

Student Volunteering Policy: University of Salford Students' Union

Section 1: Welcome

1.1 About the University of Salford Students' Union (USSU)

The University of Salford Students' Union is a democratic organisation, working entirely for the benefit of students at the University and its partner organisations.

The University of Salford Students' Union is a registered charity (Number 1138093). It is a non-profit making organisation and supports itself through the operation of trading services, including the Atmosphere venue on campus, and a grant from the university. It uses its money to maintain student activities and re-invests into its services to provide bigger and better student opportunities.

The USSU Strategic Plan 2019-2022 commits to the following promises to students:

We will:

- Offer something for every student
- Make the changes students want to see within three years
- Nurture students' personal and professional development
- Help students to be happy and healthy at Uni
- Be an outstanding organisation focussed on students

This volunteering policy and the activity it covers has been designed in line with these promises.

1.2 About Salford Students Volunteering

As much as Higher Education is a huge investment into an individual's future, life as a student isn't all about study. At USSU, we recommend that students look beyond their chosen field of study to contribute to the local community and become work and world ready. Whether you are a student looking to volunteer or a volunteer soon to become a student, Salford Students Volunteering is here to support you.

1.3 Definition of Volunteering

"Any person engaged in an activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travel and other approved out-of-pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit the environment and or some third party that is not a close relative"

To qualify as a volunteer with USSU, the individual must not benefit directly from the position e.g. a student who owns a business cannot volunteer to benefit their own business

Also, the applicant must not:

- Benefit directly from the position for which the DBS application is being submitted.
- Receive any payment (except for travel and other approved out-of-pocket expenses)

- Be on a work placement
- Be on a course that requires them to do this job role
- Be in a trainee position that will lead to a full-time role/qualification

Section 2: Preparing to Volunteer

2.1 Recruitment and Selection

- 2.1.1 USSU will strive to provide a diverse range of volunteering opportunities, available to all its members
- 2.1.2 The number of volunteering opportunities available will be subject to the capacity of staff to manage said opportunities
- 2.1.3 Without exception all volunteering promotional material, messages and on campus briefings must be authorised by a Student Opportunities Team Member
- 2.1.4 Under the guidance of the Student Opportunities Team, all volunteering roles registered through the online systems will be promoted through the most suitable avenues including (but not restricted to):
 - The University of Salford Students' Union website
 - Face-to-Face Consultations with the Student Opportunities Coordinator (Volunteering)
 - Union or University managed social media channels
 - Press Releases and Local Press
 - Presentations/ lectures/ workshops
 - Blackboard
 - LinkedIn Learning
- 2.1.5 All applications will, without exception, be processed through the University of Salford Students' Union Volunteering page of the Salford Students' Union website

Internal Volunteering Opportunities

- 2.1.6 All volunteering roles promoted by the Students' Union, both internal and external, will be outlined by a role description provided by a nominated contact for the parent Volunteering Organisation or Project
- 2.1.7 Where a selection process is applied to an internal volunteering role, a person specification will be made available in addition to the role description. These documents will be produced under the guidance and provisions of the SU Inclusive recruitment policy
- 2.1.8 In certain cases volunteering roles reflect the democratic nature of the Students' Union and as such may be subject to election by and from a certain constituency of members

External Volunteering Opportunities

- 2.1.9 Volunteering opportunities will only be considered from the following types of organization:
 - Charity
 - Not-for-profit organisation
 - Social enterprise
 - Public sector organisation
 - Community group

From now on, these groups will be referred to as 'External Volunteering Partners'

- 2.1.10 For roles promoted but not managed by The University of Salford Students' Union, equivalent information to that required for a Union managed role will be required before any promotion is authorised
- 2.1.11 The University of Salford Students' Union holds no responsibility for the recruitment of a volunteer into opportunities offered by an External Volunteering Partner, nor for selection processing following an expression of interest
- 2.1.12 The Union reserves the right to refuse to promote an opportunity where it is felt that effective use will not be made of volunteers' skills and abilities, or where it appears the placement may be unsafe or unsuitable

2.2 Policy framework and compliance

This Volunteering policy should be read in conjunction with the following University of Salford Students' Union policies:

- [Equality and Diversity Policy](#)
- [Data Protection](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Students Union Complaints Procedure](#)
- [University of Salford Disciplinary Procedure](#)
- [University of Salford Bullying and Harassment policy](#)
- Whistleblowing policy <link>

It is the responsibility of all volunteers to familiarise themselves with these policies and others which may be relevant to their individual circumstances.

- 2.2.1 UK Law places certain restrictions on foreign nationals and refugees and asylum seekers volunteering in the UK. To confirm your eligibility to volunteer in the UK some additional checks may need to be undertaken
- 2.2.2 The UK government places some limited restrictions on people volunteering while receiving state benefits. For the unemployed these restrictions tend to involve you being allowed to volunteer as much as you like providing your volunteering does not prevent you being available to attend job interviews. If you are receiving state benefits, you are advised to discuss your volunteering with your benefits adviser

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS Checks)

- 2.2.3 Volunteering Organisations will be expected to provide relevant Disclosure and Barring Service checks for volunteers, where risk assessment of the prescribed volunteering activity suggests that DBS checks are required

2.3 Responsibilities and Expectations

Salford Student Volunteers commit to:

- Do your best to uphold our values and help us deliver our charitable mission
- Meet your commitments to your colleagues and service users

- Show compassion and respect to customers, colleagues and service users
 - Undertake the training required for your role, including revalidation (in order to maintain the skills you need to carry out your role)
 - Value and respect others who help The University of Salford Students' Union to provide services
 - Communicate effectively with us: tell us in plenty of time if you can't deliver a task or if you no longer want to volunteer for us
 - Understand and comply with University of Salford and The University of Salford Students' Union policies and procedures
 - Act in good faith towards us
 - Safeguard and promote the reputation of the University and the Students' Union
- 2.3.1 There is no obligation for The University of Salford Students' Union to offer a volunteer any task, and there is no obligation for a volunteer to take on a task for The University of Salford Students' Union. Nothing in this Volunteer policy is intended to create an employment relationship between you and The University of Salford Students' Union, either now or in the future
- 2.3.2 A volunteer can cease their association with The University of Salford Students' Union Volunteering Scheme at any time. Misconduct or poor performance by a volunteer will result in the opportunity to volunteer ceasing and may trigger disciplinary procedures.

The University of Salford Students' Union commits to:

- Value you, treat you with respect and provide equal access to opportunity
- Give you a thorough welcome to the Students' Union, appropriate to your role, via appropriate induction methods
- Give you a clear description of your role and understanding of its scope
- Provide internal volunteers with all the resources and training you need to carry out your role along with opportunity to enhance your skills
- Recognise your achievements in line with the quality of your volunteering
- Give you an identified line manager and regular opportunity for support
- Maintain confidentiality of the information we hold about you
- Keep you safe and provide appropriate insurance to cover you in your approved role
- Give you the opportunity to express your views about how The University of Salford Students' Union can improve and develop

Section 3: Being a Student Volunteer

3.1 Health and Safety

- 3.1.1 It is important to recognise that Health, Safety and Security are the shared concern and responsibility of everyone and is a legal requirement of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- 3.1.2 Staff and volunteers will be informed of and responsive to their rights and responsibilities through the provision of appropriate information and literature, induction packs, training and information bulletins
- 3.1.3 Should a staff member or volunteer assess a situation or location to involve a perceived risk then it is part their legal and moral responsibility to report the risk clearly and record such reports in writing
- 3.1.4 Volunteers in roles offered by the University of Salford Students' Union can find more information on Health and Safety by consulting the relevant Health and Safety Policy
- 3.1.5 Volunteers in community roles, not managed by The University of Salford Students' Union, will be able to seek further guidance from their Volunteering Organisation

3.2 Media Relations

- 3.2.1 Volunteers managed by The University of Salford Students' Union must direct all media queries to the Marketing Team
- 3.2.2 Volunteers managed by External Volunteering Partners are expected to follow the relevant organisational policy covering media relations for their chosen volunteering role

3.3 Volunteer Expenses

- 3.3.1 An expense is defined as any cost that a volunteer must pay that they would not have incurred if they had not been volunteering
- 3.3.2 The University of Salford Students' Union is committed to ensuring that volunteering is accessible to everybody. A key element of this commitment is that no volunteer should face any unnecessary cost as a direct consequence of a volunteering activity
- 3.3.3 It is the policy of The University of Salford Students' Union for volunteers to recover expenses from the volunteering partner directly
- 3.3.4 Salford Students Volunteering will only work with External Volunteering Partners that are able to cover out-of-pocket expenses
- 3.3.5 An exception to this rule will be made for volunteering opportunities with external partners that take place on campus during the hours in which a student would normally be on campus

3.4 Insurance

- 3.4.1 Volunteers undertaking volunteering activities, within 'normal' boundaries associated with study activities or within additional pre-defined boundaries, on premises owned by University of Salford are insured under the terms and conditions of The University of Salford Students' Union's Public Liability Insurance
- 3.4.2 The responsibility for providing insurance for volunteers operating away from University premises is held by the organisation/s managing the volunteer

- 3.4.3 Without exception, The University of Salford Students' Union does not hold any responsibility for the maintenance of insurance on behalf of an External Volunteering Partner
- 3.4.4 Under no circumstance does University of Salford Students' Union accept any liability for loss of or damage to any personal belongings, including motor-vehicles, bicycles, personal technology or other premium items
- 3.4.5 Upon registration, volunteering organisations are required to confirm that their organisation does hold valid Public Liability and Employers Liability Insurance. Any organisation being found not to hold the appropriate insurance or failing to provide confirmation documents upon request will be immediately de-registered and volunteers withdrawn

3.5 Training and Development

- 3.5.1 In applying for a voluntary role advertised through the Salford Students Volunteering Website, users are agreeing to complete any necessary training or development for the role
- 3.5.2 Failure to complete the required training will delay access to volunteering activities and prevent continued interaction with a volunteering group or organisation as a volunteer
- 3.5.3 Where a role requires an individual to possess a certain skill set or level, then it is expected that training and development will be offered by the organisation, unless otherwise stated in the advertisement
- 3.5.4 The University of Salford Students' Union may facilitate complimentary volunteer training on an ad-hoc basis but reserves the right to withdraw this service at any time

Section 4: External Volunteering Partners

This section will be of most use to community groups, charities and organisations wishing to engage with the University of Salford Students' Union volunteering programme

4.1 Becoming a Volunteering Provider

4.1.1 Should an organisation wish to recruit student volunteers or to activate a student-led project on campus approach the University, they will be directed to register with the Salford Students Volunteering Scheme through the online registration pages. This is compulsory for all volunteering partners, regardless of the format of the activities they may offer

4.1.2 Without exception, all volunteering providers must provide a copy of their public liability insurance, health and safety policy, equal opportunities policy and duty of care statement before their registration will be approved

4.1.3 The University of Salford Students' Union will request a Risk Assessment from the provider for all volunteering activities and reserve the right to decline a registration should this document not be readily available

4.1.4 If requested, or deemed appropriate by the Salford Students Volunteering Scheme, a development meeting may be required to scope the potential of the volunteering project and to discuss details of volunteering roles. These meetings are subject to demand and availability

4.2 Access to University Campus/Events

4.2.1 Registration with the Salford Students Volunteering Scheme does not give automatic permission for an organisation to access the University of Salford Campus

4.2.2 All promotional materials for use on Campus must, without exception, be authorised by the Salford Students Volunteering Scheme

4.2.3 The University of Salford Students' Union may host promotional events, meetings or lectures to support student recruitment. This service is subject to demand and availability

4.3 International Volunteering

4.3.1 The University of Salford Students' Union recognises that students may be interested in donating time to support international projects. This may be through local fundraising efforts or through fundraising with the objective of travelling to the host area of the charity's international target area

4.3.2 While students and staff are commended for their interest in supporting international causes, The University of Salford Students' Union does not promote, endorse or encourage international volunteering activities

4.3.3 Clubs and Societies wishing to support international causes are permitted to do so through the promotion of localised fundraising, which must be planned, arranged and activated through a recognised international charity

- 4.3.4 Salford Students' Union recommends fundraising for effective International charities, such as those promoted by GiveWell
- 4.3.5 Volunteering organisations endorsing international volunteering activities or travel will be subject to de-registration from online systems and not authorised to operate on University of Salford property

4.4 De-registration

- 4.4.1 Should a Volunteering Provider wish to terminate their partnership with The University of Salford Students' Union and to de-register from our website, they are invited to email ussu-volunteering@salford.ac.uk to begin the de-registration process
- 4.4.2 To support the continued development of the services we offer, all voluntary de-registrations will be invited to meet with the Student Opportunities Coordinator (Volunteering) to complete a de-registration interview. This is for the purpose of evaluation and conflict resolution purposes

4.5 Blacklisting

- 4.5.1 In exceptional circumstances an organisation may be blacklisted by the Student Opportunities Coordinator (Volunteering) or Student Opportunities Manager. Situations that may require such intervention might include, but are not limited to:
 - An organisation failing to meet basic Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity or other legal standards
 - An organisation failing to provide sufficient information to demonstrate their holding sufficient insurance or failing to provide risk assessments upon request
 - Where Volunteering Activities do not meet the vision and values of The University of Salford Students' Union
- 4.5.2 The University of Salford Students' Union will make every effort to work with potential volunteering organisations to develop a network of volunteering partners but reserves the right to de-register current providers and decline applications to register
- 4.5.3 A blacklisting restricts interaction between the Students' Union and a volunteering organisation. The length of such a blacklisting is not prescribed and The University of Salford Students' Union reserve the right to extend or retract this period as is deemed necessary