

Wollongong City Libraries' Adult Literacy Program - Information for Volunteer Tutors

Thank you for your interest in this volunteer role. Please read this information carefully as it details the time commitment for training, skills and other information that will help you decide if this is a role for you.

Background

In 2013, an Australian Bureau of Statistics survey found that 44% of the adult population can find everyday reading and writing challenging. Research from the national Reading Writing Hotline also shows that there are many communities in Australia where there are no appropriate courses for adults who would like to improve their literacy skills, or there are none available at an appropriate time.

In response to this, Wollongong City Libraries has developed an Adult Literacy Tutoring program, based on the Reading Writing Hotline's program and resources.

This program pairs a volunteer tutor with an adult learner for a period of 12 months to help meet the individual's learning needs and goals. Goals may include improving workplace, social or family literacy, or developing the literacy or numeracy skills required to enrol in a course.

Wollongong City Libraries provides training, support, mentoring and space in our libraries for tutors and learners to undertake the Adult Literacy Program. We can also provide a wide variety of resources and materials relevant to the learners' needs, including recipes, timetables, magazines, newspapers, non-fiction and digital resources.

Volunteer Tutors

Volunteer tutors are required to complete a training course before being paired with a learner. This course consists of ten hours of facilitated, interactive, group training delivered over four sessions:

- Session 1** - Introduction to the program; Who are our students?; The adult learner
- Session 2** - How do we read?; The beginning & Intermediate reader; Writing & Spelling
- Session 3** - Everyday numeracy; Digital literacy
- Session 4** - Planning for success; What happens now?

Formal qualifications are not required. It is much more important that you are understanding, patient, flexible, a great listener, have a sense of humour, as well as having good English literacy and digital skills.

Volunteer tutors are required to:

- Undertake the training course with Wollongong City Libraries, and any additional or top-up training that may be required from time to time
- Undertake Wollongong City Libraries volunteer inductions
- Meet with the student for approximately 1.5 hours a week in the library to work on literacy and/or numeracy tasks related to their learning goals

- Facilitate learning in an equal relationship (not as social worker, counsellor, social trainer or carer)
- Adequately prepare weekly lessons
- Assist the learner to complete a *Student Progress* update, or other means of monitoring and recording progress
- Undertake a Police Check and NSW Working with Children Check.

Volunteer tutors are asked to agree to an initial commitment to the program of 12 months. *Whilst none of us can make absolute commitments and there may be mitigating circumstances, it is important to understand how fragile some of our learners are, and how important the relationship between tutor and learner is.* It is hoped that tutors will stay with the program for *more than* 12 months after being matched with a student.

Most tutors will arrange tasks for their learners if they go away for a period. If you need to go away for a lengthy period, please speak with Wollongong City Libraries Community Connections and Learning staff so that we can arrange temporary cover, if necessary.

If you would like to apply to be volunteer tutor, please submit an expression of interest [online](#), or email us at libraryenquiries@wollongong.nsw.gov.au.