If you can ask a data scientist a question, what is it?

These questions were collected from participants of the One Data Science programme during the discussion session of Week 1 on 4th July 2022. Kai, Alvina, Kasia and Asma answered these questions.

1. What jobs are very similar to yours?

Kai: The term "data scientist" is quite broad, but there are two jobs that I can think of which are quite similar to data scientist, which are data analyst and machine learning engineer. However, sometimes these two job roles are also considered "data scientist" in the job market.

Alvina: Definitely data 'storyteller'. It's a role that uses data to communicate insights via visualisations alongside compelling narratives to tell a story!

Kasia: Adding above to Kai's and Alvina's responses, I think that partially the data science and software engineering competencies are the same. Especially, the programming skills, being able to analyse the code and fix the issues.

Asma: Data science is a broad field that has different and too many subfields. But as PhD researcher, I think I play different roles in my research that are: machine learning engineer, data architect, data engineer, data analytics, business analyst, and statistician

2. What is your favourite part about data science? What do you find the most interesting part of Data Science? What do you enjoy about your job?

Kai: I like using data science skills to answer questions and solve problems! For example, I have used Natural Language Processing to study social media data (tweets mainly) related to the COVID-19 pandemic to see what are the topics that people talked about.

Alvina: The most enjoyable part about data science is teaching data science to the masses (and storytelling of course). I create stories to share data science tutorials on https://www.youtube.com/ZerotoDataScience

Kasia: It is great that owing to statistical methods and data analysis, we can discover patterns and relations between the data components. Those discoveries can be used in developing new approaches to treating patients if we were to focus on the healthcare domain. The data science techniques have applications in many other domains, hope that you find it out while exploring articles as a part of your first homework.

Asma: I can apply data science in countless fields' data! One of the goals of data science is to try to capture the underlying pattern of historical data to predict the outcome of future data. For me, this is really magnificent!

3. How much do you get paid?

Kai: This is a tricky question to answer as it varies from companies to companies, and is also dependent on the experience you have. To know the median salary, it's best to check at websites such as Glassdoor!

Alvina: It depends on whether you're in academia or industry :-)

Kasia: Agree with Alvina. As Kai suggested, please check Glassdoor or Linkedin for more information.

Asma: It depends on many factors, including but not limited to: position, responsibilities, company size, and whether you are in academia or industry

4. Do you find your day to day job quite monotonous?

Kai: Not at all! But sometimes the problems we face can be challenging and solving them within a limited amount of time is not easy! So yeah, it's not monotonous because it can be challenging (in a fun way!)

Alvina: Sometimes. We are only human! But we find ways to keep things interesting. I turn to stories :-)

Kasia: Sometimes it can be monotonous, probably like every other job. However, data science techniques allow optimising the process of analysing data so that you can reuse the same piece of code in different applications.

Asma: as with any other job or field, some parts of the job would be slightly monotonous whereas, for me, many of the parts are not! as the time and effort amounts you need in each project using a different dataset is quite different! The challenge sometimes is the fuel for many data scientists to work more to solve the problem!

5. Can you maintain a work-life balance?

Kai: Yes, this depends on each individual, but I am a firm believer that it is possible to maintain a work-life balance! (Depends on how you define it as well)

Alvina: Absolutely. It depends on how you define work-life balance. I wrote a short blog post on the topic.
https://www.alvinalailab.com/post/how-to-achieve-a-work-life-balance

Kasia: Yes, it is definitely possible to maintain a work-life balance while working as a data scientist.

Asma: Yes, knowing how to allocate and spend "quality time" in your work and life is the key!