



Interview Assessment Overview Guide

Interviews within rail recruitment are structured, evidence-based assessments designed to evaluate whether a candidate demonstrates behaviours aligned with a safety-critical role.

1. How Rail Interviews Are Structured

Interviewers are not assessing confidence or presentation style alone. They are evaluating behavioural evidence against clearly defined role criteria.

Interviewers assess whether candidates:

- Align with the role profile and behavioural standards
- Make sound decisions under pressure
- Follow rules and procedures consistently
- Communicate clearly and professionally
- Reflect on actions and demonstrate learning

2. Behavioural Evidence Matters

Most interview questions focus on real past behaviour rather than hypothetical situations. Past behaviour is considered the most reliable indicator of future performance in safety-critical roles.

Candidates are expected to describe specific situations they have personally experienced, explaining the context, actions taken and outcomes.

3. Using the STAR Structure

Many rail interviews assess answers using a structured behavioural format. One commonly recognised approach is the STAR framework:

- Situation – Briefly explain the context
- Task – Outline your responsibility within that situation
- Action – Describe what you personally did
- Result – Explain the outcome and what was achieved

Structured answers help interviewers clearly understand your role, decision-making process and accountability. Answers that focus heavily on team actions without clarifying personal contribution may be explored further during follow-up questioning.

4. Follow-Up and Clarifying Questions

Interviewers will often ask probing or clarifying questions to explore your answer in greater depth. This helps them understand your personal contribution, judgement and level of responsibility.

You should be prepared to back up your answers with clear detail, including why you made certain decisions and what you learned.

It is acceptable to ask clarifying questions if something is unclear. Confirming understanding before answering can demonstrate professionalism and structured thinking.

5. What Interviewers Are Not Looking For

Interviewers are not looking for rehearsed scripts or exaggerated claims. Overly polished responses without clear evidence can weaken credibility.

- Memorised answers without genuine examples
- Vague statements about being hardworking or motivated
- Hypothetical answers instead of real experience
- Avoiding personal responsibility in examples

This guide provides an overview of how interviews are assessed within rail recruitment. For structured, in-depth guidance on preparing behavioural examples and understanding assessment criteria, see our Interview Guidance resource at [Railway Careers](#).