



KeeleSU



Volunteering

A Guide for International Student Volunteers



KeeleSU Volunteering

KeeleSU Volunteering is here to support students to find volunteering opportunities to suit them. It can be course related or just a particular activity that is meaningful to them. Volunteering can range from fundraising to teaching, there is so much choice! This guide is designed to give you an understanding of what volunteering is and what you can gain from it.

Volunteering Explained

The term volunteering refers to the formal practice of offering assistance and help, **free of charge** to charities, not for profit organisations, and community projects. Volunteering means:

- There is a benefit for the local community, organisation or charity. The volunteer is providing a service for a registered voluntary or charitable organisation (or organisation that raises funds for either).
- There should be **no monetary payment**, other than any reasonable travel and food expenditure actually incurred.
- There should be **no contractual obligations** on the volunteer
- The service is **not a substitute for employment** (i.e. fulfilling a role that a salaried worker would normally fulfil).
- It is an optional activity, not compulsory.

Why Volunteer?

Volunteering gives you the chance to meet local people, develop your English language skills and find out about the country which you are now studying in.

It gives you a chance to experience what it is like to live and work in the UK and can give you a good understanding about how charitable organisations work.

People choose to volunteer for many different reasons. The following are some examples of the reasons that people choose to volunteer and the benefits that they get from it:

- To meet new people and make friends
- To build confidence and abilities
- To develop your English Language Skills
- For enjoyment and fun
- To make a difference to the local community
- To use skills you already have to benefit other people
- To get off campus and explore the local area
- To make good use of spare time at university (especially in the holidays)
- To develop new skills
- To try something new
- To be part of a professional working environment

Types of volunteering opportunities:

You can volunteer in opportunities that are related to your course or in a completely new area of interest. Areas to volunteer in can include:

- Administration
- Retail
- Charity
- Marketing
- Health
- Arts
- Sports
- Advocacy
- Welfare
- Conservation
- Working with animals
- Education

Keele Makes a Difference Day



Every month the Volunteering Department run a one-off volunteering event, where students can volunteer and help out for just for a few hours. This does not demand long-term commitment like other roles, but the hours can still be added to your profile towards KeeleSU Volunteering Awards.

KeeleSU Event Volunteers

The Activities and Volunteering departments at KeeleSU run events and activities where volunteer support is needed. For example, we often need helpers to:

- Supervise and set up stalls at events
- Act as photographers
- Assist with marketing

We often put requests out for people to fill these positions and lots of other really exciting opportunities through social media and through the Volunteer weekly newsletter.

This is how to find us on social media:

Facebook: [ksuvolunteering](#)

Twitter: [@KeeleSUv](#)

There are hundreds of volunteering opportunities that are off campus and there are a growing number of opportunities that are on campus. If you want to find out more about the types of roles you can carry out, get in touch with the team by either emailing or coming in to the office for a chat.

Are you eligible to volunteer in the UK?

This is just a guide. It is not a complete account of the Immigration Rules. See www.UKCISA.org and the Home Office webpages for up to date immigration information.

If you work, when you should not work in the UK, you are in breach of a condition of your visa and are working illegally and therefore will have your visa cancelled and you could be prosecuted.

If you need assistance contact Advice & Support at Keele su.ask@keele.ac.uk 01782 734800

If you are coming to Keele from outside the EU or EEA you should check your visa or entry clearance conditions to make sure that you are allowed to volunteer in addition to studying. Sometimes volunteering is described as unpaid work in this type of documentation. It is very important that you check this as you could jeopardise your visa status by volunteering if you are not allowed to.

Tier 4 Visa:

- You are able to volunteer during term time but there is a limit of 20 hours per week and includes both volunteering and paid work.
- You can volunteer/ work full time during the Keele vacations periods.

If you have a Tier 4 Visa, your visa or passport stamp will state "work restricted" or "able to work as authorised by the Secretary of State", or something similar. This means that you have permission to work or volunteer for a restricted number of hours.

Pre- Sessional courses can volunteer/ work during term time for 10 hours per week (if below NQF6) and full time during vacation periods.

Short Term Students (6 months or 11 months):

- You are not allowed to undertake any paid or unpaid work. You are allowed to volunteer, but are not allowed to do voluntary work. The key differences are:

Volunteers	Voluntary Workers
Do not have a contract of employment	Often have a contract with their employer
Must not take the place of an employee	Usually remunerated in kind
Must not receive payment in kind (but reimbursement of expenses, such as travel costs, is allowed)	
Usually help a charity, voluntary, or public sector organisation.	

If you are unsure, check first with the volunteering team and the organisation you are interested in before you start any volunteering.

More Visa Information:

PBS Dependant Visa- You can usually work in the UK, but please do check before starting any form of work.

Masters (Post-Graduate) Students- Are limited to 20 hours during the vacation period.

Please note: If you are a studying a 12 month Masters course, the summer vacation period is set aside for full time study to focus on writing your dissertation. It is not considered a vacation so you should not work full time during this period until you have submitted your dissertation.

Research Degree Students- If you are following a full time research course you should be aware that University regulations restrict you to 250 hours of paid work per 12-month period. This work should only be carried out on campus, working for the University. This restriction is intended to allow you to enhance your experience through working while also enabling you to complete your studies within the specified period. The 'Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures' requires students to consult with their supervisor before taking any additional work.

Your holiday entitlement is 5 weeks per year in addition to the days when the University is closed. You may work during your holiday period if you wish. If you are a Post- Graduate student, but wish to volunteer you will need to check with your department first.

Disclosure & Barring Service

Some volunteering will require that you go through a police check, for example- If you would like to volunteer with children or vulnerable adults. This is to ensure that volunteers who are helping these vulnerable people do not have any criminal convictions.

If you do need a DBS check, the organisation you volunteer at should provide this for you. If you have any problems getting a DBS check, please let KeeleSU Volunteering team know.

Note: It is advisable for you to bring a certificate of good conduct from your own country with you. If you need support obtaining this, please get in touch.

Expenses and Travel Costs:

Volunteers are entitled to get money refunded for any travel expenses they have incurred through their volunteering activity from the organisation that they are volunteering for. However, if you are unable to claim back your travel expenses, it might be possible to get travel costs reimbursed by KeeleSU Volunteering, provided that this has been agreed in advance by a member of staff in the department.

Are you interested in Volunteering? What to do next...

Step One	Login to the keelesu.com and create a volunteer profile .
Step Two	<p>Search for volunteering opportunities via:</p> <p>KeeleSU website</p> <p>Do-it.org</p> <p>Volunteeringinstaffordshire.org</p> <p>1 to 1 support from the Volunteering Team.</p> <p>Remember to think about your passions – yes, it’s great to make a difference, but we also want you to have fun & this will help you to narrow down what you really would like to do.</p>
Step Three	If you need help finding, contacting or setting up an opportunity, you can set up an appointment with any member of the Volunteering Team by emailing su.volunteering@keele.ac.uk or just pop by the department on the top floor of KeeleSU and see if we are free!
Step Four	<p>Start volunteering and logging your hours in your profile. If you've set up your own volunteering, do not forget to let us know so we can give you the information on our exciting Volunteer Awards (which employers LOVE). There are 5 awards available at KeeleSU Volunteering.</p> <p>Bronze Award: 25 hours (update your skills portfolio)</p> <p>Silver Award: 50 hours (update your skills portfolio)</p> <p>Gold Award: 100 hours (update your skills portfolio and complete a presentation)</p> <p>Platinum Award: 200 hours (update your skills portfolio and complete a presentation)</p> <p>Platinum Plus Award: 350 hours (update your skills portfolio and complete a presentation)</p> <p>Note: This is for the full amount of hours recorded over the whole of your time at Keele (3-7 years), so you can work your way up the awards over your time at Keele University</p>
Step 5	<p>Update your skills portfolio in your profile</p> <p>You are asked to reflect on your volunteering experiences so that you can recognise the skills and experiences you have gained through your volunteering activities. The skills portfolio needs to be completed so that you can achieve your chosen volunteering Award.</p> <p>Giving your presentation</p> <p>This is the final step towards achieving the KeeleSU Volunteering Award. If you are achieving a Gold Award or above, you are required to give a short 10 minute PowerPoint presentation to a member of the Volunteering Team. This is an informal presentation which will demonstrate the skills and experiences you have gained from volunteering. The skills portfolio will form the basis of your presentation.</p>
Step 6	Collect your certificate at KeeleSU Awards Night in May! (Free attendance to all those who have achieved an award).

KeeleSU Awards Night

All volunteers who have completed a volunteering award are invited to the prestigious KeeleSU Awards Night. Student volunteers will receive their Volunteer Award on stage. Alternative arrangements for receiving your award can be made if you are not able to attend this event.

Volunteering Awards are HEAR Recordable

The Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) is a UK initiative to record undergraduates academic qualifications and their co-curricular achievements. It is hoped that by having a HEAR, Keele graduates will be more distinctive and able to articulate their skills with a document that evidences their achievements.

This means that if students decide to take part in the KeeleSU Volunteering Awards, this will automatically be added to their HEAR which they will get when they graduate.

The HEAR records lots of other co-curricular activities, more details can be found here:

www.keele.ac.uk/hear

KeeleSU Volunteering Contact Details

Volunteering Manager: Sarah Amphlett
Volunteering Co-ordinator: Jess Thorley
Volunteering Co-ordinator: Andy Barnett

Email: su.volunteering@keele.ac.uk
Website: www.keelesu.com/volunteering
Phone: 01782 733622
Twitter: [@KeeleSUv](https://twitter.com/KeeleSUv)
Facebook: [ksuvolunteering](https://www.facebook.com/ksuvolunteering)

Office Opening Times:

Mon 10am-5pm
Tues 9am-5pm
Wed 9am-5pm
Thurs 9am-5pm
Fri 10am- 5pm

