



'The UK Boarding Schools Specialist'

Interview Questions & Preparation (Part 1)

One of the standard entry requirements into a British Boarding School is an interview with a senior member of staff. The main objectives are to learn more about the applicant, assess their level of English proficiency (comprehension and speaking skills) and find out what their reasons for applying are. If the interview cannot be undertaken in person (ie. as part of a schools visit), it will usually be arranged via Skype and typically lasts for 10-15 minutes.

One or more of the questions below can be expected in a standard interview:

- Can you tell me more about yourself and your family please?
- What do you consider to be your strengths and weaknesses?
- What subjects (or electives) do you specifically want to choose and why?
- What are your interests and hobbies outside of school?
- How do you normally spend your weekends?
- If accepted, are there any clubs, sports or activities you would like to specifically join?
- What career or job do you want to do in the future?
- Why do you want to join this school? What can you tell me about this school?
- How do you feel about moving away from home and becoming a boarder?

As well as taking the time to consider responses to the above, give some thought to the suggestions below:

- * Be on time and allow a few minutes beforehand to compose yourself. If feeling nervous, undertake some breathing exercises.
- * Introduce yourself with a smile, be engaging and confident (but not arrogant).
- * Once a question has been asked, take a few seconds to consider your answer and be sure not to provide one syllable answers! This is an ideal opportunity to demonstrate how proficient you are in English and able to practice the art of conversation.
- * Allow the interviewer to gain a glimpse of your personality by showing that you're easy to get along with, enthusiastic and keen to get involved in all that the school has to offer.
- * If asked a question that you don't know the answer to or fail to comprehend, simply reply "I'm sorry, could you repeat the question please?" or "I'm sorry, I don't know the answer to that question".
- * Research the school you are applying to and make a note of the things that appeal to you. If you know beforehand who the interviewer will be, learn more about them and their role so it's easier to find common ground.



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Interview Questions & Preparation (Part 2)

For students applying to a highly selective school or hoping to secure a scholarship, the interview process is more demanding and will require preparation. Interviews can run for 30-45 minutes and will usually be conducted in-person.

As well as the questions posed in a standard interview, several of the following should also be anticipated:

- If accepted, what will you be able to contribute to our school? Can you highlight any notable accomplishments or achievements to date?
- Tell me what you like and dislike about your current school?
- What has been your proudest accomplishment to date?
- Describe a challenging situation you've found yourself in and how you resolved it?
- What is your favourite book and why? Are you currently reading anything of interest?
- Are you following any global news stories at the moment? Do you have an opinion?
- Who inspires you? Is there a hero in your life?
- Can you provide an example from your time at your current school when you have shown that you are good at working as part of a team?
- Do you believe in contributing or giving back to society? Have you ever been involved in any fund-raising schemes or volunteered for a particular cause?

Further Suggestions

- * If a hand is extended during introductions, practice a firm handshake (implies sincerity and confidence), maintain good eye contact and use a warm greeting such as 'Good morning Mr/Mrs' or 'It's nice to meet you Mr/Mrs...'
- * During the interview, sit up straight with good posture and look interested. Smile often and maintain eye contact.
- * Be prepared for any unexpected questions (eg. 'What do you think of that painting on the wall?', 'Why do you think we're having such terrible weather lately?') and practice forming and expressing an opinion.
- * At the end of the interview, the interviewer may ask whether you have any questions. If you have researched the school, then it's a good idea to ask about any aspects which you'd like to learn more. This will also demonstrate to the interviewer that you've taken the time to learn about the school and genuinely want to attend there.
- * At the interview's conclusion, remember to keep smiling, make eye contact and give a firm handshake while saying 'thank you for the opportunity to be interviewed and meet you'. Leave a positive lasting impression.

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