



Welcome to Volun-tees – the University programme to help you make the most out of volunteering whilst at University. We are here to support current University students, recent graduates and members of staff to get involved in volunteering. With many ways in which to get involved, we're sure we have an opportunity for you!

There are many reasons why people choose to volunteer – to help and inspire others, to gain skills and experience or just to have fun and meet people. Whatever your reason, we'll show you how to make the most of your time and make sure you enjoy your volunteering experience.



## Things to consider

### **The Opportunity**

Is this something that you really want to do? That you are passionate about? There are many opportunities available so choosing the right one for you may take some time! Remember though – it's not all about you! Organisations invest a lot of time and effort into supporting volunteers and you need to make sure you have something to give back to them and you will be committed to the role.

### **Time commitment**

Would you prefer a short term opportunity, a one day event or a more regular activity? Can you volunteer throughout the year, including holidays? Think about what you are able to offer an organisation and check the details of the opportunity to see what commitment they need and if you can match it.

### **Location**

Where is the opportunity? Can you get to it? Use the google map to find out where it is. The voluntary organisation will be able to answer all these questions and more so don't be afraid to ask. Find out as much information as you can.

### **What to do**

You may have a very clear idea about the sort of opportunity you're looking for. However - try to keep your options open as far as possible. You may find an ideal opportunity in the most unlikely of places! You can also talk to a Careers Adviser, course tutor or the Volun-tees staff who can provide advice and support to help you decide what to do.

## Getting involved

There are many different ways to volunteering and you can start your volunteering experience at any stage.

### Do Good, Feel Good

Our Do Good, Feel Good events will help you meet other students to do something great, fun and enjoyable. Previous events have included decorating a community venue, making get well soon cards for children in hospital or helping out at our Christmas Party for the Elderly. Come and join the fun!



### Short Term Volunteering

An activity that takes place over a number of weeks, with a specific timescale and task to be completed. This could be a University opportunity such as leading a fundraising campaign or a short term community based activity (such as planning an event/delivering a set project with a deadline). A longer commitment, but a project to really help develop your skills.

### Long Term Volunteering

This involves engaging in a volunteering role with an organisation/project that may last the length of your course. This usually requires a regular scheduled commitment. Each organisation/project works differently, and you may need to complete an application form, and in some cases have an interview! (Volunteering for popular opportunities can be competitive, so you need to make sure you submit the best application that you can).

## Recognition for Volunteering

Certificates of Recognition are provided for students submitting their hours of volunteering through Volun-tees which are presented at the Volun-cheers Awards Dinner which takes place in May. Certificates of Recognition are:

Bronze Award	50 hours	Silver Award	75 hours
Gold Award	100 hours	Platinum Award	250 hours

### Volun+tees<sup>plus</sup>

The +Plus Award consists of:

**Volunteering Experience** – a minimum 50 hours (achieving the Bronze Award)

**+Plus award volunteering** – an additional 10 hours skills based volunteering

**Reflection** - Review your volunteering experience with a one-to-one session with a Careers Advisor.



Volun-cheers is the Annual Celebration Awards night for students and organisations who have been involved in Volunteering. All students who have achieved Certificates of Recognition and Plus Awards are invited to attend.

The Awards also provide recognition for those who have gone above and beyond their role as a volunteer. Organisations and project leaders submit nominations for outstanding volunteers. Volunteers can also nominate their mentor or host organisation/project for an award too. A great way to say thank you for the support you have received.

## What Next?

### **Register on Volun-tees**

Register on our website [www.volunteers.co.uk](http://www.volunteers.co.uk) and create your profile. Please complete as much as possible on this section as this will help us to match you to potential opportunities and you can also share this with potential employers if you want to show your volunteering profile.

### **Applying for an opportunity**

Please provide information such as any relevant previous experience, why you think you are suitable for the position, and what skills you can bring to the role. Volunteering roles are competitive so there is every chance that other volunteers are applying for the same position – make sure your application stands out!

### **Record your hours!**

This is extremely important – not only for you but for the organisation – to ensure that we are able to support you and the organisation throughout your volunteering experience.

### **Reflect on your experience!**

Make sure you complete all the elements of recording your hours – this will help you in future to give examples to employers of all the skills you have developed and for you to recognise the impact you have made through volunteering.

### **Get help**

If you need any help or support email us at [volunteering@tees.ac.uk](mailto:volunteering@tees.ac.uk), or book an appointment at <https://www.tees.ac.uk/studentfutures/>