





## **1. Policy Aims**

- 1.1. The aim of this policy is to enable and support staff to be proactive in voluntary activities that mutually benefit the individual, the University, and the community. It seeks to inform staff and managers of the levels of discretionary allowance applicable to employer-supported volunteering.

## **2. Definition**

- 2.1. The University defines a staff volunteer as a substantive member of staff of the University of Leicester who is supported to engage in projects, approved by the University, to the benefit of the local community, and the University itself. These activities are undertaken freely, and are not for financial gain by staff, nor the University.
- 2.2. The University will only approve volunteer leave if the following principles are satisfied:
  - The activity benefits both the community, and the volunteer;
  - The activity does not promote discrimination, hatred or extreme political/religious views;
  - The activity does not conflict with the staff member's role or responsibilities;
  - The activity is in line with the University's overall Corporate Social Responsibility strategy.

## **3. Scope and Principles**

- 3.1. The policy applies to staff with a substantive or fixed-term University contract of employment only i.e. not agency or Unitemps workers.
- 3.2. Staff are eligible to apply for paid volunteering leave to undertake approved volunteer work, for up to two of their equivalent working days per calendar year.
- 3.3. It is noted and understood that many staff may well be volunteering significant amounts in their own time. This is welcome, but is separate from this policy, which concerns the provision of time off within working hours. Volunteers will not be reimbursed for any of their free time they may wish to devote to such activities.



- 3.4. In the event of the University deciding to organise a group volunteering activity, the manager responsible may exceptionally grant permission to approve additional time off, beyond the normal annual provision of two of their normal working days, to enable the participation of staff at the event.
- 3.5. The release of staff from work to participate in voluntary work must be balanced against the other demands and priorities of their role within the University and, as such, time off for this purpose is not an entitlement.
- 3.6. Time allowances cannot be carried forward from one calendar year to the next.
- 3.7. Staff volunteering will always be subject to the prior agreement of the member of staff's line manager, and will reflect the service needs of the University (also see section 5 regarding Group Volunteering).

#### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

##### **4.1. Staff Volunteers**

- 4.1.1. Discuss as part of the PDD process with their line manager, the desire to undertake volunteering activities for experience, their personal development, and/or to participate in the wider community engagement agenda.
- 4.1.2. Staff interested in supported volunteering must complete the Staff Volunteering Application Form (see appendix 1). This should be submitted to their line manager in good time for approval before the volunteering activity is due to take place, normally a minimum of four weeks.
- 4.1.3. As part of the application process, it is the responsibility of the staff to ensure the organisation hosting the volunteering activity has completed the Volunteering Activity Provider Checklist before submission.
- 4.1.4. Staff volunteers are required to attach the signed and dated risk assessment/check list produced by the provider organisation (see section 8), as shown in appendix 2, to their application form before submission.



- 4.1.5. Staff volunteers should ensure the external organisation provides, as appropriate: safe equipment, safety clothing, and effective supervision. Staff volunteers should ensure they are aware of emergency evacuation procedures, and how to obtain First Aid.
- 4.1.6. A list of organisations the University has engaged with to support staff volunteering opportunities can be found at appendix 3.
- 4.1.7. Once the volunteering activity has been agreed, the completed and signed forms should be submitted to the staff member's manager.
- 4.1.8. Upon completion of each episode of the volunteering activity, the member of staff should complete the evaluation form found at appendix 4, and forward it to the Staff Health and Wellbeing Lead (also see sections 4.3 and 10).

#### **4.2. Line Managers' Responsibilities**

- 4.2.1. As part of the PDD process, discuss relevant volunteering activities with staff, so they can gain experience, personal development, and/or participation in the wider community engagement agenda.
  - 4.2.1.1. Record these discussions in the PDD paperwork.
- 4.2.2. Managers will consider each case on merit in light of the University's policy to support granting time for this activity, except in cases where work reasons deem this is not appropriate.
- 4.2.3. A record of time off will be kept by the line manager, and a copy of each completed Staff Volunteering Application Form, together with completed risk assessments, will be kept on the member of staff's personal file. These should be emailed to the Staff Health and Wellbeing Team at [staffhwb@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:staffhwb@leicester.ac.uk).
- 4.2.4. Managers should give serious consideration to all requests, and should manage voluntary activities as flexibly as possible. There may be work or operational reasons for refusing a request, which the manager should clearly communicate to the staff as soon as possible. In these circumstances, line managers and staff should discuss whether an alternative activity or time could be arranged.



#### **4.3. Staff Health and Wellbeing Lead**

- 4.3.1. The Staff Health and Wellbeing Lead will receive and analyse all submitted evaluation forms, available at appendix 4. (Also see section 10).
- 4.3.2. An annual report will be produced and submitted to the University Leadership Team (ULT), the University Staffing Committee (USC), and an appropriate monthly meeting between HR and the recognised Trade Unions (HRTU), in order to monitor the benefits of staff volunteering for the University.

### **5. Group Volunteering**

- 5.1. For large group projects within a college, school or department, a single approval process will be sufficient. An individual should be named as the volunteer group leader, and they should sign the application form on behalf of all staff volunteers in the group.
- 5.2. The application form should list all those wishing to volunteer on the large group form, available at appendix 1a.
- 5.3. Authorisation for the group will be given by the most appropriate senior manager for the group.
- 5.4. A risk assessment should be signed by all staff volunteers, which will be kept for future reference, with the application form.

### **6. Right of Refusal**

- 6.1. The University of Leicester reserves the right to refuse requests from staff to change their working arrangements to volunteer during their normal working hours. A request may be refused if it is believed, for example, that:
  - There will be a detrimental impact on the needs of the member of staff's college, school, department, division, or the University;
  - The member of staff's work commitments cannot be rearranged to accommodate the member of staff's requested time off;
  - The member of staff's individual performance levels are likely to suffer.



- 6.2. However, if a member of staff feels that they have been unreasonably refused the right to volunteer, they should raise the matter with their line manager, and inform their HR Business Partner.

## **7. Conduct whilst Volunteering**

- 7.1. Staff undertaking volunteering activities approved by the University are reminded that they will be representing the University and are, therefore, bound by its policies and procedures in relation to their conduct and behaviour for the duration of the episode of volunteering.

## **8. Risk Assessments**

- 8.1. Risk assessments are needed to ensure the organisations running the volunteering activities are fulfilling their duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their volunteers.
- 8.2. The University requires that a risk assessment (see appendix 2) be completed, and attached to all volunteering application forms (appendix 1). It is the responsibility of the volunteering organisation named on the application form to undertake the risk assessment. No volunteering leave will be granted unless this form has been completed satisfactorily, and is attached to the application form.

## **9. DBS Requirements**

- 9.1. In situations where the staff volunteer is required to have substantial contact with young people or vulnerable adults (e.g. elderly people or adults with a learning disability), it is likely that they will need a current, enhanced DBS check.
- 9.2. It is the responsibility of the volunteering organisation to identify whether this check would be necessary, and ensure that this has been undertaken before they commence any volunteering activity.

## **10. Evaluation – Appendix 4**

- 10.1. On completion of the volunteering activity, the member of staff will be asked to answer three questions/points, which will be returned to the Staff Health and Wellbeing Lead in order for the University to review the benefits of volunteering (see also section 4.3). These are:



- What were the benefits of the volunteer work to the University and/or the beneficiaries involved?
- Please indicate the learning and development opportunities you gained from being part of this volunteering project.
- Please comment on how you found the Employer Supported Volunteering Scheme, and any ideas you have for how it could be improved.

10.2 An annual report will be submitted to ULT, USC and HRTU to monitor the benefits of staff volunteering for the University.



**STAFF VOLUNTEERING APPLICATION FORM**

**Appendix 1**

Staff Details (for large groups, complete with the name of the designated staff volunteer leader, listing all staff names on form appendix 1a)			
Title		First Name	
Last Name		Payroll Number	
Work Telephone Number		Work Email	
College/Division		School/Department/ Team	
Details of the Volunteering Activity			
Date(s) of Volunteering Activity			
Description of Volunteering Activity			
Start and End Time			
Name of Organisation			
Contact Name			
Contact Position			
Contact Telephone Number			
Address of Activity			
Contact Email Address			
Risk Assessment <sup>1</sup>			
Volunteering Activity Provider Checklist/Risk Assessment Attached (Signed and dated by Host Organisation)	Please tick to confirm		
<i>In the event of a large group project, a completed risk assessment from the provider organisation must have been signed by every member of staff taking part in the activity, to state they have read and signed the risk assessment prior to the event.</i>			
Line Manager's Details			
Name:		Designation:	
Work Email:		Work Telephone Number:	

For the staff **volunteer** use only:

I (we) can confirm that all the above information is correct to the best of my/our knowledge and I/we have read the Staff Volunteering Policy.

Signed:..... Print Name:.....

Date:..... (for large groups, this is signed by the staff named leader)

For **Line Manager's** use only:

I give permission for the above member(s) of staff to take part in the requested volunteering activity.

Signed: ..... Print Name: ..... Date .....

Number of days volunteering approved in 20..... (year) is .....

When complete, please return this form to the Staff Health and Wellbeing Team via [staffhwb@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:staffhwb@leicester.ac.uk).

<sup>1</sup> Staff Volunteers should raise any concerns with the Host Organisation regarding the risk assessment, prior to submitting their application.



**Individual Staff Details for Large Groups (to be attached to appendix 1)**

**Appendix 1a**

<b>Staff 2 (Staff 1 is the leader named in appendix 1)</b>			
Title		First Name	
Last Name		Payroll Number	
Work Telephone Number		Work Email	
<b>Staff 3 (Staff 1 is the leader named in appendix 1)</b>			
Title		First Name	
Last Name		Payroll Number	
Work Telephone Number		Work Email	
<b>Staff 4 (Staff 1 is the leader named in appendix 1)</b>			
Title		First Name	
Last Name		Payroll Number	
Work Telephone Number		Work Email	
<b>Staff 5 (Staff 1 is the leader named in appendix 1)</b>			
Title		First Name	
Last Name		Payroll Number	
Work Telephone Number		Work Email	
<b>Staff 6 (Staff 1 is the leader named in appendix 1)</b>			
Title		First Name	
Last Name		Payroll Number	
Work Telephone Number		Work Email	
<b>Staff 7 (Staff 1 is the leader named in appendix 1)</b>			
Title		First Name	
Last Name		Payroll Number	
Work Telephone Number		Work Email	
<b>Staff 8 (Staff 1 is the leader named in appendix 1)</b>			
Title		First Name	
Last Name		Payroll Number	
Work Telephone Number		Work Email	



**VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITY PROVIDER RISK ASSESSMENT/CHECKLIST**

**Appendix 2**

Contact Details				
Organisation Name				
Contact Name				
Contact Position				
Address				
Telephone				
Email address				
Please tick the appropriate box to indicate your response: <sup>1</sup>		Yes	No	N/A
1.	Do you have a written Health and Safety policy?			
2.	Do you hold valid Employer and Public Liability Insurance which will cover volunteers?			
3.	Do you undertake volunteer induction and training?			
4.	Do you provide placement volunteers with appropriate supervision?			
5.	Are there formal procedures for reporting and recording accidents and incidents?			
6.	Do you have procedures to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger to people at work in your undertaking?			
7.	Is suitable First Aid equipment provided, with trained First Aiders?			
8.	Do you undertake Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for volunteers?			
9.	Do you have a Safeguarding policy and procedures?			

**In signing this Volunteering Activity Provider Checklist, you are agreeing to:**

- provide a full induction and any training necessary for the volunteer role;
- provide a named supervisor/contact for the volunteer;
- report to the University, any sickness involving placement volunteers that may be attributable to the work they undertake for our organisation;
- alert the University immediately of any accidents, injury or damage involving University members of staff;
- treat volunteers with respect, regardless of protected characteristics;
- implement good Health and Safety practices.

Signed on behalf of the volunteer provider organisation:

Signed: ..... Print Name: .....

Position: ..... Date: .....

**Volunteering Organisations who support Staff Volunteering**
**Appendix 3**

You can also contact any organisation of your choice, but a risk assessment must be completed by them before you can submit your application for time off.

Organisation	Contact Name	Telephone	E-mail
Voluntary Action Leicester (VAL)	VAL Voluntary Team	0116 257 5050	volunteering@valonline.org.uk
Leicestershire Cares	Georgina Rigall	0116 275 6490	georgina@leicestershirecares.co.uk
Leicester City Council	Victoria Hudson	0116 454 4474	Victoria.Hudson@leicester.gov.uk
LGBT Centre	Dennis Bradley	0116 254 7412	dennis@leicesterlgbtcentre.org
Leicester Centre for Integrated Living (LciL)	Laura Horton	0116 222 5005	laura.horton@lcil.org.uk
Hungry for Change	James Parker		hungryforchange@leicester.ac.uk
Sustainability Team	Sarah Roberts	0116 229 7382	sr390@le.ac.uk



**STAFF VOLUNTEERING EVALUATION FORM**

**Appendix 4**

Please complete and return this evaluation form to the Staff Health and Wellbeing Lead at [staffhwb@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:staffhwb@leicester.ac.uk) following the completion of the voluntary activity, or at the end of every term in the case of ongoing volunteer work.

Staff Details			
Title		First Name	
Last Name		College/Division	
Work Telephone Number		Work Email	
Was this activity discussed as part of your PDD?	Yes/No (please delete as appropriate)		

Date	Activity Undertaken	Hours Volunteered

<p>1. What were the benefits of the volunteer work undertaken (as listed above) to the University and/or beneficiaries involved?</p>
<p>2. Please indicate the learning and development opportunities you encountered from being part of this volunteering project.</p>
<p>3. Please comment on how you found the Staff Volunteering Scheme, and any ideas you have for how it could be improved.</p>