

THOMAS BARBER



My placement year has given me more experience than I could have hoped for.



I have always been interested in Cyber Security. It is why I chose to study Computer Forensics and Security at Leeds Beckett University.

That is why my placement needed to be a technically challenging role. **To get as much exposure as possible to commercial cyber security.**

To find a company that would guide and support me. Offering real projects that would give me lots of experience to support my degree course and career.

I started searching for local cyber security companies. Ambersail was one of the first to come up. It was perfect. Based at the Daresbury Science Park and offering Penetration Testing services.

From first impressions, Ambersail looked approachable and friendly. It also had a graduate development programme.

I got in touch by sending my CV through with a covering email.

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What surprised me was how quickly things progressed. I was contacted straight away to arrange a phone call to talk more about what I was looking for. I had an informal telephone chat with the company owners, Jon and Simon, who were very supportive and easy to talk to.

The next step was a formal face to face interview at Ambersail's Daresbury office. The interview was different to all my other interviews. It was a relaxed chat. It really helped to ease the nerves. Almost immediately, I was offered a year long placement in the penetration testing team.

Starting with Ambersail was a little daunting. However, I need not have worried. **Help was always available. The more senior, experienced testers happy to provide advice and support.**

I quickly discovered that there was much more to the job than just penetration testing. How to deal with clients. Writing reports. The importance of accurately scoping projects. Sharing knowledge and collaborating with other members of the team.

It was a steep learning curve.

Each day brought something different. As time progressed, I was given more responsibility. Reviewing networks for large and small companies across the world. An incredibly interesting and rewarding experience.

I did not realise how important professional skills would be. How to speak with clients. To help them understand findings and the business implications for security weaknesses. Clients find it easier to understand and act on advice when it is explained in language they understand.

My placement year has given me more experience than I could have hoped for. Improving my communications and problem solving skills.

I would firmly recommend a placement year to any undergraduate. Especially with a specialist company like Ambersail. **Offering more responsibility and exposure to technology. Who support and develop you both technically and professionally.**

