

Employee Volunteering Guidelines

If you require this in hard copy or in a different format, please email
emprelations@warwick.ac.uk

1. Purpose

- 1.1. These guidelines are intended to outline the University of Warwick's commitment to giving back and benefiting the wider community by enabling employees to participate in volunteering activities that occur during their regular working hours.
- 1.2. By establishing this provision and setting out clear principles, these guidelines aim to enhance community engagement, support personal development, and foster a culture of social responsibility.
- 1.3. Volunteering is the act of spending time doing something to benefit others without financial gain.
- 1.4. Volunteering has a number of benefits, including enhancing employee engagement, promoting wellbeing, fostering a sense of purpose, and strengthening community ties. In addition, volunteering offers a chance to develop skills and provide networking opportunities. Volunteering activities can be discussed and recognised in employees' Personal Development Review, however, are not linked to career progression or assessment of performance within their contracted job role.

2. Principles

- 2.1. The following principles and University Values apply:
 - **Going Forward and Further:** We encourage proactive engagement with volunteering opportunities, empowering employees to lead positive change and contribute to societal progress.
 - **Thinking Freely:** Employees are supported in pursuing creative and innovative volunteer roles that challenge conventional approaches and inspire fresh perspectives.
 - **Thriving on Difference:** We celebrate diversity and inclusivity in volunteering, recognising the strength of varied experiences and perspectives to foster empathy and dynamic problem-solving.
 - **Creating Connections:** Volunteering is a means to build meaningful partnerships and break down barriers, enhancing collaboration within and beyond the University.
 - **Sharing Opportunities:** By participating in volunteering, employees contribute to creating equitable opportunities for others and promoting a shared sense of responsibility for a better world.

3. Taking Leave for Volunteering

- 3.1. Salaried employees are entitled to take up to one working day (7.5 hours) of paid leave (pro-rata for part-time employees) per year (1 October to 30 September, in line with the annual leave year) for volunteering. This is in addition to annual leave.
- 3.2. Volunteering leave may be taken in hours and does not need to be taken on a single date, subject to agreement.
- 3.3. Employees are encouraged to identify and participate in volunteering opportunities, subject to the following criteria:

- The volunteering contributes to the common good – designated volunteer activities with registered charities, community groups, schools, or not-for-profit organisations are considered most appropriate.
 - The activities are without personal financial gain – for example, a fundraising activity for the sole benefit of the employee or their family would not be appropriate.
 - It does not conflict with the University's values or the employee's employment obligations. It is not considered suitable for employees to use this provision to volunteer for political organisations or participate in strikes, protests, or demonstrations.
- 3.4. Before undertaking a volunteering opportunity, employees should complete the [Volunteering Leave Application Form](#) and attach it to a request for time off on SuccessFactors. Detailed guidance on submitting and approving a volunteering leave request is available [here](#).
- 3.5. Approval of volunteering leave requests is at the discretion of the line manager, who will consider business needs, operational impact, and alignment with the principles set out above and the key considerations below. All decisions are final and there is no right of appeal.

4. Key Considerations

- 4.1. Volunteering opportunities are open to all employees, and requests should be considered in a fair and consistent manner.
- 4.2. Volunteering must be balanced with the operational requirements of the University, ensuring minimal disruption to core duties.
- 4.3. Paid time off will always be subject to the agreement of the line manager and the needs of the department.
- 4.4. Volunteering for University-led activities, such as Open Days, Graduation and Clearing does not fall under these guidelines. Time off to volunteer for these activities is subject to line manager agreement if they occur during contracted working hours.
- 4.5. These guidelines do not apply to non-contractual volunteering roles within the University of Warwick, e.g. Mental Health First Aider, Green Champions and Wellbeing Champions, or Trade Union activity.
- 4.6. Employees who volunteer outside of their contracted working hours cannot request the time to be reimbursed or given back in lieu to take at a later date. Additionally, any volunteering leave not taken within the annual leave year (1 October to 30 September) cannot be carried over into the next year.
- 4.7. The University may review volunteering participation to measure community impact, inform future policy development, and recognise contributions. Additionally, employees will have opportunities to provide feedback on their volunteering experiences to help shape future initiatives.
- 4.8. Any queries relating to these guidelines should be raised with the line manager or People Partner.

5. Equality

- 5.1. The University recognises its responsibility to ensure that no-one is discriminated against or disadvantaged in relation to a protected characteristic which include: age, disability, sex, trans and gender reassignment, maternity, paternity and adoption, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. As such, approval of volunteering requests should be done fairly and with sensitive consideration of any and all protected characteristics.

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