

## Helpful hints and Frequently Asked Question for telephone interviews during Coronavirus

Due to the situation with the coronavirus, we are currently doing interviews by phone instead of in person - just to keep everyone safe.

We know this is a slightly different way to do interviews so we've put together these Frequently Asked Questions and Helpful Hints to make the process as easy and comfortable as possible for you.

Although we hope to go back to face-to-face interviews later in the year we're still not sure when this will be, so telephone interviews will take place until then (but we'll let you know straight away when things change).

### Q. What happens when I apply to college?

**A.** You will get an email offering you a telephone interview and you can accept or decline this. If you decline it a different date and time will be offered. We will also let you know that the caller ID will be withheld so you know what to expect when your phone rings. You will get a reminder by email three days before your interview and again you have the opportunity to decline or accept the interview.

### Q. I'm feeling really nervous about having an interview over the phone – what should I do?

**A.** Please don't worry – it's completely normal and all of our tutors are really friendly and helpful and will try to put you at ease. Curriculum staff will be in touch before the interview to introduce themselves and the area of the college you are interested in. Although it is an interview, it will feel more like an informal chat as we just want to find out a bit more about you and what you're interested in studying. Also it might help to make a few notes beforehand so you don't worry about forgetting anything you want to say or ask.

### Q. How long will the interview last?

**A.** Each interview normally takes under 30 minutes.

### Q. What sort of questions will I be asked?

**A.** You will be asked things like: Why did you choose this course? What did you enjoy most at school? Please tell us a bit more about yourself?

You will also be asked about any supports needs you might need to help with your studies; we will send a copy of these to you when we set-up your interview appointment.

Remember it's fine to make some notes beforehand to help you with your interview.

### Q. How can I prepare for my interview in advance?

**A.** Have a look at the questions above and those relating to support needs and think about how you might answer them – and you can make some notes to prompt you on the day (this will help you feel less nervous as you'll be less likely to forget what you want to say).

Plan whereabouts in your home you are going to be for your interview as being in a quiet area will mean you can chat more easily. Make sure it's somewhere with good phone reception and that your phone is charged. If you have other family members working or studying from home it's a good idea to let them know about your interview well in advance so they can plan to be in a different room.

Try and be ready with your phone five minutes before the interview start time. Have a pen and paper handy in case you want to write anything down that the interviewer tells you.

If you have any questions for your interviewer then write them down so you don't forget to ask any of them.

Have your predicted grades with you in case your interviewer asks about them. Don't worry if you don't have them though – not everyone does.

#### **Q. What if I have a learning disability?**

**A.** Hopefully you will have mentioned this on your application form so we will ask you more about it. If you decide to study with us we want to put in place the support you need so that you have the best possible experience at college. We will ask you about the type of support you had in school and whether you had extra time in exams or needed specialist equipment or one-to-one support. Depending on the level of support you need we may ask a more specialist member of support staff to contact you at a later date to go through these in more detail.

#### **Q. I'm worried about my grades as I didn't do very well in my mocks.**

**A.** Please don't worry – we have courses at all levels (even for students with no qualifications) and we will put you on the course level we think is best for you. There is also a period of adjustment when you first start college and if we think you would be better suited to doing a different level then we can arrange for you to move up or down.

#### **Q. What happens after my interview?**

**A.** Normally an offer will be sent to you by email quite soon after the interview. Occasionally if we don't think the course you applied for is right for you we can offer you an alternative course or we can arrange for you to have some further careers advice or guidance.

#### **Q. What if I get ill before my interview?**

**A.** Just send us an email to let us know and we'll happily arrange a different time and date with you for when you're better.

#### **Q. What if I really can't face talking to someone on the phone?**

**A.** Please get in touch with us by email and we'll do our best to sort something else out for you. We really want you to come and study with us and we're very used to helping students who are anxious (it's very common).

Lastly, if you have any other issues or questions regarding your interview please just get in touch. We know this is a stressful time for everyone, and we don't want your interview to add even more stress. If you do want to rearrange for any reason at all, we'll be happy to do that. Just contact us on [enquiries@abingdon-witney.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@abingdon-witney.ac.uk) and we'll sort it out for you.