



**Newman
University**
BIRMINGHAM

Newman Volunteering Award

**(Handbook and forms
to be submitted for
accreditation)**

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What is Newman University's Volunteering Award?

Introduction

Newman University's Volunteering Award supports students to successfully manage volunteering independently; to develop their knowledge, skills and experiences which will contribute to their future employability and success upon graduation.

Volunteering carried out by students can be accredited and then included in their Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) on graduation. Students can receive a Newman Volunteering award for each separate volunteering placement they carry out during their time at Newman, if it meets the criteria. Students can receive a Newman Bronze Volunteering Award for 20 hours, Newman Silver Volunteering Award for 50 hours, Newman Gold Volunteering Award for 100 hours or a Newman Platinum Volunteering Award for 200 hours.

Definition

From the many definitions of volunteering available Newman University recognises volunteering as:

“An activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or individuals or groups other than (or in addition to) close relatives” (The Compact Code of Good Practice on Volunteering, 2005).

In addition, volunteering in this context will also aim to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of the student taking part to contribute to their employability and success upon graduation. Unpaid work placements already receiving academic accreditation, or undertaken to address course requirements or targets, will not be valid for counting towards a volunteering award.

The aim of the programme is also to make a positive contribution to individuals and communities in line with our status as a Catholic University with strong values of service.

Criteria

Students can apply for an accredited award that will appear on the HEAR for each volunteering opportunity they carry out, but must meet the following criteria:

- Unpaid and carried out in the UK.
- Must be separate to their course or any other extra-curricular activity that is accredited on their HEAR. For students undertaking mandatory work placements, if they accumulate additional hours above what their course dictates, those additional hours can count towards a Volunteering Award. Some student volunteering is already accredited on the HEAR and therefore not eligible for a Newman Volunteering Award, examples are listed in the next section.
- It can be carried out in any place as long as the role involves contributing to an environment, an individual or groups other than (or in addition to) close relatives for the greater good and will in part improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of the student taking part to contribute to their employability and success upon graduation.
- It is usual practice to accredit one award for each different volunteering organisation. If, however, you accumulate a substantial number of hours of

volunteering at one organisation and **you can evidence that you had more than one role there**, the HEAR Validation panel will consider offering multiple awards for a single placement up to a maximum limit of 4 awards.

- All the relevant forms must be completed fully by the students and confirmed by the volunteering organisation.
- Any questions or for clarification please contact the Careers & Volunteering Adviser, Newman University, Birmingham B32 3NT Tel: 0121 476 1181 ext. 2379 Email: careers@newman.ac.uk.

Examples of activities NOT eligible for accreditation:

The following voluntary activities at Newman University are already accredited through your course or on your HEAR so would not be eligible to count towards a Newman Volunteering Award. In any doubt please check with the Careers & Volunteering Adviser:

- Captain of a Sports Team
- Chair of a Society or Club
- Clinical hours elements to courses
- Compulsory field work
- Course Representative
- Guardian Angel
- Peer mentor
- Dissertation Research
- Student Academic Representative
- Student Union Executive
- Writing Mentor

1. Why should you volunteer?

Benefits for the student

In a competitive labour market, volunteering is a great way to increase your employability, whatever career path you want to pursue.

Volunteering to enhance your employability

Definition of Employability:

‘A set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.’ (ESECT: 2006).

Volunteering can offer the opportunity to develop existing skills and/or learn new ones:

Self-reliance skills

You will research and organise your own volunteering opportunity:

- Self-awareness
- Proactivity
- Willingness to learn
- Networking
- Planning action

People skills

You will work with others in a volunteering opportunity of your choice:

- Team working
- Interpersonal skills
- Oral communication
- Leadership
- Customer orientation

General skills

You will experience real life situations in which you will need to demonstrate the following skills:

- Problem Solving
- Flexibility
- Business acumen
- IT/computer literacy
- Numeracy
- Commitment
- Specialist skills

Accreditation

If a student meets the criteria, they can gain accreditation for their volunteering, which will appear on their HEAR and be formally recognised.

Benefits for the community/society

Volunteering aims to benefit the environment or individuals or groups other than (or in addition to) close relatives. The work a student carries out makes a positive contribution to the society in which they are living and/or studying and reinforces values of community service.

2. Searching for a volunteering position

It is the student's own responsibility to find a volunteering position, however the careers service can support in a number of ways to secure a volunteering position. We give information, advice and guidance on where to volunteer, how to approach organisations and things to think about once you've secured a position.

Careers and volunteering sessions

You can sign up for a 1:1 interview, workshop or event to explore volunteering opportunities. As a current student, log into your My Career Account (using your Newman Username and Password) at: <https://mycareer.newman.ac.uk/home.html>. Full details of our service can be found at: <https://www.newman.ac.uk/knowledge-base/my-career/>. Any questions please email us at: careers@newman.ac.uk

Advertised Volunteering Opportunities

You will find a list of volunteering opportunities for students on the Newman Careers jobs board which is accessible via your My Career account (mentioned above). Once on My Career, click on the Opportunities tab to access and to receive email alerts if you wish.

Website lists

As well as specific vacancies advertised through My Career there are many valuable volunteering databases and tools online, available for students to use to find an opportunity. The Careers Service recommend the following:

- Do-it.org, the comprehensive national database of volunteering opportunities across the UK – <https://do-it.org/>.
- National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) for helpful advice – <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/ncvo-volunteering>.
- The Guardian, advertising national and international volunteering opportunities – <https://jobs.theguardian.com/>.

There are also a series of Volunteering Centres across the UK to help and support you to find a suitable placement. For your nearest, log onto:

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/ncvo-volunteering/find-a-volunteer-centre>

The central volunteering office in Birmingham, for example, is:

Birmingham Voluntary Service Council (BVSC), 138 Digbeth, Birmingham B5 6DR
Tel: 0121 643 4343.

Some organisations have their own accreditation schemes to acknowledge the work of volunteers, check with them when you start as this would be something extra to go onto your CV.

Networking

Try to talk to as many people as possible about volunteering opportunities for ideas and for first-hand experience about what to expect. Network with friends and family as they may know someone who works in an organisation you would like to volunteer in.

Volunteering Overseas

Unfortunately, we are no longer able to accredit volunteering that is undertaken outside of the UK as we are unable to do the necessary checks for validation.

Volunteering overseas though is still a valuable experience to undertake, so if you are interested we recommend you speak to our International Office in Student Support on campus. You can email them at: international@newman.ac.uk or telephone on extension 2557.

Still looking for inspiration ...

In the past students have volunteered in a wide range of areas and organisations, they have volunteered as:

- Assistants in the Pen Museum.
- Childline helpline volunteers.
- Education assistants for Safeside, run by West Midlands Fire Service
- Leaders for Guides or Scouts.
- Mentoring in local schools to raise attainment.
- Residential activity mentors for disadvantaged children.
- Retail assistants in charity shops.
- Volunteers in Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid.

3. Preparing for your volunteering position

What to expect as a volunteer

To insure your volunteering opportunity goes smoothly it is the student's responsibility to find out as much information as possible beforehand. As a minimum the student should check that the following are in place for their arrival:

- An induction to include the information about the organisation and its policies e.g. health and safety, what to do if you have a problem and an introduction to other staff and volunteers.
- A named supervisor or person you can go to if you have a problem/question and details how to contact them. This person should also regularly check on you and your progress.
- Adequate training to carry out your role.
- Supervision - someone who is regularly checking on you and to make sure you are happy in your role.

Questions to ask

It is important to ask as many questions as possible before you begin volunteering.

- As a volunteer you are sometimes allowed reimbursement of some expenses e.g. travel, so check with your voluntary organisation.
- Is there any training available? It has to be directly related to your voluntary role otherwise it is seen as offering a gift which can have significant implications for the legal relationship between an individual and organisation.
- What will be my role? What will I be doing?
- What support or supervision will be available?
- Who will I be working with?

DBS checks and Safeguarding Letters

Settings that involve working with children and/or vulnerable people require you to have undergone a criminal records check. Carried out by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), it is the responsibility of the employer/organisation to ensure you have this in place. Some volunteering hosts will pay and organise a DBS check whereas others will expect you to have a new DBS done so check with them before you start as they can sometimes take a few weeks to be processed. For more information on DBS please see the following website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>. If you are required to produce a DBS yourself, you can seek guidance from the student records department at Newman University.

Alternatively, you may be asked to produce a 'Safeguarding Letter'. The letter confirms that you are currently registered on your course of study and that you have undergone a DBS check. You can request a Safeguarding Letter by going to the counter in Registry Operations Office and requesting a letter from Student Records.

Each individual organisation will work differently so please check directly with your host volunteering organisation for clarification.

Safety in the workplace

Although it is the responsibility of the organisation where you are volunteering to look after your health and safety, as a volunteer the student should also check the following are in place:

- What are the emergency procedures?
- What happens if there is a fire? Where are the fire extinguishers located?
- What are the First Aid arrangements?
- How do you report an accident and where is the accident report book?
- What are the procedures around use of display screen equipment (if applicable)?
- What are the Manual handling procedures?
- Will you be dealing with any hazardous materials regulated under Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) legislation?
- Do you need to wear protective clothing; will this be supplied?
- Have you been trained on any special equipment you will be using?

Information for students with additional needs

Volunteering is open to all students. If you have support needs or issues relating to diversity either discuss them with the Careers team or talk directly to the organisation that you would like to volunteer with. Volunteering organisations should be able to provide the support you need in order to perform a particular role, or they may be able to adapt the role if required.

Forms

If students wish to apply for accreditation they must complete **ALL** the relevant forms alongside the organisation they are working in. An award cannot be given without these **3** forms being presented:

Volunteering Form 1

This volunteering form is to be used to log information on the hours completed and the duties undertaken. This is a crucial part of the assessment process as it determines the level of Award you achieve so you need to be very accurate with the timings as they will be checked with your host organisation.

Volunteering Form 2

This volunteering form needs to be completed by the organisation you have carried out volunteering at in order to verify and validate your volunteering experience.

Volunteering Form 3

This volunteering form needs to be completed by the student. This aims to help the student to identify the skills they have developed and reflect on what they have learnt and how they can utilise this experience in the future.

4. **Monitoring your volunteering**

Keeping track of your hours

It is your responsibility to accurately record your volunteering hours that you wish to be accredited under this scheme. Please complete volunteering form 1.

Keeping track of your roles and responsibilities

It is your responsibility to organise an appropriate volunteering opportunity and work with your organisation to get the best out of the opportunity.

5. Applying for and receiving accreditation

Process for applying for accreditation on Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR):

Student Responsibilities

- A. You will organise a volunteering placement and check the opportunity meets the criteria as set out in pages 3-4 of the Volunteering Handbook.
- B. You will accurately record the volunteering hours you undertake on **Volunteering Form 1** and sign that they are accurate and true. As a guideline we will accredit your actual hours of face to face volunteering, not your lunch breaks, travel time or training before you start. If you feel there are special circumstances with regard to this, please clarify with the Careers & Volunteering Adviser before submitting your form.
- C. You will have these hours confirmed by your host organisation by getting your supervisor to sign and complete **Volunteering Form 2**.
- D. You will then complete **Volunteering Form 3**. You will tick the relevant employability skills that you have used during your placement and then write a short reflective account on what you have learnt and how it will help you in the future (about 100 words) and sign that they are accurate and true.
- E. You will send the **three** signed and completed forms to the Careers & Volunteering Adviser at Newman University or email: careers@newman.ac.uk Forms should be submitted for accreditation as you complete each volunteering opportunity, from September until May. **The final deadline for accreditation will be 31st May each year by which time all completed forms must have been submitted.** Remember you can apply for more than one award if you have completed volunteering in more than one place. If you complete any volunteering between June and August, this will be accredited in the following academic year.
- F. The Careers & Volunteering Adviser at Newman University will then check submitted forms for any omissions or inconsistencies with you and the volunteering organisation. Selected forms will then undertake a validation process whereby independent corroborative information will be sought to confirm the details contained therein.
- G. Student volunteering forms will then be presented to the HEAR Validation Panel in line with Newman University procedures.
- H. You will then be notified of your Newman Award and how your Certificate will be presented to you.

Organisations responsibilities

The Careers Team at Newman University will provide support and information to all students about volunteering opportunities available. Specifically, the Careers & Volunteering Adviser will be a focal point for guidance in this area and collect and record completed forms for students working towards an accredited Newman Award. All enquiries should be directed here in the first instance. Email: careers@newman.ac.uk.

6. Privacy Notices

Privacy Notice for Students

The lawful basis for processing your personal data is legitimate interests. Your personal data and information provided on the form is processed by the Careers and Volunteering Adviser in order to accredit your volunteering award. All personal data submitted in this form is processed to:

- Confirm that the voluntary work took place
- Confirm the hours of volunteering completed
- To present the information at the Validation Panel in order to get your accredited award included on your HEAR
- To send you an evaluation to give us feedback on your experience
- To produce anonymised reports for statistical purposes.

The personal information you provide on the three forms is stored on our secure IT network whose servers are located within the EU. Hard copies of personal information are kept in a secure location. The information is accessible to the careers team and shared with relevant staff including the Assessment and Graduation team. We will also send the Volunteering Forms back to the employer to verify and check you have completed the volunteering hours you have put on the forms.

The paper forms you submit will be securely destroyed. Information on these forms is stored in a database, which is active for three years after completion of your course, so that you can continue to access the information in line with your right to access the careers service for 3 years after graduation. After this time your personal data is securely disposed of. Your HEAR information is kept so that you can request a copy of the HEAR information as proof of your volunteering and for our administrative and reporting purposes.

Privacy Notice for Employers

The lawful basis for processing your personal data is legitimate interests. Your personal data and information provided on the form is processed by the Careers and Volunteering Adviser in order to accredit the students volunteering award. All personal data submitted in this form is processed to:

- Confirm that the voluntary work took place
- Confirm the hours of volunteering completed
- To present the information at the HEAR validation panel in order for students to get their accredited award and for it to be entered on their HEAR
- To request feedback
- To contact you with further information about how Newman University could work with you.

The personal information you provide on the form is stored on our secure IT network whose servers are located within the EU. Hard copies of personal information are kept in a secure location. The personal information is accessible to the careers team and only shared with relevant staff.

Information on these forms is stored in a database, which is active for three years after students graduate so that they can continue to access to the personalised careers service and for our administrative and reporting purposes. After this time your personal data is securely disposed of.

To read more about how our University works with professional contact's personal information please use this link www.newman.ac.uk/knowledge-base/privacy-notice-for-professional-contacts/.

Volunteering Form 1 (To be completed by student)

Name of Newman University Student:	
Volunteering Organisation name & address:	
Brief description of tasks, duties and responsibilities undertaken:	

Number of hours of volunteering undertaken:

Type of Activity	Date	Hours
Total Number of Hours:		

I confirm that the information provided is accurate: Yes No

Sign
Print
Date

Volunteering Form 2 (To be completed by organisation)

Name of Newman University Student: (Capital letters please)	
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For completion by the Volunteering Organisation

Supervisor/Manager:	
Organisation name and address:	
Telephone number:	
Email address:	
Brief description of tasks, duties and responsibilities undertaken:	
Number of Hours of Volunteering undertaken: (Verification of these hours may be requested as part of monitoring & validation purposes)	
Reference:	
Continued overleaf	

I confirm that the information provided is accurate: Yes No

Newman University is always keen to develop links with employers. We believe that employers and students can benefit from collaboration. Therefore, we would like to keep in touch with you ...

Please indicate whether you are happy for us to contact you regarding opportunities to work with Newman University e.g. Careers Fairs, posting job vacancies on our Careers portal etc.

By post: Yes No

By email/ phone: Yes No

Sign:

Print:

Date:

Volunteering Award 3 (To be completed by student)

Name of Newman University Student:	
Student Contact details: Address, Email and Telephone Number:	

Employability Skills Checklist: tick the ones that you have used during your volunteering:

Self-reliance skills:

- Self-awareness
- Willingness to learn
- Networking
- Problem solving

People skills:

- Team working
- Interpersonal skills
- Leadership
- Customer orientation

General skills:

- Flexibility
- Business acumen
- IT/computer literacy
- Numeracy

Reflective Account: Please write a short account of your volunteering experience – what you learnt and how you will use this to help you in the future (approx. 100 words)

I confirm that the information provided is accurate: Yes No

Sign:

Print:

Date: