



College Interviews: Questions you may be asked.

- 1. Tell me about yourself.** How do you explain your whole life in a few sentences? Of course, you want to demonstrate that you are friendly and studious but try also to say something memorable here that really makes you different from other college applicants. **Examples: I play football/netball and enjoy being part of the team, I like to spend quality time with my family and friends, we go walking, fishing etc. I am hoping to be able to make some new friends at college.**
- 2. Why are you interested in our college?** Be specific when answering this and show that you have done your research. What specifically about the college distinguishes it from others you are considering? The interviewer is hoping that you are interested in the college for reasons other than peer pressure or convenience. Similarly, if you say you applied entirely because of a parent or teacher's recommendation or because your friends are going to this college, you will be suggesting that you lack initiative and have few thoughts of your own. **Examples: You could say that you have heard great feedback about the college, family members have attended here and passed on their experiences, and you visited on their open days, felt really welcomed by them and liked the facilities.**
- 3. Who in your life has most influenced you?** You may be asked Who's your hero? What character would you most like to be like and why? This can be an awkward question if you have not thought about it, so consider how you would answer. The interviewer may want to see if you can think on your feet or think creatively, or even get you to try and reveal more about your character. Therefore, identify a few characters you admire and be prepared to articulate **WHY** you admire them. You could also include family members as inspirational and influential.
- 4. Why do you want to study?** It is OK if you have not decided what course/s you want to study when you apply to college - your interviewer will not be disappointed if you say you have several interests and have not yet decided. However, if you have identified a course be prepared to explain why. Avoid saying that you want to study something because you will make a lot of money one day - your passion for a subject will make you a good college student, not your love of money. **Examples: I am interested in a career in journalism (e.g.) because I enjoy writing and would like to get into TV broadcasting one day OR I enjoy these subjects at school and have looked into the types of career paths I could get into by pursuing them further.**
- 5. What do you do for fun in your free time?** 'Hanging out' and 'chilling' is a weak answer for this question. The college admissions staff want students who will do interesting and productive things even when they are not studying. **Examples: Do you write? Dance? Play a sport? If you do not have any current hobbies or interests you could say that you have looked into the college enrichment programmes and would like to become involved in a new activity and give examples such as writers' club, gaming club, sports etc. (Make sure the college run these)**

- 6. Do your predicted grades accurately reflect your effort and ability?** In the interview or on your application, you often have an opportunity to explain a low grade. Be careful with this issue -- you do not want to come across as someone who blames others for a low grade. However, if you really did have valid reasons, let the college know.
- 7. What can I tell you about our college?** Your interviewer will provide an opportunity for you to ask questions. Be prepared with some questions you may want to ask and make them relevant to the college and the course or subject you have applied for. **Examples: What career paths did previous students go onto? or What percentage of students pass? Remember, this is to your advantage to ask questions about your course subjects or about any concerns you may have.**

For the interview:

- 1. Review your application** Before your interview, save a draft of your college application as the interviewer may ask you a question based on something you wrote in it e.g. 'You mentioned in your application that you coach a junior football team – can you tell me about it?' Ideally, bring any letters of recommendation and your cv. You might be asked to bring along a portfolio of your work (if relevant, i.e. art) Practise how you will answer questions with a friend or family member or even look in a mirror to help you plan what to say and how to present your answer.
- 2. Plan your journey.** If attending an interview at college think about how you will travel, look at bus/train timetables and plan your route. Allow plenty of time, as it is always better to be early and allow for traffic delays.
- 3. First Impressions count.** Smart casual is your safest bet, but the main thing is to look neat, clean and tidy. Be polite. Try to address your interviewer by name (Mr, Ms, Miss or Mrs and their surname). Introduce your parents if they are in the waiting area. Do thank your interviewer at the end of the interview.
- 4. Mobile Phones.** Switch off your mobile phone before the interview. If you forget and it rings, apologise but do not answer it!
- 5. Be yourself.** Some students may feel they need to exaggerate to impress the interviewer, just be yourself. Your interviewer wants to get to know you, so practise answering some of the interview questions on the previous page.

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