

# Volunteer Role Description for York Minster Scheduled Guides

## Purpose of the role:

To provide visitors with an informative and engaging one hour tour based on the core theme content guidance, giving visitors the best experience possible

## Volunteer Supervision:

Coordinated by Lynsey Craggs, Visitor Experience Volunteer Manager  
Additional support for volunteers Susan Mason, HR & Volunteering Manager

## Location:

All locations on the Minster Floor (at ground level)

## Key tasks/activities:

- To join a guiding team (one team for each half day Monday to Saturday) and guide at a pre-arranged time slot on the rota once a week or once a fortnight
- To arrive at the Undercroft Desk 15 minutes before the start time of a tour, let the let Undercroft staff know that you have arrived and be updated on the day's events and anything that may affect the timings of tours
- To sign in the Guides diary at the start of your duty, update the diary with any known future absences and check the orange Services, Events and Closures sheet, for details of any special services, closures or events
- Offer visitors a warm, friendly, inclusive and positive welcome on behalf of the Dean and Chapter
- Guide visitors and booked groups around the Minster, presenting a tour based on the core theme content, in a confident, clear, inclusive and engaging manner, drawing out themes and stories
- Be on a rota to deliver a tour which is of an hour in length for either a scheduled tour, advertised to take place at 10am, 11am, 12 noon or 1pm, 2pm, 3pm or on the half or quarter hour
- Be respectful services at all times and ask your group to stop for prayers, explaining what is happening
- To tailor your presentation as far as possible to the needs of the particular group, making what you are saying accessible to visitors from other cultures and including simple connections and comparisons where possible
- Show pride in the Minster, including closures, loud music and excited school children. *'Isn't it lovely to see young people enjoying the Minster'*. Do not criticise Minster policies or apologise for closures or loud rehearsal, but rather point out that visitors are fortunate to be able to hear it and that *'Music is an important part in the services and life of the Minster'*. If you have comments to make, they should be made through the appropriate channels
- To work at all times in compliance with the Minster's policy on 'Health and Safety' and remembering to give warnings to groups regarding uneven surfaces, steps and such like
- To assist the Undercroft Desk staff to achieve the best coverage of tours throughout each day
- To finish the tour by thanking those in your group for visiting, inviting visitors to attend a service (if there is one soon), suggesting they may like to buy a souvenir in the shop and thanking them for visiting
- To not invent answers but offer to find out and pass on visitor's details onto the Undercroft Desk staff or Volunteering Manager for a reply if appropriate
- Report any problems to the Undercroft Desk staff and Volunteering Manager.

### **Skills and attributes sought:**

- An empathy with the Mission of York Minster and the aims of the Chapter of York
- Reliability, commitment and flexibility
- An interest in and ability to work with people from all walks of life
- Have good communication skills, including awareness of and responsiveness to your audience
- A team player, with a sense of humour and willingness to establish a friendly rapport with other Guides
- The ability to deliver a one hour tour of the Minster
- Willingness to attend further training and other such opportunities when available
- Willingness to wear required identification
- Flexibility to adapt to any changes in the Minster's routine, visitor numbers and other guides
- Be willing to cover a scheduled tour at short notice when possible
- Have an open mind and be willing to adapt to new information and thinking
- Be able to turn potential negatives into positives i.e. whatever is happening in the Minster, never complain or tell visitors '*it's a pity you can't see the Quire*' but rather talk about the Minster as a living place of worship
- Be of smart appearance

### **Training provision:**

- All Minster Guides must have successfully completed the Minster Guides Course
- General induction
- Health and Safety induction

### **Commitment involved:**

- Guide at a pre-arranged time slot on the rota once a week or once a fortnight
- To inform the Undercroft Desk of absence in the event of holidays or illness
- All Minster Guides must be willing to participate in training and professional development opportunities
- All Guides must be willing to take part in a rolling assessment programme to ensure the consistency and the high of standard of Minster tours is maintained and upheld

### **Health & Safety**

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, whilst at work, you must take reasonable care for your own health & safety and that of any other person who may be affected by your acts or omissions. In addition, you must co-operate with the Organisation on health & safety and not interfere with, or misuse, anything provided for your health, safety or welfare.

### **Safeguarding**

All staff and volunteers are expected to demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding the welfare of all children and adults who may be vulnerable, who are involved with and/or visit the Minster. This will include adherence to policies and procedures, following good practice in relation to their own behaviour and conduct and undertaking any safeguarding duties commensurate with their specific role.