

Special Program Justification Form | Instructions

Restricted and Priority Job Advertisements for Underrepresented Groups

To support an equitable hiring strategy, the hiring manager must complete the **Special Programs Justification form**, that includes the University's rationale for the strategy.

A restricted hire is a *limited* competition in which the University expressly limits eligibility to apply for a position to candidates who belong to underrepresented groups. In comparison, a priority hire is an open competition in which the University expressly encourages applications from underrepresented groups and affords greater weight to qualified candidates within the underrepresented group. With a priority hire, although the process encourages applications from underrepresented groups, the posting is open to all candidates.

- Priority and Restricted hires go through a separate approval process (in addition to the headcount provost approval process), as the Provost would like to see the attached **Special Programs Justification** form completed, including the review that was completed by LIS. This process can be done simultaneously with the headcount approval process.

Equitable hiring strategies, whether “priority” or “restricted”, may be used at any time, in accordance with the University's equitable hiring priorities, subject to certain risks and considerations. While consistent with the Ontario *Human Rights Code* and the *Employment Equity Act*, these strategies may attract allegations of discrimination from those outside of the prioritized or restricted group. If the University is unable to produce a rationale for its asserted special program and a candidate files a successful human rights application against the University, the University might not be able to demonstrate that a priority hire was justified. In such a case, the University could be required to provide general damages and special damages for violating the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) (“Code”).

What needs to be completed from you to submit a ticket to LIS:

- a) Completed Special Programs Justification form
- b) Completed job description
- c) Any additional data to support this recruit

While priority and restricted hires may at times be justified based on current and/or historical underrepresentation of a particular group, there is no specific threshold for when a group is sufficiently “underrepresented”. Priority and restricted hires may also be justified based on other factors, including knowledge/skills required in the position and the University community members the position is meant to serve. For example, if a position is created to provide guidance and counselling to Indigenous students, it may be desirable to have an Indigenous person in that position.

The process after the Special Programs Justification form has been filled out:

1. Please send your completed Special Programs Justification form to LIS at lis@uwaterloo.ca along with your completed job description and any additional information you want to include. LIS will support your request through their ticketing system via email.
 - The Senior Leader in your department should not be signing off on the form, until the analysis has been completed by LIS.

- It is critical that the hiring manager filling out this document, does so to the best of their ability, as having a priority/restricted job ad is only one piece of an equitable recruitment and selection strategy for a priority or restricted hire.
2. LIS will review the Special Programs Justification form and provide their analysis. LIS's general timeline for responding to requests is two (2) weeks. When you reach out with your request and completed form, LIS will ask you about your timeline. Once they have completed their analysis, they will respond back with their advice and guidance.
 3. You and your leadership team will review the analysis, make any necessary adjustments, and sign the Special Programs Justification form.
 5. Once the above has been completed, please send the fully signed Special Programs Justification form to the Provost Office, for final sign off.
 6. Once the Special Programs Justification form has been signed by the Provost, you can proceed with the advertisement. You must upload the Special Programs Justification form into iCIMS for your HR Partner to review.

Page #1 of the Special Programs Justification form

- Please complete the required information. Please note that the "Date" of the form, is the date you have completed the form (not the start date of the successful candidate).

Page #2 of the Special Programs Justification form

1. Question #1: Identify and provide a description of the underrepresented group.
 - Specifically identify and provide information on the priority hire that you wish to hire. Please ensure you provide a description of the underrepresented group(s).
2. Question #2: Review and attach objective data and evidence (i.e. Federal Contractors program, Institutional Analysis and Planning and Statistics Canada) showing the underrepresentation. Summarize the data and evidence and comment on the degree of underrepresentation.
 - The "Rationale for Restricted Job Ads" can be leveraged for this section, to support your request for an Indigenous hire. This document is on the Priority and Restricted Hiring Website.
3. Question #3: Describe past efforts, if any, to address the underrepresentation which the priority or restricted hire is intended to address.
 - Information on past efforts used to address underrepresentation and an equitable hiring strategy must be specific to a department or unit's context and actions. Not only will this help mitigate risk to the institution, but it protects and supports the candidate moving into this role. Having a strategic plan for this individual will be key in their success of the role.
4. Questions #4: Outline your equity hiring strategy for the position and how this strategy helps address identified underrepresentation and equity goals.
 - You will need to be detailed about your approach with this request. To uphold equitable recruitment and selection best practices, I would be happy to work with you to draft up a plan (or detail what was done previously with the hire that Scott did...from my understanding the plan that was used last time was a great one). You can also research or reach out to any additional networks about the priority/restricted recruitment process. You could add the following language, but some departments have expanded their recruitment efforts, depending on the needs of the role.

- Recognizing and incorporating diversity representation into our recruitment practices is a critical step towards fairness, inclusion, and equity of all our candidates. Each step of the recruitment process is guided by university policies and best practices to ensure all groups and individuals are included, treated fairly, and no less favorably, and have equitable opportunity. These practices include comparing applicants against the posted qualifications, asking consistent and relevant interview questions, being aware of personal biases, etc. Together, we will ensure an objective candidate evaluation is conducted to decrease the inaccuracy, unfairness, and subjective assessment of candidates. The following practices will be adopted:
 1. We will compare applicants against the posted qualifications. When reviewing resumes, hard skills and experiences will be reviewed when considering candidates for an interview. Soft skills will be objectively assessed via an interview.
 2. We will use an interview guide to ensure the same questions are asked of each candidate. Probing questions may be asked to complete answer.
 3. Interview guide will be created before reviewing candidates. This ensures we are asking questions related to the job qualifications and not the candidate pool.
 4. We will use a rubric to ensure we are evaluating answers consistently.
 5. We will take good interview notes so we can provide good feedback.

For questions or concerns on how to fill out this document, please submit requests through our form: <https://uwaterloo.ca/human-rights-equity-inclusion/equity-office/edi-r-intake-form>