

# Crafting Confidence for Interview Triumph

Presented by University of Nottingham and Cardiff University

# What we can do

- Talk about publicly available information
- Talk about interview formats
- Talk about common sense!!
- Signpost you to advice from trusted resources

# What we can't do

- Provide interview questions from previous years
- Provide interview question content for this year (we don't know them!)
- Tell you statistics about who/how we interview
- Tell you how answers are scored
- Guarantee that this session is reflective of other universities
- Recommend external interview support (lots of information out there is nonsense!)

## Why Interview?

### Benefits for the university:

- A chance to put a face to the application
- A chance to check the interviewee's skills, motivation and suitability for the course
- Distinguish between students who are otherwise similar

### Benefits for your student:

- A chance to get a feel for the university and the faculty
- An opportunity to sell themselves



Remember: Your student has been invited to an interview because the university are interested in *them*

# Interviews Used

- Various interview types
- Interview style dependent upon course and university
- Questions can range from:
  - Directly about you & your experiences
  - Scenario-based questions
  - Activities



# MMI Format

## Format:

- Practical tasks
- Ethical dilemmas
- Logical quizzes
- Scenarios or group activities
- Motivational interview

## What do they assess?

- Critical thinking
- Ethical reasoning
- Self-evaluation & reflection
- Communication skills
- Problem-solving



## How can you help?

## Help with research:

- Help them understand the format by looking into it yourselves
- Contact universities if you would like more info on what the interviews will look like
- Make sure your students know what to expect

## Help with preparation:

- Find practice questions
- Think about running some mock interviews – the best opportunity for students to gain experience
- Give them honest feedback



# Where can you find tips?

- University websites usually have information on format, what to expect and some tips
- The Medic Portal
- GMC & BMA
- Medify
- Former students
- Encourage students to talk to lecturers and students on open days
- UCAS
- The Student Room
- Advancing Access



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# The Interview



# Online interviews

- Assessing same qualities as in person
- Less time away from school/college
- Fewer travel arrangements
- Greater interviewer availability (therefore potentially greater interview slot availability)
- Access to IT/ quiet spaces can be a challenge for some students



# Online

## Set-up

- Check where you will be doing your interview – are you clearly visible?
- Try to find a quiet space where you won't be distracted
- Make others aware to avoid being disturbed
- Practice some questions online with friends
- Test IT beforehand – is the WiFi and sound ok?



# Interviews for Nottingham and Lincoln: example of virtual interview



- Fully online
- Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs)
- 1 minute to read the instructions & 5 min assessment
- 2 role-play stations, 6 stations ask questions based on scenario
- Designed to assess personal qualities essential to Medicine
- Each candidate will see at least 4 interviewers

# On the day

- Arrive/join early
- First impressions count – dress smart & have a tidy background
- Photo ID ready
- Glass of water



# DON'T PANIC!!!!

**...if you have technical issues.**

**...if the fire alarm goes off.**

Interviewers are assessing applicant's aptitude to be a doctor, not the quality of their internet connection.

It may be possible to reschedule – check with the admissions team.

**...if you're not sure how to answer a question.**

Ask your interviewers if you can have a moment to think.

Worst case scenario, take some deep breaths, compose yourself and move on to the next station. Most MMIs are marked independently of one another.



# In-person interviews

- Check if the interview is online or in-person, some universities will have gone back to in-person
- Student will be invited to the university
- Usually a choice of dates and times
- If invited to a few interviews, make sure they plan accordingly



## Advice for in-person interview preparation:



- Make sure they plan properly – travel, accommodation etc
- Go over their personal statement with them
- Encourage them to research the course and university
- If invited to a few interviews, make sure they plan accordingly
- Mock interviews
- Think about skills relevant to the course

# In-person interviews – the interview itself

- Body language
- Think about what you say and how you say it
- Always give examples (think about these when thinking about the relevant skills)
- Be positive
- Ask if you don't understand
- Try and relax





# Supporting students' next steps



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## What next?

## Things for students to consider:

- Is this the right course and university for them?
- Did they give a good account of themselves?
- Is there anything they can take away from it that they can use going forward

## What can they do following an interview?:

- Make notes and reflect - write down questions they had so they can prepare for future interviews
- Use the experience to help them moving forward, even if they feel the interview went badly
- Get more practice in if they feel like they need it



# Supporting unsuccessful students

- Important to manage expectations before an interview – they are competitive, and preparation is needed!
- Rejection will be a part of medical training – how can the student use this hurdle to their advantage?
- Does the student wish to still pursue medicine?
  - If so, what will they do if taking a gap year? Risk of NEET?
- Feedback can be helpful
  - Does the feedback match the student's own reflections?
- Consideration of alternative courses
- Clearing/ adjustment for medicine is very limited/ non-existent
- Medicine can be a lifelong career and training can be 15+ years. An additional year is not the end of the world (even if it feels like it!)

# Feedback

- Unfortunately, it can be very limited, but worthwhile obtaining
- Interviewers may not make written comments, only determine a student's score
- Interviewers see many people – they won't remember each student weeks down the line!



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