

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Volunteer Coaching



### What does The Access Project do?

Under-resourced young people are three times less likely to go to university in comparison to more advantaged students, according to the Department for Education.

This access gap prevents talented and ambitious young people from being able to achieve their potential. We want every student to have a better chance of accessing a top university and thriving in a career of their choice in the future. We are now working in 40 schools across London, West Midlands, East Midlands, West Yorkshire and the North West to help achieve this mission.

### Where does The Access Project operate?

We work with more than 40 schools across London, West Midlands, East Midlands, West Yorkshire, Cumbria and Lancashire supporting almost 2,000 students. Volunteering is delivered online, so volunteers can be based anywhere in the UK.

### What is volunteer coaching?

As a volunteer coach, you will coach a 16-18 year old student. In a monthly mentoring session, you will support them to develop their problem solving, collaboration, communication and planning skills. You will support them to develop the key skills which will enable them to successfully transition to university and into the next stages of their life.

### What's in it for me?

This programme is a unique opportunity to pay forward your experiences and inspire the next generation of young people. You will benefit from an opportunity to be a positive role model, gain transferable skills, gain an accredited safeguarding qualification and receive recognition for your volunteering hours (for use in awards etc.).

### What qualifications do I need?

To volunteer as a coach we ask that you have 3+ years of professional or life experience.

### **Can I apply if I don't have a degree?**

Yes, you can apply to volunteer as a coach. If you have questions or would like to discuss your suitability, we'd love to hear from you at [volunteering@theaccessproject.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@theaccessproject.org.uk).

### **Can I volunteer if I don't live in the UK?**

At this time, we can't accept applications from volunteers who live outside the UK. We need all our tutors to have a DBS certificate, for which you need to have lived in the UK for at least three months.

If you gained your experience outside of the UK but you're now living here, we would very much welcome you as a coach. One in 10 of our volunteers gained their degree and/or experience outside the UK. Please note that we also ask that volunteers are able to clearly communicate with their students in spoken and written English.

### **How does online volunteering work?**

You'll use our dedicated online platform so that your sessions can be engaging and interactive whilst keeping you and your student safe. You'll be able to talk with and see your student using your webcam, share documents and work collaboratively using a virtual whiteboard.

We offer training to ensure that you and your student are both comfortable using the platform. We also provide students with any hardware they need to make the most of online sessions.

We will provide you with complete user guides, access to webinars and more information at your training session. We recommend you have the following to be able to volunteer online:

- Access to a PC, laptop or tablet
- A stable internet connection
- Familiarity with video chat or online conferencing platforms, and how to share documents online
- A quiet space without distractions (you may wish to use headphones)
- Google Chrome as your browser for optimal experience

Our dedicated team will be on hand to support you with any questions or issues.

### How much time does it take?

You'll need to be able to coach for an hour a month for six months, between January to June. We recommend you take an hour to prepare and reflect ahead of each coaching session.

We recognise holidays and illness mean sometimes you will have to postpone a session.

### How do I get started?

It's really easy to get started. All you need to do is fill in our sign-up form online and tell us a bit about your education, your reasons for volunteering and give details of two character references. We'll guide you through the rest from there, which includes:

- Completing our online safeguarding course – you will receive a CPD accredited certificate for this
- Attending a 2 and a half hour online training session with our friendly team
- Completing a DBS check, organised by us

If you have any further questions, reach out to our volunteering team via email at [volunteering@theaccessproject.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@theaccessproject.org.uk).

[Visit theaccessproject.org.uk/volunteer](https://theaccessproject.org.uk/volunteer) to sign up today



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