



## LEAPS Student Volunteers – working with schools and pupils

### What is LEAPS ?

LEAPS is a widening participation programme, funded by its higher education institution and local council partners to increase progression to higher education in South East Scotland. We aim to encourage and advise students who are traditionally under-represented in higher education and we currently work with state secondary schools throughout South East Scotland, supporting pupils who match LEAPS eligibility criteria. For more information please visit our website [www.leapsonline.org](http://www.leapsonline.org).

### What role do Student Volunteers play ?

We believe the most effective way of making young people aware of the benefits and challenges of Higher Education is by providing them with the opportunity to meet current university students and to visit local universities. Most of our activities target pupils from S3-S6 (13-17 year olds) at 17 local high schools around Edinburgh and the Lothians, the Scottish Borders and Stirling. As a LEAPS Student Volunteer you would take part in workshops in schools or on university campus and work with small groups of between 5 and 8 pupils. LEAPS workshops are well structured, based on topics related to university life and led by LEAPS staff with student volunteers playing a central role.

### Why get involved ?

Previous volunteers have quoted the following reasons for getting involved as a LEAPS volunteer;

- Great experience to add to your CV
- Especially useful if thinking of teaching or a career working with young people
- Opportunity to give something back to the local community
- Provides a welcome break from academic work at university
- It's flexible – you can fit volunteering around your studies and other commitments
- It's a fun and sociable thing to do. You meet other student volunteers from local universities

### School Workshops

School workshops take place in school for a single school period (about an hour) and are delivered from November to March each year. Transport to and from the school is provided by LEAPS. For 2019-2020 we will be delivering workshops in schools to S4, S5 and S6 pupils in 17 local schools on topics such as 'Student Life', 'Typical Student Week' and the 'Transition from School to University'. Student volunteers work with small groups of pupils, complete short activities and are encouraged to talk with enthusiasm and honesty about the realities of life as a student.

### S3 On-Campus

This half-day event provides an early introduction to university and student life for S3 pupils (13-14 year olds). Pupils will visit a university and, in a small group, explore the university campus (the building and facilities) with a LEAPS Student Volunteer, our 'uni experts'. Working in their team, pupils will complete fieldwork on a particular topic, collecting research and images, which pupils will then use to create a report 'film' on Adobe Spark. In 2019/2020 we will deliver 7 of these events

between February and April. S3 On-Campus events take place at the University of Edinburgh but volunteers from any university are encouraged to take part. No knowledge of the host university is required as each group of pupils will be shadowed by a LEAPS member of staff.

### Digital Volunteering

As well as physically attending workshops in schools on campus student volunteers also have the opportunity to make a digital contribution as a volunteer. This could involve recording a short film clip, using your own phone or a LEAPS camera, which we may then use on our S5 or S6 blogs to provide additional online information and support to the students we work with.

### Interested ?

In order to find out more why not come along to one of our 'LEAPS Volunteer Information and Training Sessions' taking place at local universities (including Stirling) in October 2019. For a complete list of the sessions and to book your place visit [www.leapsonline.org/join-us](http://www.leapsonline.org/join-us)

Attending one of the session doesn't commit you to becoming a LEAPS volunteer – it's more a case of coming along to see if you think it's the volunteering opportunity you are looking for. We will cover the type of events volunteers get involved in, the pupils you will be working with, and what your role would be in a school workshop or campus based event. There will be experienced LEAPS volunteers to chat to and you will also receive all the training you need in order to get you started as a LEAPS Volunteer, should you wish to do so.

### Who can get involved ?

Please note students in second year or above at the following institutions are eligible to contribute as LEAPS Volunteers;

- **The University of Edinburgh**
- **Edinburgh Napier University**
- **Heriot-Watt University**
- **Queen Margaret University**
- **Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)**
- **University of Stirling**

### What happens after attending a LEAPS Volunteer Information and Training Session?

Following training interested students complete an online volunteer registration form, providing us with the contact details of two referees, one of which must be from your place of study. All of our events take place in a staff-supervised environment so the completion of a PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) form is not required.

### Signing up for LEAPS events

You can check out [www.leapsonline.org/volunteernoticeboard](http://www.leapsonline.org/volunteernoticeboard) for a list of forthcoming school workshops and events from November to March. To sign up for workshops and events registered volunteers just need to email basic details of the event(s) to [leapsvolunteers@ed.ac.uk](mailto:leapsvolunteers@ed.ac.uk). There is no pressure to commit to a set number of events per semester. You can take part in as many or as few events as you choose to suit your timetable and other commitments.