

What should I ask an PA applicant?



When interviewing a Personal Assistant (PA), ask about their experience and skills to ensure they can provide safe care, their practical abilities for day-to-day tasks, and scenario responses to see how they handle challenges. Check availability, personality, and compatibility to ensure a good working relationship, and complete practical checks like right-to-work documents and references for safety and reliability.

Experience & Skills

Asking about previous experience and relevant skills helps you verify that the PA can safely and effectively carry out the tasks required. It also shows whether they have worked with people who have similar needs, which reduces the risk of mistakes and ensures a higher standard of care.

Practical Abilities

These questions help determine if the PA can perform day-to-day tasks you require, such as personal care, cooking, cleaning, or running errands. It ensures they can handle the practical side of the role and meet your expectations.

Availability and Flexibility

Understanding their availability ensures that the PA can cover the hours and days you need. Flexibility questions also help you see if they can respond to occasional changes, like emergencies, holidays, or urgent requests.

Scenario/Problem-Solving Questions

These questions reveal how a candidate responds to unexpected or challenging situations, such as emergencies, illness, or disagreements. This helps assess their judgment, decision-making skills, and ability to remain calm under pressure.

Personality and Compatibility

You should ask about a PA's previous experience to ensure they have the skills and background needed to provide the support you need. The PA will be working closely with you, so it's crucial to see if their personality and approach are a good fit. Questions in this area reveal how they build trust, communicate, and handle challenging situations, helping ensure a positive working relationship.

Practical Checks

Questions about the right to work, references, and other legal requirements ensure you are hiring someone who is legally allowed to work and whose background has been verified. This protects you from legal issues and helps ensure the safety and reliability of the person you hire.

Sample questions to ask at interview



When hiring a Personal Assistant (PA), it's important to ask the right questions to ensure they have the skills, experience, and approach needed to provide safe and effective support. The following questions can help guide your interview and make sure you find a PA who is a good fit for your needs. Each question also explains why it is important so you understand what to look for in their answers.

Can you tell me about your previous experience supporting someone with similar needs?

This helps you assess whether the candidate has the skills and experience necessary to meet your personal care or support requirements.

How would you help someone achieve their personal goals or outcomes?

Ensures the candidate is person-centred in their approach and can support independence and choice.

Do you have any relevant training or qualifications (e.g., first aid, safeguarding, medication administration)?

Ensures the candidate has the necessary knowledge to provide safe and effective support.

How would you handle an emergency or unexpected situation?

Evaluates the candidate's problem-solving skills, ability to stay calm under pressure, and readiness to respond safely.

Can you describe how you support someone with personal care or daily living tasks?

Provides insight into their approach, professionalism, and understanding of dignity and respect in care.

Sample questions to ask at interview



Are you comfortable with the tasks required, such as mobility support, cooking, or household chores?

Confirms the candidate is willing and able to perform the practical duties expected in the role.

What is your availability and flexibility?

Helps ensure the candidate can work the hours you need, including evenings, weekends, or occasional changes.

How do you handle stressful situations or conflicts?

Shows how they manage pressure, communication, and challenging behaviour, which is important for a safe and positive working relationship.

Can you provide references from previous employers or clients?

Verifies reliability, experience, and suitability for the role. References help confirm the information given in the interview.

Are you eligible to work in the UK, and can you provide the necessary documents?

Legally required for employment to ensure compliance with right-to-work regulations.

How do you ensure confidentiality and respect for the person you support?

Safeguarding and confidentiality are critical in care roles; this question assesses their understanding and professionalism.

How to write a job advert



Writing a clear and detailed job advert is an important step in finding the right Personal Assistant (PA) for your needs. A well-written advert helps potential applicants understand what the role involves, what you are looking for, and whether they feel they are a good match for you. Being clear and open in your advert will help attract suitable candidates and make the recruitment process more effective.

When writing your advert, it's helpful to include the following information:

Job Title and Role

Start by clearly stating that you are looking for a Personal Assistant (PA). You should also explain whether the role is employed, casual, or self-employed so applicants understand the type of working arrangement.

About You

Include a short introduction about yourself. This can help applicants get a sense of who they may be supporting. You may wish to describe your interests, lifestyle, and the type of support you require, such as personal care, household tasks, support with appointments, or companionship.

Duties and Responsibilities

Outline the main tasks you would like the PA to carry out. It's helpful to be specific but concise so applicants can clearly understand what the role involves and decide if they have the right experience and skills.

Hours and Availability

Explain how many hours or days of support you need each week. Include any particular times, such as mornings, evenings, or weekends, and whether you require flexibility to cover additional hours occasionally.

Skills and Qualities

Highlight any essential skills, experience, or training that are important for the role, such as first aid, safeguarding knowledge, or mobility support. You may also want to include personal qualities that matter to you, such as being reliable, patient, respectful, and having good communication skills.

Employment Details

State whether the role is employed or self-employed, the agreed rate of pay, and how the PA will be paid (for example, weekly, monthly, or by invoice). This helps ensure transparency from the outset.

How to Apply

Explain how applicants should apply and what information you would like them to provide, such as a CV, references, or a short introduction about themselves. You can also include a closing date for applications and your preferred method of contact.

Other Important Information

Include any additional requirements that are relevant to the role, such as the need for a DBS check, a valid driving licence, access to transport, or any specific training.