

UPSU Policies
Volunteering Policy
May 2019

Approval Details

Approved by	G&A Committee	Date	15 May 2019
Approved by	Trustee Board	Date	21 June 2019
Ratified by		Date	
Implementation date:	May 2019		
Document admin responsibility	Sarah Davey		

Reviewing this document

This document may be amended with the permission of the Board of Trustees, following pre-approval by Governance and Appointments Committee.

Union Council will then review any significant changes to this policy prior to any such change taking effect in order to permit the Council the opportunity to provide feedback and raise any concerns in respect of any such change directly with the Union Chief Executive who will refer such feedback and concerns to the Board of Trustees for further consideration.

What does UPSU mean by volunteering?

UPSU considers volunteering to be spending time, through choice, doing something unpaid, that aims to benefit the environment or someone to whom the volunteer is not closely related (based on a Council for Voluntary Organisations definition) and to be an extracurricular activity which is not part of or required by a student's academic studies.

UPSU recognises that a volunteer is free to stop volunteering at any time.

About this policy

This Volunteering Policy is not contractual but provides UPSU's staff with information on UPSU's approach to engaging and supporting volunteers.

Scope

This policy applies to all volunteering positions provided and supported by UPSU and outlines the policy for partnering with external providers who offer opportunities through UPSU's volunteering brokerage service.

Why does UPSU offer volunteering?

UPSU provides quality pathways and connections which support Plymouth University students to grow and develop through extra-curricular volunteering by gaining valuable skills, knowledge and practical experience which cannot be achieved from academic studies. This offers a more rounded student experience whilst also making a positive impact in the local and wider community, thus enabling students to connect with and contribute to UPSU's purpose and plan.

Resolving Complaints

Students, staff and UPSU's community partners are encouraged to contact UPSU with any complaints or concerns regarding student or staff volunteers and UPSU will work with those involved to help to resolve the issue.

UPSU's procedures for dealing with complaints and problems relating to volunteers are set out in the UPSU Members' Disciplinary Bye Law and the UPSU Complaints Policy.

UPSU's responsibilities to our volunteers

UPSU will:

1. promote a wide range of suitable volunteer roles throughout the academic year, offering one off activities, ongoing roles, group and one to one settings
2. ensure that each volunteer role has a description of the specific activity involved
3. give each of our volunteers a formal induction and details of their main contact within UPSU
4. offer information and guidance to help students find and carry out a suitable volunteering role
5. reimburse our volunteers' reasonable out-of-pocket expenses so that no volunteer is left out of pocket as a result of their volunteering
6. provide a system to record and recognise volunteering
7. provide, on request, a reference for volunteers
8. ensure that our volunteers operate in safe and healthy conditions
9. maintain a policy of insurance covering our volunteers
10. ensure the volunteer enrolment process is as accessible as possible to promote diversity and inclusion and remove barriers to volunteering.

UPSU's Expectations of its Volunteers

UPSU expects that each of its volunteers will:

1. act as an ambassador for UPSU, behaving in an appropriate manner
2. observe data protection, confidentiality, safe space and health and safety obligations, as notified to them
3. make UPSU aware of any change in circumstances that may affect their volunteering
4. endeavour to be reliable and to maintain agreed levels of commitment

5. attend training where appropriate
6. log their volunteering hours and training sessions on the UPSU website

UPSU and Partner Organisations

UPSU maintains a database of volunteering opportunities with its volunteering community partner organisations who are UK registered charities, Community Interest Companies and public sector organisations. UPSU ensures that such opportunities are suitable for students and that an organisation has a policy of insurance covering volunteers before being accepted as a community partner.

Good Practice

UPSU's practice around volunteers is informed through its Investing in Volunteers UK quality standard for good practice in volunteer management and it has a dedicated staff team to support and promote volunteering amongst University of Plymouth students. UPSU welcomes comments and feedback on its volunteering practice.

Student Fundraising

All student fundraising is governed by the UPSU Student Fundraising Bye Law.

Privacy Statement

UPSU processes personal data on volunteers in order to maintain contact with them and support them. Personal data will not be shared without a volunteer's prior consent beyond relevant UPSU staff and any community organisation with which a student has expressed an interest in volunteering.

For further help and advice, please contact the Governance Team

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