

PhD interview form

Applicant name:

Date:

Interviewer name:

Page 1 - General part

1. Why do you want to do a PhD? Is it part of your longer-term career plans? What are the criteria for awarding a PhD?

(check student is intrinsically motivated, i.e. knows what research is, and is keen to do it, rather than: wants the title, my parents expect it, likes the lifestyle, or it's a way of getting a visa)

	High				Low
Applicant's understanding of research	5	4	3	2	1
Applicant's level of motivation	5	4	3	2	1
Comments:					

2. Why do you want to do your PhD studies at UCL Computer Science?

(check student has taken trouble to see what research is done in the department, and their interests fit with our activities, as opposed to London being attractive or convenient, could not get into Imperial)

Applicant's knowledge of our research activities	5	4	3	2	1
Comments:					

3. Have you applied elsewhere? Who else does research in this area?

(check they know, or have looked at, other research groups working in the area)

Applicant's awareness of relevant research activities	5	4	3	2	1
Comments:					

4. PhD involves written communication (thesis and papers) – how much have you written, and what?

(especially important for students whose first language is not English)

Applicant's ability for written communication	5	4	3	2	1
Comments:					

5. If applicant's first language is not English

Applicant's ability for verbal communication in English	5	4	3	2	1
Comments:					

Page 2- research topic and background knowledge

(Please note that these questions are for guidance only – interviewers should ask any additional questions they consider relevant to assess the applicant’s background knowledge and ability to carry out research on the chosen topic.)

1. What area/topic do you want to research, and why?

(check applicant’s awareness of state of research in the chosen area, and if they can identify what would be a contribution beyond existing knowledge)

	High				Low
Applicant’s understanding of research topic, and ability to identify a contribution	5	4	3	2	1
Comments:					

2. How would you go about carrying out research in this area?

(check that candidate is aware of at least some of the skills required to carry out research, what methods are being used, that knowledge produced has to be valid, i.e. notions of proof (theoretical or empirical) and validation)

Applicant’s understanding of research methodology	5	4	3	2	1
Comments:					

3. Questions on background knowledge

(research area specific – select 3-4 question to examine candidate’s basic knowledge and skills)

Applicant’s level of background knowledge and skills	5	4	3	2	1
Comments:					

4. Should applicant be offered a place for PhD studies?

	Yes	Not sure	No
Comments:			

5. Is there anything else that should be investigated/followed up before making an offer or rejection?