



# INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP FORUM (ISF)

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## TRANSCRIPT OF LECTURE [ISF 7]:

### ACING THE MASTERCARD FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP INTERVIEW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (UBC)

Friday 19<sup>TH</sup> February, 2021; 8:00 PM WAT

Lecturer:

2020 master card scholarship at UBC

Moderator:

Scholar Hussein

This is a recorded interview with a MasterCard scholar at UBC. However, please take it as a live session as there was only a little time for the preparation. The aim is to make the contents available at the earliest for all the shortlisted candidates for the interview.

#### CONVERSATION WITH THE SCHOLAR

**Question 1:** What is the aim of the video interview?

**Response:**

The aim is to know you asides from what you wrote in your SOP. The key things they want to know is your confidence level, how you present yourself, your ability to express yourself genuinely and how coordinated you are.

**Question 2:** What are the necessary pre-interview preparations to be considered?

**Response:**

From my experience, I made sure I got a quite environment, went through my SOPs again, got MTN Subscription with plenty of data, a plain background, a nice top and my wig. I also wrote down all possible questions with answers and placed them close to me during the interview. Also, make available a good camera.

**Question 3:** What are the etiquettes to be observed during the interview?

**Response:**

- Make sure you are sitting upright and comfortable.
- Be confident even if you think what you are saying might not be okay.
- Try and smile too.

**Question 4:** What are the questions asked or likely questions to be expected during the interview?

**Response:**

1. What do you want to achieve during your stay at UBC?
2. How will the program you want to assist you in your long term goals?
3. How will you feel, and what will you do if you are not given the admission and scholarship?
4. What are other things you will like to have seen or added in the entire application?

**Question 5:** How can these questions be answered to align with the critical objectives of the selection committee?

**Response:**

Just try to balance the MasterCard Foundation scholars program's core objectives, which is Great academic standing, Leadership and Volunteering activities, and your service to your colleagues (community service).

**Question 6:** What are the techniques to record clear and coherent responses?

**Response:**

Try and speak up clearly, do not use bedroom voice and do not shout .

There is a timer that will countdown to each question, and they have a specific time frame (3 minutes) you need to put in your answers.

There are majorly three questions; the first question has three trials and the other two has only two trials. There will be practice questions before the major ones, so do not panic. Be patient and read through the instructions bit by bit.

**Question 7:** What other useful tips would you give shortlisted candidates to excel in the interview?

**Response:**

Be calm, happy and optimistic. I will also advise you should be prayerful.

Two videos have been attached (courtesy of scholars pivot YouTube channel) to help you further prepare for the interview. Kindly endeavour to watch the full clips. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mtl8emevXBc&t=797s>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aVlIdd3xhSK&t=27s>

Our scholar is a 2020 MasterCard Awardee at the University of British Columbia.

Dear scholar (she love to be miss anonymous), thank you greatly for your time and the information shared. Wishing you the very best in your studies and sojourn in Canada.

**End of the session**

**Below are general graduate school Interview tips:**

1. Research questions and prep answers - these could be general and be asked. For example, why did you choose me or this programme? Do not regurgitate your SOP. Be creative.

Reflect on your application and your prospective advisor/interview and frame specific questions too. For example, I was asked why I had a C or D in a particular course in the 3rd year. This course was relevant to my programme. I was also asked about my undergraduate research and paper (including who wrote them up, contributions of my advisors, etc.) and if my degree/background's tropical focus would not be limiting. I was expecting these questions and was prepared with answers.

2. Have important and impressive questions to ask, answers that cannot be answered with online resources or the department website—technical and non-technical ones. I recommend a minimum of 10 and prioritize them. You may not have the opportunity to ask all, or some will be answered without you asking, or they lose relevance in that context that day. The first should be if the panel/interview wants you to clarify any of your previous answers. I also asked about the programme's diversity - Diversity, Justice, Equity, and Inclusion (JEDI, DEI) are significant issues abroad. If funding is involved, now is an excellent time to ask.

3. See and take the "interview" as a chat and not an interview. An opportunity for them to know you better and you too know them better. You would be more relaxed this way and give positive vibes that will make the folk at the other end enjoy the chat.

4. Maintain eye contact and speak up. Sit up and lift your camera to eye level or close (books below or something). Smile, wear a plain shirt. Do not stay in front of distracting background.

5. Have back up plans. Quiet room, alternate electricity, devices you can switch (e.g. phone and laptop), multiple internets.

6. Pick a time that works - one that you are typically awake and active.

7. Do not cram answers or critical points—practice, practice, practice. Write your questions down clearly.

8. Pray for favour and that they like you instantly.

9. After the interview, thank them via email and express your excitement about the possibility of joining the program.

Extra: be positive in your language and watch theirs too. For example, if they say, "When you come to the US, we can set that up". Likely a good sign. You can stir them in that direction too (indirectly letting you know that they have accepted you) with your language - "In the US/department will I be able to have an internship or register for 100 courses?"

On behalf of ISF, I wish you all the very best of luck with the interview.

We will celebrate with you soon!

Cheers!

□ Hussein

For: Admin

cc: All prospective scholars for the MCF interview at UBC.

