



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit**  
**State Examinations Commission**

## **Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme**

**Link Modules**

**Case Study 2018**

## VOLUNTEERING

Many communities rely on volunteers to help deliver services and programmes that enhance the life of the people living in the area. Local Volunteer Centres were set up to help match those who needed volunteer workers with individuals offering their services. The Volunteer Centres offer advice, placement and support services to individuals and organisations who are interested in volunteering in Ireland.

Opportunities also exist for those who wish to have the experience of volunteering abroad. Tailored volunteer projects are offered by many agencies.

People volunteer for a variety of reasons. In Tommy's case, having spent most of his working life in the construction industry, he found himself unemployed for a long period of time after his employer went out of business. He was becoming increasingly concerned about the challenges of gaining new employment. During a visit to his local Intreo Office he learned that he could volunteer and his jobseekers allowance would not be affected. Tommy decided to contact his local Volunteer Centre to explore some volunteering opportunities. This would give him the opportunity to develop new skills and gain valuable experience for his CV.

Sarah is a Placement Officer in the Volunteer Centre; she matches organisations that need help with people who wish to volunteer. Tommy had a face-to-face meeting with Sarah during which she pointed out a number of things Tommy should consider if he wishes to volunteer while searching for a job. Volunteering is a great way to improve his chances of finding work but it is important not to let it interfere with his job search. Tommy discovered there are a number of aspects he should consider before committing to volunteering if his experience of being a volunteer is to be a positive one.

Having registered with the Volunteer Centre, Tommy applied for work and secured a placement volunteering at a local care home for the elderly. His decision to accept this placement is due to his personal engagement with care homes. His elderly father has been living in a state-of-the-art facility for the last 6 months. Through his experience in the care home Tommy realised that this type of work really suited him. He researched the qualifications that are required for this career and he applied to do a course in Care Skills at a Further Education College.

Many organisations depend greatly on the positive impact of volunteering. Companies give back to society through their Corporate Social Responsibility strategy. Given the differences between commercial and volunteer organisations, it is important to ensure effective structures exist. Larger companies appoint Volunteer Co-ordinators who play a vital and varied role for both the individual and the organisation. Experience has shown that involving all parties in decision-making is vital to the success of volunteer agencies in Ireland.