

WARWICK VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEERING POLICY

Vision

Warwick Volunteers (WV) aims to give University of Warwick students a life shaping experience through volunteering within the local community and beyond.

Aims and Objectives

- Deliver an outstanding volunteering programme for University of Warwick students.
- Integrate with the local community to make a positive difference.
- Provide opportunities for students to: build networks, make friends, experience diversity, have fun, learn new skills, gain confidence, be able to reflect on these as they develop career paths.
- Create a dynamic partnership between the student volunteer members and professional staff.

Purpose of the Volunteering Policy

This policy:

- Defines the rights and responsibilities of Warwick Volunteers, its student leaders and its volunteers
- Encourages and enables, rather than limits, the involvement of volunteers

Eligibility for membership of Warwick Volunteers

Only current students at the University of Warwick are eligible to be members of Warwick Volunteers.

A student at the University of Warwick can become a member by participating in any volunteering activity recognised by WV.† To manage projects safely, Warwick Volunteers activities are for members only: non-members cannot attend.

The membership of Warwick Volunteers is for the period of a full academic year as defined by the University of Warwick.

Warwick Volunteers is free to join.

Leaving a Project / Ceasing to be a member

Every volunteer has the right to leave a project or Warwick Volunteers, but also has the responsibility to inform Warwick Volunteers of this decision.

Student Voice

Warwick Volunteers seeks to encourage and support students of the University of Warwick to enter into co-creation with their fellow students and members of the local community in the establishment and operation of projects that have a positive impact on the community surrounding the University.

Volunteers with Warwick Volunteers are supported to participate in, and comment on, the running of Warwick Volunteers through their Student Executive, their Project Leaders and the formal and informal opportunities that occur in the normal course of managing the volunteering process.

Project Leaders have both designated staff members and members of the student executive through whom they effect the decision-making process. Warwick Volunteers commits to annual consultation process with the Project Leaders before each annual cycle of strategic planning.

The Leadership team of Warwick Volunteers is a dynamic partnership between student executive members and the professional staff team, this ensures that the student voice is fully considered in all decisions made by Warwick Volunteers.

Volunteer Rights

Every Warwick Volunteers member has the right:

- To have a description of their volunteering role and what is expected of them
- To be given appropriate training
- To be supported in their volunteering having any concerns or questions dealt with promptly
- To be safe in their volunteering placement
- To have all agreed out of pocket expenses reimbursed for projects run by Warwick Volunteers
- To stop or change their volunteering placement at any time
- To be recognised as an individual, according to the University's Equal Opportunities Policy
- To receive up to date information about Warwick Volunteers' activities
- To have a voice in the running of Warwick Volunteers

Volunteer Responsibilities

- To abide by Warwick Volunteers' policies and procedures
- To act in accordance with the University's Equal Opportunities Policy
- To keep in regular contact with their Project Leader and Link Organisation
- To inform their Project Leader if they have a problem or want to leave a project/Warwick Volunteers
- To attend training where appropriate
- To maintain their agreed level of commitment and be reliable
- To respect confidences
- To act appropriately and set a good example to others when volunteering
- To be open and honest with Warwick Volunteers

Project Leader Rights

- To have a description of their volunteering role and what is expected of them
- To be informed of any decisions made by Warwick Volunteers
- To have a say in the running of Warwick Volunteers
- To be given support from the leadership team
- To have their work and position recognised
- To have access to the project room for running their project

- To have regular meetings with their volunteers
- To request reliability and punctuality from their volunteers
- To have any reasonable out of pocket expenses reimbursed

Project Leader Responsibilities

- To be familiar with and uphold Warwick Volunteers' aims and objectives, policies and procedures
- To effectively co-ordinate their project and place volunteers
- To organise, participate in and support the recruitment of volunteers to their project
- If required, to be familiar with the requirements of your project for Safeguarding checks and training (Disclosure and Barring Service check, Certificate of Good Conduct, Safeguarding training) and ensure all volunteers on that project have completed all checks and training before volunteering.
- To support volunteers by keeping in regular contact with them
- To give contact details to their volunteers
- To maintain an up-to-date list of active volunteers, to store and share volunteers' personal data securely in accordance with Data Protection Regulations and to protect the privacy of volunteers on their project.
- To be the main point of communication between the Leadership Team, volunteers and link organisations
- To pass on feedback from volunteers and from clients, to the Leadership Team and link organisations
- To keep in regular contact with the staff team and inform them quickly of any problems or issues which arise on the project.
- To be responsible, reliable and act as an Ambassador for Warwick Volunteers and the University of Warwick in the local community.

Student Executive Rights

- To have a description of their volunteering role and what is expected of them
- To have an active role in creating the strategic direction of Warwick Volunteers
- To be given a say in any aspect of Warwick Volunteers operation
- To be supported in developing the scope of their post during their period of office
- To be given appropriate training and ongoing support

Student Executive Responsibilities

- To engage and share responsibility for delivering strategy agreed by Warwick Volunteers Steering Committee
- Listen to the membership
- Listen to the project leaders
- Be ambassadors for Warwick Volunteers inside the University and out in the community
- To be familiar with and uphold Warwick Volunteers' aims and objectives, policies and procedures

Equal Opportunities

Warwick Volunteers is proud of its diverse community of volunteers and clients, ensures there is equality of opportunity for all and is committed to fostering an environment of mutual respect and dignity.

Warwick Volunteers complies with the University of Warwick's Equal Opportunities Guidelines. Volunteers are expected to have an understanding of and commitment to the University's Equality and Diversity guidelines. Further information can be found at: <https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/equalops/>

Responsibility for upholding the Equal Opportunities policy, and for dealing with any complaints arising from it, will rest with the Warwick Volunteers Manager.

Equal Access and Support Requirements

Warwick Volunteers is committed to making volunteering accessible to all students. We recognise that adjustments may need to be made to project structures and processes to provide appropriate access and/or support for volunteers who have a disability and are committed to making these adjustments wherever possible.

Warwick Volunteers will take the following steps to support access to volunteering:

- Encourage potential volunteers to positively disclose support requirements through statements in Warwick Volunteers leaflets and website, and on project sign-up forms.
- Offer confidential consultations to volunteers who have a disability to discuss accessibility and support requirements, and to identify reasonable adjustments to projects and/or processes to enable access.
- Provide accurate information on the accessibility of project activities.
- Work with partner organisations to make reasonable adjustments to improve access where necessary.
- Seek advice on improving access, for example from the University's Disability Office.

Grievance, Disciplinary and Behaviour

Warwick Volunteers complies with the University of Warwick's Disciplinary Regulations.

If a volunteer experiences any problems or issues related to their volunteering with Warwick Volunteers, it is their responsibility to raise these at the earliest opportunity with their Project Leader, or if this is inappropriate, with Warwick Volunteers staff.

Any issues/problems discussed will be treated as confidential.

Warwick Volunteers has the right to preclude or remove a student from a project and/or membership of Warwick Volunteers if the volunteer:

- Fails to follow reasonable instruction from the Project Leader.
- Compromises the safety of others.
- Fails to meet the minimum safeguarding requirements.
- Undertakes behaviour that brings the University of Warwick into disrepute.

Matters relating to members grievance, disciplinary and behaviour will be considered in the first instance by the President of Warwick Volunteers and the WV Manager.

Complaints

Warwick Volunteers adheres to the Complaints Policy set out by the University of Warwick which can be found at <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/feedbackcomplaints>

Date of last review: August 2021

Date of next review: August 2022

†Non-EEA citizens must be aware that some volunteering activity is subject to visa restrictions, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you adhere to these. For EU/EEA citizens BREXIT on 31st December 2020 will mean a potential change in your volunteering status, as these negotiations are ongoing please refer to <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/your-team/volunteers/recruiting/volunteers-from-overseas#> for the latest update.

Tier 4 visa

You can volunteer while you are studying. Voluntary work is distinct from volunteering. Hours of voluntary work (not volunteering) must be counted in the total number of hours permitted.

Warwick Volunteers does not run or advertise any volunteering opportunities which would be classed as 'voluntary work'. Our voluntary opportunities help local charities, community organisations, voluntary or public sector organisations. We will not ask you to sign a contract and offer a variety of programmes requiring different levels of commitment from volunteers.

For further information, please refer to the Working Alongside Your Studies, Important Information for Tier 4 visa holders available from the [Immigration Service Team](#) at the University of Warwick.