

2 Volunteer recruitment and selection

Supporting English language learning, in order to be effective, requires specific skills and suitable volunteers should be selected for all opportunities. Projects should consider how to engage with volunteers from diverse backgrounds, especially volunteers that reflect the background of learners they are working with.

“When I heard Syrian families were moving to my area, I wanted to help. As a child of immigrant parents, I can recall my own parents’ struggles – English wasn’t their first language – I would act as interpreter in dealings with doctors, teachers, shop assistants etc.”

– Volunteer

* Score your organisation on each good practice goal:

- 1 = We are satisfied with this
- 2 = Let’s consider a change
- 3 = Let’s make a change

Good practice goals and challenge questions

	Good practice goals 	Score*	Challenge questions 
1	Projects have transparent volunteer recruitment policies and procedures, with coordinator time and resources allocated to ensure they are implemented.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do our recruitment policies and procedures support the organisation to recruit volunteers who are able to meet the needs of learners? How do we evaluate this?
2	Projects are selective about recruitment of volunteers exploring motivation and relevant skills, based on learners’ needs. Organisations offer further guidance to volunteers who are not yet suitable for the role.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do our recruitment policies and procedures ensure that potential volunteers’ motivations are understood and match the requirements of our roles? How active are our recruitment policies and procedures in targeting volunteers with relevant skills we require for our learners? How well do we support individuals who are not yet suitable to volunteer?
3	Volunteers must have relevant background checks or references supporting their suitability to ensure the safeguarding of learners.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we keep records of background and disclosure checks and references? Are these secure and stored in accordance with data protection requirements?
4	Selection procedures ensure that volunteers are placed in a suitable placement to meet their needs, as well as their learners.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do we match volunteers’ skills and motivation to the volunteering placement?
5	Projects identify and address barriers to volunteering, where possible. These may include income, time, physical access, confidence, skills, health, caring commitments or criminal convictions.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we remove barriers to volunteering, especially from under-represented groups?
6	Volunteers come from a range of backgrounds, genders, nationalities, and levels of experience, with targeted recruitment for under-represented groups, e.g. asylum seekers, refugees, ethnic minorities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well are the communities we work with and wider society reflected in the volunteers we recruit?
7	Projects retain committed and competent volunteers to support their learners.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do we retain committed volunteers?