



Securing a job as a Social Worker - what employers want at interview

1) Look the part. Dress smartly.

2) You may be asked to respond to a case study.

They want to see you have an understanding of indicators of need and of risk and that you can identify a possible way of responding to them, prioritising (in this order)...

- a) The welfare of the child/ the well-being of the adult
- b) Strengthening of the care and support for the child within their family if that is consistent with their welfare/ the independence of the adult within their care arrangements.

You should be able to show an awareness of key sections of the Children Act 1989 and Care Act 2014 (including any key approaches and timescales) and the importance of service user involvement and multi-agency working (where relevant) to justify why you are proposing the action you propose.

3) You will be asked to do an interview.

Possible Social Work Interview Questions

1. Why do you want to become a Social Worker for ... [enter specific employer here!]?
Think about this from the employer's point of view. They want people who will be committed to their service and their area, so the more informed you are about the key strengths they have and challenges they face (see local plans, Ofsted Reports etc), any strategy they have adopted (see employer website) and any offer they have for employees (see employer website) the more you can show them you are focused on them and their priorities.
2. Provide an example of when you have worked in a challenging situation with children and families/ adults? What did you contribute to the outcome and what did you learn from this?
3. Tell us something you are particularly proud of in your social work career?
4. What experience have you had of working in partnership with other agencies supporting children in achieving their identified outcomes?
5. How would you prioritise your caseload?

6. How do you make sure you are on top of continuing professional development?

In any interview, the employer wants to see you are clear in your thinking and are able to state your view without too much hesitation. Interview panels like brief examples (so feel free to draw on anonymised practice experience or college experience) but use those examples to tell them something about your practice strengths, not the case itself.

Have a question to ask them at the end.
“What is your ASYE programme like” is a good one.

Other typical questions at interview...

What understanding do you have of ...?
[Enter anything relevant to the specific post from following list!]
“Working together to safeguard children”
“Care matters”
“Care planning regulations”
“Strengths-based social work practice framework and handbook”
“Making Safeguarding Personal”?

What is your understanding of the assessment framework/what makes for an effective assessment?

What are the key challenges facing Social Workers now?

Can you tell us how you approach case recording?

What knowledge do you have of the effects of disability and chronic illness on children and families/adults?

What strategies do you use for crisis intervention?

What are the signs of neglect and abuse?

Can you provide an example of when you have worked as part of a team in a social work setting?