

2 February 2023

Interview Questions in relation Advanced Clinical / Advanced Nurse Practitioner Band 8A Post

Question:

I wish to place a FOI request for any information / previous interview questions in relation to the post Advanced Clinical / Advanced Nurse Practitioner Band 8A.

Response:

Whilst we are fully committed to openness and transparency, it is Belfast Trust's view that to release this type of information would likely prejudice the effective conduct of the Trust's Recruitment and Selection process. For this reason, the Trust believes it is entitled to withhold the release of this type of information under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 36.

Section 36 is a qualified exemption, which means that Belfast Trust is required to consider whether or not the public interest in disclosing the information you have requested outweighs the public interest in withholding the information. In this case, we consider that the public interest favours withholding the information for the reasons set out below.

The qualified person for Belfast Trust – the Chief Executive – has confirmed that this exemption applies.

In reaching this decision to withhold the information requested, the Trust has considered fully its commitment to ensuring openness and transparency, where reasonably practicable, in all its activities. What I can advise however is that all elements of the assessment process, including the interview questions, are based on the requirements of the post. Therefore, the Trust will always use the requirements set out in the Personnel Specification as the basis for the questions asked at interview.

Given that all questions are based on the criteria and responsibilities of the job, it follows that there will be a limited combination of questions that a panel can reasonably ask for any particular post. Within this context, the Trust must also balance this against the need to retain an objective process, which is not open to candidates "learning" the responses. The performance / assessment criteria is sufficiently detailed to allow the panel to score accurately and consistently and to release this level of detail would render future interview processes for the same or similar role incapable of being fair to all applicants, if some had possession of this information and others did not.