



BA Hons Public

Services

Title: Public and Voluntary

Sector Work Experience

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'Educators have also seriously considered the potential of volunteer work to promote civic responsibility and moral growth in students.' as stated by Moore and Allen (1996) shows that volunteering is being increasingly encouraged within the education system because it allows young people to gain skills they would need once they are employed as well as the fact that they will have better understanding about how voluntary organisations work. According to Phillips and Phillips (2000) there are many skills to obtain when given the opportunity to volunteer for an organisation. They suggest that employers seek to employ those with voluntary experience as they will potentially have skills such as honesty, initiative, communication and responsibility. This report will consist of my experience and performance as a volunteer with South Wales Police, assess the skills I have gained as well as to evaluate the importance voluntary work on the local community.

After some research and careful thought about where to volunteer I decided that I wanted to volunteer for an organisation with close relations to the Public Services. I believe that this will be the best opportunity to not only gain skills that the Public Services look for when employing but to also give me the experience to decide on a future career path. I was already a volunteer with South Wales Police therefore I did not have to apply to volunteer anywhere however the issue I was faced with was the shifts were being booked up quickly and I was unsure of the shifts I could do due to

getting my rota for work weekly. This was a struggle so I considered other options such as St.Johns Ambulance however they did not have any meetings that I could attend on my only day off. Therefore I decided to do my hours with South Wales Police and keep looking for any shifts I could do.

11th August 2018

This was my first shift within the Help point in Swansea. I was eager to find out how it operated however I was more nervous as I knew the importance of my role. Once we got in it was myself and one other volunteer for South Wales Police and then there were volunteers for St. Johns Ambulance. Immediately we were felt welcomed and shown what to do by members from St.Johns Ambulance. As there were not many police volunteers we could not go out and walk as we were both new therefore we only went out when we were called alongside an experienced volunteer. We were told the basic protocol which included staying in our group, respect the patients that come in the help point as well as to act professional in the help point and on Wind Street. This seemed easy enough however once we got up to Wind Street there were many people I knew who wanted to have a conversation however I had to politely decline. This was then proven to be even more difficult as all the people I work with were on a works do which included my brother and sister. As the night went on I was getting numerous calls to off my brother to take him and my sister home however I had explained to them I was volunteering and refused this then escalated to many people from work calling me to explain that my sister was really drunk and needed to go home. This was difficult as I was not there to be their personal taxi. The last call I received was to go and pick up a intoxicated female. When I arrived I did not see the female immediately however from other people there I knew it was my sister who was very drunk. It was not highlighted to me exactly how drunk she was in the phone calls however made me realise the significance of the help point as it hit closer to home. This shift also allowed me to identify how important my role as a volunteer was and that without the volunteers in the help point most of the people

seen would put a unnecessary strain on Morriston A+E as well as potentially not getting the help they need. This has definitely given me the motivation to continue volunteering.

18th August 2018

This shift we were yet again made to feel welcome. As soon as I walked in I could identify that this is an environment where you are constantly working alongside other people and that communication is a vital skill to have within the Public Services. This shift seemed to be quite busy due to there being not many volunteers as expected so I wasn't given any new challenges such as the radio which I did not mind as it was a challenging shift dealing with many people. This shift also brought to my attention how serious some calls can be. We received calls for intoxicated individuals but also injuries and that each call we get will be unpredictable. Overall this shift went well.

6th October 2018

This shift saw more volunteers for the Police. As there were more volunteers we started off the shift with a briefing of the code of conduct and how to be professional as well as the allocation of teams. We were put into two teams of 4 which made it easier as we distributed roles within the team which included radio operator, someone in charge of the wheelchair, someone in charge of the bag and another person to help if we needed to lift anyone. I found this to be more effective as we were able to focus on our own roles which made us seem much more organised and professional. This made me feel much more comfortable and potentially improved my performance. This shift helped me realise the importance of teamwork in volunteering and more importantly the Public Services and that if I continue to volunteer I will improve skills that will make me employable in the Public Services.

14th November and 17th November 2018

These shifts ran smoothly and I feel as if I have become more confident when being put into a situation of leadership. I have found that I am using my initiative when we go to different calls. Both of these shifts were quiet as people believed it was because it is just before Christmas however I can see the reason why leadership and initiative is important when volunteering and when working in the Public Services. These are skills I will definitely be improving.

08th December 2018

This day of volunteering was short as we had to go around the Liberty Stadium to raise awareness of handing money to homeless to people and rather to hand it to homeless charities as you can guarantee the money is going on things to help them. I went round before the start of the rugby and was interacting with people. I raised some money however I focused more on promoting the message rather than asking for money. This day was very effective however one of the teams playing were french and therefore could not really explain to the fans about the charity.

09th February 2019

This shift ran consistently however at one point I had to remain at the help point because there were only men there to treat patients and a female patient was very intoxicated. This demonstrated just how important rules are as well as showing me how seriously St.Johns Ambulance are about following them. This shows that obedience is vital not only for rules but to ensure that false allocations can be proven wrong. Also the shift was not too busy which was a shock as many people were out for the rugby.

20th February 2019

This shift was quite busy compared to the last shift I did. I am enjoying the volunteering however have found that there is some tension. I have felt some other volunteers to be rude to me. I have realised that it can be a tiring environment however I can not let it affect my performance with the patients. I have found it difficult to bite my tongue however I am glad that I realised the importance of a good team relationship on performance.

16th March 2019

Tonight's shift I was nervous about doing as Wales we're playing in the six nations to attempt to win the Grand Slam title. This would potentially mean that lots of people were going to be out. However yet again I was proven to be wrong as it was fairly quiet. In my opinion this would have been a good opportunity to train other volunteers to do different roles. This is because I have not learned much more the past few shifts and there are many roles that I am not confident in such as the radio.

10th April 2019

Volunteers were encouraged to volunteer tonight as it was Varsity. Although it was held in Cardiff the help point had been informed that busses had been arranged for university students and was dropping them off at Wind Street. As the help point could potentially busy we had three teams of four just to ensure there were enough teams for calls. As the night went on we realised that it was not as busy as we thought. Some people argued that it may be because students have been day drinking in Cardiff and could be too tired or drunk to

come out to Wind Street. I was able to go for a walk with my team and it confirmed that not many people were out. Overall this night was very quiet which also shows how unpredictable some nights can be however highlights the importance of being organised and prepared just in case it was to get busy.

13th April 2019

I have been enjoying volunteering in the help point however it has made me realise that I want to be in a position where I can be confident in helping people. I am able to do this to some extent at the help point as I was given a brief first aid lesson in October but can not confidently help someone who may be injured or intoxicated. I have been considering an alternative voluntary roles such as St. John's Ambulance however I am unable to attend the training days due to work. I was then informed about a charity organisation called Cariat who provide medical training, medical assistance at events as well as to promote the need for defibrillators. I volunteered for Cariat at a bike race. Although there was no need for any medical assistance I was able to learn more about the charity and the people who volunteer for them. I really enjoyed this and will be volunteering for them in the future.

After volunteering for Cariat I went to volunteer for the Help point which was a very quiet night. Although I know the importance of the help point I have not been given much opportunity to try other roles. I understand that people who volunteer more should decide what they want to do however I believe those who are experienced should be encouraging other people to take on roles such as the radio.

24th April 27th April

Both of these shifts were the busiest shifts I've done for a while. We were not called to any situation that complicated and I believe myself and my team performed exceptionally well. I believe by continuing volunteering I am gaining many essential skills however these particular shifts I could see that there was an improvement as I was constantly communicating with the team when dealing with patients as well as the teamwork we displayed was excellent.

1st May

This shift was also fairly quiet with my team on having no more than four callouts. Most of these calls were straightforward however we received a call that stated a female had been assaulted and was unconscious. This meant that we had to run to the location of the incident. This was the first assault incident that I had ever had which meant we had to make sure the Police were notified. The patient was not unconscious as we arrived however she was reluctant to cooperate which made it a lot harder for us to get her to the help point. She eventually agreed to walk to the help point however she could not walk very fast due to being dizzy and nauseous. After dealing with this incident I reflected and realised that patience is essential within the Public Services. I found it easy to be patient with this individual considering the circumstances however I believe I am a very patient person.

Overall my experience volunteering has been very eye opening. I understand the importance of the help point as it takes the strain of the local Public Services. Not only is it essential for people who are intoxicated but I did not realise how many calls were drug related, assaults as well as how many people suffered with a mental health disorders and how it is affected

after they have consumed alcohol or drugs. Volunteering has allowed me to gain many vital skills such as communication, teamwork, leadership, initiative as well as to consider qualities such as patience and honesty. I believe not only has it been an experience to help me gain skills but it has also been very rewarding helping vulnerable individuals.

References

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