position description (on the position management “orange” side of PeopleAdmin) comes into your queue for “AAC Initial Review”:*

1. Check to see if this is a new position, reclassification, or a modification or an existing position with minor changes.
2. If this is a new position, check your unit’s position descriptions on PeopleAdmin to see if there are any vacant PCNs that may be modified before creating a new action.
3. If this is a reclassification, make sure that the supervisor/manager has uploaded a completed reclassification packet for HR’s review.
4. Review the job duty functions to ensure that they are correctly classified as essential or marginal. Ensure that a staff/professional position has at least 3 essential functions and 1 marginal function.
5. Review the minimum and preferred qualifications for accuracy and verify a connection between the minimum qualifications and the job duty functions.
6. Review the working conditions and physical requirements to make sure they are appropriate for the position.
7. Move the action to HR for their initial review. Once the action is back in your queue for “AAC routing” move the action to any applicable approvers (as decided by unit) and/or the Office of Sponsored Programs (only if position is partially or completely funded through a grant). Once this step is complete, send the action to the Executive Approver for review.
8. Once the action makes it through the Executive Approver and HR Final Review, an Approved PAF (position authorization form) will be generated. This will be used to create a posting for the position.

*What to do when a posting (on the applicant tracking “blue” side of PeopleAdmin) comes into your queue:*

1. Check to make sure that the interview questions are lawful and appropriate for the position. (Please refer to the Interview Guidelines included in this packet)
2. Check the screening forms to make sure they match the minimum and preferred qualifications listed on the position description.

3. Review the search committee for gender diversity and accurate representation of the unit or department.
4. Review advertising to ensure that the requirements have been met. (Please refer to the Advertising Requirements included in this packet).
5. If anything is incorrect, missing, or confusing, you may add your question or direction to the chair in the Notes section and return the search to their queue for correction.
6. If the posting is complete and appropriate, move the posting to the Director of Employee Development and Workplace Diversity (or designee) for review.

*What to do when a chair recommends an applicant for interview:*

1. Review the applicant to ensure that the minimum qualifications are met.
2. Move the applicant to “request permission to interview” for the review of the Director of Employee Development and Workplace Diversity (or designee).

*What to do when a chair recommends an applicant for hire:*

1. Ask the search chair for the committee’s screening forms and interview notes OR a bona fide reason why this applicant is their first choice for hire.
2. Document the reason why this applicant has been selected.
3. Initiate a hiring proposal to request permission for a contingent offer.
4. Once the offer has been approved, notify the search chair that they may make an offer contingent upon the successful completion of a criminal background check.
5. If the applicant accepts, initiate a background check by sending the hiring proposal to HR.

*At the end of a search:*

1. Ensure that all applicants have been transitioned appropriately (i.e. hired, does not meet minimum qualifications, interviewed not hired, not interviewed not hired, withdrawn, denied interview, denied offer, etc.).
2. Close the posting if it was open until filled.
3. HR recommends that all unsuccessful applicants who were interviewed are contacted by the search chair before marking the position as filled.
4. Mark the position as filled. This will automatically send a computer generated email to all unsuccessful applicants.
5. Remind search chairs that all documentation must be retained in a secure location for at least 5 years.

### **Tips for Evaluating Applicants**

The AAC should send a copy of the instruction sheets (included in packet) for how to serve on a search committee, complete interviews, and successfully screen applicants to all search committee members.

Search committee members should complete screening forms for applicants on their own without the influence of others. Evaluators should review all application materials including but not limited to: application, resume, cover letter, letter of qualification, transcripts, etc. in order to accurately assess each candidate’s qualifications.

Keep in mind, search documents must be kept confidential and cannot be discussed outside of search committee meetings. However, all documents resulting from a recruitment effort are discoverable. In other words, all notes taken during a search may be used in evidence in court.

Rating forms must be completed in ink with accurate dates and signatures.

Screening forms should allow for comments from the evaluator. All comments must be job related and appropriate.

Remember, it is illegal and/or against University of Idaho policy to make any judgment regarding an applicant's sex, race, ethnicity, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

It is inappropriate to consider the applicant's present salary, how long he or she is expected to remain in the position, or whether or not he or she is perceived as "overqualified".

Search committees must remember that they are required to evaluate all applicants and select the most qualified candidate for the position.

When in doubt, ask! Contact your HR Business Partner for guidance and best practice. A list of HR Business Partners is available at: <http://www.uidaho.edu/human-resources/about-us/meet-our-people>

### **Evaluation Errors**

Evaluators can make errors, that is, they may be influenced by systematic factors other than those intended for the rating process. It is important to be aware of some common rater errors so that you can watch for them in yourself and work to avoid using them while on the interview committee.

- ✚ Halo Effect: The tendency to rate a person high on all factors even though the person was outstanding on only one factor.
- ✚ Horns Effect: The opposite of Halo Effect.
- ✚ Positive Leniency: Tendency to overrate all people.
- ✚ Negative Leniency: Tendency to underrate all people.
- ✚ Central Tendency: Tendency to rate all in the center.
- ✚ First Impressions: strong favorable/unfavorable judgments in beginning of interview that influence the rest of the interview and final judgments. Keep an open mind.
- ✚ Recent Impressions: Strong favorable/unfavorable judgments at the end of an interview that causes other information during the interview to be ignored. Consider the entire interview and application materials.
- ✚ Contrast Effects: Exclusively evaluating a person compared to others being evaluated instead of comparing the person to the job requirements. Keep the selection criteria and the needs of the position in mind.
- ✚ Stereotyping: Attributing characteristics or traits to an individual or group of individuals because of specific or commonly held beliefs.
- ✚ Similar to Me: When people rate individuals similar to themselves high and people dissimilar, low.

### **Tips for Interviewing Applicants**

Search committee members must thoroughly understand the duties of the job and the minimum & preferred qualifications prior to evaluating/interviewing applicants. Most importantly, search committee members must be aware of illegal, unethical, and inappropriate inquiries during an interview process.

The goals of an interview process are to (1) gather information, (2) create a positive image of the University and your department, (3) present a realistic description of the position, (4) ensure that all

applicants feel they have been treated fairly, and (5) establish adequate records in the event the hiring decision must be justified at a future date.

Candidates often hope to learn more about the department, college, or unit during an interview. With this in mind, the search committee should be ready to answer questions about the position, working environment, expectations, and the local area.

Interview questions must be preapproved by the Director of Employee Development & Workplace Diversity before the posting is made public. Search committee members must use these preapproved interview questions for each interview. Job-related follow up questions may be used to probe further into an applicant’s qualifications.

Interviewers cannot ask about:

Age (Exercise caution when asking for dates of graduation)	Origin of one’s name Birthplace/Citizenship	Marital/family status	Disability
Criminal Activity	Relatives	Transportation (Cannot ask how an applicant arrives to work)	Organizations (unless professional and related to position)

For more information, please review the Interview Guidelines for Committee Members included in this packet and reach out to Director of Employee Development & Workplace Diversity or your HR Business Partner. A list of HR Business Partners is available at: <http://www.uidaho.edu/human-resources/about-us/meet-our-people>

**Tips for Conducting Reference Checks:**

To promote due diligence and to avoid negligent hiring, Human Resources strongly encourages search committees to conduct reference checks.

Reference checks allow the prospective employer to receive first-hand information about the candidate’s skills, qualifications, attitude, and ability to fit the position needs and responsibilities.

Candidates are required to submit at least 3 professional references with their application. However, HR recommends the search committee contact the current supervisor even if he or she is not listed as one of the designated references.

When conducting reference checks, focus on the following:

- ✚ Probe into any untruths or exaggerations in application materials and confirm information given in the interview
- ✚ Verify their employment history and level of education
- ✚ Using the reference check form on the HR website, find out more about the applicant’s qualifications.

For more information, refer to the Reference Checking Guidelines and Tips & Telephone Reference Check Form, both attached in this packet.

## **Post-Hire Responsibilities**

All employees must have a valid I-9 on file. AACs should check Banner (PEAEMPL) to see if the new employee has a valid I-9 (they are valid for 3 years) or call HR to confirm. If an employee is new to the University of Idaho or if their I-9 has expired, they will need to visit HR to complete an I-9 form on or before their first day of work. To complete an I-9, a new employee must present proof of identify and eligibility to work in the United States. For more information, review the I-9 form available at <http://www.uidaho.edu/human-resources/forms>.

Criminal background checks are required prior to hiring benefit eligible (classified or exempt), faculty (temporary or permanent), graduate assistants (TA/RA), non-student hourly employees, student workers, interns, and volunteers if their work will involve significant contact with minors and also recommends checks for individuals considered for positions where the hiring authority determines the work to be security sensitive (APM 50.16). The PDF to submit a background check form is available at <http://www.uidaho.edu/human-resources/forms>. If a hire was conducted through PeopleAdmin, the AAC may use the hiring proposal to request a background check from HR.

PERSI eligible non-board appointed positions will need to complete PERSI paperwork with HR as soon as the position is eligible. Delays may incur retroactive fees for both the employer and employee.

If the employee is under 18, a Child Labor Form must be kept on file with HR. This form is available online at <http://www.uidaho.edu/human-resources/forms>.

Employees required to drive a University vehicle must complete a driver record check and complete a defensive driving course. Supervisors should include this in the on-boarding process for the new hire.

Offer letters must be completed and delivered to the new employee for his or her signature. AACs and/or supervisors will send the completed offer letter to [hr@uidaho.edu](mailto:hr@uidaho.edu) to keep on file. Offer letter templates are available online at <http://www.uidaho.edu/human-resources/forms>.

## List of Contacts

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Director, HR		
Brandi Terwilliger	<a href="mailto:brandit@uidaho.edu">brandit@uidaho.edu</a>	208-885-3008

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HR Front-I-9s/supervisor setup/child labor forms		
Kirsty Pinchuk	<a href="mailto:kpinchuk@uidaho.edu">kpinchuk@uidaho.edu</a> or <a href="mailto:hr@uidaho.edu">hr@uidaho.edu</a>	208-885-3880
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PeopleAdmin or Advertising		
Theresa Nuhn	<a href="mailto:tnuhn@uidaho.edu">tnuhn@uidaho.edu</a>	208-885-3611

Criminal Background Checks		
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