Evaluating Volunteer Experience and Learner Impact- Improvement Questions

Each group discussed 2 improvement questions:

1. **Impact on Learners** - How well do your volunteers contribute to a positive impact on ESOL learners?
2. **Volunteer Experience -** How well do we support volunteers to delivery high quality services?

Prompt questions:

1. What are we aiming for?
2. What methods do we use to find out if we are doing it?
3. What do we find out from this?
4. What do we do with this information?
5. What are the challenges of implementing evaluation?
6. What changes could we make to our current processes?

This is the group feedback from our Working with Volunteers in ESOL delivery national discussion in March 2019. To join the mailing list, contact a member of our Volunteer Tutor Project team. To have this discussion with your colleagues, download the evaluation grid from our website.

1. **Impact on Learners** - How well do your volunteers contribute to a positive impact on ESOL learners? (2 pages)

What are we aiming for?
Volunteers support improved language acquisition of learners.
Volunteers can increase flexibility of mainstream provision
Volunteers help learners with specific learning goals like passing exams, IELTS, Cambridge Proficiency, additional support for college
Involving volunteers can increase the capacity of an organisation, allowing for individual support
Volunteers provide increased provision out with mainstream classes, where there is demand
Volunteers allow for more language exposure and different accents
Creative ways to learn, such as art with ESOL
Social integration of the learner, a holistic approach for enhanced learner experience
Volunteers can contribute to increased confidence in the language

-see next page for

What changes could we make to our current processes?
Training sessions for volunteers who are conducting learner evaluations: -
Pre-teach the "evaluation language" (introduce as general classroom language)
Translating evaluations into community languages where possible, use more pictures
Buddying up higher level and lower level learners
Give learners evaluation forms beforehand so they can fill them out with partners/at home
Do evaluations without volunteers/tutors in the room

1. **Impact on Learners** - How well do your volunteers contribute to a positive impact on ESOL learners?

What methods do we use to find out if we are doing it?	What do we find out from this?	What do we do with this information?	What are the challenges of implementing evaluation?
Formative and summative assessments Pass rates of exams Progression measured Monitoring numbers Learner questionnaires Class representative system, using focus groups Plenary games e.g. 2 stars and a wish, post-it notes, smileys Social media polls and comments Informal chats, "What can you do now that you couldn't do before" Anecdotal evidence Observation from tutors, volunteers or learners Whole service/project reviews	Volunteers can see how effective they are when learners pass exams Percentages of learners in whole group with improved confidence Attendance monitoring Ways to better support volunteers or learners, based on their interests Improve services and find out what else is needed, evidencing and justifying the use of volunteers	Ensure volunteers know they are appreciated and can see their impact. Council sends the newsletter to all volunteers during Volunteer Appreciation Week Celebration night during volunteer's week supported by the council, a dinner catered by college Give volunteers personal thanks Yearly report to OSCR, reports to partner organisations and to students Councils use it to justify with line manager, decision makers. Sharing with funders, key stakeholders if outcomes are being achieved Justify the use of volunteers and the need to support them	Low level learners, do they understand this evaluation questions? Cultural sensitivity- do learners feel comfortable giving honest feedback? Language barrier and articulating feedback Knowing what is directly impacted by the volunteer 30-45 learners in college classes, honest feedback? Volunteers can take feedback personally and that can knock their confidence Time restraints for meaningful feedback

2. **Volunteer Experience** - How well do we support volunteers to delivery high quality services? (2 pages)

What are we aiming for?	What methods do we use to find out if we are doing it?	What do we find out from this?	What do we do with this information?	What are the challenges of implementing evaluation?
We want indicators to show that a volunteer is 'confident and capable' in their role	Mixed Methods to know impact on service users 'impact measuring' to show confidence (SL) Evaluation forms by email (to give people time to reflect) Surveys Open ended questions to invite discussions Evaluation sessions 1:1 Support and supervision sessions, every 6 weeks Observation – mostly informal Quarterly recoding of hours, tutor reflection Counting volunteer hours – hours per term	We all have areas of good practice and areas for development We find out if volunteers are: Happy in their role Feel confident Skills are developing Skills are lacking Need for development Suggestions from volunteers to develop their knowledge or understanding Great ideas from volunteers From observation, noticing gaps in skills and ability	Information used to develop service or project or individual volunteers Offer support Offer suitable training Involve other organisations where there is a knowledge gap Share information in ESOL partnership for area to learn. Feedback to learners Volunteers Service Review Funders Integral part of service Justification for funding/ offering a 'free' qualification for volunteers -need to report results for qualifications Where else can we take this information to raise the profile of volunteers' contribution?	Not all volunteers are 'techy' There isn't always a one size fits all Volunteer buy in (reticent) Challenging to make demands on volunteering Time constraints can be a barrier Asking the right question Accepting criticism – how do you do it and reflect on it? Are you giving people an unnecessary opportunity to rant about something that could be better addressed in an alternative way. How to prevent situations of volunteers 'acting out' Dealing with negative feedback from learners – procedure in place to deal with this

2. **Volunteer Experience -** How well do we support volunteers to delivery high quality services? (2 pages)

What changes could we make to our current processes?
Share evaluation results with volunteers - it's motivating Revisit same survey so you can monitor year on year. Audio recording of volunteer comments Peer observation with feedback and a process Tally mark system to note how much time is spent on volunteer support. Link volunteers to -NATECLA -SATEFL -ITEFL webinars www.futurelearn.com Cambridge and Oxford University Press (create a system for recording this impact) Make sure that volunteer coordinators are a "walking, talking resource bank", i.e. that they are able to respond to volunteers needs and can suggest material when volunteers' learners have a particular need.   Use this network to arrange swaps in training sessions and identify expertise National sharing of volunteer ESOL impact Could we count hours nationally? Education Scotland suggests idea of using number of volunteers and link this to impact on learners.