

Scholarship Interview Question Bank

Practise questions for university students and scholarship applicants

Use these questions to prepare evidence of your academic readiness, motivation, and potential contribution. A scholarship interview may also explore financial need or the award's specific priorities. Check the published criteria; this bank does not predict the exact questions you will be asked but will give a good sampling of the types of questions you will be asked.

How to practise

- Select six to eight questions that match the award. Make brief notes, then answer aloud without reading a script.
- Use a focused introduction for background questions and STAR for questions about a past experience. Explain your own contribution.
- Connect your goals to the scholarship's stated purpose. Be accurate about achievements, circumstances, and future plans.

Background and academic direction

1. Tell us about yourself and your academic interests.
2. Why have you chosen this subject and university?
3. Which course or project has most influenced your direction?
4. What academic achievements are you proud of, and why?
5. What skills do you need to develop before beginning this programme?
6. How will you manage the academic demands of your studies?

Motivation and scholarship fit

1. Why are you applying for this particular scholarship?
2. Which of the scholarship's aims connects most strongly with your goals?
3. How would the award change your ability to pursue your education?
4. Why should the panel select you?
5. What responsibilities do you believe come with receiving this award?
6. If you do not receive the award, what will you do next?

Leadership contribution and judgement

Questions about experience

1. Tell us about a time you took initiative without being asked.
2. Describe a team disagreement and how you responded.
3. Tell us about a setback in your studies and what you changed.
4. Give an example of balancing competing deadlines.
5. Describe a mistake and what you learnt from it.
6. Tell us about a time you helped someone else succeed.
7. Describe a contribution you made through a club, volunteering or community activity.
8. Tell us about a decision where you had to consider what was fair.

Future contribution and practical considerations

1. How could your education benefit your community or field?
2. What would you like to achieve in the next three to five years?
3. How would you represent the scholarship programme?
4. What would you do if your study plans changed?
5. What support would help you succeed?
6. If financial need is part of the criteria, what would you like us to understand about your circumstances?

Useful follow up prompts

- What did you personally do? What options did you consider?
- What was the outcome? What would you do differently now?
- How does this example connect to the award's criteria?

Answer sensitive questions factually and at a level of detail you are comfortable sharing. Prepare any financial information specifically requested by the provider; do not invent details or promise outcomes you cannot guarantee.

Prepare your strongest responses

Sample approach to why you should be selected

“My studies and volunteering have helped me develop the skills this scholarship prioritises. In a student outreach project, I helped organise tutoring sessions and tracked attendance so the team could plan support. I want to study education to understand how to design more effective learning activities. The award would help me pursue that goal, and I would welcome opportunities to contribute to its student community.” Adapt this structure to the actual award and your real experience.

Scholarship and its three main criteria

My strongest evidence for each criterion

A challenge I can discuss constructively

How the award would support my education

A realistic contribution I hope to make

Questions you could ask the panel

- What support or mentoring is available to scholarship recipients?
- What participation or reporting is expected during the award?
- What are the next steps and decision timeline?

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.