

Master's Admission Interview Preparation Guide

Not every program requires an admissions interview; however, some do, and some candidates can better position themselves with an interview rather than relying only on their academic record alone. A master's admission interview helps a programme assess your readiness, interests, and suitability. Prepare to explain why this course or programme, why now, and how your experience supports your plans. Requirements vary: a taught professional programme may focus on career direction, while a research programme may explore your proposed research in more depth.

Research the programme

- Read the course structure, entry requirements, assessment methods and interview instructions. Identify modules or learning opportunities that connect to your goals.
- For research pathways, review relevant research groups and potential supervisors. Do not assume supervision is available or agreed.
- Review your application, personal statement, CV, and submitted work. Be ready to explain any claim or change in your plans.

Build a five-point admission agenda

Prepare five reasons you are ready for this programme: academic foundation, relevant experience, specific interest, evidence of learning or research skills, and a realistic future direction. Support each point with an example.

Prepare a short introduction

Use your present situation, relevant evidence, and intended direction. Example: "I recently completed a psychology degree. My final project explored student motivation and developed my skills in literature review and data interpretation. I now want to deepen those skills through your programme's research methods training. My longer-term interest is in evaluating student support initiatives."

Programme and pathway

Two specific features that match my goals

My five reasons for readiness

Practise admission questions

Motivation and readiness

1. Why do you want to pursue a master's degree now?
2. Why this programme rather than another option?
3. How has your previous study prepared you?
4. Which academic project best demonstrates your readiness?
5. How will you manage the workload and independent learning?
6. What do you hope to do after graduating?
7. Is there an academic result or gap you would like to explain?

Subject and research questions

1. What issue in your subject interests you most, and why?
2. Discuss a paper, book, or project that shaped your thinking.
3. What did you learn from your final-year or capstone project?
4. If a proposal is required, what is your research question, and why does it matter?
5. What approach might you use, and what limitations would it have?
6. How would you respond if your findings challenged your expectations?

How to give a strong answer

State your point, give evidence, and explain its relevance to the programme. For an academic discussion, distinguish what you know from what you are still exploring. If you have not read a work, say so. For a research proposal, show openness to refinement rather than presenting an unchangeable plan.

If discussing a weak result, give concise context, take responsibility where appropriate, and show evidence of improvement. Avoid blaming others or turning the whole answer into an explanation of the setback.

Questions to ask the programme

- How are students supported in choosing projects or research topics?
- What does successful independent study look like on this programme?
- What preparation would you recommend before the course begins?

Your admission preparation plan

My answer to why this programme and why now

Academic evidence I will use

A project I can explain, including my contribution and learning

A subject issue I can discuss accurately

A development area and how I am addressing it

Final checks

- I have reviewed the programme's interview instructions and my complete application.
- I can explain programme fit using specific features rather than its reputation alone.
- I can discuss my own work, including methods, findings and limitations.
- I have practised with someone who asks follow-up questions.
- I have confirmed the format, time zone and any required presentation or portfolio.

If asked about funding or availability, describe your actual position. Admission and funding decisions may be separate; confirm the programme's process.

Prepared as a companion to the Employment Interview Guide, drawing on Interview Skills Workbook and New Interview Skills Workshop by Matthew Laubengayer, Al Qasimi Foundation. Examples and practise questions are illustrative; follow the instructions and criteria of the relevant organisation.