

UCL Careers: Careers Essentials – Interview Skills

- The session will begin at 1pm



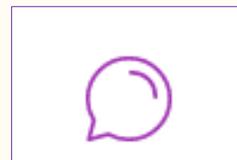
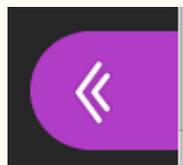
UCL Careers: Careers Essentials – Interview Skills

Glyn Jones – Careers Consultant

Moderator: **Dr Calum Leckie** – Careers Consultant

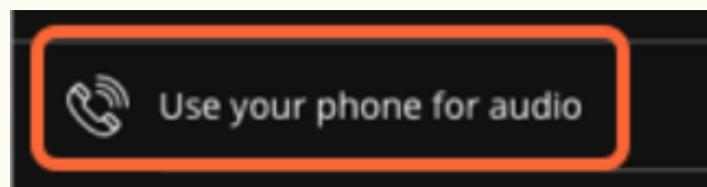
Attendance

* If you joined using a name that is not the student name you are registered with please introduce yourself in the chat box (for the register).



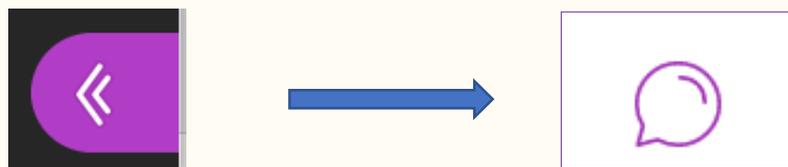
Trouble with audio?

1. Check your sound settings on your device
2. Try leaving the session and re-joining
3. Use the menu tool (top left) and select “use your phone for audio”



Asking questions

- Please send questions through in chat box



- We try to answer as we go or answer any we haven't covered at the end.

(Audio and video sharing has been disabled.)

Your experience

- **Poll:** To get a feel of the room, what interview experience do you have?
- **Chat box:** Why are you attending this session?

What we will cover

1. Video interviews – practical tips
2. Most common question types
3. How to prepare for, & tackle, common questions

Current situation: Institute of Student Employers (ISE) & AGCAS surveys

Surveyed employers, late April - early May

179 employers, 72 % large (250+ employees)

- Entry level recruitment – graduate level positions least affected (down 12% compared to 23% all levels)

Autumn 2020 predications:

- Interviews – nearly 60% to be remote

- Assessment Centres – 50% remote

www.ucl.ac.uk/careers/news
www.ucl.ac.uk/careers/careers-coronavirus-faqs

From wired.co.uk

‘An April 2020 survey of 1,110 US companies by Creative Strategies showed that 27 % of businesses primarily used **Zoom** for video calls and meetings, compared to 18 % that used **Teams**, and 15 % that used **Skype**’

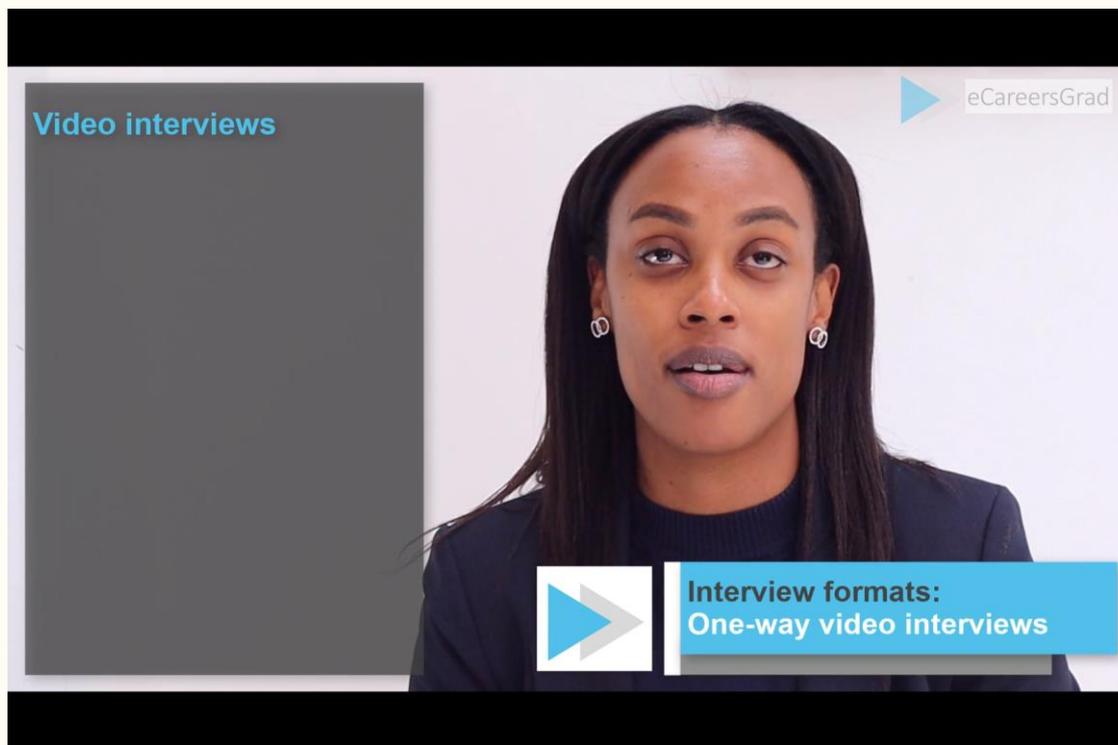
Anecdotally

KPMG, IBM and Fujitsu having been using Zoom

Types of video / online interview

- Individual face to face
- Panel (face to face)
- One way video interviews
- Online assessment
- Online group

'Interview Success' eLearning course



www.ucl.ac.uk/careers/applying/interviews

Online Interviewing: You & your Environment

- **Body Language:** Eye on camera, lean forward, smile, voice – good volume & intonation
- Professional attire
- Non-distracting background (try blurring), lighting – natural is best.
- No extraneous sounds or physical distractions
- Don't login too early, leave quickly!
- Beware passivity – at start, initiate chat

Online Interviewing: Your Technology



- Test software – **picture** quality & **audio**
- **Connectivity** – check speed.
(<18 mbps = pixilation or lag) – Wi-Fi booster, mobile Wi-Fi hotspot
- Headphones + built in mic or invest in a stand alone mic
- Close any software that plays notification sounds
- Plug in your laptop (don't rely on your battery)
- Practice: e.g. ***InterviewStream***

Your experience

- **Poll:** Has anyone had an online interview recently?
- **Chat box:** What type of questions did they ask you?

What are interviewers trying to achieve?

To verify the claims in your application form and to dig deeper...

- **Can you do the job?**
 - qualifications, experience, skills...
- **Do you *want* to do the job?**
 - knowledge of organisation / department, job knowledge, motivation, enthusiasm
- **Will you fit in?**
 - values, attitude, personality

Type of interview questions

- **Introduction / Biographical**
 - Key decisions / significant points in your life
- **Motivational**
 - Why this role, this company, this industry
- **Competency**
 - Focus on skills and experience
- **Strengths**
 - What do you enjoy / not enjoy doing
- **Technical / Case**
 - Testing specific skill / knowledge relevant to role

Introduction / Biographical

- Assume not read CV.
- **Degree** – examples of relevant modules, projects, skills
- **Work & Volunteering** – some examples & what learned. Any relevant - highlighted
- **Extracurricular** – interests & personality

Link to job specification

Unique Selling Points (USPs)

- What have you done that others haven't?
- What achievement are you most proud of?
- What are you best at?

Motivation Questions

- Why do you want to work for us?
- Why do you think you are suitable for this role?
- Why are you applying for this position?
- What do you know about what we do?
- Why us and not one of our competitors?
- How does this role fit in with your longer-term career plans?

Motivation

Why have you applied to the NHS Management Training Scheme?



1. Reasoning

"..in terms of being rewarding.."

"..supporting ministers in leading the nation's health and care programmes.."

Why have you applied to the NHS management training scheme?

01:42

20

eCareersGrad

The video player shows a woman with long brown hair speaking. A dark grey text box on the left contains the text. A blue play button is visible in the bottom left of the video frame. The video title 'Why have you applied to the NHS management training scheme?' is displayed in a blue box at the bottom right. The video progress bar shows 01:42 and the page number 20 is centered below the player.

- Multiple reasons for interest – uses a **Reasoning, Research, Relevance** approach
- Evidence of **in-depth research**, providing examples **specific to the organisation & job**
- Evidence of how your knowledge, experience, strengths & skills will **benefit the organisation**
- Demonstrates long term **commitment** – career goals consistent with the job

Competency Questions

- ‘Tell me about a time...’
- Use the job description to identify relevant skills
- Most common style of interviewing
- Use a framework to answer

Competency Questions – ‘STAR’ or ‘CAR’ model

S – Situation

- Briefly describe

Context

T – Task

- What was your specific task?

A – Action

- What did you do, why did you do it and how?
(evidence your skills)

R – Result/Reflection

- What was the positive outcome?
- Mention any learning points.



Competency Questions – ‘STAR’ or ‘CAR’ model

S – Situation

- Briefly describe

Context

T – Task

- What was your specific task?

A – Action (70-80% of answer)

- What did you do, why did you do it and how?
(evidence your skills)

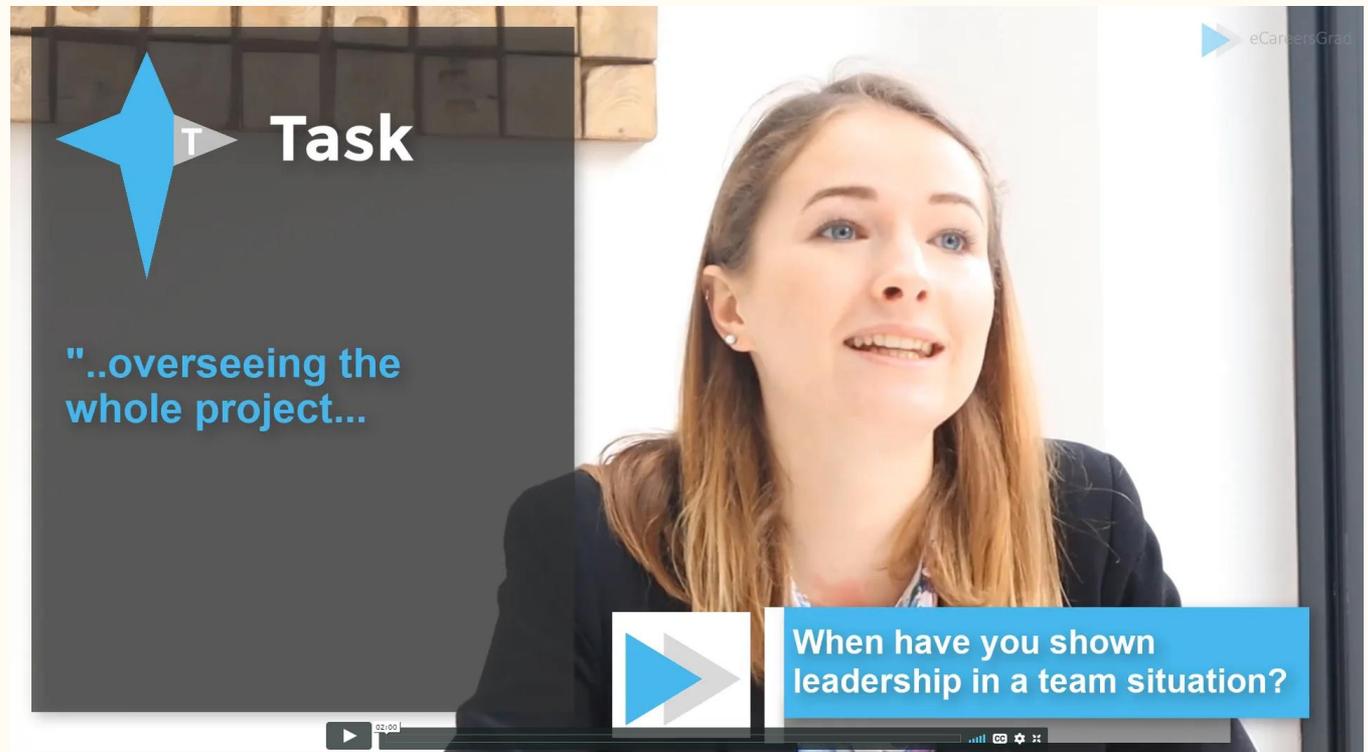
R – Result/Reflection

- What was the positive outcome?
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Competency

When have you shown leadership in a team situation?



The video player displays a woman with long brown hair, wearing a dark blazer, speaking. To her left is a dark grey slide with a blue star icon and the word 'Task' in white. Below the star, the text reads: **"..overseeing the whole project..."**. A blue play button icon is overlaid on the bottom center of the video player. A blue banner at the bottom right of the video player contains the text: **When have you shown leadership in a team situation?**

Graduate Life Science Analyst

...seeking a Life Science graduate to join their Systematic Review team. As a systematic review trainee, you will be supporting Directors on delivering projects and contributing to the company's overall vision of improving how value is communicated within the industry so that patients get access to treatment they need.

This exciting role will involve:

- Undergoing training in systematic review methodology.
- Identifying and synthesising evidence and research.
- Data collation and analysis.
- Communicating your work with the team.

Requirements:

- 2.1 level or above in a Life Science or numerical related subject (undergrad or postgrad).
- High level attention to detail.
- Strong numerical skills.
- Excellent communication.
- Keen interest in Life Science.
- Strong Excel skills.

Advert sourced on [indeed.co.uk](https://www.indeed.co.uk)

Task

- **Chat box:** What competencies (skills) might you be asked about during an interview for this role?

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Where you might gain these experiences?

- Report writing. → Your degree.
- Experience of IT. → Website redesign.
- Time management. → Multiple project deadlines.
- Relationship building. → UCL student bar work.
- Adaptability. → Travelling / year abroad.
- Communication. → Chairing society meetings.

Strengths based questions

- **50%** employers use strengths, **76%** use competencies (ISE 2019)
- Focuses on what you **enjoy** doing, rather than what you can do (as in a competency-based interview) *Prospects.ac.uk*:

Strengths Based Question Examples

- **What would a perfect day look like for you?**
 - Understanding your interpretation of perfect
- **What gives you motivation and energy?**
 - Drive / Motivation
- **If a colleague was struggling in your project, how would you help?**
 - Teamwork / Problem Solving / Interpersonal
- **What has been your biggest failure?**
 - Resilience / Learning / Development

Strengths

What would you consider about yourself to be a strength?



- Use appropriate examples to bring their answers to life – note, can use STAR
- Relate strengths and weaknesses back to the role where possible
- Body language and delivery of answers has energy and purpose.

Technical Questions

Tests your knowledge of a particular area related to the job.

- Specific to the role.
- Things you've learned / studied.
- May be asked to complete a task to demonstrate this.

Case Study Questions

Tests your analysis, communication and problem-solving skills.

- Given a situation and required to respond, offering creative solutions and drawing conclusions.
- Advise on possible course of action and how these could be implemented.

General Interview Advice

- **Listen.** If you need to, ask for clarification before answering
- **Pause** before answering to provide a concise and appropriate example.
- **Structure:** At start or summarise at end e.g. *Three key things I'd like to highlight..*
- Don't like your answer – if time, ask to provide another
- Talk about your **achievements**, but avoid being arrogant.
- At end ask questions. An interview should be a two-way process <https://careers.astrazeneca.com/application-hints-and-tips>

Further Support

- **Interview Success** – e-learning course
- **Graduates First** - case study exercise, in-tray exercise, presentation exercise, group discussion exercise
- **InterviewStream** – video interviewing practice
- **Interview Coaching** – 60min one to one session
- **CareersLab** – YouTube channel, short videos. Includes interview advice

www.ucl.ac.uk/careers/applying/interviews

www.youtube.com/user/UCLCareersService/playlists

UCL Careers 1 to 1 Support

- Applications advice (20 minutes).
- Short guidance (20 minutes).
- Practice Interview (60 minutes, on condition of real employer interview).
- Book online in advance using myUCLCareers.

Time for your questions



Thank you

- Find us online:

www.ucl.ac.uk/careers

careers@ucl.ac.uk

Mon - Fri 9:30 - 17:00



Do you have any questions for us?

Areas to avoid:

- salary and remuneration and other benefits (e.g. holiday entitlement)
- information publicly available (website/ recruitment literature) or covered during the interview)

Areas to consider:

Role:

- more detail about what the role involves, who the role-holder reports to
- challenges of the role, level of responsibility and how that may grow

Personal (use judgement):

- why do you enjoy working at X?
- what are some of the most interesting areas of work you have been involved in?

Do you have any questions for us?

Areas to consider:

Development:

- training and development opportunities, how work will be appraised and opportunities for advancement
- support mechanisms e.g. mentors/ buddy systems

The organisation:

- organisational structure and how the role sits within this framework
- challenges/ initiatives/ projects that the organisation is currently working on and future initiatives

The process:

- what are the next steps and opportunities for feedback?
- when they expect to be in a position to advise on whether candidates have progressed to next steps?