

Practice interviews – ‘the triads’: Notes for participants

Preparing for the interview

- Each of you will have the opportunity to interview another person, to be the interviewee and the observe and give constructive feedback.
- **You must familiarise yourself with the topic guide you will be interviewing on** (see the matrix for which interview topic guide you should prepare for). **It is a good idea to try the guide on someone else or think about how you would answer the questions yourself.**
- Each interviewer will have about 25 minutes to interview, with 20 minutes feedback. In this time it won't be possible to cover the whole topic. Instead, try to cover the introduction, background section and one or two of the over main headings. You should also think about how you will end the interview. It is more important to try to gain **DEPTH** through listening and probing than covering the entire topic guide.
- Probe for a whole host of things: reasons, explanations, views, feelings and so on. Remember the importance of asking “why”. It may seem unnatural but it is worth remembering that an interview is not a conversation.

Observing the interview

- As the observer your role is to assist the tutor to give feedback on the interview and interview interaction.
- Sit in an unobtrusive position so as not to unsettle the person interviewing. It is worth making notes to yourself about points that occur during the interview. You might include:
 - How good the introduction was?
 - Body language between interviewer and interviewee.
 - If the interviewer listened carefully to what the interviewee said and how they showed this?
 - Use of open, non-leading questions?
 - Use of probes and prompts?
 - Whether it seemed clear to the interviewee why they were being asked certain questions and how different parts of the interview were connected? (signposting).
 - How easy it was for the interviewee to answer?
 - How the interview was ended.
- Indicate when five minutes left so interviewer has time to warn respondent and can “complete” the interview

Feeding back

- Once the interview is finished discuss the interview in your triad. The best order for feedback in **interviewer**, **interviewee** and then **observer**. The tutors will also be happy to give feedback and to answer any questions if you aren't sure how to proceed.
- You need to give **constructive criticism** so don't forget to praise the good things and show how things could have been dealt with more fully or in a different way.
- Sometimes an interviewer finishes early. This is usually due to insufficient probing. Think about how the interviewer could have probed more fully or what prevented them from doing so.