



Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation

Standard Operating Procedure

Conducting Interviews

Applicable to all cohorts except clinical undergraduate programmes

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Copies and alternative formats may be obtained from Admissions
on request

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1. Introduction and scope of procedure

Research has shown that not all University programmes require applicants to attend an interview as part of the admissions process (Appendix 1). Some University programmes interview all applicants meeting the entry criteria, whilst other programmes only interview certain groups of applicants or in certain circumstances. Interviews can be face-to-face, via Skype or a similar video call method or via telephone.

We want the interview process to be a positive and fair experience for all applicants regardless of the outcome and recognise that staff play an important part in achieving this.

This document provides operational guidance for staff on the use of interviews in the admissions process. It applies to all interviews conducted to assess an applicant's suitability to undertake a University of Liverpool programme that results in a formal offer or reject decision. Informal meetings with University staff or recruitment activities such as open days, where prospective applicants can discuss the University's programmes, entry requirements and their suitability for selected programmes are not considered interviews in the context of this document.

Staff should also read the UCAS guidance on interviewing students. The link is in the references section of this document.

2. Procedure

Before being invited to interview, all applicants must have formally applied to the University via the appropriate route. For most programmes this will be via the online application form Apply Yourself, (AY) for postgraduate programmes or via UCAS.

2.1 Admissions process (Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught)

All non-clinical applications are processed by the central admissions team within Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation (SRAWP). Applications for programmes where decision-making has been delegated and where application documents are sufficient to do so, the central team will make a decision. Applications for programmes where decision making has not been delegated, where a test or interview is required, or where the central team are unable to make a decision based on application documents, are referred to the academic department for a decision.

Interviews may be conducted if it is an integral part of the admissions process or if an admissions decision cannot be made solely on application documents alone.

Interviews should not be conducted to assess financial viability for a programme or to assess English language skills.

2.2 Admissions process (Postgraduate Research)

Some applications are initially processed by the central admissions team within Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation (SRAWP) if Apply Yourself (AY) prompts a fee status inquiry. Student Recruitment, Admissions and Widening Participation will either make an outright decision or send the applicant a FSQ (Fees Status Questionnaire) where further information is required to make a decision. Once an applicant's fee status has been determined, the application is forwarded to the appropriate academic department for processing.

Interviews may be conducted if it is an integral part of the admissions process or if an admissions decision cannot be made solely on application documents alone.

Interviews should not be conducted to assess financial viability.

2.3 Interview Preparation

The aims of the interview and the skills and qualities sought from the applicant must be identified in advance and be consistent with University Admissions Policies.

All applicants should be sent clear information in advance of the interview, allowing sufficient time for any practical arrangements they may need to make including for example, travel arrangements. Information should include the following where applicable:

- Date and time of the interview;
- A date by which the applicant must respond to confirm their attendance;
- Information about opportunities to reschedule the interview, how to request this and the possible consequences of not attending an interview;
- What will be required of them on the day, including information on any additional test elements;
- Details on how to prepare themselves for the interview or a statement that no preparation is required;
- Venue information including directions map, parking, public transport, local accommodation;
- If online provide details of the platform and how to use it;
- Details of any documentation that should be brought to the interview (e.g. portfolio, performance piece, presentation, preparation notes);
- Information regarding whether it is appropriate to bring accompanying guests;
- Who will be conducting the interview and how long the process will last;
- A request that the applicant gives timely notice of any medical, special or cultural needs (*Suggested text: "The University is committed to providing you with an inclusive experience. If you have any access requirements, medical, special or cultural needs then please let us know in good time so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments can be put in place"*).
- When the applicant will receive a decision.

The interview should be conducted by at least two members of staff whether in person or online. One interviewer should ideally be independent to the programme or the research proposal. Where there is only one academic member of staff available, an administrative member of staff is acceptable.

An appropriate venue should be selected that is easily accessible with a suitable waiting area. If the venue has a reception, staff should be given a list of attendees.

If an interview is not conducted in person, the interviewers must ensure that the technology required to interview is available and is in full working order prior to the interview.

When interviewing more than one candidate for the same programme the interview should follow the same format to ensure a fair and consistent approach.

Where an applicant has support requirements, any reasonable adjustments should be put in place. Any queries about the duty to make reasonable adjustments should be directed to the Disability Advice & Guidance Team.

Staff should prepare ahead of the interview; ensuring that interview questions and/ or themes they wish to explore are noted on an Interview Record Form for each applicant.

Interviews should be scheduled to last no more than 1 hour.

2.4 Interview

Every effort should be made to ensure the interview is conducted without interruption.

Interviewers should ensure that procedures are put in place to verify the identity of applicants prior to the commencement of the interview.

Interviewers should not discuss the equivalence of academic or English language qualifications with applicants (such queries should be noted and discussed with the admissions team).

When interviewing, staff should make adequate and appropriate notes on the Interview Record Form for each applicant. Due regard should be taken when note taking as applicants may have the right to access this information if they subsequently make a Freedom of Information Request (FOI).

Interviewees should not be given a decision during the interview but should be told how long they can expect to wait for a decision.

2.5 Outcome and Feedback

All applicants should be told the outcome of the interview directly normally over the telephone or email so they have the opportunity to ask questions and/or request feedback, not via text.

Where feedback is requested it should be given in as much detail as is appropriate and provided in writing where requested.

3. Post Interview

3.1 Centralised Programmes

For programmes where admissions are centralised the central Admissions team should be made aware of the outcome of the interview using the Application Review Centre (ARC). Interview outcome and updated application decision will be transferred from the ARC to SWAAPPL in Banner. The interview record sheet should be sent to the central team via email (contacts available in References below).

The central Admissions team will assess the interview record sheet to ensure it has been completed in full. If not completed in full, it will be returned to the department who conducted the interviews.

3.2 Non-Centralised Programmes and PGR programmes

For programmes where the administration is handled by the Departmental admissions staff the interview record and outcome of the interview should be emailed or passed to the departmental staff and recorded on the student record on Banner, the student system. Staff should then assess the interview record sheet to ensure it has been completed in full before transmitting a decision to the applicant via Banner.

3.3 Offers/Rejections

All applicants will receive an offer or email detailing the outcome of their application. If successful, this will include information such as any conditions still to be met before the offer can become unconditional. If unsuccessful the correspondence will contain contact details, should the applicant wish to request feedback (see 2.5).

4. Appeals and Complaints

If an applicant wishes to appeal a decision or make a complaint about the procedure please direct them to the appropriate policy:

[Admissions Policies Admissions Policies- Postgraduate taught - University of Liverpool](#)

5. References

University Admissions Policies

PGT

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/postgraduate-taught/applying/admissions-policies/>

UG

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/applying/admissions-policy/>

PGR

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/tqsd/code-of-practice-on-assessment/appendix-1-PGR-CoP.pdf>

UCAS Guidance for Good Interview practice: <https://www.ucas.com/providers/good-practice>

Central Admissions Team Contacts

Undergraduate UK – uguk@liverpool.ac.uk

Undergraduate International/EU – ugosi@liverpool.ac.uk

Postgraduate UK – pguk@liverpool.ac.uk

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