



# Recruitment Toolkit



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Experiential Learning Hub  
Faculty of Applied Science

[EXPERIENCE.APSC.UBC.CA](https://experience.apsc.ubc.ca)

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## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

# Introduction and Checklist

This toolkit, paired with the spreadsheet, is a comprehensive guide to recruitment for student groups. If this is your first time, be aware that recruitment is a long process, and it is best to start planning ASAP! The steps discussed in this module are not linear - you may jump back and forth often. Good luck!

Recruitment is often done by various executives representing different subteams/positions. To avoid burnout, make sure the parties involved in the recruitment process have ample time and headspace to assess all applicants thoroughly. Discuss with your team whether they prefer rolling applications or a set deadline for everyone.

UBC EDI has an incredible course about inclusive hiring - if you're interested, the full details can be found on the [UBC Workplace Learning](#) website.

Here's an initial checklist to get you started for the next steps - a fillable version (for this and the following steps) can be found in our accompanying spreadsheet!

- Set up application form
- Start hiring process (Date)
- Applications come in for (Duration)
- Review period (Duration) days
- Interview period (Date-Date)
- Written/Verbal Exam (Date) - If needed
- Finalize applicants (Date)
- Select backups (Date)
- Send out offers (Date)

## STEP 1

# Internal Assessment

As a student, it's only natural (and healthy) to have 20-30% of your team graduate or otherwise move on each year. This allows new members and their unique ideas and skills to join the team. Before sending out any hiring notices, it's worthwhile to take stock of the current composition of your team and what your goals are in the future.

## Important Questions to Consider

- What does the composition and hierarchy of your team look like right now (year level, discipline, etc.)?
- How many members are currently on your team?
- How many members are moving on?
- What projects/goals are you working towards for the next year/design cycle/competition?
- How many members will you need to achieve the identified projects/goals?
- Do you need any specific technical or soft skills for the identified projects/goals?

Once you have listed these down, make sure to integrate this into the hiring advertisement. Now we can work on finding the students to fill the team's needs.

# Advertising

## When to Advertise

Begin by deciding when you'd like your new members to join your team, then work backwards. Consider how long it would take for applications to come in, those applications to be reviewed, interviews (if any) to be held, and for you to send out offers and hear back from your first-choice applicants. Usually, the recruiting process takes 2-4 weeks from when the initial hiring notice is posted and when the team has finalized its new members. For leadership positions, it is recommended to begin the transition process earlier in the term, so that the parties involved have sufficient time to accustom themselves to the new role.

After posting your initial hiring notice, keep the momentum going! Lots of students will be checking online for more information on teams. The recruiting period is the perfect time to show off what your team has accomplished in the last year and attract new recruits. A quick reminder a day or two before your application deadline is a good idea too.

With most teams recruiting once a year in September, competition can be fierce and students (especially first years) may find the start of the year overwhelming. Having a second recruitment period later in the year opens your team up to students who've had time to learn new skills in school and be better mentally prepared to take on an extracurricular activity. It also gives your team time to fill any gaps that have come to light since your first round of recruitment.

## Where to Advertise

### IN-PERSON EVENTS:

- Imagine Day (booth registration usually opens up in June or July)
- Club days
- In-class announcements
- Team specific information/Q&A sessions
- Department specific welcome back events

### STATIC ADVERTISEMENTS:

- Team social media pages and website
- e-nEUS weekly newsletter (submit your item at <https://ubcengineers.ca/eneus>)
- Department specific newsletters or social media pages
- Printed flyers

### STEP 3

# Screening and evaluating candidates

There are many ways that you can screen and select members for your team. A few options are listed below. You can choose a single option or mix and match to fit your needs. Regardless of the option(s) you choose, if any student personal information is collected, make sure your collection and storage method is FIPPA compliant (<https://privacymatters.ubc.ca/personal-information>).

## Resume and Cover Letter

Most students will already have a resume and cover letter ready, so this minimizes the effort required on their part. Note: For many, design team experience may possibly be the first technical addition to their resume! Make sure to accommodate for this and take a holistic approach.

## Custom Application

A custom application allows you to ask a variety of questions to better understand the candidate's background, values, strengths, and goals. Most importantly, an application allows you to ask only for the information that's important.

## Interview

A good way to get to know your candidates face-to-face, learn about their thought process, see them think on their feet, and allow for some back-and-forth discussions.

### EXAMPLE INTERVIEW SEQUENCE

- Introduction
- Format and flow
- Housekeeping questions (are they free on Saturdays, any other commitments etc.)
- Focus area (e.g. soft skill)
  - Try to keep in mind what an ideal answer would look like beforehand.
  - Add a preamble before asking the question to ensure a smooth segue which provides some context
  - Feel free to follow up on answers as needed!
- Next steps?
- Post interview discussion: strengths, areas for growth, concerns

## Test

If you're looking for a specific technical skillset that is critical to the success of the team, a written or hands-on test may be necessary before a hiring decision is made. However, keep in mind that an entrance test can be intimidating for many students.

## A few general tips for the screening and evaluation process:

### TRY TO BE CONSISTENT AND FAIR THROUGHOUT PROCESS.

- Multiple people can evaluate the same candidate independently to eliminate further bias (and being influenced by the others thoughts)
- Create a set of questions common to all candidates applying for the same role. However, assess students of different year levels accordingly - asking the same technical questions to a first year APSC student and a 4th year specialized student will give different results. Make sure your questions are well reflective of a junior member's critical thinking skills.
- Try to reason context behind your questions when possible - why are you looking for someone with a specific software/machine experience? This prompts the candidates to speak more on the topic and understand the context better.
- Define a rubric and take notes during interviews. This is especially helpful for keeping everyone on the same page if multiple people are evaluating candidates or conducting interviews.
- Keep records for how you've evaluated candidates. That way if a candidate asks for feedback, you're able provide that feedback and justify your decision.
- If you plan to send out rejections, wait until you've heard back from the candidates you've offered acceptances to.
- If any candidates contact you to inquire on the status of their application, you can let them know that applications are being evaluated on a rolling basis.

Finally, take care to recruit only as many members as you can reasonably manage and provide meaningful experiences for. Student groups are exciting so it's likely that many students will be interested in getting involved. However, a large group of excited students can quickly lose interest without development opportunities.

## INCLUSIVE HIRING

### Key Takeaways from [UBC Equity & Inclusion: Workplace Equity](#)

- Use a check-list or matrix of criteria for reviewing applications, and be sure to assess each candidate **in relation to the criteria, rather than the previous applicant**. Set up a separate document or a separate excel sheet to record your impressions of each candidate against criteria. (Listing and rating multiple applicants on the same page make it more likely that we evaluate the candidates against each other, not independently.)
- Do not unreasonably exclude non-traditional qualifications/experiences.
- Do not decide on or get attached to your top candidate at the screening stage. Postpone ranking in favour of in-depth discussions of candidate qualities with the search committee.

### Accommodations

- In the invitation to come in for an interview, the person arranging the logistics should ask the interview candidates if they require any accommodations. **Do not limit this question to those candidates who you think have a disability or another reason to need accommodation**. If the candidate indicates they need accommodations, the Center for Accessibility may be able to help you think through how best to meet their needs. Do not ask intrusive questions about the nature of the need for accommodation, but rather focus on providing accommodations as requested.
- Inform applicants ahead of time if they will be required to take a test to demonstrate their ability to perform actual or simulated tasks. Describe the test format so that they can request a reasonable accommodation if necessary. This may include providing more time to complete a test.
- Provide the applicant with an estimate of interview duration and expected end time to facilitate transportation or other arrangements.

### Cultural Differences

- As you listen to and observe the interviewees, separate 'style' from 'content' in presentation. Cultural differences can impact style, but they do not impact the content the candidate presents.
- Consider that cultural differences can affect first impressions of candidates. The standard North American interview uses the criteria of self-confidence, enthusiasm, and leadership and these qualities may not be apparent in people from more reserved cultures. (If the interviewee is hesitant to shake hands, or if they tend not to look the interviewers in the eyes, consider that there might be cultural reasons for this.)

### "Good fit"

- Be cautious when using the word "fit". The concept of "fit" as an excuse to reproduce a similar department. Candidates who are culturally similar to the department are a "good fit" while those who are different and would require more effort to engage with are a "bad fit".
- Consider the concept of "stretch" instead of a "fit". A "good stretch" is a candidate who is aligned in their values or approach to others in your student group, but also provides a healthy extension, intellectually, methodologically or culturally, that can enrich the life of the team/subteam.
- Remember that often, a person who is a good fit with the current "norm" of the student group and existing structures are judged on their potential while someone who does not is judged on their accomplishments.

## STEP 4

# Onboarding

Now that you've got a great group of new members, it's time to onboard them!

## Post-Recruitment

Congratulations, you have a new set of faces for the team! As you probably know, new members in all team have to go through some scope of onboarding. Here are some points you might want to consider:

- Have they been added to all relevant groups?** (Includes shared drives, channels, photo stream, mailing lists, etc.)
- Passwords** – do you have to share passwords with anyone new? Consecutively, do you have to revoke access from graduating members?
- TEAM 101** – if your team has a welcome package with general housekeeping rules, SOPs, and other information, has this been updated/distributed? Prepare some independent resources that members can review on their own time.
- Tutorials** – Many new members might be interested in an onboarding tutorial for any software involved, such as Notion, CAD, GitHub, Excel etc. Discuss between leads/senior members and plan accordingly. Many common applications already have online tutorials which require no content creation on your end - make use of that free LinkedIn Learning access!
- Subteam rotation** - It is crucial that new members have a well-rounded understanding of you team besides their specialised subteam. Split the members into random groups to cycle through the various subteams!
- Topic-specific workshop** - A topic-specific workshop allows members to learn new skills while working collaboratively with their teammates.
- Emergency contact information** – Make sure your members are aware of psychological/physical safety rules within the team space, and what to do if there has been an intervention.
- First meeting time and location** – New members look forward to the first meeting. Try to incorporate icebreakers, team bonding activities and some snacks/food for everyone – be mindful of dietary requirements and ask them about it beforehand through a form.
- Live Demo** - A mock competition or live demo of your team's project is an exciting way to show off what your team has accomplished in the last year and doubles to ensure projects are still functional if work has slowed over the summer.

## Example Email Templates

Subject: Welcome to [Engineering Design Team Name]!

Dear [New Member's Name],

Congratulations! We're thrilled to extend an offer for you to join [Engineering Design Team Name]. Your skills and enthusiasm are a perfect fit for our team.

Before we officially kick off, we'd love to confirm your commitment to joining us. Could you please reply to this email, indicating your acceptance of the position?

Looking forward to having you on board and achieving great things together!

Best, [Your Name] [Your Position] [Engineering Design Team Name]

Subject: Re: [Engineering Design Team Name] Application

Dear [Applicant's Name],

I hope this email finds you well. We appreciate the time and effort you invested in applying for a position with [Engineering Design Team Name]. Your interest in our team is truly commendable, and we were fortunate to have had the opportunity to review your application.

After careful consideration, we regret to inform you that we have chosen to move forward with other candidates at this time. The selection process was challenging due to the high caliber of applicants, and each decision was made with thorough evaluation and consideration of various factors.

We want to express our sincere gratitude for your interest in joining [Engineering Design Team Name]. We were impressed by your [specific strengths or skills mentioned in the application], and we encourage you to continue pursuing your passion for engineering and design.

While we won't be moving forward with your application at this time, we want to keep the lines of communication open. We believe in the potential of every applicant and would welcome the opportunity to connect with you in the future should other positions become available or if there are opportunities for collaboration.



Thank you once again for your interest in [Engineering Design Team Name]. We wish you continued success in your academic and professional endeavors.

Should you have any questions or if you would like feedback on your application, please feel free to reach out.

Best regards,

[Your Name] [Your Position] [Engineering Design Team Name]

Subject: Welcome to [Engineering Design Team Name]!

Dear [New Member's Name],

Congratulations and welcome to [Engineering Design Team Name]! We are thrilled to have you on board and are eager to begin this exciting journey of innovation and collaboration.

Your enthusiasm for engineering and design caught our attention during the application process, and we are confident that your skills and unique perspective will contribute significantly to our team's success. As a valued member of [Engineering Design Team Name], you will have the opportunity to work on challenging projects, collaborate with like-minded individuals, and further develop your engineering expertise.

Here are a few key details and next steps to get you started:

1. Kick-off Meeting:

We will be hosting a kick-off meeting on [Date and Time] via [Communication Platform]. During this session, we'll introduce team members, discuss our ongoing projects, and provide an overview of our team's mission and goals. We will also have some snacks and food! If you have any dietary requirements, please feel out [This Form].

2. Team Resources:

You will receive access to our team's shared drive and communication channels. These platforms will be essential for seamless collaboration and information sharing. We encourage you to explore and familiarize yourself with these resources.

3. Onboarding Buddy:

To facilitate a smooth transition, you will be paired with an onboarding buddy, [Buddy's Name]. They will be available to answer any questions you may have, provide guidance on team processes, and help you integrate into our dynamic community.

5. Team Meetings:

Our regular team meetings are held every [Day/Time]. Attendance is crucial for staying informed about ongoing projects, discussing team updates, and participating in valuable brainstorming sessions.

6. Onboarding Workshop:

If you're worried about feeling unprepared, look no further! Our team will be performing various workshops for (CAD/Excel/3D Printing/Manufacturing) in the coming weeks.

Once again, welcome to [Engineering Design Team Name]! We look forward to achieving great things together and creating a positive impact through our shared passion for engineering and design.

If you have any immediate questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to [Contact Person's Name] at [Contact Person's Email].

Best regards,

[Your Name] [Your Position] [Engineering Design Team Name]

## Conclusion

Hiring is a give-and-take process. As first-years often have limited knowledge in relation to senior members, there may be more onboarding and training involved after recruitment – acknowledge the fact that younger members may treat the role as more of a learning opportunity than just directly contributing their skills to the team. That is completely okay! As long as they're enthusiastic about the team, don't be shy to recruit a diverse set of experiences.

# Resources

## Still have questions?

You can book an advising appointment with Minoli Navaratnam ([minoli.navaratnam@ubc.ca](mailto:minoli.navaratnam@ubc.ca)) in APSC Professional Development. We can:

- Review your worksheets or the content of this module.
- Discuss any other questions you may have.



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