

## Questions in OET Speaking

### Why do we ask questions in OET Speaking?

- To find out about patient condition: symptoms, concerns, feelings
- Background Medical history, lifestyle, treatments, medications
- To ask for permission
- To check existing knowledge
- To check understanding
- To see if there are any other questions

### In this unit, we'll look at:

- Wh - questions
- direct
- indirect
- open
- closed

## Question Grammar

### We use auxiliary verbs support to main verbs (infinitives):

- do - questions / negatives: I do not like French music.
- have - I have seen that movie twice.
- be - I am listening to music. / She was hurt by the wasp.

When we make questions, we 'invert' the subject and verb by using an auxiliary verb to ask 'closed questions':

**Statement:** She has got a sedentary lifestyle.

s + i + o

**Question:** Has she got a sedentary lifestyle?

a + s + i

We can also use modal verbs in the auxiliary position:

She **can** speak 4 languages.

**Can** she speak 4 languages?

**Does** she speak 4 languages ?

### What do we mean by question types?

- **Direct** - straight to the point - not overly polite
- **Indirect** - polite, we ask a first question for permission and then follow with the main question
- **Open** - any answer is possible
- **Closed** - yes or no

### Wh-Questions

We can also use 'question words' at the beginning of questions in order to ask 'open questions':

- **QUASI** (question word + auxiliary + infinitive)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What</li> <li>• When</li> <li>• Why</li> <li>• Where</li> <li>• How</li> <li>• Who</li> <li>• Whose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long</li> <li>• How many</li> <li>• How much</li> <li>• How often</li> <li>• What time</li> <li>• How happy</li> </ul>
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Examples:

You see a young man crying at the bus stop.

- **Auxiliary question:** Are you upset?

aux + s + adj

- **Wh-question:** Why are you crying?

Qu - a - s - i

You walk up to a bus stop and there are a few people there. You ask:

- How long will the bus take?

Qu + aux + s + i

- When will the bus arrive?

Qu - a - s - i

How many + noun

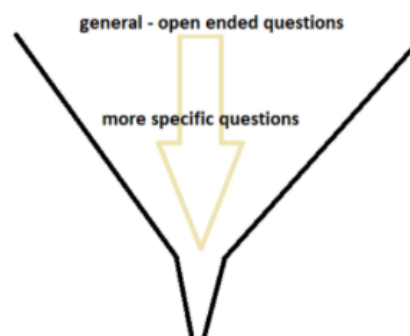
- How many children does she have?

Qu + noun + aux + s

Moving from Open to Closed Questions in conversation

This is an essential aspect of OET Speaking and features in the Clinical Communication Criteria, as an indicator of 'Information Gathering'

Most conversations in a medical setting will have a 'funnel' shape:



A typical conversation about a patient's pain might go from open to closed:

**Patient:** Well, I've been in a lot of pain recently.

**Professional:** Ok, **where is the pain?**

**Patient:** It's in my arm.

**Professional:** **Which arm is it?**

**Patient:** It's the right arm.

**Professional:** **Where does it hurt?**

**Patient:** At the top, near the shoulder.

**Professional:** **How long have you been experiencing** the pain / How long have you had the pain/ **When did the pain start?**

**Patient:** About three months.

**Professional:** **Does it affect your sleep?**

**Patient:** No, not really.

**Professional:** **Have you tried any medication?**

**Patient:** No.