

Volunteer Policy

(Appendix D)

Volunteer Policy

Volunteers are a vital part of the growth of the Students' Union. The following document will give guidelines of recruitment and selection, support for volunteers, rights and responsibilities, duties and relationships.

1. Purpose of Volunteer Policy

- 1.1 Within the Students' Union, volunteers are a major resource and make a vital contribution to our aims outlined above. We intend to encourage, develop and support volunteer involvement in our work in which volunteers are already important. In doing so we recognise that the roles of volunteers will complement and not replace the roles of paid staff.
- 1.2 In the Students' Union a volunteer is understood to be a person who does voluntary work on our behalf. It is undertaken by choice and it is unpaid. Nothing in this policy or otherwise arising from arrangements made in relation to volunteers shall give rise to an employment relationship.
- 1.3 Within the Students' Union, volunteers are active in the delivery of our services and are active in any community led groups and projects that we may support. Volunteers are also involved in many aspects of our work including our advisory and information services, our campaigns at local and national level and in our mentoring roles.
- 1.4 The Students' Union believes that our relationship with our volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and commitment, within which the Students' Union and our volunteers both have rights and responsibilities.

2. The Students' Union Obligations to Volunteers

- 2.1 The tasks to be performed by volunteers will be clearly defined, so that all concerned with their activities are sure of their respective roles and responsibilities.
- 2.2 The organisation will comply with the Data Protection Act by the use of application/registration forms and by keeping records of work done by volunteers as a basis for monitoring, and by enabling volunteers to have access to their records.
- 2.3 Volunteering opportunities will complement rather than replace the work of paid staff.

- 2.4 Opportunities will be given for volunteers to represent their views to the Students' Union.
- 2.5 All existing and future policies will be checked as to how they affect volunteers.

3. The Volunteers' Obligations to the Students' Union

- 3.1 All volunteers should carry out their tasks in a way which corresponds to the aims and values of the Students' Union and volunteer within agreed guidelines and remits.
- 3.2 All volunteers shall respect confidentiality, respect other volunteers, service users and staff.
- 3.3 All volunteers shall carry out their tasks with regard to the health and safety of others and attend training and support sessions where appropriate.

4. Recruitment and Selection

- 4.1 The Students' Union will adhere to its equal opportunities policy when recruiting and selecting volunteers.
- 4.2 To ensure that all volunteering opportunities are widely accessible they will be promoted appropriately. Such promotion will specify the task to be undertaken and will draw attention to the benefits and experience gained from participation in volunteering.
- 4.3 Where appropriate, volunteers will be required to complete a volunteer's application/registration form.
- 4.4 Written task descriptions will outline time, commitment, necessary skills and actual duties.
- 4.5 The Students' Union will comply with the Police Act Part V and will follow the procedures and standards laid down by Volunteer Development Scotland's "Protecting Children" when selecting volunteers who are to work with children, young people, and other vulnerable groups.
- 4.6 We will request references for volunteers where appropriate.
- 4.7 Once placed, we expect the volunteers to comply with the existing policies and procedures.

5. Support for Volunteers

- 5.1 The Students' Union will invest financial and personnel resources for the management of volunteers.
- 5.2 The Students' Union will provide an introduction period and a review session for volunteers to assess the progress of their placements and to resolve any problems at an early stage.
- 5.3 Volunteers will be given information on legislation and policies that may affect them e.g. Health and Safety, Human Rights and Equal Opportunities.
- 5.4 All volunteers will be offered appropriate access to support and supervision on a regular basis, with a named staff support, and will be informed whom to contact in an emergency.
- 5.5 All volunteers will be offered equal access to appropriate training to enable them to develop their capabilities and personal competence appropriate to their volunteering role.
- 5.6 Opportunities will be provided for changing and/or upgrading volunteer responsibilities as desired by the volunteer and appropriate to the organisation's need.
- 5.7 Volunteers will be encouraged to provide each other with mutual support within the bounds of confidentiality.
- 5.8 The Students' Union complaints, grievance and disciplinary procedures will be explained to volunteers and they will be informed of who to contact if they have a grievance about any aspect of their work.