Migration Agent interview questions

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What to expect

Interviews for Migration Agent roles test legal knowledge of the Migration Act and Regulations, judgement in handling live cases, and the interpersonal skill needed to guide clients through a stressful process. Expect a mix of process, scenario and compliance-focused questions alongside standard behavioural ones.

- **Process:** Questions on how you actually work through a case, from initial assessment to lodgement, testing whether your method is thorough and repeatable.
- **Technical/legal knowledge:** Questions checking your grasp of visa subclasses, legislative change and how you keep your advice current.
- **Scenario/judgement:** Hypothetical situations, such as a missing document near a deadline, testing decision-making under time pressure.
- **Behavioural:** Past-experience questions about managing difficult clients or complex cases, usually answered using a structured example.
- **Compliance and ethics:** Questions on your obligations under the Code of Conduct, professional indemnity insurance and OMARA reporting requirements.

Most interviews open with background and registration checks, move into technical and process questions about how you handle cases, then present a scenario to see how you reason under pressure, before finishing with a behavioural question and time for you to ask about the caseload and support structure.

1. Walk me through how you assess a client's eligibility for a visa and decide on the right subclass to pursue.

Why they ask

This checks whether your case assessment method is thorough and whether you consider alternative pathways rather than defaulting to the obvious option.

How to structure your answer

Answer as a step-by-step walkthrough: initial client interview, information gathering, checking criteria against relevant legislation, and how you present options back to the client.

> **Example answer**
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> *“I start with a detailed client interview to understand their circumstances, work history, relationships and timeframe. From there I map their situation against the criteria for the visa subclasses that could apply, checking points scores, sponsorship options or family criteria depending on the pathway. I document my reasoning and often identify more than one viable option, so I set out the trade-offs for the client, including processing time and evidence burden, before we agree on a direction.”*

2. How do you keep your advice current when migration legislation and policy change?

Why they ask

Legislative change is constant in this field, and agents need a reliable method for staying compliant rather than relying on memory.

How to structure your answer

Explain your ongoing process, then give a concrete example of applying an update to a real piece of advice.

Example answer

"I monitor Department of Home Affairs updates, subscribe to migration law research services and follow guidance from the Office of the MARA. When a policy setting changes, such as a shift in points criteria or a new skilled occupation list, I review any open files that could be affected and update the advice I've given those clients rather than waiting for their next check-in. I also keep a running note of changes so I can brief colleagues quickly."

3. A client's application is missing a required document and the Department of Home Affairs deadline is in two days. What do you do?

Why they ask

This tests judgement under time pressure and whether you know the practical options available, such as requesting an extension or advising on partial submission.

How to structure your answer

Talk through your immediate assessment, the options you'd weigh, and the decision you'd land on and why.

Example answer

"First I'd contact the client straight away to find out why the document is missing and whether it can be obtained quickly, for example a police check or medical result still in progress. I'd check whether the department allows a short extension request for that document type and lodge one if appropriate, being upfront about the reason. If there's no extension option, I'd assess whether submitting with a clear explanation and undertaking to provide the document as soon as possible is preferable to missing the deadline outright, and I'd document that decision for the file."

4. Tell me about a time you managed a client who was anxious or difficult to work with through a complex visa process.

Why they ask

Client relationships under stress are a routine part of the job, and this shows how you balance empathy with professional boundaries.

How to structure your answer

Use STAR: situation, task, action, result.

Example answer

"I had a client whose partner visa application had been delayed for several months with no update from the department, and they were understandably anxious and contacting me frequently. My task was to manage their expectations while continuing to progress the case. I set up a regular fortnightly update, even when there was little new to report, so they weren't left guessing, and I lodged a formal status enquiry with the department. The client felt more in control once they had a predictable point of contact, and the application was eventually finalised without further complication."

5. How do you explain a visa refusal or an unfavourable outcome to a client?

Why they ask

Client-facing communication in a moment of bad news tests both empathy and clarity about next steps, which matters for repeat business and referrals.

How to structure your answer

Describe your approach to a difficult conversation, covering tone, content and follow-up options.

Example answer

"I arrange to speak with the client directly rather than sending the news by email alone. I explain the specific reasons for the refusal in plain language, then move quickly to what options remain, whether that's a review application, a different visa pathway or addressing the issue that caused the refusal. I make sure they understand any time limits that apply to a review and give them time to ask questions

before we agree on next steps.”

6. What do you do to meet your obligations under the Code of Conduct for registered migration agents?

Why they ask

Compliance and professional conduct are central to this role, and an employer needs confidence you understand your personal obligations, separate from the firm's.

How to structure your answer

Set out your knowledge of the requirements, then how you apply them day to day.

Example answer

“I maintain my professional indemnity insurance and continuing professional development hours as required for OMARA registration, and I keep clear file notes on advice given and instructions received, which protects both the client and me if a matter is ever queried. I'm careful about conflicts of interest, particularly when a matter involves family members with different interests, and I make sure clients understand fees and likely outcomes before they commit to using my services.”