

## LBS Interview Guide

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### Overview:

The LBS interview is by invitation only and has two components. The first part is an online video interview where the applicant records 90-second answers to two questions. The second part is a 1-on-1 interview, which is virtual or in person, completed by an alumnus or an admissions officer. The interviewers have reviewed the applicant's entire application and will ask comprehensive questions about their profile. Additionally, during the 1-on-1 interview there is a Case Interview, or otherwise known as the Presentation. This case is *not* like a management consulting case interview and does not require preparation. It typically entails a broad business question requiring the applicant to provide a structured and thoughtful verbal answer, explaining their *why* or thought process.

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### Interview Format:

**Who gets interviewed?** Per David Simpson, the Recruitment and Admissions Director, LBS interviews roughly 20% of applicants as of 2023 ([Source](#)). Interviews are by invitation only at the admissions committee's discretion. LBS does not publish their acceptance rate, but it is estimated by Forbes to be 20% ([Source](#)). Based upon 20% of applicants being interviewed, we estimate the acceptance rate to be closer to 10-15%.

**Location(s):** Aside from the Video Interview, the 1-on-1 interview is either virtual or in person within the applicant's home region. If the interview is in person, you may be asked to travel nearby for your interview. In this case, typically the interviewing alumnus will choose a public setting or their office for the interview.

**Anticipated Length:** This interview can vary in length, with reports ranging from 45 to 120 minutes. While the interview will most likely be around 60 minutes in length, be prepared for the longest possible timeframe when scheduling your day.

**Who does the interviewing?** Admissions interviews are conducted typically by an alumnus, and less frequently by a member of the admissions committee.

**What information has the interviewer already reviewed?** The interviewer will have read the applicant's entire application prior to the interview.

**After the interview:** Interview feedback is then combined with your initial application and used by the Admissions Committee to decide to admit, reject, or waitlist the candidate.

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### Video Interview:

Upon being selected for an interview, applicants will complete an online video interview prior to their in-person interview. The online interview link will be sent to the applicant via email, which will lead to the KIRA online platform. (This video recording platform is used now by multiple MBA programs.) The online interview is comprised of two questions and is meant to see how you communicate and think on your feet with little preparation. This also helps to provide a consistent point of view for the admissions committee, since the in-person interviews are completed by hundreds of different alumni.

For each of the two questions, applicants have 45 seconds to prepare an answer and 90 seconds to respond.

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### **Question 1:**

Typically each year, LBS has one question that is standardized across all applicants and one that is randomized. Recently, the standardized question for the past few years has been: *“What will you gain from the London Business School MBA Programme that you won’t gain from another MBA programme?”*

Prepare yourself in advance for this question and show up with a polished answer with at least 3 reasons why LBS is the right program for you. Be specific, mentioning various resources at LBS, such as classes, professors, clubs, conferences, trek, and other activities, and why they are relevant for you and your goals. This is where one must do their research to truly show their fit with the LBS program.

For some applicants, the school’s London location is a prime motivator, being that LBS is the only top business school in the city. So, consider this for your “why LBS” answer.

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### **Question 2:**

The second question is randomized and can be from multiple categories, such as the four listed below. In general, prepare as if this was an actual in-person interview that would span multiple types of questions. (You will be preparing anyhow for your in-person interview, so the preparation can go hand-in-hand.)

**#1 Behavioral:** these questions are table stakes in most interviews and applicants should use the STAR format to answer (i.e. Situation, Task, Action, Results). The typical topics that will come up in these questions for an MBA interview are leadership, teamwork, and DEI. Be prepared to explain your thinking and the “why” behind your decisions. Example questions:

- Tell me about a time you lead a team.
- What is your leadership style?
- Tell me about a time you created a more inclusive environment.
- Tell me about a time you worked on a challenging team – what was the issue and how did you resolve it? What did you learn?

**#2 Your Personality or Interests:** these questions are about getting to know you more personally, such as asking about your favorite book and why. What's most important here isn't the "what" but the "why". Explain your thinking to the admissions committee. Example questions:

- What is your favorite book and why?
- What is your favorite movie and why?
- What is your favorite song/band and why?
- What do you like to do in your spare time?
- What are your hobbies and why?

**#3 School-Specific:** these questions will be about how the school is a fit, what resources you plan to use on campus, how you will contribute, and so forth. (This category is less likely to show up for your second question, since the current standardized question is within this category.) Example questions:

- How will you uniquely contribute to the school's community?
- What resources do you plan to use on campus?
- Why is our school a fit for you?
- Why are you a fit for our school?

**#4 Your MBA Story:** these questions are your "general" MBA questions that you should know like the back of your hand. These should be already answered in your application including why you are interested in an MBA, what are your short and long-term goals, etc.) Example questions:

- What are your short-term and long-term goals?
- Why these goals?
- Why an MBA?
- Why now?
- What will you gain from an MBA program?

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### **1-on-1 Interview:**

After completing your Video Interview, the 1-on-1 interview and case interview will be completed together in one sitting by an alumnus of the program. (And less frequently, it will be completed by an admissions committee member.) Applicants will complete this interview either virtually or in-person in their home region.

### **Traditional Interview:**

The bulk of the interview will be a traditional interview covering "typical" MBA interview questions and categories. The style of your interviewer may vary as interviews are typically completed across hundreds of different alumni. That being said, alumni interviews are usually more conversational and informal in nature, as the interviewer is truly looking to get to know you and wants you to succeed.

Applicants should prepare for the same types of interview question categories as suggested above for the randomized question of the Video Interview: #1 Behavioral; #2 Your Personality or Interests; #3 School-Specific; and #4 Your MBA Story.

Additionally, you should also be prepared for interview questions that are specifically tailored to your application, as your interviewer will have read your entire application in advance. Tailored questions to your application may ask about a particular professional experience, accomplishment, or clarifying a point made in an essay. Anything in your application is fair game, so we suggest re-reading your application prior to your interview so that it is fresh in your memory.

### **Sample Questions:**

*This is non-exhaustive and illustrative.*

- Based on your academic and professional experiences and interests, how might you uniquely enrich the experience of your classmates?
- How do you envision engaging with the LBS community?
- Are you considering other MBA programs? If so, where does LBS rank?
- Tell me about what is important to you in an MBA program. How did you select the schools to which you applied?
- What specifically draws you to the MBA program at LBS?
- Why do you feel now is the right time for you to pursue an MBA?
- Walk me through your resume.
- How did you enjoy your undergraduate experience, and how did it help you end up in your current role/career?
- Tell me more about your current role.
- Describe a project or working situation that you are particularly proud of in your current role/at your current employer.
- How is an MBA going to help you achieve your short-term and long-term goals?
- Do you have a backup post-MBA goal?
- What are your plans for the summer between your first and second year?
- Describe your leadership style and give examples of situations in which you had to be the leader.
- Describe a time when you had to adapt your leadership style to work effectively with members of a team.
- Tell me about a time when you took steps to ensure that everyone (on a team, in a class, or at an organization) felt included. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.
- Describe how you have incorporated different points of view on projects or in a team setting.
- Tell me about a time when you disagreed with a decision that was made and what you did in that situation.
- Tell me about an extracurricular activity you have been involved in (in undergrad, post grad, in your workplace); why you have been involved in it and what you have gained from the experience?

- How do you plan to be involved at London Business School outside of the classroom?
- How do you spend your free time?
- What is your “plan B” if you don’t get into business school?
- What makes LBS different from other schools you are applying to?
- Why are you a fit for LBS?
- What do you know about London?
- Why London?
- Tailored to Your Application:
  - Why did you decide to study xyz major in undergrad?
  - Can you tell me more about how you gained abc accomplishment at Company F?
  - How do you like working at Company A?
  - In Essay 1, I was intrigued by what you said about xyz topic. Can you expand on that point?

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### **Case Interview:**

During your 1-on-1 interview, you will have a case interview, or otherwise known as the presentation or mini presentation section.

This is *not* like management consulting case interviews at all. It does not require technical skills, math, nor case interview frameworks. LBS advises that no preparation is required or necessary. However, some say that staying aware of current events in major companies (such as Amazon and Meta) and industries (such as finance and technology) can be helpful. We also advise being aware at a high level of popular topics in business, such as AI and Crypto (as of 2025). To accomplish this, we recommend skimming the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, or *Financial Times* for about a week prior to your interview. (However, this truly is not necessary.)

So then what *is* the LBS case interview? It is typically a broad question about a hypothetical or real life business situation. For example, the question could be “Company ABC wants to achieve XYZ goal; how should they do this?” You may be asked to give your opinion or present options to that situation. Overall, the case interview question is meant to test how you think on your feet. It doesn’t test for one single or “right” answer, but rather how the interviewee responds, if you employ critical reasoning, and can explain the *why* behind your decision-making process. Additionally, it tests if you are calm, clear, and articulate when speaking.

Typically the interviewer has a few case questions to choose from and picks one for the interview. The interviewee has 5 minutes to prepare and up to 5 minutes to present. (We recommend speaking for at least 2-3 minutes to ensure your answer is thoughtful enough.) During both your preparation and presentation time, you are allowed to use paper and take notes or draw any helpful decision trees or diagrams, or bullets for your key points.

We recommend before diving into your 5 minutes of preparation to ensure you understand the question. You can try mirroring back the question to your interviewer in different wording to ensure you have understood it correctly. If you have any questions, *do* ask them.

Once you are in preparation mode, we suggest using pen and paper to map your key points so that you can stay clear and focused during the presentation. You do not have to show all the paper that was used during the preparation stage, so feel free to use one page to brainstorm, and another to finalize your core ideas.

Once you are in the presentation stage, we suggest discussing your decision-making process, or how you came to your conclusion, or your *why*. The why behind your thinking is most important. Additionally, you can consider discussing pros and cons of various idea or avenues. When in doubt, you can try using a simple framework such as:

- Profit = Revenues – Costs
  - Revenue = Qty \* \$ across multiple revenue streams or product lines
  - Costs = Fixed + Variable
- Go or No Go?
  - Potentially rate each lever with a weighted % (such as Profit = 50% weight) and rate each lever's attractiveness from 1 (no go) to 5 (go). Create a basic math equation to weigh if you should Go or No Go (i.e. Yes or No).
- Pros and Cons
  - Pick the list with the most items (i.e. more reasons under Pros means Yes).
- 4 C's
  - Map out the considerations for 4 areas to help decide the best strategy.
    - Internal (Company) Factors
      - Cost
      - Capabilities
    - External Factors
      - Customer
      - Competition

Lastly, some interviewers are reported to ask one or two follow up questions, typically that clarify your answer, so be prepared accordingly.

### **Past Case Interview Questions:**

*Note that this list is non-exhaustive and meant to be illustrative.*

- You are the CEO of a global company that operates in diverse markets. How would you implement policies to improve diversity and inclusion across different regions while respecting cultural differences?
- Given the rapid advancements in AI, do you believe businesses should adopt AI at the risk of losing human jobs? How would you balance these interests as a leader?
- Which parts/departments of your current company would benefit most from adopting generative AI?

- Given the increasing emphasis on sustainability, should large corporations be responsible for reducing their environmental impact even if it means sacrificing short-term profits?
  - An employee has written damaging criticism of his company on a social networking website, resulting in his company firing him. Do you support the company's decision? Why or why not?
  - What strategies do you feel a large company (i.e., Coca-Cola) should follow to ensure the acquisition of a smaller company (i.e., coffeehouse company Costa) is successful?
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### **Questions for Your Interviewer:**

You should always be ready with at least 3 questions for your interviewer. Usually, there is time at the end of the interview for at least one question.

However, there are "bad" questions that you want to avoid.

- **Too General:** You do not want to appear as though you have not completed your due diligence on the school. For example, asking a question such as "Do you have a consulting club?" would be a bad question. Your questions should be thoughtful and showcase that you are prepared and are genuinely interested in the school.
- **Too Personal:** Be careful of asking something, especially of an alumnus, that may be too personal. A question like this could be, "Did you find it difficult to be a working mother at this school?" When in doubt, don't ask the question and keep things positive and upbeat.
- **Too Niche:** It is typically not helpful to ask super specific questions such as, "Can you tell me more about the application process for the Immersion Semester in Italy?" Questions like this can be so specific that the interviewer most likely does not know the answer. This is also not particularly relevant to your interview, as it is too particular to alter your decision factors on whether or not this school is a top choice for you.

Now onto the "good" questions.

Firstly, consider who your interviewer is when asking questions - you'll have slightly different questions for an alumnus or second year student versus an admissions officer. Secondly, consider topics such as advice on the MBA experience or better understanding the school's culture. These are thoughtful and specific enough to show your true interest without becoming too personal or niche.

For example, an alumnus or second year student can give great insights into questions such as "What surprised you when you started business school?" or "What do you wish you would have known before starting at xyz business school?" Whereas, an admissions officer may never have gone to business school and could instead answer questions about the school's culture or values. For example, you could ask an admissions officer "I've heard from a few conversations with current students that learning by doing is a major value at xyz school. Are there any other values that the school celebrates?"

Example Questions for Your Interviewer:

- What surprised you about your MBA experience? (for an alumnus or student only)
  - What do you wish you had known before starting your MBA? (for an alumnus or student only)
  - What experience or resource did you find most impactful from your MBA program? (for an alumnus or student only)
  - What would you change about your MBA experience? (for an alumnus or student only)
  - How has your MBA experience influenced your career and personal growth since graduating? (for an alumnus only)
  - What advice do you have for the summer before starting my MBA program - how can I best prepare?
  - What qualities do you find most successful MBA students have in common at this school?
  - From my research I've learned that your program's culture is [insert adjective]. How would you describe the school's culture from your personal perspective?
  - Based on what you've learned about me so far, where do you see me best contributing to the campus community?
  - How do you expect this program will evolve in the next 1-2 years? (for an admissions officer only)
  - Are you anticipating any near-term significant changes to the MBA program? (for an admissions officer only)
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#### **Other Resources:**

#### **Relevant Vantage Point Articles:**

- [How to Ace Your MBA Interview](#)
- [How to Prepare for MBA Interviews – Expecting the Unexpected](#)
- [The Top 3 Pitfalls to Avoid in Your Business School Interview](#)
- [Common MBA Interview Questions and How to Prepare](#)
- [MBA Interview Questions – Don't Let These Stump You](#)
- [Questions to Ask MBA Admissions Officers in Your MBA Interview](#)

#### **Other Online Resources:**

- <https://www.mbamission.com/guides/interview-guides/london-business-school-interview-guide/>
- <https://fortunaadmissions.com/lbs-video-interview-questions/>
- <https://www.clearadmit.com/interview-reports/lbs>

Good luck!