



Student: Christopher
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Queen Mary University of
London
Placement: TalUPP
Role: Data Scientist

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Can you describe a typical working day on your placement?

I'd cycle to work, put on smarter clothes, grab my work laptop and set up at one of the desks (usually next to the other data scientists). I'd have a to-do list which is kept up to date online, with all the programming updates and fixes I need to work on for the day. I worked on the back-end scripts for a mobile app which is still in progress so there was a lot of programming work to do every day! Most days would be running tests, looking for bugs and making fixes, as well as adding more of the required functionality. I'd work on scripts to test the app's functions on example user templates to ensure that my functions were returning what we expected.

How do you think this internship has benefited you for the future?

This internship has greatly benefited me as it has accelerated my programming skills to the point where I feel I can pursue other work in this field possibly using a variety of coding languages and facing a variety of different problems. I've also secured a part-time position at the same workplace meaning that I'm still learning and gaining valuable experience in this field every week!

What has been your biggest achievement and challenge during your internship?

I started teaching myself the coding language I use for the scripts only a few weeks before the start of the internship and managed to keep learning and picking up new techniques such that I could code all the app's initial back-end functionality by myself. This is the reason that the gain in experience has been so high!

What are your next steps?

I study physics and love programming. I've just started a course on computational condensed matter which I'm really looking forward to. Combining physics and programming is something I can really see myself striving for in the future. I'm interested in technology and renewable energy as well and will keep learning and gaining experience where I can.

Employer perspective

We want students who have strong mathematical skills as this is a skills gap. We were looking for someone who was self-sufficient; Chris has surpassed all our expectations; he is so focussed. Commercial awareness is not necessarily a focus but Chris has picked up what we are doing and why, very well.

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