

IELTS Listening Lesson 27

Setting:

University Staff Member Interviewing a Volunteer Applicant – Talks about duties, expectations, and time commitments.

Questions 1–6: Complete the sentences below.

Write NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER for each answer.

1. The volunteer applicant found out about the opportunity at the _____.
 2. Volunteers in the Saturday School Program mainly help with subjects like English, science, and _____.
 3. A one-day training session, lasting _____, is required for all volunteers.
 4. The minimum volunteer commitment is _____ per month.
 5. New volunteers typically work in _____.
 6. Volunteers will receive a certificate and a _____ at the end of the term.
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Questions 7–10: Choose the correct letter, A, B, or C.

7. Why does the applicant want to volunteer?
 - A. To earn academic credit
 - B. To gain experience for a future career
 - C. To meet people in the community

8. What is required as part of the application process?
- A. A personal essay
 - B. Two academic references and a DBS check
 - C. Proof of enrollment in the university
9. What kind of supervision will the volunteer receive?
- A. Occasional check-ins from a staff member
 - B. Direct supervision by a qualified teacher
 - C. Independent work with weekly reporting
10. How does the staff member describe additional volunteer opportunities?
- A. Mandatory and scheduled monthly
 - B. Rare and difficult to join
 - C. Optional and held a few times a year
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Script

University Staff Member: Thanks for coming in today. I understand you're interested in volunteering with the university's outreach program?

Volunteer Applicant: Yes, that's right. I heard about the opportunity at the student fair last week, and I think it could be a great way to get involved and develop some new skills.

University Staff Member: Absolutely. Volunteering with us is a great chance to contribute to the local community and also build your own experience. To start, can I ask what specifically interested you about this role?

Volunteer Applicant: Well, I've always enjoyed working with people, and I like the idea of helping younger students. I'm thinking of becoming a teacher after I graduate, so I figured this would be a good stepping stone.

University Staff Member: That's a great connection. Many of our volunteers go on to teaching or other public service roles. Now, just to clarify, this position is part of the Saturday School Program we run for local secondary students. Volunteers assist with tutoring in various subjects—mostly English, math, and science—and also help supervise during breaks.

Volunteer Applicant: Okay, that sounds pretty straightforward. I'm majoring in biology, but I've taken quite a few math courses too, so I might be able to help in both areas.

University Staff Member: That would be helpful. We try to match volunteers to subjects they're comfortable with. We do ask, however, that you attend a short training session beforehand so you're familiar with our curriculum and approach.

Volunteer Applicant: Sure, I'd expect some kind of orientation. How long is the training?

University Staff Member: It's just a one-day session—about four hours. It covers classroom management basics, working with diverse learners, and safeguarding procedures.

Volunteer Applicant: Great. And when do the sessions actually run?

University Staff Member: The Saturday program operates every week during term time, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. We understand students have busy schedules, so we ask for a minimum commitment of two Saturdays a month.

Volunteer Applicant: That's manageable. I don't have classes on Fridays, so I should be able to make it work.

University Staff Member: Good to hear. We also rotate volunteers so no one gets overloaded, and we try to be flexible around exams or coursework deadlines. Just keep us informed, and we'll coordinate accordingly.

Volunteer Applicant: Sounds reasonable. What about the application process? Is there anything else I need to provide?

University Staff Member: There's a short application form, which includes some questions about your background and availability. You'll also need to provide two references—academic or professional—and complete a DBS check, since you'll be working with minors.

Volunteer Applicant: Right, of course. I have a part-time job tutoring, so I think my employer there could be one of my references.

University Staff Member: Perfect. And once everything is cleared, you'll be assigned to one of the local schools we partner with. Most are within walking distance of campus, though a few are a short bus ride away.

Volunteer Applicant: Okay, I don't mind the travel. Do volunteers work alone or in pairs?

University Staff Member: Usually in pairs, especially for new volunteers. You'll be working under the supervision of a qualified teacher as well, so there's always support available. Over time, some volunteers take on more responsibility, like leading activities or helping organize events.

Volunteer Applicant: I'd be interested in that eventually. I like the idea of developing leadership skills.

University Staff Member: Absolutely. And we do recognize your contributions officially. At the end of the term, you'll receive a certificate of participation, and we're happy to provide reference letters or documentation for your CV.

Volunteer Applicant: That's great. It would definitely help when applying for postgraduate programs or jobs later on.

University Staff Member: Exactly. One more thing—it's important that volunteers understand the need for professionalism. Even though this isn't a paid position, punctuality, preparation, and communication are key. If you ever can't attend a session, we need at least 48 hours' notice unless it's an emergency.

Volunteer Applicant: That makes sense. I treat my part-time job the same way. I'll make sure to stay in contact.

University Staff Member: Excellent. Now, do you have any questions about the role or the program?

Volunteer Applicant: Just one—do volunteers ever help with other kinds of events outside the Saturday program?

University Staff Member: Yes, occasionally. We run literacy fairs and science outreach days a few times a year, and volunteers are welcome to assist. Those events are optional, but we'll let you know in advance when they come up.

Volunteer Applicant: That sounds fun. I'd be happy to get involved with those too.

University Staff Member: Wonderful. I think you'd be a great fit for the team. I'll send you the application form and reference form by email, and we'll invite you to the next training session once those are completed.

Volunteer Applicant: Thank you. I appreciate the information and look forward to getting started.

University Staff Member: You're very welcome. We look forward to having you on board!

Answer Key

- 1 student fair
- 2 math
- 3 four hours
- 4 two Saturdays
- 5 pairs
- 6 reference letter
- 7 B
- 8 B
- 9 B
- 10 C