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TOWER SCHOOL

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# How to... prepare for school/college interviews

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Please let the school know once your interview has been confirmed so you can arrange to finish school early if required!

## Practice questions for your interview:



### Why are you interested in attending this Sixth Form/college?

Interviewers will always be keen to hear why you have selected their 6th Form as a prospective place for study, particularly if it is independent of your current school. They will want to see that you have **done your research** about the school/college, and given proper thought to its suitability for your goals and needs.

The kind of things that they may expect to hear could relate to **good results, a mature environment, a personal approach** and focus on helping you achieve your ambitions, **specialist UCAS advice**, and having access to a **thriving enrichment programme** with varied extracurricular activities.

If you have visited the Sixth Form as part of an open evening, be sure to mention that.



## What subjects are you interested in studying and why?

This kind of question will assure the interviewer that you have **given good thought to your subject choices**. It may be that your primary reason relates to enjoyment (in other words, they are your favourite subjects) rather than any specific long term plans, but the main thing they want to establish is that your motivations are clear.

Remember, if you are not yet sure of your final subject choices, Sixth Form colleges will be able to offer specialist advice, considering any university pre-requisite subjects whilst also keeping your options open. Take advantage of their expertise, be open to their advice and do feel confident to ask any questions you may have.



## What kind of professions/fields do your family work in? Do they support your potential aims?

Finding out what **parents and family do can really help understand your influences** – it may be that your decisions are entirely independent of anything your family do or have done, but it is always useful to know about any family members (or other people for that matter!) who have influenced or inspired you and helped form your passions.

Understanding whether your potential study choices will have the backing of those around you is also very important, largely to ensure you will have the support that you need to study at Sixth Form level, and beyond that at university.



# Q

## Do you already have some universities in mind?

This question helps give an idea of where you are in your thought process/research and the type of degrees and universities you are considering. It will give the Sixth Form an indication of your ambitions, and preferences in terms of areas/distances from home.

At Sixth Form colleges like King Edwards, **specialist UCAS advice and support is a very important part of the study programme** so if it is still unclear at this point, there will be plenty of help on hand.

# Q

## What's your biggest achievement to date? What are you most proud of?

Whilst this might sound like a very general question, the idea is most likely that you will relate your answer to something **within the realm of education** – whether it is academic or extracurricular. It could be, for example, that you have captained one of the sports teams, that you have been elected president of the Pupil Council, that you have starred in a school play, or simply that you have achieved a better grade than anticipated in one of your subjects at GCSE.

Whatever the answer, it will hopefully demonstrate to the interviewer your particular areas of strength and characteristics. This can also help with the advice they provide to you about your study plan and possible degree and career options.



## How would your teachers/friends/parents describe you?

Some people can feel awkward or embarrassed when it comes to talking about their qualities – whether good or bad, so phrasing a question in this way can make it easier for them to find the right adjectives.

Whilst honesty is of course always important, this type of question gives you an **ideal opportunity to highlight your best traits**, which could, for example, be that you are determined, extremely motivated, a good team player, punctual, excellent at meeting deadlines and good at working in a team.

It does however also give you the opportunity to identify areas where you might like to develop. At this point, no Sixth Form expects you to know and be able to do everything.



## What can you bring to our Sixth form/college?

Most Sixth Form colleges strive for a **diverse pupil body** in which each pupil feels a sense of worth, no matter what their specific skills or interests. They also want to make sure there are plenty of opportunities for academic enrichment, for example through pupil-led initiatives such as community events and charity fundraising.

These types of activities not only provide enjoyment, but also hone important transferable or **'soft' skills** that can be useful to highlight in UCAS applications, therefore those pupils who are willing to get involved are very attractive to future Sixth Forms.



## What do you enjoy doing outside of school?

Your prospective teachers and principal will definitely be interested to hear more about you as a person, and what you enjoy in your spare time. **Establishing more about your personal attributes/aptitudes and how they might apply to your future studies can a very useful exercise all-round** – especially if you are not yet sure of your final subject choices both at A- level and beyond.

It is also important to bear in mind that universities are generally looking for pupils with a deep and genuine interest in their subject. Sixth Forms will usually be looking for what evidence there is to back that up from activities outside of class and how they can help build on that for your university application. This is particularly important in some areas, such as Medicine, where an understanding of the role/function of medicine and the health care profession is really key; really understanding what a doctor does and current issues in Medicine (or your other subject areas of interest – Economics, Politics etc).

Explaining more about your pursuits outside of school will also give them an idea of how you are likely to **balance work and social time.**



## What are your long term goals? Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

This type of question is designed to show that you have really given thought to where and what you want to study and where it could lead, in other words, that you have a **rough idea of your future career plans**. If, for example, you would like to become a doctor, this explains why you are pursuing A-levels in Maths and Sciences, and your keenness to undertake medical work experience placements during Sixth Form.

**Bear in mind however that if you do not know exactly what you want to do yet, do not worry!** It can be good to have a broad idea of fields which you are (or are not) interested in, but **part of the reason of coming to a good Sixth Form is to open your eyes to the wide range of opportunities available** and then explore more the ones you are interested in, giving increasing focus to those of most interest for your university applications. This way, you can be sure to make really informed choices about your futures – your degree, your university and beyond that, your possible career.

Remember, whilst specialist subject knowledge and skills are important - particularly for very vocational fields - so-called 'transferable' skills such as resilience, and communication can be just as important, and a good Sixth Form will always recognise that. The world of employment is changing and will continue to do so, and it is unlikely you will hold just one job for your whole life. So, do not stress, keep your options open and do what you enjoy!



# Q

## Do you have any questions you would like to ask?

It is always good to have a few questions that you would like to ask to show that you are really interested in this Sixth Form, and of course to ensure you know exactly what you can expect if you are offered a place and that it will be a good fit for you.

As referenced already, it can be good to show that you have done some research – for example it could be that you have seen details of previous pupils who have progressed to study a subject you are interested in on the Sixth Form's website. In this instance, you could ask the interviewer to tell you more about their experience at college and how they supported them.

Whether it relates to the teaching, the staff, the facilities, or the course content for each subject, don't be shy when it comes to asking questions. The more information you have, the better.





## ***Finally....***

**We recommend a smart-casual dress code. Some attend in their school uniform! Just remember to come across as motivated and enthusiastic, which we know you will!**



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**If you have any questions please  
contact the school office.**

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