



The SU Volunteering Award – Committed Student Volunteer

*Guidance For The Online Written Reflection Activity &
The Top 10 Skills and Attributes Graduate Recruiters Are Looking For*

Congratulations on having logged 50+ hours of voluntary activity. Use the following guidance to help you answer the questions in your written reflection. It won't take long! If you require further support or guidance, please do not hesitate to get in touch – volunteer@su.plymouth.ac.uk

Question 1: List at least three day-to-day tasks you undertake to fulfil the requirements of your volunteering role/s.

Examples of tasks you could have been undertaking include e.g. Reading and responding to e-mails, attending/chairing meetings, listening to people's concerns, making phone calls, supporting others, planting trees etc.

If you have more than one role to reflect on, you could list a couple from one role, and a couple from another, or simply just choose to list some tasks from only one of the roles. It's entirely up to you! Do make it clear however as to which role you are referring to when listing the tasks.



Question 2 – 4: Choose one of the top ten skills graduate employers are currently seeking, and evaluate how you are using and developing this chosen ability, through some of the tasks you have listed above.

The Top 10 Skills Graduate Employers Are Currently Seeking

As put forward by [Target Jobs](#)

1. Communication

The ability to be clear, concise and focused when using both verbal and written communication methods, combined with the ability to actively listen to others.



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2. Teamwork

The skill of being a team player, by taking responsibility for, and contributing to the team's goals/objectives, as well as building positive working relationships that help you all get there.

3. Negotiation and Persuasion

The ability to understand what someone else wants to achieve, but also setting out what you want to achieve and how to achieve it, and coming to a joint decision of a way forward where you both get what you need, and feel good about it.

4. Problem Solving

This is about clearly seeing the causes of a problem from different perspectives, and coming up with creative solutions to resolve said problem, in a logical and analytical manner.

5. Leadership

Leadership is all about bringing people with you to fulfil a goal/vision through the effective motivation of others, the delegation of tasks, and through setting a good example.

6. Organisation

The ability to work efficiently through effective prioritisation (how you decide what is important) and time management (how you meet deadlines).

7. Perseverance and Motivation

The ability to not let the challenges that work can throw at you, get the better of you. That you can get through said challenges, preferably with a smile on your face, where possible.

8. Ability To Work Under Pressure

The ability to recognise when you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed, and manage such appropriately, for the benefit of your work and your own personal wellbeing.

9. Confidence

This involves having faith in your colleagues and the organisation you work for, as well as having confidence in yourself without acting in an arrogant fashion. The ability to be assertive.

10. Commercial/Organisational Awareness

This is about being able to understand and define the organisation you work for, i.e. its purpose, its aims and objectives, how it works, what its unique selling point is etc. It's seeing the bigger picture.

For more information on each of these skill areas, [please click here](#).



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Answers to all three questions should be 2-4 sentences long. The trick is to avoid making broad sweeping statements that could apply to anyone. You need to provide detail to make the answer personal to you. The following examples demonstrate this:

Example 1:

“By conversing and seeking feedback with fellow students, my confidence has grown hugely.”

This student is talking about their ability to be confident in certain situations. Anyone however can make bold statements like this. As the reader, for us to be truly convinced that their confidence had grown, we need to see just a bit more. Something like...

“By conversing with and seeking feedback from fellow students, my confidence has grown hugely. I have had to approach students and engage them to sign a petition for my campaign, and I used the SEA approach, which stands for See, Engage and Act, to do this effectively. Consequently, I acquired 300 student signatures, which has been a real boost in helping me to hopefully create good change for students.”

Here, the student has given a detailed example (getting students to sign the petition), has mentioned a technique they have used to help them boost their confidence (SEA), and has shown the impact (300 Student Signatures) of the task they have undertaken, whilst working to boost their confidence. A much more convincing answer!

Example 2:

“Through answering telephone calls for St Luke’s Hospice, I am enhancing my ability to communicate to a wide range of audiences.”

Again, this is a broad sweeping statement that does not actually explain how they are enhancing their ability to communicate to a wide range of audiences. We just know that they are using this task to enhance their communication abilities. A better answer would be...

“Through answering telephone calls for St Luke’s Hospice, I am growing my ability to communicate to a wide range of people. When talking to the elderly, I will slow the tempo I talk at and be patient. When talking to those who have residents in our care, I act sympathetically and keep things simple for them. When dealing with partner companies and organisations, I am polite and precise with my communication.”

This more convincing answer provides different examples of how they adjust their communication format/style when dealing with different audiences. It doesn't just state that they are good at communicating with different audiences.



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Example 3:

“When chairing meetings, I use my leadership skills to guide conversation and get us through the meeting.”

With this answer, we do not get an idea of what leadership skills they have actually used.

“When chairing meetings, I use a number of leadership abilities to ensure they are a success. I am fair in my approach, making sure that everyone is heard, including those who I feel are shy in nature. This proved advantageous recently, when I encouraged a quieter member of the committee to voice their view on ideas for our next event, with their idea now having been adopted in our programme of activities. I can be assertive when required to drive the meetings forward so that all agenda items are covered. I also lead by example, by refusing for example to look at my phone during meetings so as not to be distracted, and encourage others to follow suit.”

With this answer, the student has demonstrated their leadership skills (fairness, assertiveness, and leading by example), with examples given of how they have demonstrated these. A good answer!

Question 5: How do you see yourself continuing to develop these three skills in your role/s going forward?

You simply need to provide an example of what you will be doing in your role/s that will see you develop the three skills you picked for questions 2-4, or come up with a different example for each skill. It's entirely up to you. If you have more than one role, then it is up to you which role you choose to use as an example. A good answer would look like....

Leadership: Next semester, our society will be hosting an event open to all students, with the potential for 100 individuals to attend. I will be leading the team to deliver such an event, which will involve my abilities to motivate them when the going gets tough, stay calm when we are very busy, and adapt where necessary.

Confidence: Through leading on this same event, my confidence will grow as I will have to undertake some public speaking in the process, which I chose to do to push myself out of my comfort zone.

Communication: With regards to the running of the society overall, my communication skills will only continue to develop as I communicate via different methods to groups as large as the entire membership, to individuals on a one on one basis, who are struggling say to engage in the activities we run, as an example.

The student has provided clear examples of when and how they will develop these skills.