

Work Experience with Portsmouth International Port

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My time at Portsmouth International Port was filled with unique and diverse experiences, each day presenting new opportunities for learning and growth.

On the first day of my placement, I was given a tour of the port offices and the port itself. I then met one of their pilots, where I learned more about how a pilot prepares before bringing a vessel into port. I later got to walk around SMS Towage (Tug operator).

On my second day, I got to go on one of the Whitaker Tankers (vessel fuelling operator), where I got a ship tour. Next, I got to see what the job of port control was during my time there, and I got to make a phone call to the pilot I met earlier that week to announce to him that we were given an hour and a half notice for the Britannia Beaver. Later, I joined the Berthing Masters and Quay Assistants in the tying up of vessels coming into port and untying ships leaving port. I also had the fantastic opportunity to go out on a pilot boat during the Freedom Flame event (which the Harbour Master, Mr McInnes, has kindly organised).

On my third, it was arranged, and I got to spend the day at the Wightlink port, where I got the opportunity to board Victoria of Wight and do a couple of rounds from Portsmouth to the Isle of Wight; during my time onboard, I got a tour around the vessel, got to talk with the captain of the ship, see how Deck Officer manoeuvre the boat in and out of ports, I was shown around the engine room, getting to see how they get cars on and off the ferry and lastly, I got to go on a trip to Isle of Wight with one of the fastcats.

I learned precisely what they do at the freight gates on my fourth day. I also talked to one of the staff at Portico, who gave me insight into what Portico does. Lastly, I spent the rest of the day with port security, where I learnt about all the safety checks they do around the terminal and the check before passengers go off to board.

On my last day at PIP, I went around with one of the Berthing Masters, checked, and then chatted with the Harbour Master.

Overall, my experience with Portsmouth International Port has been an amazing one; I am currently studying a Pre-cadetship course at Brockenhurst College and am due to start my cadetship sponsored by MSC Cruises at Solent University after I finish my three years of a foundation degree. I want to do my top-up, and after that, I would love to continue my education for another year and get my post-graduate in Maritime Law as it's not only going to give me flexibility for the future but also going to befit me in my career at sea when going up in ranks. This week has opened my eyes to everything that happens in port, from ships coming in and out to passengers boarding a ship. All the new things I learned through the week will support me throughout my career, as I already understand how ports work.