

Edinburgh Award Advice Place Volunteer

What is it and who can participate?

The Edinburgh Award for Advice Place Volunteer is designed to recognise volunteers who showcase the following: research and enquiry skills, personal and intellectual autonomy, communication and personal effectiveness. We expect all volunteers to match these competencies and show motivation to improve on these over the year.

The Award focuses on two areas:

- the impact the activity has on the volunteers personally (i.e. their personal development, highlighted through their three development priorities);
- the impact the volunteers have on the situation in return (i.e. on the organisation or people around them within their activity).

We offer the volunteers an opportunity to build their confidence and experience in a safe environment and allow them to set their own goals. For example, some may wish to improve their knowledge on council tax or tenancy rights, or some may wish to help promote sexual health or wellbeing issues.

Their role mainly focuses on welfare advice, e.g. health and wellbeing, discretionary funding, answering general enquiries, housing and tenancy questions. The volunteers can get involved in a range of projects that run throughout the year as well as writing their own articles for social media. It is also a great opportunity for them to provide us insight from an adviser and student point of view, on how we can improve our services and the Students' Association as a whole.

To be eligible, one must be a volunteer in the Advice Place.

What's involved?

The volunteers should commit to 50 hours between October and April - this can include in the office or at outreach events. We have training 2/3 times a year with an initial full day session before the volunteers begin which is really informative to make them feel comfortable and confident. We also host sessions before each of the three 'input' stages which are aimed at helping the volunteers reflect on their progression at each stage. The volunteers are also encouraged to support each other and we give them opportunities to meet up and communicate with each other. We also assign them a buddy (a member of staff) so they always have a point of contact if they wish to talk over a difficult enquiry or ask questions. Over the year, participating volunteers complete three reflective submissions about the goals they set at the beginning.

How do I sign up?

We advertise for volunteers across the summer months and training begins in October. We use the Students' Association volunteering website for recruitments, so keep an eye on: <http://volunteering.eusa.ed.ac.uk/>

If you have any questions about this strand of the Edinburgh Award, please contact advice@eusa.ed.ac.uk