**Guidance Notes & Information for Volunteer Applications**

Thank you for your interest in a voluntary opportunity with the College. Volunteers play a valuable role in the life of Sutton College and without them we would be unable to offer the high level of service to learners that we currently do.

**We would ideally like volunteers to have:**

* An understanding of the principles of adult education
* Knowledge and understanding of the specific subject area
* Ability and willingness to work as part of a team, reporting to tutors/College managers as required
* Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
* Commitment and drive in helping us to put our values into action

**Plus, for those applicants interested in working in a classroom environment:**

* An understanding of the principles of supporting learners
* Ability to liaise and consult on all aspects of the required job or learners’ programme

# Benefits of Volunteering

* Gaining relevant work experience and references
* Gaining transferable work skills and knowledge
* Achieving a sense of value – either from being a part of someone else’s achievement or from contributing to the success of a project
* Receiving specific training relevant to your experience/interests
* Have access to support on CV writing /interview techniques through our Advice Centre
* Eligibility to staff discount (after 6 months’ continuous service)
* Eligibility to apply for internal vacancies (after 6 months’ continuous service)

The Volunteer Application form provides the key information which allows us to make an informed decision regarding your application. **Please complete all sections and do not write ‘see attached CV’ in any section.**

Please read these guidance before you complete the form. You should then return the completed form by email to:

[volunteering@suttoncollege.ac.uk](mailto:volunteering@suttoncollege.ac.uk)

or by post to:

**Data & Information Services (DIS) Department**

**Sutton College**

**St Nicholas Way**

**Sutton, Surrey**

**SM1 1EA**

# EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENT

The College is committed to offering equality of opportunity to all staff, students and visitors regardless of age, race, health, financial and employment status, disability, age, gender, faith, marital status, social class or sexual orientation. Positive steps will be taken to ensure that unlawful discrimination does not occur. Effective procedures are in place to deal with complaints. Sutton College actively promotes equality through its various Action Plans, Statements and Policies.

A copy of the full Equality & Diversity policy can be inspected at any Sutton College office or downloaded from our website. Our completed Equality Impact Assessments are published and are available on request. Sutton College policies should not be read in isolation, but cross referenced with all relevant London Borough of Sutton (LBS) and the College and Student policies. Please visit our website for more information.

**ABOUT OUR VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

Volunteering appointments will be made on the basis of the knowledge, skills and aptitude required to fulfil the role. Some opportunities are open to everyone, while others require specific skills or experience. **It is the aim of the College that all applicants are given a fair and equal opportunity.** Underpinning this process is the commitment of the College to its legal duty to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults by adopting safer recruitment practices.

Recruitment and selection documentation relating to unsuccessful applicants will be kept on file for 6 months and then destroyed in accordance with the College Data Protection policy.

**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE GET YOUR APPLICATION?**

Vacancies will be advertised on the College’s website and applicants should apply by e-mail to the DIS department by completing the application form.

Prospective volunteers will be invited for an interview with the relevant Manager.

If successful at interview, and once the placement has been confirmed, the DIS department will take up references and will contact you to arrange for a DBS check. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) provides access to criminal record information through its Disclosure service.

Once we have received all of your checks satisfactorily, confirmation of your placement details and further information will be sent to you by email.

# THE APPLICATION FORM

We use what you tell us on the application form to help us decide who to interview. **Please take your time, and fill it in fully.** We look for evidence to show that you have the relevant experience or skills, so it is important that you give us enough detail, and examples of what you have done, to show that you do have the required skills.

Complete the Volunteer Application form neatly, fully and accurately. It may be typed or legibly hand-written in black ink. Do not send a duplicated curriculum vitae or large quantities of appended material.

**Experience**

Your work history may include periods of unpaid and voluntary work as well as paid employment. For example you may include time as a carer for one of your family, or being a voluntary helper in a school. Use another sheet if you need extra space.

**Referees**

We approach your referees to confirm what you have told us following an interview. For example, if you tell us that you have worked in your present job for three years as a care assistant, we would expect your referees to tell us the same.

**We ask for references to cover a full five year history, which may include time spent at school/further education.** For this five year history please provide an email address or full postal addresses, including postcodes. Use another sheet if you need extra space. If you have been self-employed during the last five years, your accountant can often provide a reference. If you have been claiming benefits in the past five years, please give details of the person who can provide a reference.

Suitable referees are people who have had direct, recent experience of the work of the applicant and who are in responsible positions. Choose referees who know you well enough to comment on your skills for the job you are applying for. For each referee please say how you know the person. **Please don’t give close friends or family members as referees.**

**Statement of Suitability**

This is your opportunity to tell us why you are suitable for the job. **Please give us more information here about which areas you are interested in supporting and why.** Give specific examples of what you have done which prove your ability.

**We don’t always expect you to have formal experience.** If you have been out of work for a long time, or have never been in work, you may have acquired relevant skills and experience from being involved in community or voluntary work, through school or college activities, or by running your home.

**Eligibility To Work**

Under the Asylum & Immigration Act 1996, you will be required to provide proof of your eligibility to work in the UK. We will not appoint you until we have seen original documentary evidence – usually your national insurance number or a current work permit – that you are eligible to work in this country. If you are unsure about your status then you should contact the Home Office.

**Rehabilitation of Offenders & Police Checks**

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) provides wider access to criminal record information through its Disclosure service. All volunteering roles at Sutton College involve access to vulnerable people or children and these jobs are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which means you must give us details of any criminal convictions you have had, spent or unspent. We can ask the police to check whether you have a criminal record, and if so for what offences. We only carry out a DBS check if we offer you a role.

# THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING FORM

We regularly check our recruitment and selection to make sure that we are not unfairly discriminating against certain groups. To help us do this we ask you details about yourself. You cannot be identified after we have collected our statistics.

# DATA PROTECTION

The information on this form will form part of your contract of employment if you are successful and is collected under the lawful basis of public task and processing contracts and will be used for recruitment and other HR, line management or statutory procedures in accordance with our data protection policy, available on our website.

# COMPLAINTS

Sutton College wants to ensure equality of opportunity in its recruitment and selection. If you think that you have been discriminated against during the selection process you should write to the Principal explaining why you wish to complain. A representative may wish to speak to you and later will confirm the outcome of the investigation.