



WORK EXPERIENCE POLICY

Policy Custodian: Head of Careers

Approving Body: MTS Senior Leadership Team

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(This policy does not apply to Merchant Taylors' Prep.)

The purpose of this document is to explain the School's Work Experience Scheme process and criteria.

Why do work experience?

Work experience or ongoing volunteering are invaluable ways to explore careers and develop employability skills. Work experience, work shadowing, career insight activities and volunteering cover many different types of activity, ranging from a detailed conversation with an employer to hands-on experience in a workplace, usually unpaid. Since the Pandemic many in workplace schemes are either virtual or are offering a hybrid scheme. All can be valuable in different ways and pupils are encouraged to be proactive in seeking out a range of opportunities to investigate possible careers and develop their employability skills.

What is work experience?

An unpaid placement of maximum 2 weeks' duration, on site at an employer's premises, or held virtually. Students can either shadow members of staff or carry out particular tasks or projects where the emphasis is on the learning aspect of the experience.

Privately organised work experience, paid jobs, extra-curricular activities, and volunteering are not part of the Schools' Work Experience Scheme.

Who organises placements?

The MTS Careers Team *supports* pupils in finding work experience and related opportunities by listing opportunities on the Careers Website, retweeting opportunities on Twitter, and informing students via Teams and/or email. Please note *we do not allocate work experience*.

It is the responsibility of the student/parents to explore these opportunities and for parents to satisfy themselves with the suitability of the scheme for their child before they apply. Pupils gain huge benefit by exploring opportunities for themselves, going through the application processes and, sometimes, dealing with rejection as well as success. This builds essential career management skills and resilience for the future.

When can the work experience take place?

Work experience may only take place during MTS School holidays. For term-time absence students will need to gain permission in advance by emailing Dr Clarke before making any commitments. Permission is not guaranteed and is considered on an individual basis. Students in the fifths and upper sixth should be careful not to plan work experience in the run up to their public exams. For fifths it would ideally be during the summer holidays after sitting their GCSEs.

The Careers Centre can help as follows:

- **Careers Website:** Look frequently at the "Careers at MTS" work experience webpages via MyMTS where opportunities are posted regularly. If you're not sure where to find it, ask in the Careers office.
- **Emails/Microsoft Teams** - some opportunities may also be posted on Teams or emailed out to students.
- **Instagram:** follow the Careers Department on Instagram @mtscareersdepartment to keep up to date with news and events.
- **Twitter:** We retweet lots of work experience opportunities that we hear of on our private Careers Centre Twitter @mtscareersdept – students and parents can request to follow us.
- **OMT Network:** We may be able to put you in touch with OMTs or with companies/organisations who have previously offered the School placements.
- **Help with CV/cover letters** – we have uploaded a CV and Cover letter template on the Careers website as well as on the student's Morrisby profile. The Careers department are happy to help or provide feedback.
- **Interview practice** – some opportunities may require an interview. Please contact the Careers department if you would like some guidance and practice.
- **DBS Checks** - We can organise DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks for boys intending to work with children or vulnerable adults. There is no charge for this, but please contact Careers at least 2 months in advance as waiting times for these external checks can be unpredictable.
- **Letter of Support:** We can provide letters of support for applications should employers require it.

Paperwork Required

- **Privately arranged work experience (not involving the school)**

Since all work experience takes place during School holidays, if students or parents organise a placement privately, *without involving the School*, then there is no School paperwork and no requirement to advise Careers of the details. In this case parents are responsible as organisers of the placement and the School does not therefore carry out the health and safety or insurance checks described below in this Policy. Pupils are not covered by the School's Public Liability and Personal Accident Insurance Policies in privately arranged schemes.

Parents are strongly advised to refer to the advice on parental responsibilities which can be found on the Health and Safety Executive website by clicking on this link:

Advice for parents and carers of young people on work experience:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/young-workers/parents-carers.htm>

- **Work experience where the School has been involved in arrangements.**

Where the School has been involved in directly organising a work experience placement for your child, that placement must be processed within the School's Work Experience Scheme. It must meet the attached 'Scheme Criteria' and follow the 'Process and Timeline' below.

Process for placements that fall within the School's work experience scheme (organised by the School):

Once School organised placement is agreed, please complete, sign, and return the documents listed below. Students can download these from the Careers website with completed forms being returned to Careers either as hard copies or scanned and emailed.

We need 3 things before the placement can go ahead:

- The **Parent form** – to be completed and signed by both the student and a parent/guardian (downloaded from the Careers website)
- The **Company form** – completed and signed by the company (downloaded from the Careers website)
- A copy of the company's **Employer Liability Insurance certificate** (to be requested from the employer)

All of the above must be returned to Careers and all further checks deemed necessary by the School must also have been satisfactorily concluded. Companies can often take a while to respond, so please make sure we receive your forms a month before the placement begins. For Summer placements this would be a month before the end of term.

Our Policy states that students agree to share CV's and application requirements with employers. They will send this themselves as requested (if organised privately), but parents can also give written consent to the Merchant Taylors' Careers Team to send on their behalf if it is organised by the school.

Actions for students before, during and after their placements

Before students go on work experience, they should refer to the '**Work Experience Pack**' which is available to download from the Careers Website. These covers:

- Pre-work experience checklist
- What to do during the placement
- Code of conduct
- Emergency procedures
- Post work experience checklist – including Reflection.

Virtual Schemes

Virtual schemes have grown in popularity since the pandemic. They provide flexibility for students as travel/distance is no longer a barrier and many schemes enable the students to complete the programme at their own pace. They can be interactive and held in real-time. Students should consider the following when participating in a virtual scheme:

- Obtain permission from a parent/guardian before registering.
- Only use their School email address to register and participate.
- Behave professionally – be polite, consider body language and not use inappropriate content in the chat function.
- If the scheme requires you to turn your camera on, please ensure it is not from your bedroom, and that you are appropriately dressed.
- Do not disclose personal information such as where you live.
- If students feel uncomfortable or witness inappropriate behaviour whilst on the call to shut it down immediately and report it to a parent/teacher.

OMTs and Networking

We often invite our OMT's to come along and talk to students about their career journey, and to start the networking opportunities for current students.

The following protocols apply should they contact a guest speaker:

- Students should only use their School email for correspondence and at no point divulge personal information or telephone number.
- If a meeting is arranged as follow up, parents should be copied on the correspondence and agree they are happy with arrangements. Please also copy the careers team so they are aware.
- All meetings should be conducted in a public place.
- Students can arrange to have a Zoom/Teams call with an OMT set up in School with a member of staff present or at home with a parent/guardian present.

On the occasions work experience is arranged through an OMT, parents must be fully conversant with our work experience policy requirements.