

**Shared Services Connected Limited (SSCL) is a leader in critical business support services for the largest Government departments and agencies, the Ministry of Defence, Police and CITB across the UK.**

We transform services through digital solutions and innovation, including end to end Finance and Accounting, HR and Payroll, Procurement, Pensions Administration and Resourcing Services - enhancing the customer experience, enabling smarter public services.

We employ around 3,000 people who, with their in-depth client knowledge and collaborative approach, sit at the heart of our business strategy. SSCL operates at size and scale across the UK public sector and has already delivered savings of just under £750 million - providing more funds for front line public services.



## **Virtual work experience placements for under-represented students**

**SSCL offers virtual work experience placements to students who would usually miss out on career opportunities**

### **Challenge**

As businesses look at improving diversity and inclusivity in the workplace attention has also turned to students and what organisations can do to improve and support their journey from education to career.

The challenges of the past few years has meant that many have missed out on work experience or insight days and the impact even greater for students from deprived areas or those who are disadvantaged through lack of networks.



## Deliverable

SSCL is committed to contributing into communities and supporting a wide range of charities by using its expertise – the skills of its people.

By partnering with its parent company Sopra Steria and social mobility charity Speakers for Schools, SSCL was able to offer a new experience.

Speakers for Schools is a charity aiming to end educational inequality by giving all students access to the same networks available to the top fee-paying schools in the UK.

Through a collaboration with SSCL a programme of virtual work experience placements was designed to students from across the UK!

SSCL's virtual work experience focuses on the Future of Work. Guest speakers from across SSCL share their insights on a range of topics – including CV and interview techniques, innovation and creativity, and project management.

Students are given the opportunity to use the insights from these sessions to develop their soft skills by completing a project tackling a genuine business problem. Using online whiteboards facilitated by our workshop experts, students work together in groups to explore potential opportunities related to the Future of Work and brainstorm solutions.

Students demonstrate the value created by their solutions with desk-based research and present their findings back to a panel of senior managers from SSCL and its key clients – gaining additional experience with handling questions and receiving feedback.

Throughout the virtual work experience, students are supported by SSCL volunteers acting as mentors to help them develop their presentations and reflect on the work experience.

The first session was held over one week with 17 students taking part from across the UK with more held in 2023 in collaboration with Ministry of Justice.







## Results

Offering virtual work experience placements give under-represented students valuable opportunities to learn from industry professionals and gives them the chance to apply their newfound knowledge and practical skills to tackle genuine business challenges. It empowers students to unlock their potential and gives them the chance to have a real impact on the future of work in SSCL.

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## Benefits

- Having virtual sessions enables better targeting to schools in disadvantaged areas and reduced costs to take part
  - SSCL was able to draw on a diverse range of talent to help pull together a varied programme to benefit students
  - 18% of students who took part qualified for Pupil Premium – a Government funded scheme to support disadvantaged pupils.
  - Feedback from students was positive
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“I enjoyed hearing the feedback and interesting discussions after the presentations, and feeling like we made a positive impact on the future of work”

~ **Student**

“I really enjoyed listening to the presentations and speaking with the students. They all came away with a lot of credit”

~ **Mark Winkworth, Performance Manager, Ministry of Justice**

“Such an honour to speak with students about innovation and creativity in the work context, to hear their passion for change at an age when they’re just soaking up information, and to have the opportunity to help to shape the way they approach not only their current projects but their future roles”

~ **Carl Johnson, Programme Director, Customer Contact Services - SSCL [Virtual Work Experience - SSCL Future of Work Guest Speaker on Innovation]**

“I really enjoyed the mentoring experience and it was lovely to hear the ideas and questions the students had for us.”

~ **Emma Bancroft, Order to Cash Process Leader - SSCL [Virtual Work Experience - SSCL Future of Work Mentor]**



**We  
Succeed  
Together**