



Tower Hamlets Careers Service

Tough Interview Questions for College or Sixth Form

It's difficult to tell for sure what questions will come up at interview, but here are some that are commonly asked with hints on how to answer them.

1. Tell me/us about yourself.

Since this is often the opening question it can be tricky. Don't go into too much detail. Cover three or four topics: education, outside interests, career ideas, what you learned from your work experience. Remember that this is usually a warm-up question. ***Don't tell the interviewer your life history.***

2. Why have you applied to this sixth form/college?

Answer this question by showing the interviewer(s) what you know about the college/sixth form from your research – reading the prospectus, visiting the website attending the open evening. You could talk about their teaching reputation, exam results, study facilities or student activities. ***Never say "because my friends are coming here."***

3. Why have you applied for this course?

In answer to this question you could talk about why you are interested in the subject(s) and where this interest comes from. It's also good to talk about where this course fits in your overall career plan and what you hope to achieve in the future. ***Never say "Because I think it'll be easy for me" or "My brother/cousin/friend told me it would be a good idea."***

4. What do you find most attractive about this course? What seems least attractive about it?

Be careful when answering a question like this – always emphasise the positive. For example you could list three or four attractive features of the course, and mention a single, minor, unattractive aspect; or you could list the three or four attractive features and then say something like ***"At this point I feel so positive about this course it's hard for me to consider any unattractive features"***.

5. What do you enjoy doing outside of school?

This is your opportunity to talk about your interests, but avoid talking about an activity just because you think it sounds good (*the interviewer may be an enthusiast*). If you like to read be prepared to talk about the sort of books that interest you – fiction/non-fiction, travel, history; if you enjoy sport talk about the sort of sport you like and whether you're a player of a spectator; if you like playing computer games, describe your favourite game and why you find it interesting.

6. Why have you decided to leave your present school?

Of course the most obvious and common answer to this question is that your present school sixth form doesn't offer the course or subjects you want to study. However, even if this is the case – try to make sure your answer reflects a positive choice on your part. *"I think studying in a new environment will be exciting – I'll have the opportunity to meet new people and make new friends."* **Never say** *"I don't get on with the teachers/students at my present school."*

7. What are your most/least favourite subjects at school?

Be careful how you answer this question. Try to think of why you enjoy studying certain subjects more than others. *"I enjoy studying drama because it allows me to express myself."* *"I like history because I've always been interested in the past and how it influences the present."* *"I enjoy science because it helps me to understand more about the world."* If you dislike a particular subject try to show that you are still trying: *"I suppose my least favourite subject is maths. I've always had to work harder to understand this subject."* **Never say** *"I don't like maths because the teacher is rubbish."* **You should always avoid blaming others.**

8. What are your long-term goals?

This is your opportunity to talk about your plans for the future. Try to show how the course you're applying for supports your long-term goals; for example: *"My ambition is to become a nurse and I know that qualified nurses need to take a university degree. This is why I have applied to study the Level 3 Diploma in Applied Science"*.

Whatever questions you are asked, remember the key to interview success is to BE PREPARED

See handout – Interview Skills BE PREPARED