

# THE UNION VOLUNTEER POLICY

Guidance for student volunteers

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THE UNION  
MANCHESTER  
METROPOLITAN  
UNIVERSITY

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# SECTION 1: VOLUNTEERING WITH THE UNION

## The Union's Mission:

*"The Union exists to represent all members at the Manchester Metropolitan University. We strive to ensure that the needs and views of our members are at the heart of everything the University does. We will provide a wide range of services, activities and opportunities to offer the best possible student experience."*

## The Union Volunteer Policy

This policy sets out The Union's commitment to volunteers, and the structures we have in place to ensure that volunteers are appropriately recruited, trained, supported, recognised and consulted, across the range of volunteering opportunities available. This policy also sets out some general tips for volunteers, including signposting to get specialist advice.

## The Union's commitment to volunteering

At The Union, we know that volunteering is an amazing way for students to acquire skills, knowledge and experience outside of their academic studies. We believe that extra-curricular activities such as volunteering are extremely important to some students' time at University.

As part of our commitment to providing a wide range of activities and opportunities, The Union endeavours to engage volunteers in a variety of volunteering experiences. We are passionate about providing students with opportunities that enable them to develop, learn, and have fun as well as engaging in a responsible way with the community around The Union.

As part of this commitment, we support the development of one off opportunities and projects in partnership with local schools and third sector organisations. The Union also has numerous clubs, societies, and representation opportunities.

## Definition of Volunteering

**The Compact Code of Good Practice in Volunteering defines volunteering as:**

*"an activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or individuals or groups other than (or in addition to) close relatives."*

**The Compact Code also identifies four principles for volunteering, which we believe are vital to ensure volunteering is valuable for students:**

- **Choice:** Volunteering must be a choice freely made by each individual. Freedom to volunteer implies freedom not to become involved.
- **Diversity:** Volunteering should be open to all, no matter what their background, race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origins, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.
- **Mutual Benefit:** Volunteers offer their contribution and skills unwaged but should benefit in other ways, for example by finding the activity fulfilling.
- **Recognition:** Recognition of the contribution of volunteers to the organisation, the community and wider social objectives is central to a fair relationship between the volunteer and volunteer-involving organisation.

The Union does not consider volunteers to be employees of the organisation, or any external organisation with whom they undertake volunteering.

## The Union's Commitment to Volunteers

**For any volunteering you undertake with The Union, we will try**

to:

- Make volunteering roles accessible and inclusive
- Ensure any volunteering roles are valuable and beneficial to you
- Ensure you have sufficient information about what the role will involve
- Ensure you receive appropriate training, and have opportunities to develop in your role
- Provide support and advice relating to the project
- Have ways for your volunteering to be rewarded and recognised
- Consult with you and keep you informed of any changes
- Treat you with respect, and in a way that is not discriminatory
- Have things in place to keep you safe when you volunteer, including insurance
- Work with you to resolve any problems that might arise

## Why Volunteer?

**We know that students volunteer for a whole range of reasons. Some of these might be:**

- Learning new skills
- Enhancing employability
- Taking on a new challenge
- Developing leadership
- Giving back to the community
- Meeting new people
- Gaining sector-specific experience
- To Have Fun

## Volunteering Opportunities at The Union

**Volunteering roles at The Union fall into six main categories (although we sometimes have other additional opportunities):**

- Course Representatives
- Halls Representatives
- Club/society committee members
- Sub-group members
- Project volunteers and micro/one-off volunteering
- Brokerage opportunities (external volunteers)

## Recruitment

Different volunteering opportunities at The Union have different recruitment procedures in place. The Union will ensure that recruitment procedures are fair and transparent for all volunteering roles.

### **Club / Society Committee members**

Committee members for clubs and societies are democratically elected by members of that club/society, after putting themselves forward for election. Each club/society has its own constitution which outlines the positions available.

- **Course Representatives**

Course representatives are elected by other students on their course after standing for the position. The Union provides training and support to these volunteers throughout the academic year.

- NUS Delegates

NUS delegates represent MMU at NUS conference, and are elected in an all-student election after nominating themselves.

- Sub-Group members

The Union has three subgroups: sports, societies and liberation. Subgroup members are either elected to individual positions, or become part of the sub-group due to election to another position within the clubs/societies structure (e.g. BUCS sports rep, women's rep).

### Projects and one-off opportunities

Volunteering projects are identified and developed either through contact with an external organisation to form a partnership project, or by students themselves. The Union advertises for volunteers for Projects on The Union website and other appropriate forums, and volunteers apply by contacting the relevant co-ordinator – sometimes the process will include an application form. Where there are more potential volunteers than places available we will undertake group or individual interviews to determine the best volunteers for the role. Unsuccessful volunteers will be signposted to appropriate alternative projects or opportunities.

## References, DBS checks and the recruitment of ex-offenders

### References

Occasionally, some roles may require volunteers to provide character references. This will usually be part of an agreed request from a partner organisation, where the role involves contact with children or vulnerable people. Volunteers will be informed if references are required when opportunities are advertised, and can ask us for advice about who to use as appropriate references. We will let you know who, if anyone, your references will be shared with. We use references to make a decision about your suitability for the role, and would always discuss any concerns with you before making that decision. We understand that many students have not had paid or volunteering work before, and will always bear this in mind when requesting references.

### DBS checks and the recruitment of ex-offenders

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, The Union complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a DBS check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

Volunteers may be required to undergo a DBS check if the nature of their volunteering role requires it. This is especially likely where the role involves working with children or vulnerable adults.

When DBS checks are required, volunteers will be made aware of this at the recruitment stage.

Having a conviction does not necessarily prevent you from volunteering, and will be assessed on an individual basis. We ensure that all those at The Union who are involved in the DBS and recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

## Training and Support

At The Union we are committed to ensuring that our internal volunteers receive training and support. We want to make sure that whatever your volunteering role, you are suitably prepared and informed and know who to ask for help if you need it. We are also committed to providing ongoing development training for all our volunteers, and will deliver sessions throughout the year.

While the induction and role-based training you receive will

vary depending on what volunteering you are doing, we try to make sure it is useful. Examples of training we have provided for volunteers include; child protection, confidentiality, leadership, teamwork, project planning and specific course and halls reps training.

The type and level of support available will depend on the kind of volunteering you're doing and the level of responsibility you have. Support might mean meetings with a Project Leader, check-ins with staff, volunteer peer-support meetings, or group support with the supervisors of your volunteering role.

If you are considering volunteering outside the University with an external organisation, you might want to ask them about the training and support they will provide for you as part of the volunteering opportunity.

## Reward and recognition

The Union values the incredible contribution of all its volunteers, and believes in recognising and rewarding this contribution both formally and more informally.

We run Volunteer Thank-You events, to recognise the fantastic work that volunteers are doing. As part of the Union Awards, we also recognise outstanding projects and volunteers that have been especially innovative or made a real difference.

Volunteers who are working towards their MMU Futures Award can also have volunteering hours recognised and claim bronze or silver points for their involvement. Volunteers should see the MMU Futures website for more information about how to do this.

The Volunteer Management Group (made up of Union staff members representing different parts of the organisation) review and update our strategy for recognising and rewarding volunteers on an annual basis to ensure it is appropriate and inclusive.

Volunteers making a regular commitment to the Union are able to request references from us to support applications for jobs, courses or other volunteering roles, and we will provide these wherever possible.

## Student feedback and consultation

At The Union we believe that we can only develop the right range of opportunities, and make the process of recruitment, training and support better in consultation with student volunteers.

As such, we are committed to getting feedback and suggestions from students involved in volunteering and also from students who might want to volunteer. We may do this by:

- Asking volunteers for feedback at least annually about internal volunteering roles they have been involved in.
- Consulting with the wider student population about volunteering issues, for example through website tools or Student Voice.
- Through subgroups and other democratic structures, including consulting with elected members of the subgroup committees.
- Asking students who register with the volunteering hub questions about their requirements and volunteering experiences.

Positive feedback that students want to provide about their volunteering experience may be used in Union promotional materials. If students have specific issues that need to be addressed urgently, they should talk to Union staff; see the Problem Solving Policy or The Union's Complaints procedure.

## Non-Student Volunteers

There may be times when it is appropriate to involve non-students in the volunteering opportunities available in the

Students Union. In these instances, we will maintain a clear role description and use appropriate recruitment processes, in line with our commitment to equal opportunities and valuing diversity.

Non-student volunteers will have access to the same level of support and training as student volunteers in a similar role, and will be included in the Students Union's wider volunteer development and recognition structures. It is intended that the information in this policy will apply equally to all volunteers.

In line with our charitable objectives as an organisation, there must be a clear benefit to students to involving a non-student volunteer in an opportunity developed and provided by the Students Union.

## SECTION 2: POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR VOLUNTEERS

### Equal opportunities and diversity statement

The Union has an equal opportunities policy, but we believe that a distinct statement is needed to make our commitment to valuing and celebrating diversity as well as challenging discrimination clear for volunteers.

At The Union we celebrate and welcome diversity among volunteers and those who work with them. We have a strong commitment to equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice in volunteering, and encourage our volunteers and partner organisations to share this commitment.

We recognise that people experience discrimination, lack of opportunity and prejudice based on; ability or disability, age, gender and sexism, HIV status, marital status, nationality and language, physical appearance, political opinion, racial origin, religious belief, and sexuality.

**As part of our commitment to valuing diversity, we will try to ensure that:**

- Recruitment for volunteering roles is transparent and accessible.
- Volunteers represent the diversity of our membership.
- Staff and internal volunteers receive training on diversity.
- The range of projects available represents the interests of the student population and in some cases the wider community.
- Publicity materials are anti-discriminatory and do not promote stereotypes.
- We implement procedures for monitoring and evaluating diversity and equal opportunities at The Union.

### Health and safety statement

At The Union we take the safety and wellbeing of volunteers seriously. We believe that volunteers should be able to enjoy their volunteering role, with the knowledge that there are procedures in place to help keep them safe. Within the scope of health and safety, volunteers are responsible for their own actions and everyone is responsible for the health and safety of themselves and others. In addition, we expect volunteers will follow reasonable instructions from project co-ordinators to help keep everyone safe.

Internal volunteering activities fall within the remit of the Union Health and Safety policy, which details responsibilities and is compliant with relevant legislation. With regard to volunteering, we have the following specific measures in place:

- Student-led volunteering projects, club and societies activities should have a comprehensive risk assessment in place.

- We will have sufficient insurance to cover all internal volunteering activities.
- We will check as far as possible that external organisations have the relevant insurance in place to cover the activities of volunteers and that activities are suitable, in line with the Brokerage Policy.
- A system for reporting and investigating accidents and near misses.
- Training for volunteers so they are aware of responsibilities and can undertake their role safely.

The Volunteer Management Group will review and update volunteering health and safety practice annually, or in event of a relevant issue to ensure all practice is in line with current legislation and guidance.

### Safeguarding Statement

As part of some volunteering roles at The Union, volunteers will have contact with children or vulnerable adults. We think it is important that volunteers understand about safeguarding, types of abuse and how to respond to concerns or disclosures. For this reason, we maintain a comprehensive Child Protection policy and Safeguarding Adults policy.

To ensure that children or vulnerable adults accessing projects run by volunteers are safe, we make sure that volunteers are DBS checked when applicable, in line with DBS rules and guidance. The Union will ensure where applicable that volunteers receive training on safeguarding when relevant to their role and will ensure that volunteers are made aware of the right person to pass safeguarding concerns on to.

It is vital to protect children and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse, but it is also important that volunteers do not put themselves in compromising situations.

**We advise that volunteers:**

- Do not engage in rough play or physical games
- Do not spend any time in isolation with a child or vulnerable adult
- Create a safe and supportive environment so children or vulnerable adults feel able to raise concerns
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour, language or activities
- Be aware of their language and behaviour when comforting or reassuring someone
- Do not give out personal details such as phone number or address
- Maintain appropriate boundaries of behaviour

We generally identify abuse as falling into four areas, although in many cases they will occur together. These are:

**Physical** – any injury to the person including hitting, kicking, biting, burning, withholding medication. It can also include the failure to prevent injury.

**Sexual** – unwanted, unlawful or inappropriate sexual contact including rape and sexual assault. Also includes non-contact abuse including making or viewing of sexual images

**Emotional/Psychological** – actions or words that make the child or vulnerable adult feel humiliated, frightened, upset. This includes taunts/bullying, making them feel worthless or unloved, or imposing unrealistic expectations.

**Neglect** – a failure to meet the necessities such as food, warmth, clothing, safety, access to medical care, and responding to emotional needs.

Volunteers may become aware of a safeguarding concern through a direct disclosure, suspicion of injury, behaviour of a child or vulnerable adult, or through the actions of a carer,

parent, staff member or another volunteer.

When a volunteer has any concerns of this nature, it is vital that they are recorded and reported to the right person. Volunteers should maintain confidentiality by not discussing the issue with other volunteers, and only telling the appropriate person (such as the safeguarding adults officer at the partner organisation, the MMU Child Protection officer).

For full details of child protection and safeguarding adults procedures, please see the full policies.

## Under 18's statement

As some of our students can be under the age of 18 when they join the University, the Students Union has a specific policy to cover their participation in activities and opportunities.

In relation to volunteering, we have a duty to ensure that our volunteers are safe and supported. Sometimes this might mean students under the age of 18 are unable to participate in certain projects or activities co-ordinated by the volunteering service. Volunteers must inform us if they are under 18 when applying for volunteering opportunities. Volunteers should also be aware that some external organisations will place a lower age limit on volunteering due to the nature of their activities, and should find out if this is the case before applying to them.

## Problem solving policy

We hope that most problems that arise can be dealt with informally through discussion with committees, Project Leaders, co-ordinators, or the Union staff. However, in the interest of fairness, it is necessary to have a procedure for those occasions when problems, complaints or difficult issues cannot be resolved informally through discussion.

### This could happen when:

- A volunteer makes a complaint about the project, partner organisation, another volunteer or member of staff
- There is a problem with a volunteer's behaviour or ability to undertake their role

If volunteers have a complaint relating to a partner organisation, they will be supported by appropriate Union staff to follow that organisation's internal complaints procedure. In other circumstances, volunteers should follow The Union's complaints procedure.

Other problems may include a change in personal circumstances or other issues which mean it is difficult for you to carry out your volunteering role, and we will understand when this is the case. In these circumstances, volunteers should speak directly to their committee or Project leader/staff co-ordinator in the first instance. There may be possible changes to the role or tasks you carry out to enable you to continue. You can also receive support from the Union service to look for alternative roles either within The Union or at external organisations.

## Volunteer Misconduct

The Union maintains a Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 2), which provides an outline of how we would hope volunteers will conduct themselves. If a volunteer seriously fails to meet these expectations, we may have to take action up to and including ending the volunteer's role with The Union.

### Misconduct might include:

- Racist, homophobic, sexist or other discriminatory or derogatory language or behaviour
- Serious breach of confidentiality
- Violent, aggressive or inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Serious misuse of Union or a partner organisations'

computer or email facilities

In these circumstances, a meeting will be held between the volunteer and relevant parties to discuss evidence, and agree an outcome. Relevant parties might include project leaders, student voice, halls co-ordinators, committee chairs, partner organisations, and Union staff, depending on the nature of the volunteering role.

## Data protection and confidentiality

At The Union, we take our legal responsibilities (for example as outlined in the Data Protection Act 1998) to handle, store and share information appropriately very seriously. Union staff and volunteers have responsibilities to maintain data protection principles and maintain confidentiality where applicable.

## Volunteer details

As part of your engagement with us as a volunteer, we may hold information about you such as name, address, phone number etc. We will keep this information in line with the Union's Data Protection policy. This means we won't share the information with anyone who doesn't need to know it or without your consent apart from in exceptional circumstances such as a safeguarding disclosure. It also means it will be kept in a safe place which only appropriate people have access to.

Where we use information such as age, degree year or ethnicity for the purposes of monitoring or reports, this information will be anonymised. Where we want to use direct quotes from feedback or evaluation forms we will get your consent to use this information.

## Volunteer responsibilities

As a volunteer, you may have access to information about other people including sensitive and confidential information. This might be information about staff members, other volunteers or service users. Information such as date of birth, diagnosis or disability, address, personal histories or phone number would be confidential information.

Confidential information should not be shared with third parties apart from in exceptional circumstances – this means people outside of your volunteering role, project /partner organisation and in some cases may even mean other volunteers within your project. If you are volunteering at an external opportunity, the organisation you volunteer with will have policies and procedures they need you to observe.

Union volunteers may be asked to complete a Confidentiality Agreement form (Appendix 3) to show they have understood how they should treat confidential information where applicable.

## Brokerage Policy

As part of the Volunteering service offered by The Union, we work with external organisations to put their opportunities on an online brokerage system for students to browse. This is a great way for students to access information about the range of volunteering opportunities available in the community and for organisations to recruit volunteers from within the student population.

To ensure that the opportunities organisations advertise to students are safe, reasonable and appropriate, we try to undertake specific checks on the organisation and on the proposed opportunity. These may include:

- That there is a specific volunteer role description outlining tasks, personal qualities required and support available.
- That the volunteering activity or role is appropriate and does not make unreasonable requests of the volunteer in terms of time commitment, task, or level of responsibility.
- That the proposed role will be valuable to the volunteer.

- That the organisation has appropriate insurance to cover the activities of volunteers.
- That appropriate training or support is in place for volunteers.
- That the organisation has specific policies in place where applicable to support volunteering.

In order to put volunteering opportunities on the brokerage system, organisations must register and be approved by the Volunteering service. Once approved, we will then also review and approve (or reject) submitted volunteering roles before they can be advertised to students.

If there are concerns about a volunteering role or organisation, the Volunteering service may try to address these directly with the organisation and seek further information. The organisation may be given the opportunity to explain or clarify any issues before a decision is reached about approving or rejecting an opportunity.

If an organisation or opportunity is rejected, the Union may provide feedback where possible and may signpost the organisation to develop their provision so future roles can be approved.

## International Volunteering Opportunities

In order to advertise volunteering opportunities which are outside of the UK, we will try and check that they are in line with industry good practice. The Union volunteering service will maintain a checklist to evaluate international volunteering opportunities before they can be advertised to students. Where we have any concerns about how ethical, responsible, appropriate or supportive an organisation or opportunity is, we will not advertise it.

## Expenses and the provision of food

The Union acknowledges that it is often good practice to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses for volunteers. Given the wide range of volunteering opportunities available through The Union, we do not have a single policy for the provision of expenses or food for volunteers. Individual volunteering projects and roles will provide information on whether reasonable expenses will be reimbursed and how volunteers can claim expenses. We will usually reimburse expenses for community project materials, equipment and other resources, but not for travel – although we will consider individual circumstances where necessary.

External organisations will also have their own policy about volunteering expenses, and volunteers are encouraged to ask organisations about this if they begin volunteering with them.

# SECTION 3 ADVICE AND TIPS FOR VOLUNTEERING

## International students and volunteering

The Union aims for volunteering roles to be as inclusive as possible and welcomes the contribution of all its members to volunteering roles. However, International students/non-UK students need to be aware of the conditions of their Visa or immigration status and whether they have an impact on volunteering.

Before applying for any volunteering opportunities, please make sure you read the document [Your Visa, Your Responsibility](#) and understand what restrictions you might have and how these apply to volunteering roles.

If you need further advice about your visa or immigration status, please contact MMU International and speak to one of their specialist advisors.

## Volunteering outside The Union

Through the Union's brokerage service, we advertise volunteering opportunities with external organisations to students. Volunteers may also wish to find opportunities themselves through other brokerage sites and directly with groups.

If you are thinking about undertaking volunteering with an external organisation, it is useful to do your own checks on them and ask relevant questions to make sure the organisation and the opportunity are what you want.

### This might include:

- Checking out their website and reading their mission statement/aims.
- Looking at the role description for the opportunity, and asking questions about what kind of tasks you will be doing – particularly if the opportunity is a long-term one.
- Asking about their volunteer training.
- Asking what commitment they would want from you (how often and how long for).
- Asking about reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses such as travel expenses.
- Finding out what support or help would be available if you had any problems.

If you volunteer with an external organisation, you are responsible for your own health and safety there, but organisations should also have their own health and safety and safeguarding policies you should be introduced to.

As a rule, volunteers should not directly replace paid workers at any organisation. If you feel you're being asked to do tasks that should be those of a paid worker you are entitled to question this. As a volunteer, you are also entitled to refuse to carry out tasks you feel are unreasonable.

Above all, we would advise doing your research and using any interview/meeting to discover if it's the right opportunity and organisation for you. Advice about volunteering outside the University is also available from local volunteer centres. These include the Volunteer Centre Manchester and CVS Cheshire East.

## Volunteering Abroad

The vast number and range of different organisations offering international volunteering opportunities can be overwhelming and very confusing. If you're thinking of volunteering abroad, it's even more important to do your research on the organisation and the opportunity. Some questions you'll want to consider include:

- How are my skills matched to an opportunity or project?
- Asking to speak to previous volunteers on that project.
- Asking about the philosophy and aims of the organisation.
- Getting a breakdown of exactly what your money will be spent on – and where.
- Asking about pre-departure training and inductions.
- Find out what support is available when you arrive – including if you become ill, have an emergency or need to return home.
- How sustainable is the project – does it carry on after I leave? How involved are local people? Who runs the project?
- Who arranges insurance and Visas?
- Do I need to fundraise?

The Union's Volunteering service can provide you with more information and sources of advice, and run workshops for students throughout the year.

## Volunteering and benefits

**Please note: This information was taken from the 2010 Jobcentre Plus/DWP leaflet “Volunteering while getting benefits” (<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/dwp1023.pdf>) and is correct as of 01.12.13**

If you're getting State benefits, you can be a volunteer and, in nearly all cases, your benefits will not be affected. For the purposes of benefits, you are considered a volunteer if:

- You are not paid for your time (apart from expenses)
- You are not under contract to do it
- Do something for someone who is not a member of your family
- You are doing something for a not-for-profit organisation

The Jobcentre Plus say you can volunteer as many hours as you like while you're getting benefits as long as you keep to the rules for getting them.

If you're getting benefits, you should always speak to your advisor before starting any volunteering. Depending on the kind of benefit you are in receipt of, this might be Jobcentre Plus, your local council or the Pension Service.

You should not be paid any money for volunteering, apart from getting reasonable put-of-pocket expenses. The Jobcentre Plus state that even if it is expenses, you still need to tell them – so keep receipts.

For further information please visit [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk).

# APPENDIX 1: VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM (STUDENT-LED PROJECTS)

## Volunteer Application Form

### Volunteer Details

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Volunteering Role

Name of Project applied for: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteering Role applied for: \_\_\_\_\_

### Questions

(use as much space as you need)

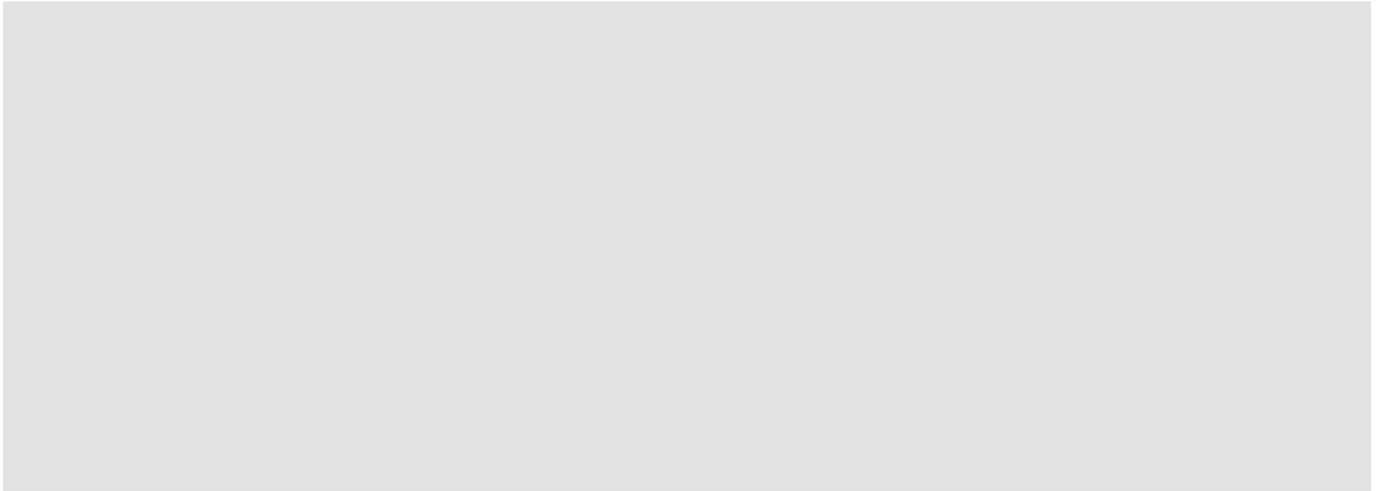
#### 1. Why are you interested in volunteering for this project?

#### 2. Describe yourself in five words:

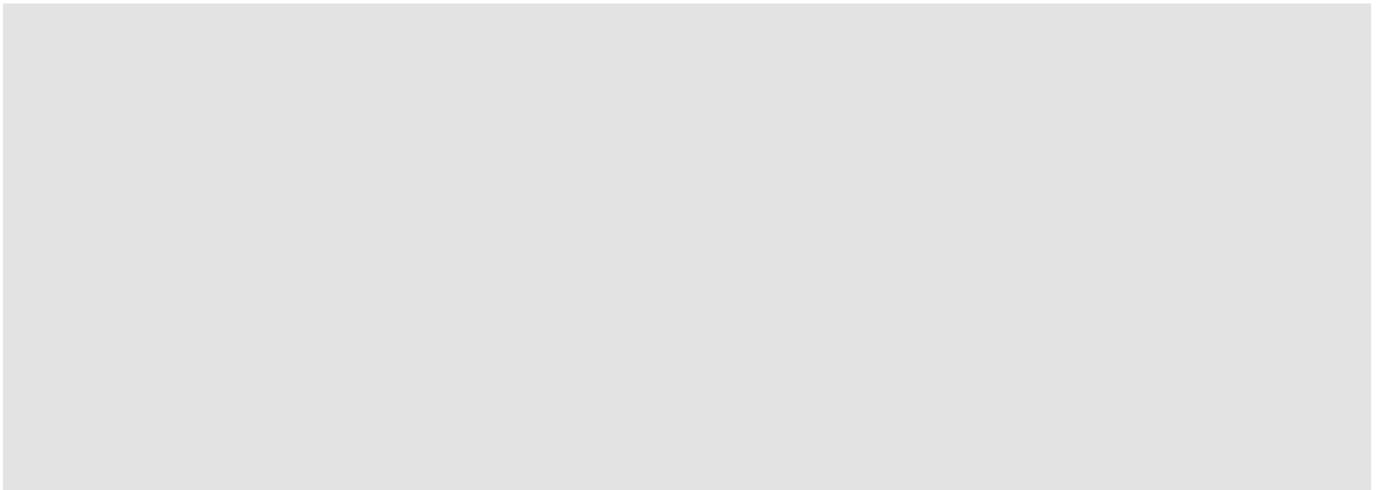
#### 3. Do you have any experience of similar roles or activities?

(you can write about it, or attach examples of work/projects)

**4. What are you hoping to get out of volunteering?**

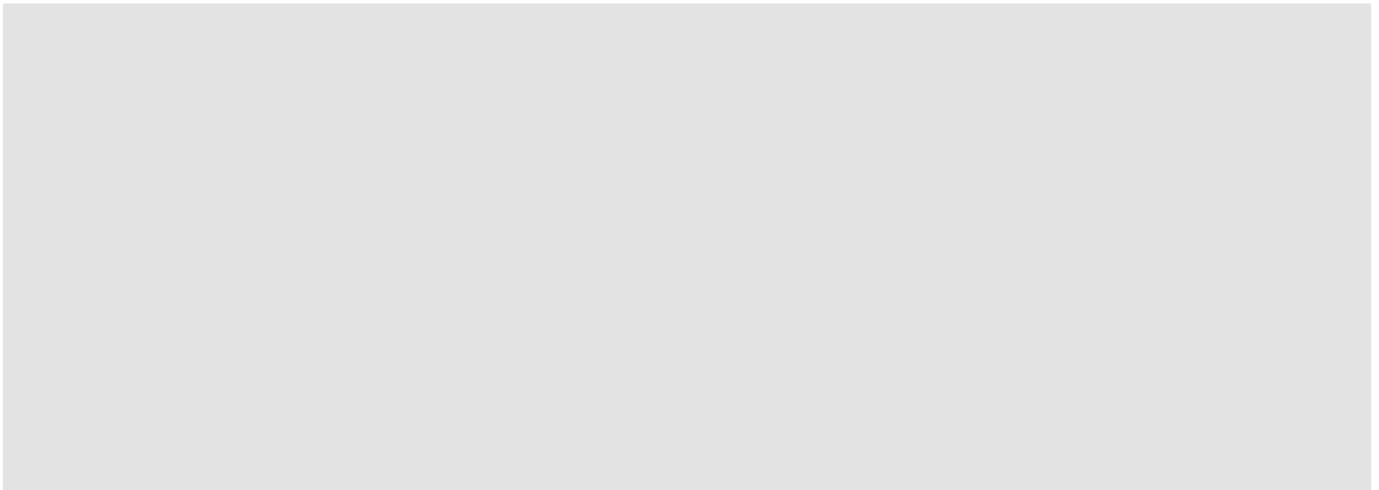


**5. How can you demonstrate your commitment to this role?**



**6. Any other information/questions?**

(Use this space to let us know if there's anything we might need to do to make this opportunity accessible for you.)



Please return this form to: [volunteering@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:volunteering@mmu.ac.uk)

## APPENDIX 2: VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

This outlines how we would hope Volunteers would conduct themselves when undertaking a volunteering role with The Union (e.g. as a committee member, course rep or project volunteer), or when volunteering in an opportunity found through our brokerage site.

### **Volunteers should try to:**

- Honour commitments they make, including turning up on time and informing supervisors/leaders in advance if they are unable to attend or continue with a volunteering role.
- Take the volunteering role seriously, and treat it as a valuable opportunity.
- Treat others with respect and dignity and not act in a way that is discriminatory.
- Be presentable and appropriately dressed for the role they are undertaking.
- Observe any specific policies or procedures that are necessary for their role and activities.
- Be responsible for their own health and safety in the course of their volunteering, as far as they are able.
- Attend any necessary training for their role.
- Claim back agreed expenses, such as materials.
- Be aware that they may be seen as representing The Union and try to represent us and themselves in a positive way.
- Inform us (or the organisation they volunteer with) if their circumstances change substantially (for example, have a new conviction to disclose)

### **For Volunteers who lead or supervise other volunteers we would also hope they would try to:**

- Make their course, group or project inclusive.
- Be supportive of other volunteers.
- Handle any allocated funds appropriately.
- Make The Union aware of any project problems or issues they might need help with.

**The Union's commitments to you as a volunteer can be found in the Volunteer Policy.**

# APPENDIX 3: CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Information about individuals is protected in law through the Data Protection Act 1998. The purpose of this agreement is so we can ensure you are aware of your responsibilities in relation to these legal guidelines. While undertaking your volunteering role, you may have access to or become aware of information that is regarded as confidential.

This could include information about people you are supporting (e.g. a child, a service user), information about other volunteers, and information about people who work at that organisation.

## Confidential information can include:

- Names
- Phone numbers
- Addresses
- Personal histories including convictions, relationships or contact with particular services
- Diagnoses
- Information that could identify someone

This information should not be shared with third parties, either while you are volunteering or after you leave.

*The only exception to this is when you become aware of something that concerns you – for example a child protection issue. In this case you would be expected to share this information only with the relevant nominated person as per procedures (e.g. the safeguarding officer).*

## Confidentiality Agreement

You are signing to say that:

- You understand that as a volunteer you may come across information that is confidential.
- You agree not to share this information with any third parties.
- You understand that any breach of confidentiality is a serious matter that The Union will have to address.

**Signed**

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**Name**

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**Volunteering project**

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**Date**

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