



Open Doors Guidance for Employers

Open Doors is a project run by the East Sussex Careers Hub who work with all state-funded secondary schools, colleges, special schools in East Sussex, as well as some primary schools, to inspire and prepare young people for entering the world of work. The programme runs each academic year and aims to provide young people with meaningful experiences of workplaces.

Local employers open the doors to their workplace to groups of young people, giving them the opportunity to tour the site, meet and hear from staff members about their job roles and career journeys, and learn about the opportunities and training and career pathways within the sector.

Open Doors visits have helped young people to decide their career pathways, introduced them to local employers, and inspired them to work harder in school. It has even led to businesses who have hosted visits offered work experience placements to young people who have visited.

The project is a great way for employers to engage with schools and colleges in their area and introduce the young people who will make up the future workforce to their company and the pathways they offer. Open Doors can also help with contributing social value to the community.

What does an Open Doors visit look like?

The structure of an Open Doors visit is designed to be flexible to suit the needs of the employer taking part so no two visits are the same. There are certain activities we recommend to ensure a visit is meaningful and engaging for young people, but this will depend on what you can offer.

1. Give a tour of your workplace

This is the key part of Open Doors and should be included in every visit. We appreciate you may not be able to show every area of your site, but try to show each department of your company and explain the various jobs in each area (e.g. HR, IT, Cafeteria, etc).

2. Meet different members of staff

Get staff to talk about their current job role and the skills they use, but also their journey and how they got to where they are now. You could do this in the tour or a Q&A session.

3. Have a short work-based activity

Doing a short practical task or activity linked to a role on-site (e.g. bricklaying, preparing food, etc) will help give young people a sense of what it's like to work in your company.

4. Talk about career pathways in your industry

Giving a short presentation about the career and training pathways in your industry is a great way to bring everything together and help young people to plan their next steps.

Most Open Doors visits typically last 1-2 hours depending on the size of the employer and the activities that are planned. When you sign up to offer Open Doors visits, you will be asked how long you expect each visit to last, how many people you can host per visit, and if there are any specific dates and times when you can only host visits (e.g. certain days of the week, mornings, etc). Please let us know if you only have capacity to offer a limited number of visits each year.

Who can come on an Open Doors visit?

The Careers Hub works with all state-funded secondary schools, colleges and special schools in East Sussex, including further education colleges, sixth forms, alternative provision, as well as some primary schools, which means the project is available to students from Reception up to Year 13. Schools will decide which students to bring on visits for a number of reasons such as their interest in the business or if the sector is linked to a particular subject they are studying.

When you sign up to offer Open Doors visits, you will be asked if you are able to offer visits to primary schools, alternative provision, and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and if there are any specific groups you would like to host visits for (e.g. studying a certain subject). If you have not worked with young people with additional needs before and do not feel prepared to host a visit, please let us know and we can help address any concerns.

We are also looking for employers who can do longer, more in-depth Open Doors experiences for smaller groups of young people this academic year as part of the Future Ready pilot. These visits would last a whole school day (9am-3pm) or across 2 half-days with the aim of providing a more meaningful experience for Year 9 students who are particularly interested in a specific sector. This could include doing a more detailed activity or spending time with employees in a particular role during a visit. Please email Future.Ready@eastsussex.gov.uk to find out more.

How do I offer Open Doors visits to school and colleges?



Step #1: Contact the Careers Hub at OpenDoors@eastsussex.gov.uk to express your interest in Open Doors.



Step #2: The Careers Hub will work with you to plan and confirm what you can offer in terms of an Open Doors visit.



Step #3: The Careers Hub will share details about the Open Doors visits you can offer with schools and colleges.



Step #4: After a school has expressed interest in a visit, the Careers Hub will liaise with you and the school to confirm a date and time for the visit.



Step #5: The visit takes place on the agreed date and time. A member of the Careers Hub will often join you if this is your first time hosting a visit.



Step #6: The Careers Hub will collect feedback after the visit to identify any adjustments that can be made to improve and optimise the project.

Please be aware that we require all employers to provide a health and safety risk assessment and copy of their public liability insurance before any visits can take place.

If you would like to take part in Open Doors or have any questions, please contact the Careers Hub at OpenDoors@eastsussex.gov.uk or go to Careers East Sussex for more information.