

## **Mark and Hayley from Experian**

Experian is a credit reference agency.

Experian are now partners of SOC so looking to take on a bootcamper from the course!

Mark – engineering manager, been there 3 years.

Hayley – Full stack software developer, been there almost 3 years, joined on the graduate programme.

They work in experience consumer services section.

Tech stacks – Front end = React with next.js or express. Node backend services but primarily C#.net or Java. Hosted on AWS and GitHub for source control. They offer training and code academies so developers can get qualifications in things they are unfamiliar with. Developers get time to improve themselves as well as doing the work.

Hayley felt her strengths were back-end before starting there but has learnt the front end too.

## **Selected Q & A**

What challenges did you face when you started there? = Key challenge was learning the new tech stack, finding her voice, not being scared to speak out. Experian have a “no such thing as a stupid question” policy!

As you are looking to recruit from bootcamp, can you give us an insight to recruitment process? =

Typically (but might be modified for SOC) –

- informal chat for 30 mins to learn about you and also tell you a bit more about Experian
- Coding test (could be front end, back end or full stack depending on what role) (use codility to send tests out - <https://www.codility.com/> )
- More formal interview, with competency-based questions (e.g. tell us how you solved a particular problem?)
- Code review of your coding test
- Then offer if successful!

Do you need a lot of knowledge about finance/credit score to work for Experian? = Very little – they are looking for developer skills, you’re not being hired as an accountant! Not looking for complete package either, they are happy to help you develop. Have the right attitude, soft skills etc. Hayley didn’t know what a credit score was before she started! But you may want to learn about it if you get the job so you can understand what you’re coding for.

Can you talk us through your onboarding process for new developers that you employ? = First month/6 weeks is quite intensive – lots of stuff thrown at you from an accreditation point of view – e.g. Data protection qualifications etc (which are done yearly). From early on, you get provided with a laptop that’s setup (dev-spec Dell or Macbook, meet your team, involved in

regular stand-ups and get paired with someone on the team. Also hook you up with graduate cohort to do the same training to bring you up to speed. Start to feed you small tickets to work on, but support from everyone like scrum manager, quality assurance etc. Not expecting you to hit the ground running. You can shadow others and will have a buddy throughout. Hayley added that it will feel overwhelming at first, don't worry about taking it all in, don't be afraid to ask questions (even if it's about something you think "I should know this") - sounds a bit like SOC!!

Developers getting more training – can you give more detail about how they can do this? E.g. how often are they able to do training etc. = They have a concept of 10% time. This works out as half a day a week to do self-development. Sometimes developers will take that, other times they might not if they like learning from doing tickets. Juniors would probably get more (like a day a week). You can explore new technologies and this is actively encouraged – they work in quarters and at the end of quarters they have “innovation planning” – 2 week block to go away and do hackathon day with team – could be proof of concept, fixing bugs etc. Hayley separates her half a day into 30 mins a day at the start of each day!

AWS and CICD pipelines (<https://www.redhat.com/en/topics/devops/what-is-ci-cd>) – how are you looking to progress more in to the cloud? = Currently CICD is all AWS on a pipeline. It's not specifically native AWS, they have their own deployment wrapper. Goes through lots of testing in the pipeline and have different stages – develop, integration, staging then production. They have been talking about multi-cloud deployment but are heavily involved in AWS so not sure if that will happen.

What are your performance expectations for junior/graduate developers for the first 6-12 months? = Big learning curve, as you will be picking up new coding methods etc, so expectation after first 6 months is to be able to pick up a ticket and see it through to deployment independently (most can do this after 3 months, so this is quite a relaxed target). The key thing is getting you settled in, they're not looking to get rid of you after 6 months, they've looking at how they can further support you.

Diversity and inclusion – e.g. what is the gender split at senior leadership and if it's not equal then what are you doing to address that? What sort of policies do you have in place for diversity and inclusion? = They publish a diversity and inclusion report on a yearly basis that is publicly available. Contains goals to address diversity and inclusion and they also publish gender-pay gap figures. Lots of networks such as disability networks, women in tech group, pride network etc. Some strong female leaders within their specific section (“head of” roles), they do talks in schools to help young women in to tech. This is also one of the reasons they are looking to employ off the bootcamp – diversity of the course.

Fully remote and/or flexible working roles? = Yes they do. They have people that are purely remote and most people are hybrid – it's team dependent, some come in once a month and some come in every day (but mostly a personal choice). Some people come from as far as Blackpool and come in once every 6 weeks! Big planning sessions, team building etc are great in a room so they like to have people in for these, the rest they don't mind. They wouldn't

actually have the space to have everyone in the office (they only have about 30% capacity of what they would need to have people in!).