

QMIND

Queen's Machine Intelligence and Neuroevolution Design
Queen's AI Hub

AI

Hiring Guide

2021-2022

September 11, 2021

Meeting Agenda

- Land Acknowledgement
- What is Bias? What does Bias look like?
- Equity in the Hiring Process
- Do's and Don'ts of Interviewer Etiquette
- Interview Structure
- Question Examples
- Pre-amble and Post-amble Example
- Accessibility



Land Acknowledgement

To begin, let us acknowledge that Queen's is situated on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territory. We are grateful to be able to live, learn and play on these lands.

As QMIND continues to grow and expand, we recognize and respect our role as guests upon these traditional lands.



What is Bias?

Unconscious bias in the interview process:

- “unconscious bias happens when you form an opinion about candidates based solely on first impressions”
- Or, “when you prefer one candidate over another simply because the first one seems like someone you’d easily hang out with outside of work”

Types of Bias

Implicit Bias:

The unconscious attribution of particular qualities to a member of a certain social group

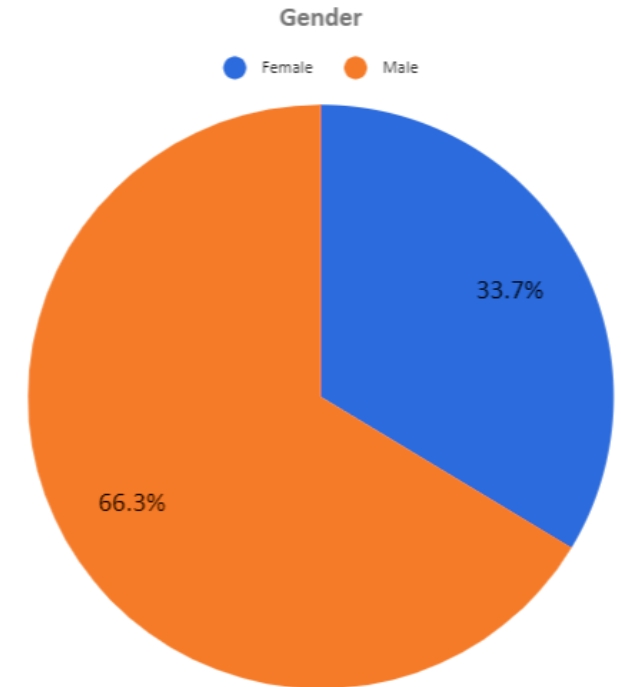
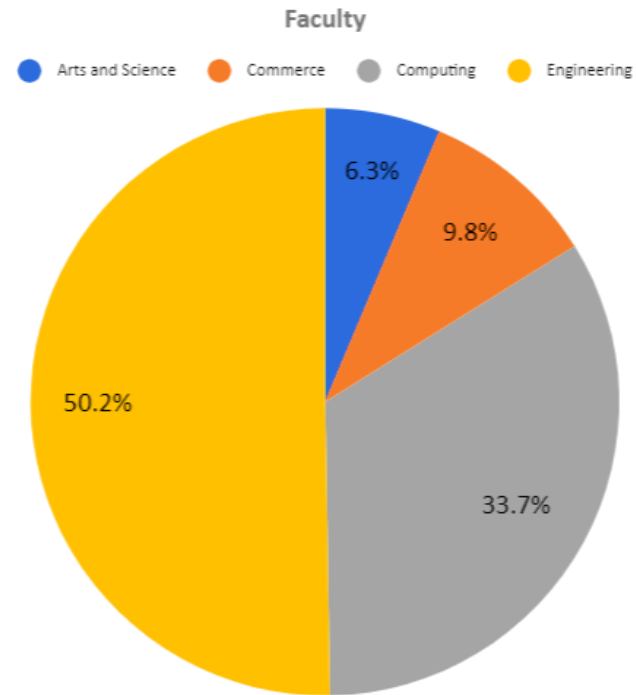
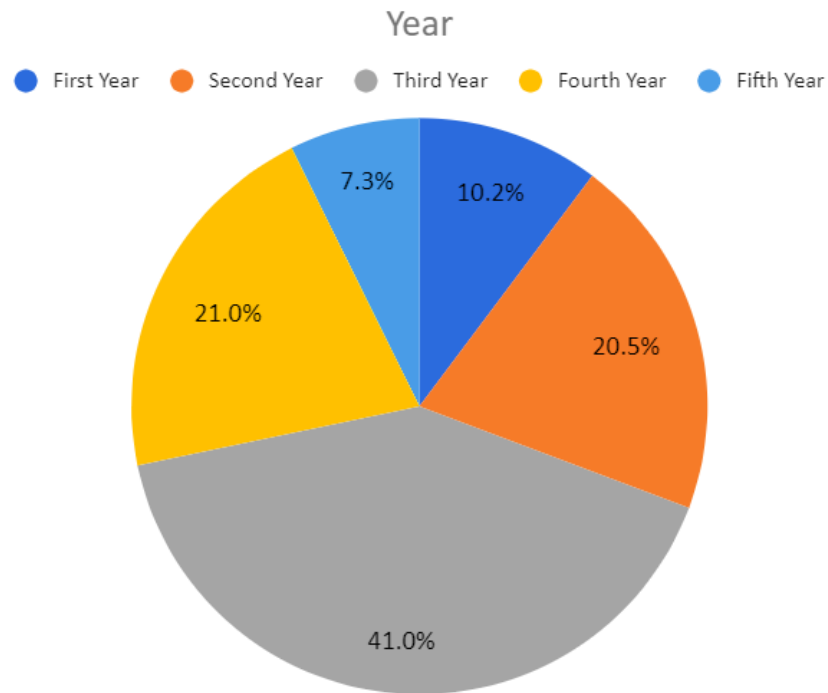
Confirmation Bias:

The tendency to search for, interpret, favour, and recall information in a way that affirms one’s prior beliefs or hypotheses



Why is this a Problem?

“Biased hiring decisions result in less diverse teams”



How Can We Stop This?

- Be aware of your biases, recognize what they are, and consciously reflect and try to avoid them when making hiring decisions
- Ask: "Where is, or could, bias show up in this decision?"
- Hiring Goals: Diversity in terms of faculty, race, gender, year of study, and ideas.
- Different people, with different backgrounds, have different things to offer.

"Diversity in our workplace makes us smarter, more innovative, and promotes better critical thinking."



How to keep the hiring process equitable?

- Balanced and diverse hiring panels that accurately represent the pool of applicants
- Fair questions that are either the same, or similar for every candidate (give every candidate equal opportunity)
- **Ask yourself:** What are you looking for in a coordinator? What qualities do you deem necessary for the role?
- **Keep notes on candidates:** Based on what and how they answered, in comparison to what you are looking for in a candidate



Do's and Don'ts

DO'S:

- Give your undivided attention to candidates, show that you care about what they are saying- even if they are not what you're looking for, they might have ideas you didn't think of
- Write notes and comments during the interview, to prompt your memory during the decision-making process (Recommend google doc)
- If a candidate is your friend, or if you feel you have a pre-determined bias towards them, let the other members of your panel know in advance



DO'S:

- If you have valuable input working with a candidate in the past, also let the other panelists know, if it is sincere it is a good thing to know
- Determine the value of experience vs passion for certain roles, some roles require more experience, whereas some passion and determination are all it takes



DON'TS

- Message each other or anyone else during the interview- save your comments for after the interview
- Recognize your bias, don't immediately disqualify someone because of your bias's about them
- Lack enthusiasm, show that you are interested and excited to be talking to them, hiring days get long, take breaks
- Don't gossip, if there's things you didn't enjoy about your team in the past, use this to your advantage to fix them this year, don't give the candidate a reason to fear the team



Interview Structure

Pre-amble

Welcome the interviewee, Introduce name and positions of panel,

“QMIND is a community dedicated to making AI more accessible for students and creating a diverse team of people interested in AI and tech. Today, we are interested in getting to know a bit more about you and how you can positively impact our team. The interview will take about (TIME) minutes, and consist of questions about who you are, teamwork specific questions, and position-specific questions. There will be time at the end if you have any questions for us. Please let us know if you need us to repeat or rephrase any questions. We will be taking notes during the interview to make sure we accurately remember your answers and ideas, but please be assured we are paying attention”



Questions

Types of Questions: Personal questions about the candidate and their experiences, teamwork specific questions or situational questions, position specific questions.

- Great to ask follow up questions if something they said sparked your interest!
- Ask questions that tell you why they want to join QMIND specifically, not just any club on campus
- Ask questions that give you a feel of what role they take on a team, are they a leader, do they collaborate well, are they transparent, etc.
- Ask questions that allow them to explain their experience and qualifications for the specific role they applied for
- If they applied for multiple roles, ask a role specific question for each position



Example Questions

Good:

- What goal do you hope to achieve by joining QMIND and what steps will you take towards achieving this goal? Additionally, how will you balance your efforts with school?
- Your project turns out to be much harder than your team anticipated and there is no way that you will be able to do it with the time that you have left in the school year. How do you handle this situation?
- Describe the biggest challenge you faced while working on a project. What did you learn from this challenge?



Example Questions

Not so Good:

- Questions that could be answered with “Yes” or “No”
- What is your biggest weakness?
- Where were you born?/ Where are you from?



Interview Structure

Post-amble

-Explain next steps in the hiring process

- “We will let you know about our decision via email by Tuesday, September 28th at 11:59pm. We thank you for taking the time to talk to us today, it was great to get to know more about you and your ideas for QMIND this year”



Accessibility

If a candidate requires any form of accommodation there are things we can offer:

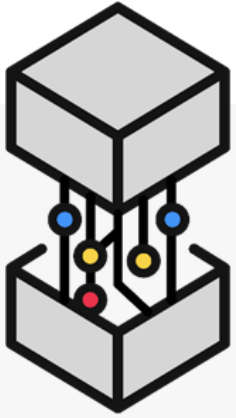
- More interview time to think out responses
- Copy of interview questions in advance
- A revised interview date or time



Zoom Rules

- Make sure to look through the interview schedule the day before to know if you're up or not
- Limit the interview to 15 minutes (12 minutes – formal interview questions; 3 minutes break)
- Practices to make interviews more inclusive and accessible:
 - Add your pronouns
 - Turn on live transcript
 - Put interview questions in the chat





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Deliberation Process

2021-2022

May 2, 2021

Meeting Agenda

- Interview Review
- Congratulations Email
- Decline Email
- Next Steps



Congratulations! Now what?

Next Steps:

- Read through candidate notes and score to narrow down top choices
- Reflect on the qualities you are looking for in a coordinator
- Reflect on your biases

What are you looking for?

- Do they have the qualities necessary to succeed in the role?
- Are they a good culture fit?
- Are they passionate about QMIND?
- Do they seem like they work well on a team? Are they kind, transparent, hard working?
- Will they work well with the other team members?



You've picked your team!

What to include in your acceptance email:

- Make sure you personalize every email to include their name, and position they have been chosen for
- Be very specific about what position they have been chosen for, bold the position so they are aware if it's not their first choice
- Let candidates know why they were chosen for their second choice, what qualities made them a better fit for that role
- Give candidates a time limit on when they must accept their offer by (**usually 24hrs**)
- Tell candidates **not** to share their results until at least **Friday**



Sending out offers

Deadline:

- Please send out all offers by **Tuesday September 28 at 11:59pm EST**
- This allows us the ability to offer the position to another candidate before the Wednesday deadline



Acceptance Template

Header: 🎉 QMIND Executive Team Hiring Decision! 🎉

Intro: Congratulations **THEIR NAME**,

Body:

Oh behalf of QMIND, we are so excited to offer you the position of **SPECIFIC ROLE** for QMIND 2020-2021! We were thoroughly impressed by the passion and commitment you had for QMIND and our vision this year. We're so excited to see how you can shape this role and make QMIND even stronger than it already is. We truly believe you will excel in this position and we are so excited to work with you.

We recognize that some aspects of this role need to be further discussed to include your ideas and initiatives. Once you accept this role, we will set up a meeting to further discuss any required actions as well as your responsibilities for the year.



Body:

Please reply to accept this offer for the position of **Specific Position** by **DATE and TIME**. After your acceptance we will follow up with a link to join our team Slack channel, as well as more information about onboarding.

We're so excited to get to work with you and have you on our team! If you have any questions at all, please feel free to reach out us.

Thanks!

Your name, and role



Rejections 😞

- Unfortunately, some people may be great, but are not the right fit for the team
- If someone is a good candidate but not a right fit for your portfolio, contact the second choice director and let them know they are available to them
- Send out rejection emails after all offers have been accepted, just in case someone declines their offer (have a second choice ready in this situation)
- Have notes available on why you didn't select this person, some people may request feedback on their interview



Rejection Template

Header: QMIND Executive Team Hiring Decision

Intro: Hi **THEIR NAME**,

Body:

Thank you so much for interviewing with us this week! We loved getting to talk to you and hearing all your ideas, and can see that you're very passionate about QMIND. Executive interviews were extremely competitive this year, and unfortunately at this time we are unable to offer you a position with QMIND. This was definitely not a reflection of your abilities or capabilities, just that we don't have a position that would perfectly fit you at this time.

We hope that you still come out to our events next year, and apply as a general member in the fall.

Best of luck with everything!

Sincerely,
Your name, and Role



After they accept:

- Send a follow up email asap after they accept
- Congratulate them on joining the team, and express your excitement to work with them!
- Offer their next steps, usually would be adding them to all our networks
 - Slack
 - Notion
 - Google Doc
- Include any onboarding material or packages you may have
- Encourage them to add a picture and position to their slack profile (it's important that they join slack asap, the invitation link expires after 2 weeks)
- Set up a meeting to onboard them and get them integrated on your team!



Congrats on your new team!

Can't wait to see what you do with your portfolios!



If you have any questions...

Feel free to send me (Wendy Wu) a message on
Slack

