ACADEMY
GREAT BARR

Provider Access Policy

2026-27



Policy owner	Mr L Price
Approval	Local Governing Body
Effective from	November 2026
Next review	November 2027

1. Purpose and scope

This policy explains how education and training providers can access students at Q3 Academy Great Barr. Access allows providers to explain approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The policy gives effect to section 42B of the Education Act 1997, as amended. The Mercian Trust is the school's proprietor.

The school's wider careers programme runs from Year 7 to Year 13. The statutory provider encounters in this policy run from Year 8 to Year 13.

2. What students can expect

Students in Years 7 to 13 will:

- find out about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships at each transition point
- hear from a range of local providers through activities such as options events, assemblies, group discussions, and taster events
- learn how to apply for the full range of academic and technical courses

The school will provide every student with at least 6 opportunities to meet providers of technical education or apprenticeships as they progress from Year 8 to Year 13:

Phase	Timing	Each student's entitlement
First	From the start of Year 8 to 28 February in Year 9	Each student will attend at least 2 encounters involving different providers.
Second	From the start of Year 10 to 28 February in Year 11	Each student will attend at least 2 encounters involving different providers.
Third	From the start of Year 12 to 28 February in Year 13	Each student will be offered at least 2 encounters involving different providers. Attendance is optional.

The school will not limit a required encounter to selected students or only those who have already expressed an interest.

Each encounter will last for a reasonable period during the standard school day. It will involve two-way discussion. Students will be able to ask questions, and the provider will answer them.

The school will ask each provider to:

- introduce the provider and explain the approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships it offers
- explain the careers to which those options may lead
- describe what learning or training with the provider is like
- answer students' questions about these matters

The school will make encounters appropriate and accessible for the students involved. It will consider reasonable adjustments, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), safeguarding, and other relevant individual needs.

3. Requesting access

To request access, providers should email careers@GBR.merciantrust.org.uk or call Reception on 0121 358 6186 and ask for Mrs K Soulsby, the school's careers and aspirations leader.

A request should explain:

- the provider's education or training offer
- the year group or groups it wishes to meet
- the purpose, proposed format, and expected length of the encounter
- preferred dates or parts of the school year
- any room, equipment, access, or other practical needs

The careers and aspirations leader will discuss and agree the content, timing, premises, facilities, and supervision with the provider before the visit.

Provider access can be arranged during the standard school day within each of the 3 phase windows in section 2. The school uses options events, assemblies, group discussions, and taster events to provide these opportunities.

Providers can also request opportunities to speak with parents and carers through suitable careers, options, or transition events.

4. How requests are decided

The school will consider each request fairly, taking account of:

- whether the request supports students to understand approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships
- the age and needs of the proposed cohort
- how the request fits the statutory phase and the school's careers programme
- whether the encounter can take place for a reasonable period during the standard school day
- safeguarding, safety, supervision, and reasonable adjustments
- the availability of suitable rooms, facilities, equipment, and staff

The school may refuse a request that falls outside the purpose of this policy, is unsuitable for the proposed cohort, presents an unresolved safeguarding or safety concern, or cannot reasonably be accommodated.

The school will not refuse access because it favours an academic route over a technical or apprenticeship route.

The careers and aspirations leader will communicate the decision.

5. Premises, facilities, and materials

The school will provide an appropriate room for an agreed encounter. It will provide specialist equipment where this is available and agreed in advance.

Providers may leave a prospectus or other relevant course literature with the careers and aspirations leader. The school will make suitable material available to students.

6. Safeguarding and inclusion

Providers and anyone accompanying them must follow the school's instructions on visitors, safeguarding, and health and safety, as well as any instructions from staff.

The school's 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy' sets out its arrangements for checking visitors' identity and suitability. The school will decide the appropriate supervision for the visit. It will not require a Disclosure and Barring Service check solely because someone makes a one-off supervised visit.

The school may end or restrict access if this is necessary to protect students, staff, or visitors.

The school will make reasonable adjustments where required. Providers should raise access needs when agreeing the visit.

7. Careers programme

The school's careers programme describes the wider offer for Years 7 to 13. Section 3 explains when and how provider access can be arranged.

8. Monitoring, concerns, and review

The careers and aspirations leader will monitor the school's provider access arrangements. The school will review this policy at least annually.

A provider should first raise a concern with the careers and aspirations leader using the contact details in section 3. If the concern remains unresolved, the provider should follow and normally complete the Trust's Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy and Procedure.

After completing that procedure, or where the Trust prevents it from being completed, the provider may ask the Department for Education (DfE) to review whether the school handled the complaint correctly. DfE does not substitute its own access decision or change the school's decision. Read How DfE handles complaints about academies.