

Cyber Security Interviews & Beyond



In collaboration with



By Kaif Ahsan

Internships & Grad Roles - Overview

- Eligibility:
 - ❑ Internships – Penultimate (Second last) year
 - ❑ Graduate Roles – Last year
- Timeline:
 - ❑ Peak application season: February – June
 - ❑ Grad roles can also be found year round in varying amounts



Where to find them?

- University career websites – check year around
- LinkedIn
 - ☐ Has a very large repository
 - ☐ You can set notifications for certain companies
- Job Portals
 - ☐ GradAustralia – Can filter by international student
 - ☐ GradConnection
 - ☐ Angel.co – Start ups (Most US based roles)



Referrals - what and why

- Almost all companies accept references by existing employees
- Often guarantees you reach interviews rounds
- Interviews for all candidates are the same – most of the time
- Some companies require referral to come before application



Job application hacks

- Reserve engineer your resume based on the requirements and role of the job description
- You only need 60 – 70 percent of the requirements of job description, always apply anyway
- LinkedIn is your best friend
 - ❑ Search who in your connections work in the company you're applying – Ask for tips or referrals
 - ❑ Often the recruiters mail is present or you can send InMail – always reach out to them when you can



Cyber Interviews - 101

- The format of the interview varies a lot based on the role you're applying
- Typical interview formats:
 - ☐ Behavioural
 - ☐ Psychometric
 - ☐ Situational & Knowledge based
 - ☐ Coding challenge



Internship & Grad job interview flow

Online Application



Phone rounds



Final Interview rounds – onsite

Situational & Technical Rounds

- Highly dependent on the role
- Knowledge based questions; for example ‘What’s the difference between encryption and hashing?’ etc.
- Often puts you in a hypothecia situation and observers your response – role play based
- Resources:
 - ❑ Question banks: YouTube, Glassdoors etc.
 - ❑ TryHackMe : Role specific rooms
 - ❑ PortSwigger Web Academy

Coding Rounds

- Only applicable if you're applying for security engineer, application security engineer etc. roles
- Consists of 1-2 coding question
- Leetcode – most companies take questions from here. (Easy & medium questions only)
- Python & GO – very popular languages in security



Short Break - Q&A

Ask me anything!

Long Term Preparation



What companies mainly look in you

- You passion for what you do / the industry
 - ☐ What activities you do outside of your studies
 - ☐ Your community involvement
- Your technical / conceptual knowledge
 - ☐ How much knowledge you possess of the target area or the role
 - ☐ Your communication & collaboration skills

Immerse yourself in the industry

- Attend meetups / conferences
 - ☐ They often have student discounts or scholarships
 - ☐ It is very important to increase your network
 - ☐ Put yourself out there – It will be difficult at first, I know
- Be part of the security clubs & community
 - ☐ Try to be on the committee – really pays off
- Podcasts, blogs & news
 - ☐ Great podcasts – Hacking into security, Risky Business, Darknet diaries
 - ☐ Blogs- Krebs on Security, Ars Technica etc.



Diversity & Inclusion

Cybersecurity industry has massive support for females and all non-binary people

- Dedicated Conferences such as 0xccc (<https://www.0xccc.sh/>)
- Dedicated free workshops : Haxx, She Hacks Purple etc.
- Security organisations : AWSN
- Scholarships: Google Techmakers, Grace Hopper scholarships etc.



Build your technical repertoire

- Watch YouTube, Twitch streams of TryHackMe, Hack the Box, CTFS, etc (<https://securitycreators.video/>)
- Take lots of notes!
- Practice your skills in TryHackMe, ImmersiveLabs, Hack The Box, Wargames
- Participate in CTFS by yourself with friends

Short Term Preparation

(2 - 3 Months before the interviews)

Stronger Together

- Try preparing with 1-2 of your friends
 - ❑ Share research together
 - ❑ Practice taking mock interviews of each other
 - ❑ Have a shared company list / question list etc.
- Reach out to seniors & mentors
- Like everything else, job interviews need a lot of practice



Applications & Resumes - The essentials

- It's very tempting to apply 10 places together with one CV – DON'T DO IT
- Start early, 1-2 applications per day or every other day
- Customize your resume according for the job
- Keep your resumes 1 page, 2 MAX
- Use templates: Google resume templates, Canva etc.

Link to Slides

<https://github.com/verbal-noun/presentations>

Thank You!

Please ask any questions if you have.

Feel free to connect:



Kaif Ahsan



@verbal-noun