

## RESOURCING/

# Guidance for Chair and Panel members: Conducting Online Interviews

## Introduction

This document provides guidance on conducting online interviews effectively and securely.

Details include information on the University's recommended online platforms and some key protocols for online interviews.

The advice in this document will help ensure that remote interviews are a positive experience and that all candidates are treated fairly and courteously.

*Please ensure that you follow all other standard interview guidance to ensure they continue to be conducted fairly. For more information, see [here](#).*

## Online platforms for interviews

Chairs are advised that it is their responsibility to set up the IT/AV facilities for their online interview and request support from the IT support within their department if necessary.

Information Services can also provide support at [helpdesk@kent.ac.uk](mailto:helpdesk@kent.ac.uk).

- **Microsoft Teams**

The University supports the use of Microsoft Teams for all staff and is the recommended platform for conducting online interviews. Teams provides an easy way to have online meetings with colleagues and/or external contacts. You are able to chat online with text, audio or video. Furthermore you are able to share files and screens in real time, enabling candidates to show presentations for example. It is a more feature-rich alternative to Skype for business and email.

Please review our [Guide for Creating and Managing Interviews using Teams](#)

Information Services also has guidance on how to use Microsoft Teams:

<https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/staff-file-storage-saving-and-sharing-files/teams-for-staff>.

- **Skype**

We recommend that you use Microsoft Teams, as the University default option, for your online interviews. However, you can use Skype if you prefer. For guidance on how to download and use Skype: <https://www.kent.ac.uk/itservices/staff/skype/index.html>

## Data protection

HR will continue to send initial invitations to shortlisted candidates, as per the normal process, via Stonefish. Once invitations have been accepted and the schedule confirmed, you will be notified and can proceed to set up the meetings in Teams. We advise when sending links or calendar invites to attend a Teams online interview, that you include this privacy statement:

*"The University of Kent takes its responsibility around data protection seriously. To find out more about GDPR, click [here](#). For more information about how the University processes personal data, click [here](#).*

### **The recording of interviews is not permitted by University Staff or candidates.**

Please be mindful when interviewing via video, that personal data can be disclosed inadvertently when sharing something on your desktop or in the background of your video. You should also take the necessary precautions to ensure you don't disclose personal data to others within your household.

## Protocol when conducting interviews online

### DO...

- **Test the technology:** ensure your camera, microphone and audio are working before the meeting in order to fix any technical issues in advance
- **Choose your location:** ensure you are conducting the meeting in an appropriate setting and use the Ellipsis icon to blur your background if necessary
- **Make Introductions:** The Chair should take time at the start of the interview to ensure panel members and the candidate understand their roles during the interview and lay 'ground rules' for how the interview will run
- **Maintain engagement and professionalism:** give your full attention to the candidate, just as you would in an in-person interview. Try to look into the camera lens and not them on your screen as this is not direct eye contact.
- be aware that all facial expressions and body language can be seen by candidates and panel members, when video has been enabled
- **Be prepared:** ensure the panel pre-meeting is long enough for the usual discussions about allocating areas and order of questioning but also to run through the main protocols given here and to agree how the online interview will be conducted in practice
- **Make the most of the Teams functionality:**
  - ensure all panel members are aware that the chat function in Teams is viewable by everyone on the call, including the candidate
  - use the mute button if you want to allow only one person to be heard at any time (this might be helpful while someone is presenting information, for example)
  - use the mute button when you are not talking to ensure that any background noise from your working environment is not transmitted across the call
  - use the @-mention function if you want to ask someone a specific question

### DON'T...

- **Record** any job interviews
- **Share your screen** unless you are certain what will be shared is appropriate and that you will not disclose any personal data

## Further advice for Academic interviews, presentations and audience feedback

The Academic interview process at Kent, has often involved a candidate presentation in the morning (followed by Q&A) to the panel and a wider audience of staff and students, followed by an interview later on, with just the panel members. It may be more practical at this time to run the presentation and interview for each candidate back to back, with no further audience involvement. Separate meeting invites should be sent out for each candidate interview, to ensure confidentiality and data protection.

If you would prefer an audience for candidate presentations, you need to set up separate presentation and interview meetings for each candidate, and every audience member must be invited to each separate presentation meeting. (For instance if you have 5 candidates, they would each need 2 meetings set up - 1 presentation and 1 interview, 10 in total with audience members invited to each presentation meeting only.) Confidentiality and data protection must be considered when setting these meetings up and giving feedback. Before the presentations, the Chair should distribute guidelines to all audience members on how to use Teams within this situation, and agree a protocol for participation.