



Riann Parker is Saint Martin's **Enterprise Adviser** and works to develop a careers plan that gives students multiple opportunities to learn about work. Her role is an opportunity for her to share insights and experience about job opportunities and the key skills she believes local and national businesses need.

This is a voluntary placement and since starting in 2017, Riann's aim has been to support Mrs Lowry, the Careers Leader here at Saint Martin's and to help produce an effective

careers programme for the school, across all age groups, which is not only informative but also fun and challenging.

Below is a short insight into Riann's work/life experience and how she has got to be here working alongside the school.

After leaving school I had no idea what I wanted to do.... Does that sound familiar???

If I have learned anything since leaving full time education it's that having a true vocation in life is very much a rarity, if you are lucky enough to have a real calling and passion for a certain career from an early age then you are very lucky indeed.

After school my friends and I dutifully head off into further education with little or no idea of what we wanted to do with the rest of our lives or how to achieve it. We fell into jobs and worked our way upwards to the best of our ability. I did not attend University and while working on my A levels at 17 years of age my family decided to move to Scotland and I wanted to stay at home! At 17 I learned to manage my study, work a part time job and how to run a house! Amazingly I survived.

I have worked since I was 15 years old, mostly within retail shops at weekends or in the evenings. However, I found my first 'proper' job in a bank as a cashier, in truth, it was very dull and at 21 I moved to Scotland to be with my family and started working back within the retail industry at Tesco.

And that is pretty much where my story starts.... Within 12 months I applied for a management position and was successful. I have since managed every department possible within various supermarket chains and after getting involved in disciplinary meetings through notetaking..... my interest was peaked!

At 27 years of age I realised that I wanted a job in HR. I speculatively sent my CV to the Regional People Manager within Asda and she agreed to meet with me. My HR career had started, a career that I LOVE... I was appointed as a People Manager within one of the biggest supermarket chains in the UK.

I spent over 15 years working as a HR Manager/Regional HR Business partner within the Retail & Leisure Industries until 2011 when my partner and I decided to branch out into the world of Childcare and set up our own business. In 2011 we opened two children's day nurseries under the banner of the Banana Moon franchise. We still own one of these nurseries and with it doing well, and being managed effectively by the onsite team, I ventured back into the world of HR as an Interim HRBP in 2014 with Travis Perkins. Several assignments later I have been working as an Interim HRBP for over four years and have spent the last 18 months working on various projects within Ryder Limited who are a Transport and Logistics company.

I decided to get involved as an Enterprise Adviser to give something back....

I have interviewed many people during my time in HR, from Shelf Stackers to Senior Managers and while qualifications are obviously important, the applicant who impresses me the most is the one who can share their experiences with me, explain to me their transitional skills and show an element of drive.

I want to help school leavers understand that they already have many transitional skills, help to give them a good idea of what an employer is looking for and to help support them in their search for their 'calling and passion'