

Edward Snowden 'attended hacking course in India'

Delhi-based training institute says Snowden took 'security analyst and ethical hacker' course in 2010 and was an 'intelligent, quiet' student Edward Snowden, the CIA contractor who revealed the scale of America's internet surveillance around the world, may have learned the hacking skills to leak thousands of files on a £1,000 course he attended in India.



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According to the Delhi-based Koenig training institute, Mr Snowden attended a six-day "security analyst and ethical hacker" course in 2010, two years before he disclosed the files which outraged foreign leaders and embarrassed his government.

Last night the company told the Daily Telegraph that the rogue analyst had contacted them in 2009 to join the course and later paid the fee for his tuition and extra for his boarding in Karol Bagh, a grimy market district of the Indian capital.

The company's Delhi training centre manager, Hema Sharma, said he had first contacted the company in 2009 and paid for his course in advance by Paypal before joining later in September 2010. He had been a quiet student who had stayed in his hostel room and focused entirely on his course.

"He was an intelligent, quiet and cooperative student," Mr Sharma said. "A thorough hacking professional, who preferred to maintain a low profile and not share details about [his] personal life. He got in touch with us in 2009 and in September 2010 joined the course. We provided him accommodation and other facilities.

“He made the initial payment through PayPal and the rest through his credit card. It was a self-sponsored course. He mostly spent time at the institute and used to go out rarely.

He added: "Certainly his course here included some elements which may have helped him in what he did. But overall he was a very intelligent student and good learner."

The course required a year's experience in managing Windows and Linux systems, a detailed knowledge of internet protocol (IP) addresses, and allowed Mr Snowden to become a "Certified Ethical Hacker", and an EC-Council Certified Security Analyst (ECSA). "Through groundbreaking penetration testing methods and techniques, ECSA class helps students perform the intensive assessments required to effectively identify and mitigate risks to the security of the infrastructure", the company's course prospectus explains.