Preparing to Volunteer

If you are about to embark on regular volunteering, please read our guidelines below to help you get the most out of your volunteering.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

As a volunteer, there are certain things you can expect and it’s important to let the Career Development Service, or the volunteering manager/co-ordinator where you are volunteering, know if things aren’t going as you’d expected them to. Remember that no volunteer should feel unsupported or unsafe in their activities.

Make sure you know who your point of contact is/support person at the organisation where you are volunteering.

What you can expect from the organisation you are volunteering with:

- To receive basic training (where applicable) and ongoing support
- To be paid out-of-pocket expenses
- To know who you are responsible to
- To know exactly what is being asked of you – role descriptions are helpful.
- To learn and develop new skills
- Not to be used to replace paid staff
- To be safe whilst volunteering
- To be treated in accordance with their Equal Opportunities policy
- To know when and how long you want to volunteer for
- To leave or change projects
- To be valued
- To complain

What will be expected of you...

- To familiarise yourself with the organisation you are volunteering with
- To attend any training that is provided.
- Report all potential hazards, accidents, near-misses or perceived risks
- Tell someone if you’re having any kind of difficulty or problem with your volunteering
- As a representative of the University of Leicester to be as polite, patient and considerate as possible
- Never put yourself or others at risk
- Be reliable – it’s very important to let people know if you’re not going to be able to turn up

Health and Safety

The Career Development Service strives to ensure that any community organisations that we refer volunteers to have been subject to our health and safety checks. This includes ensuring polices are in place to safeguard volunteers. Volunteers should be given induction by the organisation they are volunteering with about health and safety and the necessary information, instruction and training to ensure the safe performance of volunteer work activities. This inductions should give clear guidance about what volunteers can do to meet their responsibilities for their own health and safety. You are also required to take responsibility for your own health and safety and not to put yourself at risk.

If you have any questions or concerns about your volunteering, please contact either your volunteering manager (where you are volunteering) or the Career Development Service – volunteer@le.ac.uk