

Professional Interviews top tips

The interview process is:

- Find a quiet area with strong Wi-Fi. CTSI recommend booking a room at your offices.
- Log onto the link via Teams.
- Introduction is by CTSI staff to check room and ID and start recording.
- Examiner comes into the team meeting and CTSI staff leave.
- The scenario is brought onto the screen and 10 minutes reading time is started.
- Examiner will turn off camera and microphone during the reading time.
- The examiner will come back onto screen at the end of the time and work through each question with you.
- There are 5 questions with no supplementary questions asked.
- You will have 20 minutes to work through the questions.
- The interview is free form and the examiner will move onto the next question as you naturally come to the end of what you are saying.
- Take your time to hear and read the question being asked.
- If time allows then you may want to review the scenario and questions again and inform the examiner you want to add to your answer for a question. This is fine to do.

General tips

The subject areas that have a professional interview, each have their own process that you would undertake in the workplace. The professional interview should show the application of your knowledge to the scenario you have been presented.

Below are the examiners top tips:

- The purpose of the scenario is to determine that you are **aware of the process** you would apply to the scenario that is presented. The examiner **will not** provide prompts to you to remind you of information/areas etc. Their job will be to ask the pre-set questions and record your answers.

The answers you give will show them how much you understand the processes and requirements aligned to the scenario provided during your 10-minute preparation time.

- Try to remain relaxed and calm. This will help you during your exam. This enables you to clearly communicate with the examiner and will help with ensuring you get across your answers in a concise manner.
- Make good use of the preparation time by making plenty of notes using bullet points so that your notes are easy for you to refer to during the interview.
- Also remember that you can refer to your notes as often as you need to, during the interview.
- During your reading time consider the scenario and the aspects you would consider if this came up at work. Resolve the problem presented. Present the solutions you would do in the 'real' world.
- Listen carefully to the questions being asked and then read through the question as written, so that you fully understand what is being asked. Then tailor your responses accordingly to answer those questions.
- The questions to be asked will build on the scenario given.

- Don't just throw any answer to the question is wont give you makes – it has to be relevant to the question being asked.
- Examiners want you to identify what you are doing and why, not what you know. This is assessed elsewhere.
- Once you have answered all the questions, check how much time is remaining. If there is time left in the assessment, then you are able to go back to any previous questions to provide additional information.
- Ensure your answers to questions specifically relate to the scenario rather than answering generally.
- You will not gain any marks for quoting legislation or matters that are not being asked.
- Use all the time that is allocated for the professional interview. It is your time to use and questions can be repeated and further answers considered when marking.

Weight and Measures:

In addition to the previous tips:

- consider what elements are being examined by it. Knowledge is covered in the written exam, testing of equipment in the practical, and the ability to communicate technical information in the oral. So that leaves the practicalities of doing the job to be covered in the professional interview.
- scenarios are usually based on situations a newly qualified officer might find themselves in, such as the verification of a scale, a short measure complaint, discovering unverified equipment etc.
- Candidates should fully consider the scenario and respond appropriately.
- The interview would look to establish what a candidate would actually do in those situations:
 - what practical steps will you take,
 - what information do you need to gather, and
 - what advice will you give.

These are common themes across the scenarios.

- Expected answers are fairly straight forward. For example, when asked what information they would need to gather for the verification of a weighbridge, not one candidate said they would find out the address or who was paying the bill. And if asked what advice would be given, I'm expecting references to (and knowledge of) the standard guidance they could supply to a trader. Few candidates mention Business Companion, OPSS guidance, WELMEC etc
- The Examiner may not look for overly strict interpretations of the applicable regulations; there needs to be some sort of acknowledgement of the greyer areas such as borderline results.
- Also, if the scenario speaks about routine inspections, I don't expect answers to refer to initial verification, but that probably comes down to the candidates not being sufficiently exposed to weights and measures inspections in their authority and getting confused between the two.

Consequently, the most important piece of advice to give would be to get out on as many inspections as possible. This, and thorough completion of the portfolio, is the best preparation