Video Interviews

With remote interviewing becoming more common, this guide provides top tips to help you prepare effectively.

What is a Video interview?

Slightly different to a Skype interview, a video interview is often pre-recorded. Usually all candidates are sent the same video to complete in their own time. Recruiters are using video interviews more frequently as it is a very cost effective way of screening candidates, and they can choose to replay an answer and rate them online.

The employer will be ensuring you match the job requirements, and will likely assess:

❖ Your personal qualities, qualifications, skills and abilities
❖ Motivation and enthusiasm to succeed in the role
❖ How you communicate and your interpersonal skills.

Preparing for a video interview

LOCATION
❖ Choose a location where you feel comfortable.
❖ Avoid filming outdoors as you will have less control over noise or light levels.
❖ Ensure it is in a quiet area, close your windows and doors, turn off any equipment that may distract during the video process e.g. phone, TV, radio etc.
❖ Consider placing a ‘DO NOT DISTURB’ on your door.
❖ Check your surroundings behind you on your webcam, take down any distractions.
❖ Sit at a table (avoid an office/computer style chair if you might be prone to ‘swinging’ if nervous!)

LIGHTING
❖ Ensure the lighting is bright (more than just your computer screen as a light source) and that the light source comes from the same direction as the camera. This will light your face evenly and avoid unwanted shadows
❖ Try not to record under harsh artificial overhead lighting.
❖ Avoid being back lit as this will make you appear silhouetted

PRESENTATION
❖ Dress appropriately – as if you were attending this interview in person.
❖ Align the webcam with your face and shoulders; ensure you are looking straight ahead at the camera not down so they don’t get a view up your nose!
❖ Think about your body language, look enthusiastic, motivated and avoid slouching
RECORDING
- The general format is 30 seconds to read the question followed by two minutes to answer
- Have a glass of water available.
- Ensure any prompts (post-its or notes) are within the eyesight of your computer so you do not lose eye contact by looking down at notes
- Have your application form available
- Relax and speak slowly
- Focus on the camera and smile.

PRACTISE
- A tutorial can often be sent in advance together with a FAQ section, and can often be run by an external company.
- Ensure that you have tested your equipment: microphone (try not to wear headphones) and webcam etc. in advance. Check the calibration of sound and image that there is no delay or crackling noises.
- Also check in advance that the technology is compatible with your device, so don’t leave it until the last day!
- Book a mock video interview with the Careers team – who can give you feedback before your big day

RESEARCH
- The questions you will be asked are aimed at identifying your suitability for the role, so ensure you know your CV, application form and the job description/ person specification.
- Prepare responses that highlight your skills and experience
- Research the company and know why you want to work there.

KEEPING CALM AND MANAGING NERVES
- Understand all candidates will have an element of being nervous. If you don’t it may mean you aren’t too keen for the role.
- Try taking calming breaths before the interview
- Use visualisation to help you remain confident, for example, imagine completing the interview successfully.
- Practise and prepare as much as possible

Ultimately a video interview should be treated and prepared for just like any other interview. To help you prepare for the interview also see our leaflets focusing on Competency Interviews and Strengths Based Interviews.

The Lancaster University Careers team can be accessed either through:
- TargetConnect https://lancaster.targetconnect.net/leap/appointments.html
- Attending a drop in appointment in The Base: 10.00-12.00 and 2.00-4.00 Monday-Friday.
- Emailing careers@lancaster.ac.uk