



Interview Guidance

This document will provide information on your interview, including details on the structure, and how best to prepare.

Interviews will be conducted remotely using video technology via Microsoft Teams. However, you can request for it to be conducted in person. This can be arranged by contacting your local Advisory Committee after you've been invited to interview.

Interviews will be carried out by a panel of three people. The interview panel will not have access to your application form; they will not know any information about you other than your name and what you discuss in the interview.

Timing

You can expect the interview to last around 75 minutes. If you are running late to your interview, please contact the Advisory Committee you have applied to informing them of any delays. Please be aware they may not be able to accommodate any delays so do ensure you check your connectivity and equipment prior to your interview.

Preparing for your interview

You are strongly advised to conduct further research prior to your interview. This can include reading resources and watching informative videos on the role of a magistrate and understanding local and national crime and justice issues. It is also worthwhile reflecting on the court observations you will have completed if you're applying for the criminal court or the required research if you are applying to the family court.

Research

- This short film [on the work of magistrates in England and Wales](#) will tell you more about the work magistrates do in courts and the types of cases they deal with.
- This short film on [how offenders are sentenced in England and Wales](#) will give you an insight into the types of sentences magistrates can give out

You can find more information and research [here](#) which we encourage you to read.

You must ensure you are familiar with the five key attributes required for the role and how you best demonstrate them, these are:

1. Understand and appreciate different perspectives
2. Make fair, impartial and transparent decisions
3. Communicate with sensitivity and respect
4. Show self-awareness and be open to learning
5. Work and engage with people professionally

For more information on these, please see [the website FAQ section](#) for further guidance.

Interview structure

You will be asked if you understand the commitment required. This is a minimum 13 days a year over 5 years, plus training.

You will also be asked to disclose anything in addition to what you stated on your application form which could damage your credibility as a magistrate if it became known to the public. This is to help establish whether you are of good character. Someone of good character may demonstrate the following:

- No convictions
- Nothing in the past, private or working life which might bring the magistracy into disrepute
- No inconsistencies in information provided during the interview
- Demonstrates appropriate motivation for applying

You do not need to repeat information that was considered at the initial eligibility application form stage.

The panel will then ask you five behavioural questions, one on each key attribute and five situational questions, again one on each attribute.

Behavioural questions are questions which explore your experience performing role relevant activities to identify if they have the desired attributes. You can use examples from your work life, past or present, or from any experiences you think are relevant. An example of a behavioural question is:

“Describe a time when you had to make a decision which required careful consideration.”

In answering these questions, you should structure your answers to the questions using the **Problem Action Result** method as described below:

- **Problem** – describe the specific event or situation where a problem arose. This should include a short description to set the context and details of the problem that occurred.
- **Action** – explain how you displayed the relevant behaviours and understanding. What did you do? How did you do it? Why did you do it that way? What skills did you use?
- **Result** – summarise the results of your actions. What was the outcome? What did you learn?

Situational questions are questions with role related situations that are derived from the attributes required for the role. An example of a situational question is:

“You are working with a colleague who is not taking part in the decision making. How would you encourage them to participate?”

Answering a situational question is not about how you have behaved in the past, but how you

would react and respond in this situation if presented with it in future.

Please think carefully about your answers. You can take some time to consider your answer before you respond. You must answer honestly, to the best of your ability and ensure you outline the reason and rationale for your response.

The interview panel may ask follow up questions, on your answers. This to ensure they have a good understanding of your response and how well you demonstrate each key attribute. This is a good opportunity to provide any further information you may have missed.

You will be informed of the outcome of the interview via email as soon as possible following the interview.