



SKILLS & VOLUNTEERING CYMRU (SVC)

VOLUNTEERING POLICY

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	Volunteering Policy
1	General
1.1	Introduction
	Skills & Volunteering Cymru (SVC), previously called Student Volunteering Cardiff (SVC), is a registered charity 1173198. We were formed through the partnership of Student Community Action (SCA) and Innovate Trust in 2001.

	<p>Our principle aim and purpose is to enhance the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable members of the South Wales Community, whilst offering skills development to our volunteers.</p> <p>This aim is achieved by offering individuals the opportunity to volunteer on SVC's own projects or those run-in co-operation with other organisations based in the local community.</p> <p>SVC was established by students from Cardiff University, and values the contribution of all its staff members, volunteers and associated bodies in its continued work. SVC aims to promote positive links between members of the community by providing a range of projects on which individuals can volunteer. No volunteer within these projects will take the place of a paid member of staff.</p>
1.2	Objectives of the Policy
	<p>This policy aims to set out good volunteering practice throughout SVC so that all staff, volunteers and outside bodies are able to access and understand the ethos in which volunteers are engaged in SVC's numerous volunteering projects.</p> <p>It aims to help ensure fairness and consistency across our projects.</p>
1.3	Staff Responsibilities
	<p>All SVC staff are primarily here to support and ensure the safety of our volunteers, beneficiaries and partners.</p> <p>The staff each have responsibility for different areas of the Charity.</p> <p>SVC Manager SVC Team Leader (supervises the Police Project based in Cardiff, the Vle of Glamorgan and RCT) Health & Social Care Project Co-ordinator Health & Social Care Project Co-ordinator (Year in Industry) Mental Health & Community Project Co-ordinator Children and Young People Project Co-ordinator Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Officer</p>
2	Types of Volunteers
2.1	The SVC Board of Trustees
	<p>This is a group of volunteers whose shared responsibility is to oversee the charity's work and ensure its continued development. The Board of Trustees is a source of support and guidance for Lead Volunteers and Volunteers across our projects.</p>
2.2	Lead Volunteers
	<p>Many of SVC's projects are co-ordinated by one or more Lead Volunteers. They are responsible for the overall running of the project. Lead Volunteers recruit, induct and train their volunteers as well as offering support throughout the year.</p> <p>Lead Volunteers are supported by a designated staff member, called an SVC Project Coordinator, who will support them with the needs and requirements of their particular project.</p>

2.3	Project Volunteers
	SVC offers a diverse range of projects in which individuals can volunteer. It is up to the individual to decide which project they are interested in, they can choose to volunteer on more than one project should they want to. All volunteers within SVC have the opportunity to become a Lead Volunteer or apply to be on the SVC Board of Trustees (vacant Trustee roles occur annually).
3	Recruitment & Selection
3.1	Volunteer Recruitment
	At the start of every academic year SVC will attend different recruitment events including freshers' fairs within the local universities, lecture shout-outs, educational workshops, assemblies within local colleges/schools and related community events. Throughout the year we also engage with other volunteer providers to raise awareness of our services and develop local partnerships.
3.2	Advertising our Projects
	SVC will advertise our volunteering opportunities in numerous ways including: - a) Posters: Posters are displayed within local universities/ student unions, on notice boards in university halls of residence and within the community – such as GP practices. b) Recruitment Events: SVC will host stands at numerous events including freshers' fairs, third sector events, careers service events and college assemblies/ workshops. c) SVC Website: Details of all SVC projects and how to apply are available on our website (www.svcymru.org), individuals can apply online or within the SVC office. d) University Career Hubs: Information about SVC's projects are also available through some University Career Hubs (Cardiff University, Cardiff Metropolitan University and University of South Wales). e) Local Advertising: SVC's services are also featured on online platforms such as Volunteering in Wales.
3.3	Application Procedure & DBS Checks
	All volunteers will be required to complete a basic application form. For many of our projects, due to the capacity in which volunteers will be supporting children or vulnerable adults, volunteers will therefore also be required to complete a DBS check. At this stage individuals will be required to disclose any criminal convictions, which will be treated in the strictest of confidence. Some of our projects also require additional application forms due to their complexity. Additionally, volunteers will be asked to complete health declarations, enabling SVC to provide our volunteers with support and/ or reasonable adjustments within their volunteering. All volunteers are additionally asked to complete Volunteer Agreements confirming their commitment to volunteering.
3.4	References
	The majority of SVC projects require volunteers to provide two references. They are required to have known these referees for two years and they must

	<p>not be family members or personal friends. A formatted reference form and cover letter are emailed to all referees.</p> <p>Where applicants are unable to provide references meeting these criteria, volunteers should arrange to speak with an SVC staff member to discuss whether any alternative arrangements can be made.</p>
3.5	Equal Opportunities
	<p>SVC's EDI policy must be adhered to at all times in interactions with volunteers, beneficiaries and staff (please see Section 10). This is available on the SVC website - 1635341577_svc-edi-policy-final.pdf (svcmru.org)</p>
3.6	Unsuitable Volunteers
	<p>To the best of SVC's abilities, a suitable project will be found for each volunteer wishing to volunteer with SVC. If it becomes apparent that a volunteer is unsuitable for any role then the volunteer will be invited into the office where the issues can be discussed and resolved to an extent that is of benefit to the beneficiaries and the volunteer.</p>
3.7	Criminal Convictions
	<p>Having a criminal conviction does not automatically mean an individual is unable to volunteer with SVC. SVC will endeavor to find a suitable project for the volunteer. If you have any concerns about how an offence may affect your volunteering options, then please contact the SVC Manager (Adrienne Earls) to discuss this further –a.earls@svcmru.org.</p>
4.0	Induction & Training
4.1	Volunteer Induction
	<p>For each project the Lead Volunteers and/or SVC Project Coordinators (staff) will give volunteers induction information about the project/s which interest them. This may be through an induction talk, or through an information sheet detailing "Frequently Asked Questions" specific to the project.</p> <p>A project Welcome Pack will also be distributed to volunteers giving general information specific to the chosen project.</p> <p>Often, volunteers are taken on <i>site</i> visits to their chosen project/s. Here volunteers will be shown around the location and given instructions regarding Health & Safety and fire regulations.</p> <p>Every project has different induction procedures; many are carried out at the place of volunteering by the staff who will be supporting the volunteers within their work.</p> <p>At SVC we operate an "open door policy", and therefore volunteers are always welcome to organise a time to meet with staff for a cuppa and chat 02921 67 67 80 or email us at Info@SVCymru.org</p>
4.2	Volunteer Training
	<p>Volunteers are given training specific to their chosen project/s, this may include Child Protection, Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) and Learning Disability Awareness, to name a few.</p> <p>Some training courses are mandatory, and volunteers must attend these training sessions to prepare them for their volunteer roles.</p> <p>Volunteers are also encouraged to attend optional training courses which will complement their chosen volunteering roles.</p> <p>For a full list of SVC training courses please contact the SVC office.</p>
4.3	Lead Volunteer Training

	Lead Volunteers will receive role specific training, information, support and guidance. This will be delivered by your SVC Project Co-ordinator.
4.4	Board of Trustees Training
	The SVC Board of Trustees receive training from the SVC Manager at the start of the academic year. This covers a) The Structure of SVC; b) What SVC must adhere, and what it should do regarding best practice; c) Trustee Liability and how to manage risks.
5	Supervision & Monitoring
5.1	Lead Volunteer Supervision
	Lead Volunteers will be offered formal supervision sessions from either the SVC Manager, or an SVC Project Co-ordinator. Supervisions will be offered at least once per term. Additionally, SVC operates an “open-door policy”. Our volunteers are actively encouraged to come into the office to discuss any issues or problems.
5.2	Volunteer Supervision
	It is primarily the role of the Lead Volunteer to monitor the welfare of their volunteers and undertake regular supervision. Should there be any issues volunteers have the option to contact their Lead Volunteer, the Board of Trustees or any member of SVC staff. All volunteers will be given the contact name and contact details of their Lead Volunteer; they will also be given the SVC office contact details. Some of our projects are managed by SVC staff directly rather than Lead Volunteers, in these circumstances' volunteers will be given the details of their assigned staff member, plus the details of the supervisor/s within their organisations/locations of their chosen volunteering project/s.
5.3	Monitoring
	Different projects are funded in different ways and therefore have different monitoring requirements. Some volunteers will be requested to come into the office to undertake one-to-one meetings, this helps SVC to ensure the project is running smoothly and that our volunteers are happy within their roles. Through these supervision sessions volunteers will be asked questions about their volunteering, how they have been supported, what’s worked well, any issues or concerns, new ideas, etc. These volunteer responses are then recorded and collated yearly to look at changes required, and recommendations made. At the end of every year evaluation questionnaires are also sent out to our partners and beneficiaries to monitor how the projects have progressed, and if they have met their requirements.
6	Volunteer Expenses
6.1	Reimbursement
	It is the policy of SVC to reimburse out of pocket expenses incurred by volunteers in their volunteering activity upon presentation of receipts.
6.2	Out of Pocket Expenses
	Out of pocket expenses include: Petrol and travel (mileage must be recorded, or receipts retained), resources for projects (arts & crafts, food), entrance to activities and equipment (project applicable).

	The full Transport Policy may be viewed here - Student Volunteering (svcmru.org) .
6.3	SVC Staff & Volunteers Expenses Policy
	The full Staff & Volunteers Expenses Policy may be viewed here - STUDENT VOLUNTEERING (svcmru.org) . Any expenses to be reimbursed must be accompanied by a receipt; only in exceptional circumstances will staff be able to reimburse expenses without a receipt, this will be at the discretion of the SVC Manager and/or Board of Trustees.
7.0	Recognition
7.1	SVC truly values the commitment, time and dedication made by all of our volunteers. All SVC volunteers will receive certificates annually on request, to evidence the contribution they have made through their volunteering. SVC will produce regular articles about the amazing work conducted by our volunteers, hold social events to thank volunteers and hold awards annually for the Volunteer of the Year and/or Special Recognition Awards. Additionally, SVC will be pleased to offer references for our volunteers, detailing the project/s, commitment and roles volunteers have undertaken with SVC.
8	Health & Safety
8.1	Risk Assessments
	All volunteers will be given Health & Safety instructions at the location of their project. A risk assessment for each project is undertaken by an SVC staff member. Additionally, all new activities or volunteering ideas will have a new Risk Assessment undertaken to ensure the safety of the volunteers and beneficiaries. Volunteers will be notified about specific risks associated with their chosen project/s.
8.2	Health & Safety Policy
	The full Health & Safety Policy may be viewed in the SVC office or SVC website. Health & Safety will be brought to the attention of all SVC volunteers. All volunteers will be expected to work in accordance to information, guidance and training provided.
8.3	Accidents and Incidents
	Accidents: In the event of an accident (when medical attention is required), as volunteers are not trained in the assessment of injuries, an ambulance must be called. If the accident involves a beneficiary, then parents/carers and/ or supervisors must always be informed. An accident report form must be completed promptly; these forms are kept in the SVC office. The completed form must be given to the SVC manager. Incidents: SVC considers that incidents are anything that occurs that is outside the norm within a project or beneficiaries behaviour. An incident form must be completed; these are kept in the SVC office. On completion these must be given to the SVC manager.

8.4	Settling Differences Policy & Problem-Solving Procedure
	<p>Settling Differences Policy: Should a volunteer have a problem within their volunteering, in the first instance this should be discussed with their Lead Volunteer or assigned staff member. If the problem concerns the Lead Volunteer and/ or assigned staff member, a member of the SVC Board of Trustees or SVC Manager is available to discuss the problem. If the problem concerns the SVC manager, the volunteer should discuss this with the SVC Board of Trustees. SVC hopes that all problems can be resolved informally with discussion. However, if this is not the case then the formal procedure will come into effect. The full Settling Differences Policy may be viewed in the SVC office or SVC website.</p> <p>Problem-Solving Procedure: The full Problem-Solving Policy may be viewed here -Student Volunteering (svcymru.org)</p>
9	Harassment
	<p>SVC recognises that harassment is a serious issue and, should it occur when volunteering, may affect the confidence of volunteers. Any volunteer who feels they are being harassed should not accept the situation and should make it clear from the outset that this behaviour is not acceptable. Volunteers who have encountered any form of harassment are encouraged to discuss the situation with SVC as soon as possible. The Lead Volunteers, SVC Trustees and SVC staff are available should a volunteer want to discuss or report any situation. The volunteer may elect to have the complaint investigated, in the full knowledge that the matter will be dealt with seriously, promptly, sensitively and with the strictest of confidence.</p>
10	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)
10.1	Equal Opportunities
	<p>SVC undertakes a wide variety of projects with socially excluded individuals across South Wales. As such SVC has the responsibility to oppose discrimination. SVC will treat all people we meet with equally, this includes our volunteers, staff, Trustees, beneficiaries and partners. SVC expects all its members to respect each other and will not tolerate discrimination or abuse in any form. The full EDI Policy may be viewed here -1635341577_svc-edi-policy-final.pdf (svcymru.org).</p>
10.2	Diversity
	<p>SVC is firmly committed to diversity in all areas of its work. We recognise there is much to gain from diverse cultures and perspectives, and that diversity will make the organisation more effective in meeting the needs of all its stakeholders. We are committed to developing and maintaining an organisation in which differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds and needs are fostered and valued, and where those with diverse backgrounds and experiences can participate and contribute. SVC will regularly evaluate and monitor its progress towards diversity.</p>
11	Insurance

	<p>All volunteers are covered by the appropriate Employers Liability Insurance and Public Liability Insurance.</p> <p>The full insurance details can be supplied by the SVC Manager, Adrienne, A.Earls@SVCymru.org</p>
12	Confidentiality
	<p>The majority of SVC projects work with disadvantaged, and or vulnerable members of the community. During the course of volunteering, volunteers will be privy to information that is confidential to the people they are volunteering with. This information must remain confidential to the volunteer and appropriate others.</p>
13	Data Protection
	<p>SVC will only use data relevant to carrying out its legitimate purposes and functions as a charity, and in a way that is not prejudicial to the interests of our volunteers. SVC will take due care and responsibility in the collection, storage and sharing of any sensitive data relating to our volunteers, beneficiaries and projects.</p> <p>The full Data Protection Policy (including our policies relating to GDPR) may be viewed -Policies and Procedures SVC (svcmru.org)</p>
14	Volunteering on Multiple Projects
	<p>Many of our volunteers choose to volunteer on several SVC projects, to gain experience working with different beneficiary groups. Volunteers are welcome to participate in several projects at once. However, we ask volunteers to be mindful of their workloads/ other responsibilities, and to only register on projects that they can commit to.</p> <p>Additionally, we often look to our volunteers to assist us in delivering one-off events – such as events for Winter Giving Week (December), or National Student Volunteering Week (February). SVC will promote these opportunities to our volunteer mailing list and through our social media.</p> <p>Volunteers will also be invited to support other SVC projects if we require additional support for sessions. Where we are struggling to run a session due to lack of project specific volunteers being available, SVC will endeavor to open these opportunities to our volunteers registered on other projects. These vacancies will be promoted through SVC social media and/ or mailing list.</p>