

MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester

Manchester
Access Programme

Interview Skills Workshop

Behaviour

- We expect you to be engaged whilst in this workshop.
- Get involved!

Objectives

This session aims to:

- Give you a greater understanding of the format and content of potential interviews
- Help you feel more confident and prepared for upcoming interviews
- Give you an understanding of what interviews are for
- Provide some guidance on how to do yourself justice
- Provide an opportunity to practice!!

The workshop won't cover:

- Subject specific information
- A secret list of questions
- All the answers!

Think about...

- What are your concerns about interviews?
- Why do universities invite applicants to interview?

Why do we ask applicants to interview?

- To get more information about applicants:
- Check information on UCAS form
- See if applicants have realistic expectations and a genuine interest in the subject
- Give applicants information about us
- Allow applicants to ask questions
- Assess whether they can successfully complete the course
- Assess which applicants are best matched to programme – who will benefit and contribute most?
- Selective and non-selective interviews

Different types of interview

- One-to-one (standard)
 - Panel (being interviewed by several people)
 - Group (being assessed whilst you complete a group task)
 - Assessment (numeracy/literacy)
-
- At Manchester, you will often be invited to a Visit Day, where you will get a tour and a talk about the course, with a short interview as part of the day

Who will interview you?

- One or more admissions tutors/admissions officers
- Lecturer and/or researcher in the subject
- Familiar with requirements of the programme
- May also be practitioner (health related programmes)
- Any age, gender, ethnicity, nationality, and background!

What are interviewers looking for?

Interview questions

Interview questions are usually derived from the following sources:

- Your UCAS form
- The selection criteria as specified in the prospectus and entry profiles
- Current developments in the field of study
- Professional standards (for some subjects)

Commonly used criteria

Some examples of criteria that Admissions Tutors often use include:

- Interest, motivation and commitment to the subject
- The ability to study independently.
- The ability to work with others.
- The ability to manage time effectively.
- An interest in the University

What are criteria?

- Selection criteria are required qualifications, skills, characteristics, abilities or knowledge, which are relevant to successful completion of the programme
- Typical examples include: A2 grades, IT literacy, interest in science, teamwork etc.
- Information on specific criteria can be found in prospectuses, university websites and UCAS entry profiles.
- Interviewers will be looking for applicants to show that they meet the criteria but will not always ask about them directly!

Answering questions

When answering an interview question, you should try to respond with enough detail so that you meet the criteria, and include an 'real life' example.

The STAR system can be a good way of answering questions.

Situation

Task

Action

Result

Activity, benefit, course

- **Activity** – what you've done, D of E, Part time job, voluntary placement, captaining the football team
- **Benefit** – What you've learnt from it, responsibility, good communications skills, leadership
- **Course** – How this relates to your course or uni

Current developments in your field of study

- Whatever your chosen course it is important to keep as up to date as you can on developments in that field.
- For example: If you are applying for Optometry – what new treatments are being developed? Has there been anything topical in the news lately about the NHS?

Whatever the course:

- Do you know of any new research that is being done in this area?
- Have there been any stories in the news lately that are relevant to this field of study?
- Do you subscribe to a particular magazine or look at certain websites in order to keep up to date on developments in your area of study?

Current developments in your field of study

- In groups of 3 or 4, share with the rest of your group which course you have applied for and then **using the flipchart paper and pens spend 5 minutes listing anything you know about current developments in that field of study.**
- If it's a subject like English or History for example, list some of the things you might do to learn more about this subject area outside of college, for example: read books that are not on the A-level syllabus; visit museum exhibitions.....

Break!

Interview Time!

Interview practice

- You are now going to spend some time practising!!!
- Find a partner! It must be someone you do not already know!!!
- Using the Interview questions handout, take it in turns to ask your partner the questions.
- This is a great opportunity to practise talking to someone about your subject interests; your skills and experience.
- Just talking these things through with someone and getting in to the habit of articulating your thoughts and ideas is great interview practise!!!

Interviewer prompts

- **To begin:** Good afternoon, I am Dr _____.
- Please take a seat.
- I'm going to ask you a few questions about your application. Please try to feel comfortable.
- [Ask question/s]

- **At end:** That's the end of the interview. You can relax now! Thank you for coming.

Feedback prompts

- Did the applicant:
 - Answer the actual question?
 - Give a considered answer?
 - Speak clearly and politely?
 - Provide relevant information?
 - Give examples or evidence?
 - Appear enthusiastic and motivated?



The University of Manchester

**Manchester
Access Programme**

Ambassador demo!

In the interview – DO

- Greet your interviewer
- Listen carefully
- Ask for clarification
- Speak clearly
- Think about your body language
- Ask questions
- Give any other relevant information
- Thank your interviewer for their time

In the interview – DO NOT

- Swear or use inappropriate language
- Make claims that you can't back up
- Act as if the outcome is already decided
- Pretend you are more expert than you really are
- Forget to switch off your mobile
- Employ casual or unfriendly body language

Tips on answering questions

- Listen really carefully to the question – answer the one you’ve been asked, not the one you wish you had!
- Take time to think about your answer.
- If you get tangled up, say so and start again.
- Be concise – don’t use big words or waffle just for the sake of it.
- Be specific
- If you don’t know what to say, brainstorm aloud.
- Be honest –don’t try to anticipate what answer you ought to give.

Practicalities - preparation

- DO:
- Review your UCAS form, the entry profile, the prospectus etc.
- Practice presenting yourself in a good light
- Practice speaking clearly and concisely
- Practice talking about yourself in a professional manner
- Talk to people you don't know as well and try to explain clearly to them what you think about particular issues, and why
- Read relevant news articles / watch the News
- Think about what questions might be asked

- You do not need to revise - it is not an exam

Practicalities – the day before

- Get everything that you will need ready: clothes, travel tickets, notes - don't forget your invitation letter and copy of your UCAS form!
- Check your travel route. Set a time when you have to leave by, and let relevant people know.
- Make sure you read through your invitation letter – check the details (time, location, contact numbers)
- Go to bed early and get a good night's sleep!

Practicalities – on the day

- Get there in plenty of time.
- Take a contact number so you can let the university know if you are delayed
- Take a bottle of water and a snack if it will be long day
- Ask for attention from staff if you need it
- Don't be shy about requesting to use the toilet etc.
- Don't feel you have to talk with other candidates, or be put off if they won't talk to you!

Practicalities – afterwards

- **After the interview; hold a debrief with yourself**
- Make some notes shortly after the interview so you can remember what happened and what questions you were asked
- Reflect on what went well, and what could have gone better. Learn for the next one!
- Don't feel pressured to share what happened with other people. The interview is between you and your interviewers.
- Relax and try to forget about this one - it's over!

UCAS guidance

- Short UCAS video on UCAS interview guidance

<http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/undergraduate/tracking-your-application/invitations>

Concerns

- Do you now feel less nervous about the interview process?

Ambassador Tips!

Resources – Interview Preparation

- <http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/undergraduate/tracking-your-application/invitations>
- http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/wiki/Interview_Tips
- <http://www.studential.com/interviews>
- <http://www.umass.manchester.ac.uk/applying/interview/>

Questions?

Decision Manchester

- Those of you who have applied through Decision Manchester and submitted your personal statement should hear back from MAP by the start of November.
- Don't send your form to UCAS before you have received your Decision Manchester answer!!

**Thank you and
good luck!
Now sign out!**