**HELPSmates Buddy Program Frequently Asked Questions**

**Who will I meet?**

Students choose their volunteer buddy through our UTS Online forum. They decide which buddy to choose based on the information volunteers gave us in their application.

**How many students does a volunteer meet?**

When they register, volunteers indicate how many students they would like to meet.

Most people meet only 1 student but some people like to meet in a group of 3 or 4. Volunteers are only expected to spend 1 hour a week, no matter how many students they meet.

**When will I get a buddy?**

Volunteers may be contacted by a student soon or it could take a while. Matching of volunteers and students depends on whether they have the same availability and areas of interest.

If you don’t find a buddy within a few weeks, please email us and we may be able to offer some advice.

**How long should students wait for a reply from a volunteer?**

It is very important that volunteers reply to student emails asap or the students will think they are no longer interested in the program. It is also important to check junk mail as there have been some problems with emails going to junk mail, though we think that has now been solved.

*Whether you are a volunteer or a student, if you are no longer interested it is very important that you email us so we can delete you from the system.*

**Where will we meet?**

You and your buddy can decide where to meet. Some people go to a busy café and others prefer a quieter place on campus. You can meet through other forums such as Skype, as long as you are both comfortable with that. Remember, the HELPS Buddy Program insurance only covers you while you are here on UTS premises. If meetings continue or are conducted outside of UTS they are no longer considered to be part of the HELPS Buddy Program.

**What will we talk about?**

It’s a good idea for volunteers to ask students what they would like to talk about. Most people are happy with casual conversation but you can also look in our UTS Online Forum for ideas and conversation starters. Though it is a good opportunity to talk about your studies and clarify ideas, it is not a volunteer’s responsibility to edit written assignments. This may be in breach of the university’s Plagiarism policies. For help with writing, students can come into the HELPS centre and talk to our Academic Advisors.

**What if I want to stop?**

Either partner can stop the meetings if necessary but please contact HELPS to confirm this is the case. It is important to also confirm with your buddy that you can no longer continue. If needed, HELPS can contact your buddy for you and help you find a new buddy.

**Should we record how often we meet?**

Volunteers record their buddy meetings in a google form (https://goo.gl/forms/bYl5IkpcAvJZGXFZ2). The link to this google form can be found in the e-mail you received when first registering. Make sure to press ‘Submit’ after every edit. You must be signed into your UTS student account.

**Do I get a certificate?**

Certificates will be issued to volunteer buddies at end semester after completing the online evaluation and record of meetings. Certificates are not issued to students taking part to improve their English speaking skills.

**Good luck with the UTS HELPS Buddy Program!**