

Interview preparation checklist

What to do in the week, the day and the hour before a UK cybersecurity interview. It assumes you have worked the relevant sections of the question bank at ronanblake.co.uk/questionbank — this is the layer on top.

THE WEEK BEFORE

- ☐ Research the organisation properly: what it does, how it makes money, any recent security or regulatory news
- ☐ Find the people you will meet on LinkedIn and understand their backgrounds
- ☐ Re-read the job specification and map your evidence to its first three requirements
- ☐ Work the relevant technical section of the bank, plus the adjacent one — real interviews cross boundaries
- ☐ Prepare and rehearse aloud four or five competency examples, structured, with outcomes and numbers
- ☐ If it is a Success Profiles interview, identify the named behaviours and prepare an evidenced example for each
- ☐ Prepare one current vulnerability or development you can discuss a level below the headline
- ☐ Choose three to five questions to ask them, and know why you are asking each

THE DAY BEFORE

- ☐ Confirm the time, the format, and whether it is in person or remote
- ☐ Test the technology if it is remote: camera, microphone, the platform itself
- ☐ Re-read your own CV and be ready to speak to every line on it
- ☐ Re-read your strongest two or three prepared examples — do not attempt to memorise them word for word
- ☐ Plan the journey, or the room you will sit in, and give yourself margin
- ☐ Stop preparing at a sensible hour. Tired outperforms over-prepared.

THE HOUR BEFORE

- ☐ Arrive or log in early enough that you are not rushing
- ☐ Have water, your CV, the job specification and your questions in front of you
- ☐ Remind yourself of the four or five stories you intend to land, not the whole bank
- ☐ Remember the two habits that carry every technical answer: think out loud, and mark clearly where your certainty ends

IN THE ROOM

- ☐ Listen to the whole question before answering, and ask for clarification where it is genuinely ambiguous
- ☐ Narrate your reasoning rather than delivering conclusions from silence
- ☐ When you reach the edge of what you know, say so plainly and reason from there — never bluff, particularly on cryptography
- ☐ Give specific examples with outcomes, not general claims about how you always work
- ☐ Ask your questions, and listen to the answers as your own due diligence

- ☐ If an earlier answer landed badly, use the closing moments to put it right — one sentence is allowed, expected, and occasionally decisive
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AFTERWARDS

- ☐ Write down the questions you were asked while they are fresh — they are the best preparation material you will ever get
 - ☐ Note anything you answered poorly and work out what the better answer was
 - ☐ Send a brief thank-you note if it feels natural; keep it short and specific
 - ☐ Whatever the outcome, the notes make the next interview better. Most people skip this step, which is precisely why it compounds.
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From Appendix C of The Honest Guide to UK Cybersecurity Interviews.