

Conducting Interviews

From the outset of the process, governors will agree the number of steps that the selection process should involve, and the type of assessment methods that will most effectively identify the most suitable person for the post.

The selection process may include a variety of assessment methods, though it is common for at least one interview to be included. Candidates should be given at least seven calendar days' notice to attend an interview. Candidates will already have been asked to provide details on their application form of any reasonable adjustments required, though they should be given a further opportunity to indicate any additional support they may need to attend the interview. All requests for assistance should be given careful consideration and all reasonable requests should be granted.

The selection panel will need to allow enough time to fully prepare for the interviews. This will involve preparing core questions and considering what supplementary questions might be useful to encourage the candidates to provide comprehensive responses. The weightings for each criterion will have been agreed already, and this should be taken into account when determining the number of questions to be asked relating to each criterion. Where an Assessor is appointed he or she will prepare a number of suggested questions, though the selection panel will agree the list of questions that are to be asked.

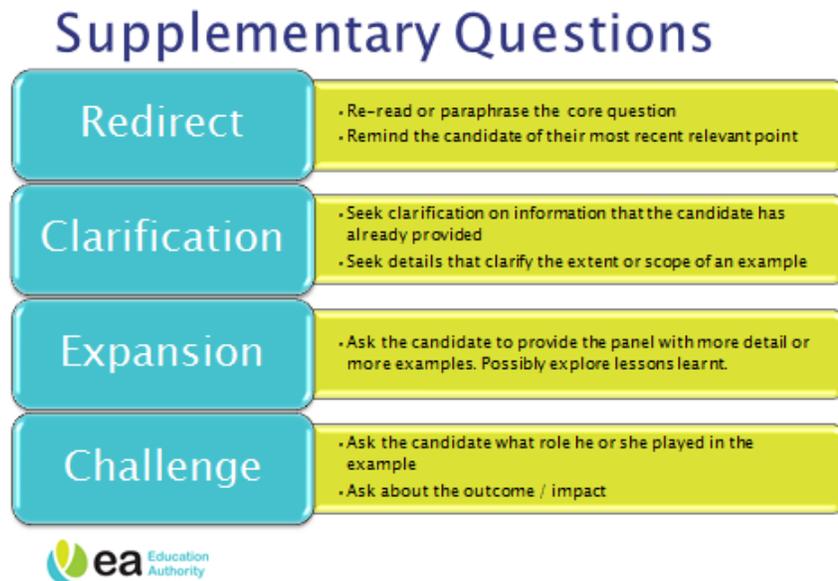
The selection panel may require candidates to deliver a presentation as part of the interview and this will require careful planning. An Assessor may also suggest presentation topics.

The selection panel may wish to provide candidates with a copy of the core questions at the interview. If this is agreed, it will be important to ensure that the exact wording of core questions has been agreed in advance of the interviews to allow time for the finalised questions to be printed.

Supplementary questions are used to fully explore the candidate's response, and will therefore differ for each candidate. The panel may wish to design supplementary questions that will ensure certain key information is sought, where the detail required is not provided in the candidate's response.

For example: the core question may ask the candidate for an example of a whole-school initiative they have led, that resulted in improved educational outcomes. The panel may be particularly keen to assess the candidate's leadership style. Where the candidate does not allude to this in their response, this can be probed by means of a supplementary question.

Supplementary questions must relate to the core question and to the candidate's response.



These should be used to: redirect a candidate where their response has begun to deviate from the core question; to seek clarification on some information that the candidate has provided; to ask the candidate to expand on their response, or perhaps to fully explain a specific point that they have mentioned only briefly.

Candidates often use the term 'we' in referring to achievements, and supplementary questions can be used effectively to challenge the candidate's specific role in the example given.

The panel will agree which panel members will ask which core questions. Where an Assessor is appointed, the panel may request that one or more of the core questions would be asked by the Assessor. All candidates must be asked the same core questions, using the exact wording agreed, and keeping the emphasis consistent. The panel should also decide in advance who will ask supplementary questions. It may be appropriate for one member to ask a core question and for other members to ask supplementary questions as appropriate. The key point is that the panel must agree this protocol before the first interview.

Each Panel member must make an individual note of each candidate's responses. It is good practice for the chair to advise candidates that members will be taking notes, so that candidates will know what to expect. It isn't necessary to note the full response though members need to include enough detail in their notes to enable them to mark the candidate fairly, recalling the depth of their response. All notes taken during the interview will be taken and retained, including any notes made on additional sheets of paper. In the event of a challenge, all notes will be discoverable.

Once the final candidate has left, the chair will allow some time for members to complete their notes and their marks for each candidate against each criterion. It is important that there is still no discussion about the candidate's performance until members have been given the opportunity to mark all candidates provisionally.