

## Junior Achievement Volunteer Business Adviser

### The History

The Junior Achievement Company Programme is recognised as the world's top entrepreneurial programme for young people in education.

This programme was first run in the USA as far back as 1919 and was introduced into the UK in the 1960s and the Isle of Man more than 30 years ago. Today more than 300,000 students across Europe participate in the programme on an annual basis.

The programme is open to anyone aged 15 to 19 years in full-time education. In the Isle of Man we run this programme at Year 12 (16 – 17 years) in the Island's high schools and University College Isle of Man.



### Getting started

The programme runs from the start of the academic year until the following April but in some cases may extend until July.

We have a number of experienced Business Advisers but always have opportunities for new advisers to join the JA team. In some instances a new adviser may wish to shadow an experienced adviser for the first year but many feel ready to take the plunge after their appropriate induction session.

All of the schools have experience of running the programme, however Junior Achievement will provide you with full support in your role.

Business Advisers must undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check online and safeguarding training in accordance with our safeguarding policy. These checks must be satisfactorily completed before you commence your role.

Whilst we will try and accommodate your chosen school, if appropriate, we may need to re-allocate you to work with another student company in another school.

### Commitment

Advisers are required to attend a training session which normally lasts 2 – 3 hours. Once you are allocated to a student company you are requested to attend weekly meetings which normally last 50 minutes.

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### Your role

An Adviser treads a careful line between leading the students (Achievers) through the experience and enabling them to run things for themselves. It is a difficult skill to master but is an invaluable transferable management technique. It demands tremendous concentration on how a meeting or work session is progressing and sensitivity to individuals and the dynamics of the group. Choosing when and how to intervene is a matter of careful judgement and the essence of being a good Adviser.

### Be a motivator

From time to time it may be necessary to instil a sense of urgency, raise morale, engender team spirit, be a catalyst and “Devil’s Advocate”.

### Be a consultant

Care should be taken not to direct, order, instruct or lecture. You should guide, help, suggest and provide a range of alternative solutions. Encourage and inspire an innovative approach. In the early stages of establishing the Company you will have to give a more positive lead, using the information from the Start-up Pack.

### Be a guardian of safety and quality

No product should be made which, in the production process, involves danger to the student or, when sold, could present a danger to the user.



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The same principle applies for our programmes that span the academic year. Young people gain so much from volunteers spending as much time as possible sharing their experiences and knowledge of industry as well as mentoring and encouraging the companies to develop. However, the nature of these programmes is such that new advisers need a more comprehensive induction and access to support materials than for the short programmes.

Volunteers acting as Advisers on these programmes need to understand the programme structure and timetable, its rules and practices, as well as receive some tips and guidance on how to help to run it successfully.

To facilitate this, we will organise formal induction sessions, open to new and experienced Advisers. These will provide a comprehensive overview of the programme, distribute supporting materials and explain how to find out more information or get answers to any trickier questions.

These generally last 2 - 3 hours and are scheduled at the start of the academic year and will:

- ensure that you receive a full briefing on Junior Achievements Safeguarding policy and procedure which will include what you should do if you have a safeguarding concern
- encourage new advisers to network with experienced advisers in order to share tips and experiences, particularly about what to expect in the first few weeks of a new company's life
- ensure that the Junior Achievement team is available to advise as required, particularly for less experienced advisers

### Continuous Improvement

Our volunteers are generally resourceful and proactive people who will seek out other volunteers with more experience and ask them for help, suggestions and advice. This is a powerful network.

### Dealing with Problems

If you encounter a difficulty with any aspect of your role, please raise it with your Junior Achievement contact for advice and support. If, for whatever reason, your role is not working out as expected then please let us know.

If the problem cannot be resolved effectively, we will deal with this in accordance with our Problem Solving Procedure. Although dealing with problems can be difficult, it can give us a positive opportunity to improve the way we do things.

For more information on the Company Programme please contact  
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