

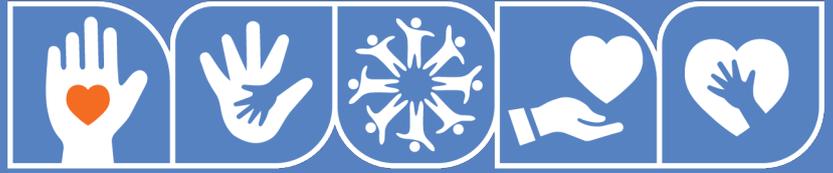
JOB SEEKING SKILLS

Step 4: Starting work



16: Volunteering

Volunteering



What is volunteering?

Volunteering is where you undertake an activity, without being paid, that aims to benefit someone, such as a community group, or something, such as the environment.

This can be done formally through a charity organisation, such as Oxfam, or informally through community and social action.

Note that internships are not a type of volunteering. These are paid positions, working for a company for a period of time.

Why is volunteering important?



Volunteering is important as it offers essential support to charitable causes, people in need and wider community action.

Many organisations take on volunteers, in addition to employed staff, as they only receive partial funding from the government and some rely solely on volunteers as they may receive little to no funding.

The third sector



You may have heard of the term 'the third sector' and wondered what it means.

It is a term for organisations that don't come under the definition of public sector (such as local authorities) or private sector (such as banks). It includes charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups.



What is volunteering?

Volunteering isn't just about the 'feel good' factor of helping other people.

Here are ten good reasons for getting into volunteering.

1. It's a great way to **meet people and make new friends**.
2. You'll learn **new skills**, such as teamwork and communication.
3. It makes a **positive impact** on other people's lives.
4. You can **build on the things you're good at**, from sport to listening to others.
5. You can get loads of valuable experience.
6. You can get an **award or qualification** and it **looks good** on your CV, and course applications.
7. It can be **great fun**.
8. You get the chance to **learn about yourself** – what you want out of life, and work.
9. Trying something new is a **great confidence booster**.
10. Helping other people really **does** feel good.

Who can get involved?

People of all ages take part in volunteering. So why not put all that youth, energy and enthusiasm into something really worthwhile?



According to the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) commissioned by the Scottish Government, **25% of adults volunteered with a group, club or organisation in 2024. The participation rate for adults aged 16-34 increased by 9% since 2023.** (Volunteering in 2024, Volunteer Scotland)

Volunteering may have some restrictions, but you can check these out with your local volunteer centre.

The main restrictions apply when the organisation you'd like to volunteer for doesn't have insurance covering people under 18, or it may simply be due to the type of volunteering opportunity.

How to get started?



Volunteer
Scotland



If you'd like to find out more, go to the [Volunteer Scotland website](#).

It's a great source of information and advice, including a section with case studies of volunteers.

You can use the [Help & Advice, Find support locally](#) page to find out about your local Volunteer Centre and arrange to speak to a volunteer development adviser. There are 60 local centres across 32 local authorities in Scotland.



The [DofE \(Duke of Edinburgh\) website](#) is also a great resource for those up to the age of 24 looking to get into volunteering.



They won't expect you to volunteer on the spot!

Before you get started, you'll need to talk about what's involved in volunteering, what opportunities are available in your area, and what you want to get out of the experience.

You can volunteer in just about any activity that interests you. For example, take a look at these case studies from SportScotland and Health Improvement Scotland to see the range of things that people have volunteered for.

- <https://sportscotland.org.uk/volunteering/case-studies/articles/charlie-mclean>
- <https://hisengage.scot/equipping-professionals/volunteering-in-nhs-scotland/case-studies/>



Activity 1: Finding suitable volunteering opportunities

Read the profiles and use the websites listed to find an appropriate volunteering opportunity for Hannah and Ahmed.

[Activity 1 worksheet](#)

What could you do?



There are lots of different types of volunteering opportunities, from helping out at local sports clubs or drama groups to getting involved in conservation and community projects.

You might want to choose something that relates to your career plans. As well as making a valuable contribution, you could get a taste of what a particular job area involves.

You can see the wide range of opportunities available on the [Volunteer Scotland website](#), and the other useful websites we've listed.



What can I do to help me decide what sort of volunteering will suit me best?

The activities you completed on identifying your skills and values (1: [All about me](#)) will help you with this.

You can also think about your interests and personal qualities.

Gain a qualification or award



You could work towards the **Award in Volunteering Skills at SCQF Levels 3, 4 and 5.**

You take part in volunteering activities, develop a range of skills and complete personal development experiences, all of which help to prepare you for further education and employment.

You learn how to plan a volunteer placement, review and reflect on your skills and what you've gained from the volunteer experience and complete an investigative project.

This qualification could really help you to make the most of your volunteer work and is a valuable addition to your CV.

In addition, you can also gain awards through the following:

- [Saltire Awards \(12-25\)](#)
- [John Muir Award \(All ages\)](#)
- [Duke of Edinburgh Award \(14-24\)](#)



Activity 2: Find a volunteering opportunity

Use the useful sources below, and the internet, to find your own volunteering opportunity and complete the [Activity 2 worksheet](#).

Want more information and advice?

Here are some useful sources:



- [Good Moves](#)
- [National Museums Scotland - Volunteering](#)
- [National Trust for Scotland - Volunteering](#)
- [King's Trust](#)
- [Step Together Volunteering](#)
- [Volunteer in Sport \(sportscotland\)](#)
- [Volunteering Matters](#)
- [Creative Lives](#)
- [Volunteer Scotland](#)
- [Volunteer Aberdeen](#)
- [Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action](#)

Now you have learned more about volunteering,
you can move on to

[17: Self-employment and entrepreneurship](#)

Or [click here](#) to return to the main screen.