

Researchers -

Sample Interview Questions – Academic Roles

Interviews for academic roles vary widely. Always look carefully at the person specification and job description, do your research and seek advice from within your academic network wherever possible. The following questions are neither exhaustive nor predictive of the questions you may face but should help you to start thinking of areas to prepare before your interview.

General

1. Why do you want to work here? In this institution, in this department?
2. Why do you think you are the right person for this position? What sets you apart from other candidates? What will you contribute to this department?
3. What are the key challenges we face and how will you help us to meet them?

Research-related

1. What do you consider the key achievements of your PhD / research project?
2. What is the cutting edge in your field and how does your work extend it?
3. Tell me about your future research plans. What outcomes in terms of publications do you expect? How would you expect to demonstrate impact for your research?
4. What problems did you encounter in your PhD research? What did you learn from them?
5. How would you explain your research to a first year undergraduate?
6. How will you go about revising your thesis for publication?
7. Describe your methodology and the reasons for choosing it. What are its limitations?
8. How do you see your research expertise complementing our existing research base?
9. What sources of funding do you anticipate being available for your future research? How much do you know about the requirements of this / these funding bodies?
10. In this institution we are keen to develop collaborations between departments. What opportunities for multi-disciplinary work does your research have?
11. What potential does your research have for knowledge exchange and for contributing to our strategic objectives in this area?

Teaching

1. Tell me about your teaching experience. What teaching contribution do you think you could make to our undergraduate programme?
2. How do you seek feedback on your teaching? What feedback have you had from students? How have you improved your teaching on the basis of feedback received?
3. How would you describe your teaching philosophy?
4. How have you supported the different learning needs of your students? What practices do you have to ensure your teaching is fully inclusive?
5. What more can we do to ensure equality and diversity is embedded in the curriculum? What examples of good practice have you seen?
6. What experience do you have of blended and technology-enhanced learning? How have you been able to support peer-learning practices (or other pedagogies) through the use of technology in your teaching?
7. What assessment methods do you use? How could you improve your practice?
8. How has your research informed your teaching?
9. Describe a new module you would like to develop as part of one of our programmes. How would you sell it to students?
10. What do you see as the main challenges in teaching undergraduates today? What strategies do you have for overcoming them?
11. What do you see as the main differences in teaching postgraduates compared to undergraduates. How would you modify your own teaching?

Administration

1. What administrative experience do you have that is relevant to this post?
2. How do you feel about the administrative workload that you will have to do as a member of the department?
3. What skills do you have that would enable you to make a strong contribution to the administrative responsibilities involved in being an academic?
4. If you were to organise a conference or symposium in your research area, what existing networks would you draw on?
5. How would you balance your administrative duties with your research and teaching commitments?

These questions are in no way a guarantee of those you may be asked at interview but can be useful in helping you to practice your interview technique.