

Security Consultant interview questions

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What to expect

Security Consultant interviews in Australia typically assess your technical knowledge of risk management and security systems, your ability to communicate with stakeholders, and your judgement in real-world scenarios. Employers also check your understanding of licensing and compliance requirements.

- **Technical and risk assessment:** Questions on risk assessment methodologies, security standards, and system design.
- **Behavioural:** Past experience with incidents, audits, or stakeholder management.
- **Scenario-based:** Hypothetical situations testing your judgement under pressure.
- **Compliance and regulatory:** Knowledge of Australian standards, licensing, and privacy obligations.
- **Client-facing and communication:** How you explain complex security concepts to non-specialists.

The process often starts with a phone screen with a recruiter or hiring manager, followed by a panel interview that may include a technical specialist and a senior leader. You might be asked to walk through a risk assessment or incident investigation. Some employers include a short written exercise or presentation. Final rounds usually focus on cultural fit and your approach to client relationships.

1. Walk me through how you conduct a security risk assessment for a new site.

Why they ask

This tests your technical method and whether you can structure a risk assessment logically.

How to structure your answer

A step-by-step walk-through: scope, threat identification, vulnerability analysis, risk evaluation, and treatment recommendations.

Example answer

"First, I define the scope with the client: what assets, people and information are involved, and what the operational context is. Then I identify potential threats, from theft and trespass to cyber-physical risks. I assess existing controls and vulnerabilities by reviewing site plans, conducting a walk-through, and interviewing staff. I evaluate the likelihood and consequence of each risk using AS/NZS ISO 31000 principles. Finally, I recommend treatment options, prioritising cost-effective measures like access control upgrades, lighting, or procedural changes. I document everything in a report with a risk register and an implementation plan."

2. Tell me about a time you investigated a security breach. What did you do and what was the outcome?

Why they ask

Assesses your investigative skills, attention to detail, and ability to learn from incidents.

How to structure your answer

STAR: Situation, Task, Action, Result.

Example answer

"In a previous role, a staff member reported that cash had gone missing from a secure room over several weeks. I led an investigation: I reviewed access logs from the Gallagher system, interviewed relevant staff, and examined CCTV footage from the Genetec system. I identified a process gap

where the room was left unlocked during shift changes. I recommended new dual-authorisation procedures and retraining. The outcome was that the losses stopped, and the new procedures were adopted across other sites. I also produced a report that helped the client tighten their internal controls."

3. A client insists on a security measure you believe is ineffective. How do you handle it?

Why they ask

Tests your judgement, client management, and ability to balance professional advice with client relationships.

How to structure your answer

Listen, acknowledge their perspective, present evidence, and offer alternatives. If the client still insists, document your advice and ensure compliance.

Example answer

"I would first ask about their reasoning: maybe they have had a bad experience or a budget constraint. Then I'd present the evidence, perhaps a risk assessment showing why the measure won't reduce the risk, or a comparison of alternatives. I'd offer a pilot or a hybrid approach. If the client still wants to proceed, I'd document my professional advice in writing, ensure it doesn't breach any regulations, and continue to monitor the situation. The goal is to maintain trust while being honest about the limitations."

4. What Australian standards and regulations apply to security consulting, and how do you stay current?

Why they ask

Checks your compliance knowledge and commitment to professional development.

How to structure your answer

List key standards (AS/NZS ISO 31000, ASIAL guidelines, state licensing), then explain your approach to ongoing learning.

Example answer

"The main one is AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018 for risk management, along with ASIAL guidelines for the security industry. Depending on the state, you need a security consultant licence, and if working with government you might need a security clearance. Privacy legislation like the Privacy Act 1988 also applies. I stay current by reading ASIAL updates, attending industry briefings, and maintaining my state security licence through ongoing professional development. I also follow changes to work health and safety laws because they intersect with security planning."

5. How would you design an emergency plan for a large retail site?

Why they ask

Tests your ability to apply security principles to a specific environment and think operationally.

How to structure your answer

Assess the site, identify risks, define roles, create procedures, test and review.

Example answer

"I'd start with a risk assessment of the site, looking at layout, occupancy, and potential emergencies like fire, bomb threats, or armed robbery. Then I'd define roles for staff, including wardens and first aid officers. I'd write clear procedures for evacuation, lockdown, and communication with emergency services. I'd also specify how to use security technology like CCTV and access control to support the plan. Finally, I'd schedule regular drills and review the plan after any incident or change to the site. The plan needs to be practical and well communicated to everyone on site."

6. Describe a time you had to explain a complex security issue to a non-technical stakeholder.

Why they ask

Assesses your communication skills and ability to build trust with clients.

How to structure your answer

Situation, action, result, focusing on communication techniques.

Example answer

"I once had to explain to a retail manager why our access control system was triggering false alarms. Instead of using technical jargon, I compared it to a door that sticks in humid weather: the issue was a sensor threshold, not a break-in. I showed them a simple diagram and a short video of the sensor behaviour. They understood immediately and approved the fix. The result was a faster resolution and better cooperation from their staff on future security upgrades. I always try to translate technical concepts into everyday language and focus on the impact on their business."