# Your Course in Context

## *MI5, MI6 & GCHQ’s Careers Fair*

Before completing the activity, I chose an optional topic of ethical hacking to complete for my course. I was initially interested in this activity for the hacking element as I knew that MI5, MI6, GCHQ is a secret intelligence service so it could involve hacking. I was unsure if they would go into depth about what happens within the jobs, as it is confidential. During the activity, I was disappointed to know that they wouldn’t be going into depth about the jobs, but they did explain some jobs briefly and allowed employees to tell their experience. After completing the activity and hearing other people’s stories, I felt like I wasn’t doing enough to get to where I want to be as I learnt from this activity that lot of the people went out of their way to improve or learn new skills. In conclusion, I have decided that during my future studies, I am going to dedicate more time into learning the skills used and improving them to high standard for my future career.

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## *Try Hack Me*

I didn’t have a good understanding about cyber security so I thought doing this activity would be a great way to help increase my knowledge about it. During the activity, I was taught how important cyber security is through the ability to hack within a safe environment, however, I was disappointed as I am unable to complete a course due to needing a paid subscription. After completing what I could for the activity, I found cyber security to be interesting as it has a lot of the topics which I have learnt so far within my course. I have learnt that there are sections of computer science that might not be explored within my course, and it is my job to explore them. In conclusion, I have decided that I should expand my knowledge further within computer science by taking time to research and explore the sections of computer science not taught.

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## *Networks guest Lecture*

Initially I was confused about what I would like to do for my future career so I wanted to explore the potential professions that I could continue within. I decided to attend this guest lecture to gain an insight on what my networks knowledge could lead to. During the beginning of the lecture, I felt like I understood a lot of content being given and that this could be a potential career path. After the lecture, I was confused as a lot of content was given and most was beyond what I was taught, and it wasn’t explained well. I learnt that there is qualification required for this type of career, that is difficult to get and most who try, fail. I struggle with networks so I am unsure if I would like to continue it within the future. I have learnt a valuable lesson from this lecture from hearing stories about the difficulty of gaining the qualification: Even though I might be struggling, I shouldn’t fully close off the idea of continuing a career within networks and should instead research into it. Similar to the MI5 activity, I have decided that I should dedicate more time to improve skills and make sure to ask tutor for help if I am struggling or research anything I don’t understand.

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# Legal and Ethical

## *Interpretable AI, algorithmic accountability, and AI ethics*

I have been fascinated with AI and how it affects people so I chose to complete this activity to gain an insight on how much of an impact AI can truly have. The activity begun before the time that was told, so I missed a bit of it. After I joined, I was intrigued to find out that AI has a lot of issues surrounding it. For example, if the statistics given to AI are biased then AI will be also. After completing the activity, I learnt that not everything will be perceived in a good way, and it is important to choose the ethical choice. I have learnt that it is important to be fair especially when it could affect lots of different people and it is important to take accountability for the data inputted. In the future, I know that there will be a group project that could involve collecting data. I should dedicate more time during this to make sure the data is fair and diverse.

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## *Ethics and Law in Data Analytics*

Before completing this activity, I wanted to learn more about data and the law as I am online, so my data is being shared to companies. During the activity, I learnt that there are gaps within the law as the digital world is evolving rapidly but the law is not. I knew that this activity was based on the American system, so I decided to do more research into the UK to which I found out about the GDPR principle to keep data safe and for intended use. I have learnt that it is important to stay up to date with the laws for the digital world because it affects me a lot as I am an active user. I have decided that I will do more research into the UK data laws and make sure I understand and that I am up to date constantly.

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## *Ethical Decision Making*

I chose to complete this activity because ethical decision making is an important part of everything as lots of people can be affected by a simple choice. During the activity, I found out that ethical decision making is a long process as all the pros and cons needs to be weighed out and the decision needs to be judged if it is morally right or not. After completing this activity, I learnt that I am not good at ethical decision making so I should improve on this. I have decided that I will improve on my ethical decision-making skills by reading scenarios and choosing what I think will be the best option that has the least damage.

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# Social and Professional

## *Women in engineering*

This activity stood out to me as I was discouraged to choose computer science knowing that the work environment would be male dominated. I wanted to complete this activity to learn about the female experience within this sector as I didn’t feel confident continuing in computer science. During the activity, I heard other women’s stories and the difficulties they must face on the daily just for being a woman in the workplace, for example being looked down upon. These stories made me feel a lot more confident as these women were underestimated and decided to get better to prove their male co-workers wrong. After hearing these stories, I learnt that obstacles will appear but they shouldn’t stop you from continuing. In conclusion, this activity helped me to understand that I won’t be perfect, but this shouldn’t stop me. This aligned with my goal to improve my self-confidence as I heard other women stories which helped motivate me.

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## *Digital Divide – growing or shrinking?*

I knew of the divide caused by the digital world, but I didn’t have an in-depth knowledge. I chose to complete this activity so I could gain an understanding of how the digital divide was affecting everyone. During the activity, it became apparent just how much the world relies on the digital world and how this was causing a lot of damage to those who couldn’t access the digital world. I felt upset that young children were being robbed of opportunities because they couldn’t get online. After completing this activity, it made me become more socially aware of others and their experiences being different to mine. From this activity, I have learnt that with the increase of the digital world also comes with issues within the real world. This activity has helped me to gain an understanding of the issues with the digital world, therefore I have decided that I should research into this to get a clearer understanding of what the industry is doing to combat these types of issues.

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# Employability

## *An insight into Graduate Environmental roles at National Highways*

Before attending this activity, I was sceptical about how this would tie into my course as I initially thought it was to do with roadworks, however, I decided to attend to make sure. Whilst the activity was occurring, I was glad to find out that there are multiple jobs that my course connects with and was able to hear from graduates who received a role there. After the activity, I have learnt that jobs for my course are becoming more important in everyday life. This activity has helped me to explore paths within my course. This aligns with my goal to research existing jobs for my course and create a list of possible options to continue within.

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## *Graduates Jobs and Placements Fair 2022*

I was nervous to attend this activity as my communication skills are not the best, however, I decided to push myself and attend this activity. During the activity, I was spoke to multiple companies and found that they offer multiple jobs to graduates and I was able to find out what are some of the qualities they look for. After attending, I learnt that communication skills and technical skills are a big part of what the companies look for. This activity helped me to realise my communication skills have improved a lot. One of my 5-year plans was to improve my communication skill, which I have succeeded in.

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# Sustainability

## *Decarbonize software*

Before attending, I was confused as to how software can help decarbonise the environment, so I decided to attend to help understand how. During the activity, I learnt how important it is to be code conscious and make sure everything is efficient. After the activity, I learnt that code should be efficient, for example no repeated code as these increases run time and overall uses more energy. In conclusion, I have decided that in the future I will make sure my code is efficient and does exactly what It *should be doing to help decarbonise.*

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## *Technical Services Sustainability Projects Webinar*

Before attending, I was already researching existing projects that were helping the environment so I chose this activity to learn about the upcoming projects and how I could help the environment. During the activity, I was fascinated with the ideas to help reduce waste. After the activity, I learnt that it is important to recycle and that even electronics should be recycled as the materials used to make electronics are finite. I have learnt to be more sustainably aware and to not waste resourced. Within the future, I plan to reduce the amount of electricity I use and spend it on more important things like my coursework.

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# Appendix

## My Five-Year Plan

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
| **My goals** | Improve my self-confidence and communication skills to a level where I feel competent. Find out more about the sort of jobs that I could apply for with my degree as I am not sure what I want to do. Having a clearer idea of my career options will help me to plan for future years. | Improve self-confidence so I don’t doubt my skills.  Improve communication skills so I can contribute more to helping others whether that is within a group project or just helping another person who is struggling.  Learn and Improve skills used in the course so that I understand the work better. Improve skills so that they are more advanced for the workplace.  Learn about the UK data laws to make sure whichever career path I continue in is legally executed.  Improve on my ethical decision-making skills to help my decision making later if needed for my future career.  Find out more about the skills employers are looking for so that I can stand out amongst the other candidates.  Look into jobs that I can apply for with my degree, so I have a better understanding what they expect.  Decarbonize my coding to help the environment.  Spend more time focussed on my course. | Learn other topics within Computer Science that aren’t taught within the course to expand my skill level. E.g., cybersecurity.  Improve on my CV so that it is more tailored towards graduate jobs.  Look for jobs for when I graduate.  Spend more time on the course to ensure that I get the highest grade that I can.  Complete more courses on LinkedIn so that I can improve skills and show them to the employers.  Prepare for interviews so I know what to expect and can be comfortable.  Continue improving my self-confidence and communication skills. | Look more into master’s or PhD degrees so that I can improve my skills.  Continue improving my self-confidence and communication skills.  Improve my coding skills by attending hackathons.  Keep up to date with the computer science world so I know when new skills need to be learnt or something has changed. | Complete a master’s or PhD degree if I have found one.  Continue improving my self-confidence and communication skills.  Keep improving my CV with skills that employers look for.  Maybe change jobs so that I can get experience within other fields. Stay up to date with the Computer Science world. |
| **What do I need to do to achieve my goals?** | Investigate opportunities available through RISE, the Science and Engineering Enrichment programme and LinkedIn Learning.  Go to at least one employability event and speak to some employers. | Listen to/ attend motivational speeches.  Take part in group activities like hackathon to help improve my communication.  Talk to tutors if I get stuck or research and learn more about the specific skill and do activities that practise the skill.  Research the UK data laws and try to understand them.  Practise my ethical decision-making skills by completing more LinkedIn courses.  Attend employer events and ask questions more about what the perfect candidate is. I can also use the events to find possible future jobs.  Make sure my code is efficient and not repetitive to help decarbonise it. Dedicate more time to my course and the work within my course rather than being on my phone. | Find out what other topics are within computer science and spend extra time learning them to help increase my skill level.  Attend a careers activity that focusses on CVs.  Attend post graduate job events and try and find some I like.  Complete the recommended 40hrs on my course to help get the best grade I can.  Find and complete LinkedIn courses that help to elevate my skills.  Carry out practise interviews to help prepare myself for interviews. Attend group activities to help improve my interpersonal skills. | Look into the masters and PhD degrees that are offered at the university and see which ones suit my degree.  Attend group activities to improve my interpersonal skills.  Attend coding activities that help me to improve my coding skills. Follow the changes to the computer science world on social media so I stay up to date. | Spend all my possible time on my Master/PhD if I have found one to make sure I do best performance.  Work on interpersonal skills by getting a job and interacting with other employees.  Complete LinkedIn courses to add more skills to my CV.  Look into other jobs with different skills so I can get a feeling of which job would be preferable. Follow the changes to the computer science world on social media so I stay up to date. |
| **What support & resources will I need?** | To understand the range of jobs, open to me I will also look at the Careers & Employability website, and may need to speak to a Careers Adviser. | To improve interpersonal skills, I will need to investigate when group activities are available. May need to sign up for a newsletter for hackathon to know when it is occurring.  To understand the perfect candidate and what jobs are available to me, I could speak to a career’s advisor. Will require tutor’s support when trying to improve/ understand skills taught within the course. | Get tutors support about other topics within computer science that could be helpful to my future career.  Speak to careers advisor about my CV and get their help so it is better suited towards employers. Speak to careers about upcoming employer events and their dates. | Speak to Careers advisor about a further degree and get advice on which ones might be more appropriate.  Speak to tutors about upcoming coding activities. Follow technology companies on social media to see what the future will be like within computer science. | Follow technology companies on social media to see what the future will be like within computer science. Follow multiple different companies so I can know when new jobs positions are available. |
| **What training & qualifications will I need?** | I need some training in how to give good presentations. | I need some training on my interpersonal skills. I also need qualifications to show to the employers like a certificate from completing a hackathon. | I need some training on improving my skills like writing reports and structuring them to be concise. I need training within interviews so that I can prepared for future interviews. | A master’s or PhD qualification if one is suitable for my future. I need training on my coding skills. | Complete master’s or PhD qualification if one is found. |