

ESOL conversation class - Volunteer Role Description

Role Title	ESOL Conversation Volunteer
Minimum Time Commitment	Every Friday from 9.45am to 11.45am (term time) + lesson preparation time 3 months minimum commitment
Location	The Renewal Programme, 395 High Street North, E12 6PG
About Us	<p>The Renewal Programme is a dynamic community-based charity, with 50 years' experience, empowering those in need to transform their lives, for a stronger community.</p> <p>The Renewal Programme strives to ensure that access to English learning is available, free of charge, to anybody who would like to learn. Our Education Department runs a broad range of ESOL classes from Absolute Beginners to Level 2. Our tutors have an excellent reputation for providing quality teaching to those in our community.</p>
About the Role	<p>We're looking for volunteers to lead our conversation sessions.</p> <p>With your help, we can build the confidence of local people who do not have English as a first language enabling them to gain more independence in their lives, move on to a formal ESOL qualification or just to have the chance to meet and socialise with other people.</p> <p>In these sessions you'll help people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practise speaking English in a relaxed and informal setting • Talk about subjects that matter to them, and their lives • Gain skills that will help towards independence • Reinforce skills that they may have been learning in the classroom • Meet new people and make new friends. <p>You will need good spoken English and plenty of enthusiasm. This role may be suitable for those who have acquired an ESOL teaching qualification and are looking to gain more experience in the sector. You will be part of a team of volunteers, with no member of staff present during the sessions. You will be expected to prepare and deliver the sessions with your fellow volunteers. Tasks will include:</p>

Before the Class (Preparation)

- Coordinate with other volunteers to plan the session's goals and structure and clarify individual roles within the volunteer team
- Help select or design conversation topics appropriate to participants' levels and interests
- Prepare discussion questions, prompts, or role-play activities
- Create and gather materials

During the Class (Delivery)

- Welcome participants and help create a friendly, inclusive environment
- Facilitate small-group or pair conversations
- Encourage participation from all learners and manage group dynamics
- Model clear, respectful conversation and appropriate language use
- Provide gentle guidance, clarification, and feedback as appropriate
- Help keep discussions on topic and within time limits

After the Class (Follow-up)

- Participate in a brief debrief with the volunteer team to reflect on what worked well
- Share observations about participant engagement or challenges
- Suggest ideas or improvements for future sessions

General Responsibilities

- Communicate reliably with the volunteer team
- Be punctual, respectful, and supportive of team members and learners
- Follow organizational guidelines
- Represent the program or organization positively

Skills & Experience

Personal qualities most suited to the role:

- Be a native or near native English speaker
- Ability to work as part of a volunteer team
- Reliability and commitment to regular sessions
- Willingness to work without direct supervision.
- An interest in supporting people to achieve their learning goals.
- Ability to put learners at ease and build confidence
- Flexible and responsive to different language levels
- Ability to facilitate small-group or one-to-one conversations
- Willingness to use simple language and adapt speech as needed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Active listening and supportive communication style ● Willingness to follow safeguarding, inclusivity, and confidentiality guidelines <p>Desirable criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Experience working with migrant communities ● Experience of facilitation of ESOL conversation classes ● TEFL or CELTA qualified ● TEFL or CELTA student
Positive Impact	<p>There is great reward in helping people from diverse backgrounds to gain confidence in speaking English. Our learners come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds with varying life experiences and different reasons for wanting to improve their spoken English. Many of our service users are dependent on others in their family or community to carry out day-to-day tasks or are worried about being in a formal classroom setting. Conversation classes help in building the learners' confidence to become independent, and in many cases, to move on to formal English learning or work.</p>
Benefits, Training and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Basic volunteer training. ● The opportunity to develop new skills and gain work experience to add to your CV. ● Free DBS certification. ● To be a part of a team who are making a positive change within the local community. ● The satisfaction of contributing to building the English language skills of our learners. ● We will pay any agreed out of pocket expenses.
Essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Native or near native speaker
Pathways to become a volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete the application form ● References ● Basic DBS Check ● Attend an Induction Session at The Renewal Programme
Report to:	ESOL teacher/Volunteer Project Manager