



The Cardinal Hume Centre welcomes volunteers from all walks of life. Here we speak with 80-year-old volunteer, Judy Thomas, who has worked as a Learning and Employment Services volunteer for a remarkable eight years. Judy has worked mostly one-to-one with clients in different roles, including mentoring and reading coaching. A true believer in life-long learning, Judy recently she completed a CELTA (certificate in teaching English to speakers of other languages) course. She is now working as an ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) teacher. Judy is also currently studying Arabic so she can help her clients more.

What made you want to volunteer?

I was still working when I started volunteering. I wanted to do a volunteer-type job because I'm a Catholic, I attend [Westminster] Cathedral, and I'm also extremely interested in young adults and people who come from another country who need help. I used to work with families and children in the health service and the Cardinal Hume Centre seemed a good place to start.

What led you to doing the CELTA Course?

I didn't feel I had enough knowledge to be able to help the clients together in the classroom with their English as much as I wanted to. The CELTA course has been fantastic. It gave me confidence in teaching and to work with students at different levels. I was happy to do the one-to-one teaching: for some clients, you could really see the change, but I've always enjoyed the class experience.

How are you finding the teaching now?

I am loving it! I'm used now to writing lesson plans. I am aware of other aspects that you need to bring in to complement your lesson plan, such as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. I wouldn't have known that without the CELTA.

What do you find most enjoyable about your volunteering?

It's the satisfaction of seeing your clients progress, which is what it's all about really, and working as a team. Flora and Emily in the volunteering team, Jan and Sylwia in Learning Services and the reception staff always made me feel part of a team.

What would you say to someone interested in volunteering at the Centre?

The Centre will find something that is right for you. I've always found the atmosphere totally supportive. Everybody has always been kindness itself. The Centre is welcoming, happy and extremely professional, and I have had huge satisfaction working as a volunteer here.

To find out more about volunteering at the Cardinal Hume Centre please go to <https://www.cardinalhumecentre.org.uk/help-us/volunteering/>