

# Geography Ambassadors

## RSGS Pilot Scheme – FAQs for Teachers

### Organising a Visit

**Q: How do I ask for an Ambassador to deliver a session at my school?**

A: The best way to do this is to contact Rachel Hay and Addy Pope, the project co-ordinators, on [ambassadors@rsgs.org](mailto:ambassadors@rsgs.org). If you are unsure about what type of visit would be best for you, they will be happy to help you.

**Q: How far in advance do I need to arrange a visit?**

A: The earlier the better, as this allows plenty of time for preparation and communication between you and the Ambassadors. However, if you need to arrange a session at short notice, please contact the project co-ordinators with all the details as soon as possible, and they will do their best to find you an Ambassador who is available.

**Q: How many pupils should there be in a session?**

A: Anywhere between five and 35 pupils is appropriate because it encourages interaction and questions from the pupils. This becomes more challenging with larger groups. Assembly-style sessions in lecture format are not appropriate for Ambassadors to deliver. If you would like a session for a larger group, please contact the project co-ordinators, who will be able to advise.

**Q: How long do sessions need to be?**

A: Generally, 45 minutes to one hour. However, it is ultimately for you to decide on the appropriate length of time depending on session topics the Ambassador will cover, timetabling restrictions, and the age and stage of your pupils. It is important to let the Ambassador know what time they will have. Less than half an hour is not appropriate for Ambassadors, unless it forms part of a half-day or day visit (for example, an Ambassador running a session for S2 pupils, before chatting to some S5/6 pupil for 20 minutes).

**Q: Is it OK to have Ambassadors in more than once? How do I go about booking another visit?**

A: Definitely! You can have multiple visits for one age group or across different years. The previous Ambassador can come again, or new Ambassadors can be asked. To rebook, contact the project co-ordinators or RSGS headquarters, or email the previous Ambassador who came to your school to see if they are interested and available.

**Q: What type of schools do Ambassadors work with?**

A: Ambassadors mainly visit secondary schools.

**Q: What age groups can Ambassadors deliver a session to?**

A: Between 11 and 18 years old. However, if you would like a session for a different age group, this can be discussed with the project co-ordinators.

**Q: Is a visit by an Ambassador guaranteed if I request one?**

A: Our Ambassadors are really enthusiastic and committed, and we expect to be able to fulfil every visit request we receive from teachers in the Edinburgh and Glasgow areas during the pilot scheme in 2015-16. However, as it is a voluntary scheme and Ambassadors often have other commitments, we cannot guarantee that an Ambassador will be available.

**Q: I would like an in-depth careers session for my pupils. Is this possible?**

A: This may be possible with Graduate Ambassadors, but often, due to full-time work commitments, their availability may be limited. Please contact the project co-ordinators to discuss options.

## **Facilitating the Visit**

**Q: As a teacher, how do I support the Ambassador(s) when they are working with my pupils?**

A: As a teacher, you are expected to have an active disciplinary role in the session an Ambassador is delivering. Ambassadors are not teachers and are not expected to do any disciplining of pupils. In addition, it is your responsibility as a teacher to make sure that Ambassadors are treated with respect and courtesy at all times.

**Q: Is the school expected to host the Ambassadors for the entire day, including lunch times?**

A: If the Ambassadors have visits that span across the whole day, it would be expected that they will remain in the school premises during breaks. However, whilst an offer of lunch would be appreciated, it is not necessary or expected; just let them know beforehand and they can bring their own packed lunch.

**Q: What resources are sent with the Ambassadors? Do the Ambassadors need any resources provided by the school?**

A: The Ambassadors will bring the following resources with them:

- a school feedback form;
- a prepaid envelope in which to send the form back;
- an RSGS leaflet;
- a *World of Opportunity* booklet (also available on the RSGS website);
- any other documents they feel are relevant to their session.

The Ambassadors should bring all their own resources. However, they may require a certain classroom set-up in order to run their session. This may include PowerPoint, internet access, audio for videos, or individual technology for pupils (eg laptops, iPads). This should all be worked out in advance between yourself and the Ambassador, as we appreciate that different schools have different facilities.

## General

### **Q: Is the Geography Ambassadors scheme free?**

A: The scheme is free of charge for both schools and Ambassadors. However, as a small educational charity, the Royal Scottish Geographical Society welcomes donations to support projects like this; to help, please contact [enquiries@rsgs.org](mailto:enquiries@rsgs.org) or 01738 455050.

### **Q: How much control do I have over the content that the Ambassadors will deliver?**

A: The scheme aims to help support Geography in schools and to show what the subject can become when you take it further. It does this by utilising Ambassadors' enthusiasm for particular aspects of Geography that would be relevant to school pupils. As a result, the scheme is not tied to the curriculum and can be used to complement your teaching of Geography. Ambassadors will work with you, over email and phone, to develop a session that meets your requirements. We advise you to speak to the Ambassador on the phone prior to the visit, to ensure that both of you are comfortable with the arrangements. You can also contact the project co-ordinators at any point too.

### **Q: What if I want a specific type of Ambassador visit, like a development or GIS focused one?**

A: Let the project co-ordinators know this when you request a visit and they will make sure that the Ambassadors are able to deliver the content you require.

### **Q: Are Ambassadors members of the PVG scheme?**

A: Whilst some Ambassadors may hold PVG membership from other work, Ambassadors do not legally need to be members of the PVG scheme, as they are volunteers who will not be left alone with pupils.

### **Q: Do I have to fill out a school feedback form for each session delivered?**

A: This depends on the organisation of the visit. If it was a different Ambassador hosting each session in the same visit, it would be expected that multiple forms would be filled out as they relate to the session delivery. However, if it is the same Ambassador delivering repeat sessions throughout the visit, one feedback form is ample. You can return this to us electronically, or in the envelope provided.

### **Q: I am organising the visit but will not be present for the session(s). Is this OK?**

A: This is fine, as long as another member of teaching staff is present who knows the pupils and will be able to support the Ambassador(s) effectively and during the session. They will be given the school feedback form following the session. This asks for feedback on the organisation and delivery of the session, therefore it might be useful to complete the form together.

### **Q: What other resources can I get from the RSGS?**

A: Some teaching materials are available on the RSGS website ([www.rsgs.org](http://www.rsgs.org)) and we are always grateful to share resources received from teachers. Secondary school teachers can arrange for their pupils and themselves to attend talks during our *Inspiring People* talks programme between September and March each year. Please visit [rsgs.org/inspiring-people/talks-and-events](http://rsgs.org/inspiring-people/talks-and-events) for more information.

**Q: What if I am unhappy with any aspect of the visit?**

A: The way the scheme is set up places a big emphasis on communication between the teacher, the project co-ordinators, and the Ambassadors, to ensure all parties are happy with the visit prior to it going ahead and thus minimising the potential for things to go wrong. Ambassadors will have agreed to adhere to a code of conduct prior to joining the scheme, and please make sure that you ask the Ambassador to send you this if they have not already done so. In preparing to have an Ambassador visit your school, please contact the project co-ordinators if there is anything you wish to discuss.

**Still have a question?**

Please contact Rachel Hay and Addy Pope: [ambassadors@rsgs.org](mailto:ambassadors@rsgs.org)