Conveyancer interview questions

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What to expect

Conveyancer interviews test practical process knowledge as much as legal understanding, since most of the role is procedural work done under time pressure with real money and real deadlines attached. Expect a mix of technical process questions, behavioural questions about handling client stress or errors, and scenario questions that test judgement when a settlement is at risk.

- **Process:** Walk-throughs of how you handle a specific task, such as a title search or a settlement, to check you know the correct sequence and legal checkpoints.
- **Behavioural:** Past examples of managing client anxiety, tight deadlines or a mistake, used to assess judgement and communication under pressure.
- **Scenario:** Hypothetical problems, such as a title defect found late or a settlement fund discrepancy, to see how you'd respond in the moment.
- **Regulatory/compliance:** Questions on state legislation, trust account handling and licensing obligations to confirm you understand the compliance framework you'd be working within.
- **Client-facing:** Questions on explaining legal or financial terms to non-legal clients, since much of the job involves translating contract language for buyers and sellers.

Most conveyancing interviews start with a rundown of your current process for a standard purchase or sale file, move into two or three behavioural or scenario questions about problems you've handled, then cover software and systems experience (LEAP, PEXA, state title databases), and close with questions about licensing status and availability.

1. Talk me through your process from receiving instructions on a purchase to exchange of contracts.

Why they ask

This checks whether you actually know the sequence of a transaction, not just the theory, and whether you catch issues early rather than at the last minute.

How to structure your answer

Walk through the process in order: initial instruction and client identification, contract review, title search and enquiries, advice to client, and exchange, noting the checkpoints where problems typically surface.

> **Example answer**
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> *“Once I get instructions, I confirm client ID and get a copy of the contract from the agent or vendor's solicitor. I review special conditions and check the certificate of title, then run a title search to confirm ownership, encumbrances and any caveats. If there's anything unusual, like an easement or a body corporate issue on a strata property, I raise it with the client before they sign anything. Once they're comfortable and finance or building inspection conditions are sorted, we move to exchange.”*

2. Tell me about a time you found a problem with a title or contract close to settlement. What did you do?

Why they ask

Late-stage title or contract problems are common in this role, and the interviewer wants to see calm, methodical handling rather than panic or corner-cutting.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: describe the situation and the specific defect found, the task or risk it created, the action you took to resolve it, and the result for the client and settlement date.

Example answer

"On one file, a title search two days before settlement showed an unregistered easement that wasn't disclosed in the contract. I contacted the vendor's solicitor straight away to confirm it was genuine, then explained the implications to my client rather than letting them find out at settlement. We negotiated a short extension so the vendor could address it, and settlement went ahead a week later with the easement properly noted. The client appreciated being told early rather than being surprised on the day."

3. A buyer calls you the morning of settlement saying their bank hasn't confirmed the funds will be ready in time. What do you do?

Why they ask

This tests judgement under time pressure and knowledge of who to contact and in what order when a settlement is at risk.

How to structure your answer

Set out the immediate priorities, who you'd contact first, and how you'd manage the client's expectations while the issue is being resolved.

Example answer

"I'd call the bank's settlements team directly to get a clear status update rather than relying on the client's account manager, and I'd notify the other side's conveyancer or solicitor early so nobody is caught off guard. I'd explain to the client what the delay means, including any penalty interest risk, and keep both parties updated until funds are confirmed. If it looks like it won't resolve that day, I'd discuss a short settlement extension with the vendor's side rather than letting it default."

4. How do you explain a contract clause or financial obligation to a client who has no legal background?

Why they ask

Client-facing communication is a core part of the job, and this checks whether you can translate legal language without talking down to clients or glossing over risk.

How to structure your answer

Describe your general approach to plain-language explanation, then give a specific example of a clause you've had to explain and how you checked the client actually understood it.

Example answer

"I avoid reading clauses out verbatim and instead explain what they mean practically. For example, when explaining a special condition about a pest inspection, I'd tell the client what happens if the inspection finds an issue: they can negotiate, ask for repairs, or in some cases walk away, depending on the wording. I always ask the client to repeat back their understanding in their own words before we proceed, so I know the advice has actually landed."

5. What state-based conveyancing legislation and licensing requirements do you need to stay across in this role?

Why they ask

This is a direct compliance check to confirm you understand the regulatory environment you'd be working in, including trust account rules and licensing.

How to structure your answer

Name the relevant legislation and regulator for the state the role is in, then explain how you keep your knowledge current.

Example answer

"Depending on the state, that includes the relevant Conveyancing Act or Sale of Land Act, trust account handling rules set by the state regulator, and licensing renewal requirements through bodies

like NSW Fair Trading or Consumer Affairs Victoria. I keep current through continuing professional development requirements tied to licence renewal and by following updates from the Australian Institute of Conveyancers."

6. How do you manage your workload when you're running multiple settlements in the same week?

Why they ask

Conveyancers often juggle several files at different stages, and this checks organisational method rather than just a claim of being organised.

How to structure your answer

Describe the practical system you use (file management software, checklists, calendar reminders) and how you prioritise when deadlines clash.

Example answer

"I use LEAP to track key dates for every file, including cooling-off periods, finance dates and settlement dates, and I set reminders several days ahead of each one rather than on the day. When settlements clash, I prioritise whichever file has the least flexibility, usually where a client has a same-day purchase and sale, and I make sure documents like the settlement statement and cheque or PEXA workspace details are finalised at least a day in advance."