



Schools and Colleges:

A guide to good employment for learners

GREATER MANCHESTER
**GOOD
EMPLOYMENT
CHARTER**

“In Greater Manchester we want to help our young people understand what good work looks like. We want you to be empowered, have high expectations and challenge employers who do not offer good work. By learning about what good employment looks like, you will be in a better position to make informed choices about who you want to work for and how you want to work.

Partly driven by the impact of the pandemic, the world of work has changed. Our perception and priorities around work have shifted. This has been particularly evident in the expectations that young people now have in relation to the working world.

In Greater Manchester, we have developed The Good Employment Charter to help raise the bar and elevate employment standards.”

Andy Burnham,
Mayor of Greater Manchester



What is the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter?

The Charter is a voluntary membership and assessment scheme, which aims to improve employment standards for all organisations of any size or sector across Greater Manchester.

The Charter sets out seven key characteristics of good employment. Employers make a commitment to uphold the highest set of standards in these characteristics and demonstrate actions have been taken to ensure the comprehensive criteria has been met.

Questions you might ask an employer

If you are invited to an interview with an employer, you may feel nervous, but this is quite normal. You may have the opportunity to ask an employer questions either before or during an interview.

Below are suggested questions, linking to the characteristics of The Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter. You might feel better prepared for an interview if you select 2 or 3 questions that you feel would be appropriate to ask.

The characteristics of good employment

Secure work

The employer offers secure work, giving employees security over their income through transparency in communications and contracts, guaranteed minimum hours, and regular review of these terms. Employees are thus given the ability to effectively manage their work and non-work commitments.

Questions you might ask the employer:

- Will I receive a contract prior to my start date?
- Will my contract outline my hours of work?
- Will my contract state my pay?
- If I work shifts and a shift gets cancelled at short notice, will I still get paid?

Flexible work

The employer enables flexible working by designing jobs in a way that, wherever possible, are flexible in where people work, when people work, and how much people work. They also provide clarity on the possibility of job flexibility from the outset of employment.

Employees have access to a clear flexible working policy that encourages flexibility, gives opportunity for staff to request flexible arrangements, and offers regular review of such arrangements.

Questions you might ask the employer:

- Do you have a flexible working policy?

- Am I able to work flexibly in this role?
- If I work remotely, will you provide me with the appropriate equipment that I may need? E.g. laptop
- What options for flexible working do you offer?
- Am I able to request a flexible work pattern at the start of my employment?

Pay

Your employer pays staff the Real Living Wage as set out by the Living Wage Foundation.

The Real Living Wage is an independently calculated hourly wage that covers the basic living expenses of an employee and their family. It is voluntary, and higher than the government minimum or government living wage. It takes into account factors like housing, food, transport, and aims to provide a decent standard of living.

Employers will also ensure that they will work towards providing sick pay from day one of absence.

Questions you might ask the employer:

- Do you pay the real living wage?
- If I am off sick, will I receive sick pay?
- Is this paid from the first day of my absence?

Engagement and voice

The employer utilises employee engagement and voice, building a confident, empowered workforce. Employees are involved in decision-making and managing change through effective communication and consultation, and trade unions are recognised and positively engaged with where applicable.

Questions you might ask the employer:

- Do you hold regular staff meetings?
- Will I have regular meetings with my line manager?
- Do you have employee forums that I can get involved with?
- Do you welcome staff suggestions from all employees?

Recruitment

The employer has excellent recruitment practices, involving prospective employees in an inclusive, fair recruitment process that is accessible, enables both equality and equity, eliminates unconscious bias, and supports the building of a diverse workforce.

Questions you might ask the employer:

- If I am selected for interview, are you able to share the interview questions beforehand so that I can best prepare myself?
- Before arriving for interview, will I be informed of who to ask for at reception?
- If I am successful, what does onboarding look like?
- Will you inform me of recruitment timescales so that I might know when to expect to hear the outcome?

- Following the recruitment process, will you provide me with feedback whether I am successful or not?

People management

The employer ensures excellent people management and development of their workforce, giving employees a clear set of organisational values and expected behaviours along with the right to a workplace free of bullying and harassment.

With an emphasis on organisational development, all staff are provided with training that enables them to perform effectively in their role and develop skills and experience that supports progression.

Questions you might ask the employer:

- Do you provide training and development opportunities?
- Am I allowed time within work to carry out work related studies/training?
- Do you recognise employee achievements?
- Are there opportunities to progress within the organisation?



Health and wellbeing

The employer actively supports employee health and wellbeing. Employees have the ability to thrive in a workplace where adjustments are made, and individual needs recognised.

This employer acknowledges that mental and physical health need to be considered in relation to an organisation's wider values and objectives. Strategies are in place and internal and/or external support is available to facilitate ongoing discussion, training, and monitoring.

Questions you might ask the employer:

- Do you have a health and wellbeing strategy?
- Do you arrange events for employees to socialise?
- Do you provide health and wellbeing training e.g., mental health awareness?
- Are conversations relating to health and well-being encouraged?

What does an employer expect of you

Here are 10 things that will increase your chances of gaining work experience and career progression:

1. **Being on time.** When you're late, you make everyone else late and demonstrate you don't have respect for their time. Use the mantra that 10 minutes early is on time.
2. **Work ethic.** Work hard until the job is done to a standard that you are proud of (whilst maintaining a work/life balance).
3. **Effort.** Give every task everything you've got – you won't always get it right, but don't be afraid to ask, and to fail. Learn from your failures, and your knowledge will build. Everyone wants you to be successful. Never just do the bare minimum.
4. **Body Language.** Smile. Engage. Sit up, look interested, give good eye-contact. Don't be a negative influence. Be a positive one.
5. **Energy.** We all get tired but give every job, big or small the same energy. Exercise, rest, eat well. Share ideas. Be someone that others want to be around. You can't afford to sit back and expect everything to happen for you.
6. **Attitude.** Treat every project like it is your first. All the excitement, fear, and enthusiasm. Attitude can actually trump skill because it means you can learn new things, you can adapt. You can't be expected to know everything right away but show that you have potential.
7. **Passion.** Find something you're passionate about. Delve deeper, learn more about it, become an expert, share your knowledge.
8. **Being coachable.** Be respectful and be willing to learn from others that have more experience. Check your ego. Be willing to accept criticism.
9. **Doing extra.** Don't wait for a brief. Identify the problem, try and fix it.
10. **Being prepared.** Who plans ahead? Who just wings it? Benjamin Franklin said, "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail." It is good to have the ability to take things in your stride but being prepared will increase your chances of success.

(Adapted from a LinkedIn article by skills coach, Tom Marshall)



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