

Model Volunteering Policy – a template

Overview

- [Introduction and commitment](#)
- [Standards of good practice](#)
- [Roles and responsibilities](#)
- [Recruitment and selection](#)
- [Induction and training](#)
- [Support and supervision](#)
- [Recognition](#)
- [Settling](#)
- [Expenses](#)
- [Moving on](#)

This model format is intended for guidance purposes and should be adapted to suit your organisation and specific processes.



[Creating a Volunteering Policy](#)

In setting out, or when regularly reviewing, your Volunteering Policy, see this resource, which explains the purpose and reasons for the key aspects covered within this format.

Introduction and commitment

This volunteer policy sets out the agreed principles and practice by which we involve volunteers and is relevant to staff, volunteers and trustees within the organisation. It aims to create a common understanding, a consistent approach and ensure the highest standards are maintained in relation to the management and involvement of volunteers.

We recognise volunteers as an integral part of the organisation. Their contribution supports our mission and strategic aims and complements the role of paid staff. We aim to encourage, support, celebrate and invest in volunteer involvement to ensure that volunteering benefits the organisation, its clients, the volunteers, and the community. We know that there are costs associated with volunteer involvement and will seek to ensure adequate financial and staffing resources are available for the development and support of volunteering.

We acknowledge that people have a right to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering and can contribute in many ways. We accept our responsibility to organise volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the gift of the volunteer's time is valued.

We are committed to offering a flexible range of opportunities and to encouraging a diversity of people to volunteer with us, including those from under-represented groups such as younger people, people with a disability, older people and people from ethnically diverse communities. We pledge to develop roles where firsthand knowledge of 'a particular issue' is welcomed. To improve volunteer diversity, we will gather data to enable monitoring of equality, diversity and inclusion and will take action if required to employ targeted volunteer recruitment methods and reach out to underrepresented groups.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers and to foster good working relationships between paid staff and volunteers. Volunteers will not be used to replace staff.

Volunteers are individuals who undertake activity on behalf of our organisation, unpaid and of their own free choice.

The [Welsh Government Volunteering Policy](#) (2015) defines volunteering as activity which:

- is undertaken freely, by choice
- is undertaken to be of public/ community benefit
- is not undertaken for financial gain

Work experience placements and internships are not the same as volunteering and so will be managed differently and those arrangements are not covered by this policy. Trustees are volunteers with responsibility for governance of the organisation. Volunteers may be involved on a one - off, short term or on a longer term, regular basis. They may be involved in the direct delivery of our services; on our board of management as trustees; in community engagement to raise awareness, in one off events and promotional activities, in our offices or in community venues.

Volunteers are valued for:

- Bringing additional and diverse and new skills and perspectives to the organisation
- Enabling us to be more responsive and flexible in our approach
- Championing our cause within the wider community
- Enhancing the quality of what we can offer and of client experience
- Promoting the wellbeing of users of services, staff, local communities and themselves

Standards of good practice

Our management practice is informed by the Investing in Volunteers Quality Standard for volunteer management and the Code of Practice for Organisations involving Volunteers

Roles and responsibilities

A designated (staff) member (The Volunteer Co-ordinator) has responsibility for the development, management, co-ordination and support of volunteering within the organisation, including the welfare of volunteers. All volunteers will have a designated and named staff member/volunteer for guidance, support and supervision. Staff responsibilities for volunteers will be explicitly referred to in their job description. Those supporting volunteers will have access to volunteer management training and have the ongoing opportunity to discuss the challenges and successes in managing volunteers.

Volunteers will be supported to undertake a role they understand, are prepared for, we hope they enjoy and where they can make a difference. We intend for roles to be, where possible, flexible and to match what our organisation would like help with to volunteers' motivations, needs and skills.

There is no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, for the volunteer to attend or to undertake tasks. Volunteers will receive induction and information that enables them to understand how to inform the team if they cannot attend or continue. The organisation has transparent and easy to understand procedures so that both parties can communicate any wish to discontinue an association together.

Recruitment and selection

Equal opportunities principles will be adhered to in recruiting volunteers. Opportunities will be widely promoted, in both English and in Welsh and in other languages as appropriate, to attract interest from a wide pool of volunteers and different sectors of the community.

Positive action to target volunteer recruitment may be used where appropriate. Online application is encouraged but non-digital methods of application are also available, as is one-to-one support, to complete the process. We will use the Volunteering Wales platform to aid our recruitment and use other methods such as social media posts and community networks.

Information will be made available to those enquiring about volunteering, including written role descriptions which set out the purpose of the volunteering role, what's involved, what we offer as support and key considerations. Risk assessment will be undertaken on all volunteer roles and identified risks and steps to mitigate risks can be shared with the volunteer.

The recruitment process is defined and consistent for any given role. The process for trustees, regular volunteers and for volunteers for one off events will be tailored in each case and may differ from one another.

Recruitment will usually involve an informal interview/chat, application form and the taking of references. For roles which involve care giving and/or sustained and direct contact with young people or adults in a regulated service, volunteers will be required to have a full DBS disclosure check which will be arranged by the organisation. DBS disclosures are dealt with in the strictest confidence.

A criminal record will not necessarily prevent an individual from volunteering with our organisation. We will take appropriate caution in light of previous or pending convictions, which supports individuals to gift their time.

Where applicants are not able to be placed in their preferred or an adapted role, they will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles, or signposted to the local volunteer centre or the <http://www.volunteering-wales.net/> website.

Induction and training

Volunteers will be provided with induction and training appropriate to the specific tasks to be undertaken and their needs. We provide assessed training and ongoing training and development opportunities.

Safeguarding is everyone's business, and we will provide volunteers with training and information to ensure they are confident of what to look for and do. Our onboarding procedure includes essential organisation information, site orientation, team welcome and role preparation. We have a range of options to assist new volunteers such as role tasters, shadowing, buddying up. The volunteer handbook gives reminders from induction training / further details about the support and procedures in place for volunteers.

Support and supervision

Volunteers will be offered ongoing support and supervision as appropriate, and this is discussed during induction. We offer flexibility around role and engagement. We can discuss with volunteers adapting the role and what support is needed. Arrangements for supervision vary according to the volunteer and the role undertaken, and may include telephone support, email check ins, group meetings or one to one review. The regularity of supervisions will be explained at induction and are linked to the role.

Recognition

We value our volunteers and have many mechanisms for saying thank you and recognising contributions. We aim to show gratitude often, using personal thank yous, social meet ups, occasional certificates and by explaining the impact our volunteers make.

Formal recognition of the contribution of volunteers is expressed through annual reports, website articles, social media, and during Volunteers' Week (The National Week of volunteer appreciation which takes place

annually in the first week of June) celebrations.

Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with the organisation via staff and volunteer team meetings, planning events, focus groups and/or volunteering surveys.

Settling Differences

We wish to create a culture of welcome, open communication and respect. The organisation aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. It seeks to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and acted upon promptly.

We will attempt to deal with any problems informally and at the earliest opportunity. Volunteer related issues will be managed informally, and it is not appropriate to use staff disciplinary procedures. Processes for counselling out and or letting volunteers go are widely understood, transparent, explained at induction and mentioned in the volunteer handbook / welcome information.

All volunteers will have a named person to whom they can turn in the case of any difficulty. Where informal resolution is not possible, the organisation's Complaints Policy will be adhered to.

Volunteers will be made aware of the organisation's complaints policy and how to use it. They will also be made aware of how inappropriate actions by volunteers will be addressed by the organisation.

Expenses

Reimbursement of expenses incurred during volunteering is considered a good practice marker, a measure which supports equal access to volunteering and as a recognised budget need in volunteering projects.

Volunteers will be given clear information about volunteer expenses reimbursement and the process to make a claim.

Volunteers will be reimbursed agreed expenses such as travel: bus fare and/ or mileage and refreshments and any necessary expenditure for role using the correct form made available incurred by their volunteering activities.

Moving on

Our organisation recognises that volunteering develops skills beneficial for personal growth. Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options. We can support this by providing a reference; we will provide a reference for all volunteers who have been in role for longer than 3 months.

When volunteers consider moving on, we encourage them to let us know as soon as they can so we can thank them for their time with us. When volunteers move on from volunteering with us, they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire more fully.

Date approved 00/00/0000

Date of next review 00/00/0000

Person responsible (INSERT NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON]

THIS IS A TEMPLATE DOCUMENT, PLEASE AMEND AS APPROPRIATE, ADD YOUR OWN LOGO AND BRANDING