

How to become a Volunteer Learning Guide

Could you be a Volunteer Learning Guide?

For an informal chat
about becoming a
Volunteer Learning
Guide, contact
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Are you an adult learner? Have you had positive experiences of learning as an adult? Have you found going back to learning opened doors to new interests, skills and ideas? Did you make friends or gain more confidence from your learning venture?

Getting back to learning as an adult can sometimes be daunting. Potential new learners may be nervous, lacking in confidence or put off by negative school experiences. Sometimes, people know they want to learn but don't know what is available or how to find out more about their options.

Helping people get over those practical and emotional hurdles is where the Volunteer Learning Guides come in.

What are Volunteer Learning Guides?

They are volunteers who provide peer support to people within local communities to help increase participation in learning. They do this by raising awareness of learning opportunities that exist within Wirral, directing people to appropriate places to learn or get more information and by encouraging and supporting new learners.

Volunteer Learning Guides provide a friendly, informed point of contact and information for potential adult learners, helping them overcome initial obstacles so they can take their first steps to becoming an adult learner.

Learning Guides advise all age groups - from school leavers to Senior Citizens – around what is available to them or signpost learners to where they can get the most appropriate support to meet their needs.

Volunteer Learning Guides can use their own experiences and enthusiasm to help others take that first step back to learning. They can also draw on things they have in common with potential learners to build rapport, offer solutions and make practical suggestions. For example, a Learning Guide who is a lone parent could understand and help overcome barriers to learning for other lone parents.

One of the major obstacles to learning can be getting information about the wide range of learning opportunities available in Wirral. The Volunteer Learning Guides' main tool will be a web based information portal that is being developed in order to bring all this information together.

Learning Guides also have strong relationships with community and voluntary groups who provide them with on the spot support, information and a place to work from.

Being a Volunteer Learning Guide

Volunteer Learning Guides come from all backgrounds and communities across Wirral. No particular qualifications are necessary. The essential requirements are an enthusiasm for learning and an interest in supporting others to learn. Support and free training for the role is available from Wirral CVS Volunteer Centre.

Learning Guides can be flexible in the amount of time they give to their voluntary work and when they give it. With their support worker, Sandra, they design a schedule that suits them and the community they are working in.

What you get out of it

Being a Volunteer Learning Guide is a fantastic opportunity to meet people from all over the Wirral and gain a huge amount of satisfaction from providing valuable guidance and support to others.

Meeting and supporting people is in itself a wonderful way to develop interpersonal skills and grow confidence but Learning Guides can also become qualified as a Mentor OCN level 2 and also gain OCN level 3 in Advice and Guidance through Connexions ...learning and gaining qualifications as they support others in learning!

There are networking meetings with other Learning Guides and a support worker once a month and involvement with events such as local community workshops and awareness days to keep updated with relevant developments in Wirral.