



**Volunteer Handbook**

**Reviewed September 2018**

## Contents

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### Section 1: Volunteering through Anglia Ruskin Students' Union Volunteer Centre

Introduction	3
Welcome to Anglia Ruskin Students' Union	4
Why volunteer?	5
Who is involved?	6
How can you find out about volunteering?	7

### Section 2: Volunteer Support and Responsibilities

Volunteer Training and Development	8
Volunteer Recruitment and Selection	9
Volunteer Supervision and Commitment	10
Dealing with Problems	11

### Section 3: Volunteer Awards and Recognition

Volunteer Accreditation and Recognition	13
Employability	14

### Section 4: Internal Volunteer Policies & Procedures

Safeguarding Policy and DBS Checks	15
Equal Opportunity and Diversity	19
Confidentiality and Data Protection	20
Health & Safety	21

### Section 5: Additional Information for Volunteers

Volunteering and Tax Benefits	23
Students from outside the UK	24
Student Feedback	24

### Section 6: Appendices

1. Confidentiality Agreement	25
2. Volunteer Agreement	26

## Introduction:

The purpose of this handbook is to provide overall guidance to ARU volunteers and staff engaged in volunteering activity and volunteer management. This handbook is designed to support and guide volunteers and is intended for guidance only.

This handbook does not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement and Anglia Ruskin Students' Union reserves the right to amend their volunteering policies at any time.

Unless specifically stated, the policies and guidelines referred to in this handbook apply to all volunteers registered with Anglia Ruskin Students' Union and the Volunteer Centre at Anglia Ruskin Students' Union.

If you are unsure about any of the material covered in this handbook, please speak to a member of the Volunteer Centre and they will be able to help you.

This handbook is available in a larger font upon request.

## Section 1: Volunteering through Anglia Ruskin Students' Union Volunteer Centre

### Welcome to Anglia Ruskin Students' Union

We are an independent charity that supports students during their time at university. If you are an Anglia Ruskin student studying in Cambridge, Chelmsford, London, Peterborough or as a Distance Learner, you are a member of Anglia Ruskin Students' Union. You become a member as soon as you enroll at Anglia Ruskin University; it is automatic, it is your right and it is going to make your time here at ARU even better.

We provide many facilities and services to ensure that you have the best possible university experience and this is why we have a dedicated Volunteer Centre for our students. –Volunteering is important to us and our members for two reasons. Firstly, the Students' Union is led by students, for students, and could not function without student volunteers. The university and its students have a key role in the local community and we want to ensure that our student volunteers are supported in making a positive contribution to their communities. Secondly, we know that volunteering provides our students with opportunities to develop new skills and gain experience. Volunteering not only supports our students' experience at university but is also valuable for students' employability in the long-term. For example, in a survey by **Student Volunteering England**, **94%** of employers believed that students who volunteer have enhanced skills, and **73%** of employers stated that they *“would rather employ someone with voluntary work experience than without.”*

The Students' Union facilitates a diverse range of volunteering opportunities:

- **110** student-led societies and sports clubs, all run by student volunteers.
- **600** education & campaign reps, a network of student volunteers who are dedicated to supporting their fellow students.
- **360** voluntary opportunities with external charities and organisations, offering students the chance to make a difference in their communities and gain transferable skills.

## Why Volunteer?

- **Have fun!**  
Getting involved in volunteering should be exciting and fun. We facilitate a variety of unique and interesting activities and events throughout the year.
- **Gain new skills**  
Volunteering offers you the opportunity to develop new skills and gain experience whilst supporting a project that you really care about.
- **Enhance your employability**  
Volunteering provides a way for you to develop skills and knowledge that many employers are looking for, and can increase your chances of getting your dream job when you leave university.
- **Experience Diversity**  
Volunteering often involves working with people from a wide range of backgrounds and environments. Volunteering gives you the chance to meet new people both at ARU and in the wider community.
- **Training**  
To help you to carry out your volunteering role effectively we can offer training and development opportunities, as can many of the organisations that we work with.
- **Recognition and Accreditation**  
At the end of each academic year we can accredit your volunteering efforts to recognise your hard work through transcripts and certificates. You can also be eligible for a number of awards given by the Students' Union and by Anglia Ruskin University.

## Role of the Volunteer Coordinators and Related Staff

The involvement of volunteers requires coordination and the implementation of best practice to ensure a high-quality service. The function of the Volunteer Coordinators and Students' Union staff is to provide a central brokerage service for students interested in volunteering in the community, University and Students' Union. With the support of the wider Students' Union staff team, the Volunteer Centre will enable students' access to relevant opportunities for volunteering and will provide direction to appropriate support and training whilst at university. Adequate and accessible records of volunteering activities and achievements will be maintained for recognition and accreditation purposes; the Volunteer Centre will also provide a central point for effective volunteer recruitment and management for the Students' Union.

## Who is involved?

### Volunteer Centre Staff:

#### Cambridge

**Caroline Way:** Volunteer Coordinator

**Chris Pursell:** Volunteer Centre Manager

#### Chelmsford

**Gayle Miller:** Volunteer Coordinator

### Student Opportunities Staff:

#### Cambridge

**Abi Dolan:** Societies & Activities Coordinator

**Meg De Pasquale-Crighton:** Course Based Society Coordinator

**Abi Dickinson:** Student Activities Manager

#### Chelmsford

**Gareth Thomson:** Societies & Activities Coordinator

**Jo Harbrow-Harris:** Activities & Operations Director

### Executive Officer Team:

**Laura Douds:** President

**Amanda Campbell White:** VP Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences

**Mary Copsey:** VP Business & Law

**Fraser Luther-Yarwood:** VP Health, Education & Medical Science

**Matt Hayes:** VP Science and Engineering

**Oluwadamilare Ojewande:** VP ARU London

**Please note: our Volunteer Coordinator for Cambridge are also responsible for our Peterborough campus and our Volunteer Coordinator for Chelmsford are also responsible for our London campus.**

## How can you find out about volunteering?

**Mailing List:** Create a volunteer profile to receive up-to-date information about all volunteering activities. If you would like to register, please 'create your profile' at [www.angliastudent.com/volunteering](http://www.angliastudent.com/volunteering).

**Facebook:** [Volunteering ARU Students' Union \(Cambridge\)](#)  
[Volunteering ARU Students' Union \(Chelmsford\)](#)

**Twitter:** [@VolunteerARUSU](#)

**Website:** [www.angliastudent.com/volunteering](http://www.angliastudent.com/volunteering)

**Email us at:** [volunteering@angliastudent.com](mailto:volunteering@angliastudent.com)

### Telephone:

Cambridge: 01223 460008

Chelmsford: 01245 258178.

### Drop in:

The Students' Union Volunteer Centre is based in:

Cambridge – Peter Taylor House.

Chelmsford – Tindal Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

### Our offices are open:

9:00-17:00 Monday to Friday

## How can you get involved?

The following list shows the different ways that you can get involved in volunteering. If you have a query about any of these opportunities, please contact the Volunteer Centre. The Volunteer Centre are on hand to help you find a volunteering role that suits you.

### SU Volunteer Centre:

Opportunities with external organisations

One-off events

Volunteering Trips

Student-led projects

### Students' Union:

Students' Union trustees

Sports Club and Society committees

Campaign and Course Representatives

Students' Union Ambassador

## Section 2: Volunteer Support and Responsibilities

### Definition of a Volunteer

A volunteer is any person who gives up their time in an unpaid role without expectation of compensation, reimbursement or employment beyond reimbursement of expenses incurred in the course of their duties. Volunteers registered with the Volunteer Centre are not considered employees of the Students' Union or of the organisations registered with Anglia Ruskin Students' Union Volunteer Centre and the Volunteer Centre will assess all opportunities to ensure that registered volunteers are not placed in roles that should be paid.

### Discretion

The participation of volunteers in activities organised by or facilitated through the Students' Union Volunteer Centre is at the discretion of the Students' Union and other organisations involved in the activity. Volunteers must be willing to submit to appropriate checks before commencing volunteering, as listed in the volunteer handbook and role descriptions.

### Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers are a valuable asset to Anglia Ruskin Students' Union, its staff and our University, and the Volunteer Centre is dedicated to supporting its volunteers. The rights and responsibilities of our student volunteers are laid out in this handbook, in the Clubs and Societies and Representation handbooks and on the Students' Union website at [www.angliastudent.com/volunteering](http://www.angliastudent.com/volunteering).

### Volunteer Training and Development

The following training opportunities for Students' Union volunteers are available:

- Development Training
- Employability Programme – A short programme available to students, accredited by the ILM
- First Aid Training
- Minibus Driving Test
- Anglia Ruskin Employability Programme
- Education and Campaign Representative Training
- Society Committee Member Training

These training sessions can all appear on a volunteer's Skills Transcript and can be facilitated through Students' Union and Anglia Ruskin University staff. If a volunteer needs specific training that is not listed above, they should contact a Volunteer Coordinator to discuss possible training.

### Expenses

For Students' Union volunteers, expenses will be considered on a project-by-project basis. The Volunteer Coordinators will let you know further details and what is required to claim.

Where possible, the Students' Union believes that external projects should pay volunteers out-of-pocket expenses, but we understand that this may not be possible for some projects, and we will inform you if this is the case.



# Volunteer Recruitment and Selection

## Recruitment

Volunteers are recruited proactively through the Volunteer Centre section of the Anglia Ruskin Students' Union website as well as through the social media and webpages of the Students' Union and through its flyers, posters, internal press, events and newsletters.

Volunteers are recruited without regard to gender, disability, race, age, employment status or any other distinction that may be viewed as discriminatory.

The sole qualification for volunteer recruitment shall be the suitability to perform a specified task or role on behalf of Anglia Ruskin Students' Union, internal university departments or other organisations that have requested volunteers.

## Internal and External Requests for Volunteers

Enquires from organisations wishing to offer opportunities through Anglia Ruskin Students' Union Volunteer Centre should be made to the Volunteer Coordinators in the first instance. Organisations and opportunities can now be registered online via our website and can be started at [www.angliastudent.com/volunteering/organisations/](http://www.angliastudent.com/volunteering/organisations/)

The Volunteer Coordinators will direct appropriate students to the opportunities, but hold no responsibility for the recruitment of a volunteer for an opportunity. The organisation should apply their normal recruitment criteria to students directed to their opportunities.

Anglia Ruskin Students' Union Volunteer Centre reserves the right to refuse to promote an opportunity, place/recruit volunteers where they feel effective use will not be made of their skills and abilities, or where it appears the placement may be unsafe or unsuitable. Organisations must read and accept our Service Level Agreement before registering their organisation or uploading any opportunities.

## Volunteer Role/Task Description

Volunteers require a clear, complete and current description of the duties and responsibilities of their task or role. This role/task description should include a named supervisor and worksite. These descriptions should be provided by the organisation responsible for the volunteering opportunity.

## Selection

Anglia Ruskin Students' Union Volunteer Centre will endeavor to offer guidance to help potential volunteers find the organisation or project that will best meet their skills, studies, knowledge and interests.

Volunteers who opt for an elected volunteer position will be subject to the Anglia Ruskin Students' Union articles and bye-laws or the society/club's constitution, should their election into the role be successful.

Volunteers who opt for a role within an external organisation will be subject to that organisation's normal recruitment procedure. If a volunteer feels that they have been dealt with unfairly, they may contact the Volunteer Coordinators who can mediate with the organisation. However, coordinators do not have the power to change an organisation's

decision. Volunteers can also submit any queries or raise any issues experienced during their volunteer experience through our online support form which can be found here [www.angliastudent.com/volunteering/support/](http://www.angliastudent.com/volunteering/support/).

Volunteers may be required to submit to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before being placed within certain organisations; failure to do so or a negative outcome on a DBS may result in that placement being refused. If a volunteer receives a negative outcome on a DBS check provided by an external provider, they are not obliged to tell the Volunteer Centre.

## Volunteer Induction

All Students' Union volunteers will receive an internal induction to Anglia Ruskin Students' Union.

Each university department and external organisation that recruits volunteers will be responsible for providing their volunteers with an induction.

Volunteers taking part in Students' Union projects and events will be trained as needed for the opportunity. External organisations may also implement related training programmes and development initiatives associated with their volunteering opportunities.

## Volunteer Supervision and Commitment

### Requirement of a Supervisor

Students' Union volunteers will have access to a named line manager/supervisor.

Volunteers who perform a task or role for an external organisation should have a named supervisor who is responsible for their direct management. In addition the Students' Union Volunteer Coordinators and Activities' staff are available for consultation, guidance and assistance, in confidence where appropriate.

### Commitment and Absenteeism

- Volunteers are individuals first and the Students' Union recognises this, Volunteer Coordinators will ensure individuals do not feel under pressure to commit if they feel they cannot.
- Volunteers should be honest about their availability with the Volunteer Centre, this way opportunities can be tailored to fit around the volunteer's timetable.
- Organisations and internal departments will be reminded that they should respect student volunteers' priorities in terms of timetables and academic work and examinations.
- Volunteers should however note the importance of reliability in their roles, particularly in 1-2-1 befriending or mentoring roles.
- Volunteers are also responsible for informing organisations if they are unable to attend a volunteering session in a timely manner that is in accordance with the organisation's reporting procedures.

## Termination

There may times when an internal or external organisation feels it is in its best interests to end their relationship with a volunteer, either because they no longer wish to have a volunteer perform the role or they have issues with that volunteer's performance.

External organisations are encouraged to talk to the Volunteer Coordinators about their decision.

Volunteers may also feel as though they would like to end their role, volunteers in this position are encouraged to discuss this with their Volunteer Coordinator as they can help the volunteer to find a more suitable role if the volunteer so wishes.

Volunteers that are in an elected position such as trustee, education and campaign representatives are subject to the terms set out in the Union's articles and bye-laws; clubs and society committee members are subject to their club/society's constitution.

## Dealing with Problems

We hope that most problems can be dealt with and resolved informally through discussion with the Volunteer Coordinators.

In the interests of fairness and the protection of volunteers, staff, students and our service users, it is necessary to have procedures for dealing with problems, complaints or other difficult situations which cannot be resolved informally.

There are two sets of circumstances which may result in more formal action being taken:

- If a volunteer has a complaint to make about any aspect of their role within the Students' Union, including the conduct of other staff or volunteers.
- If there is a problem with a volunteer's conduct or behaviour – if they behave in a way that is unacceptable or do not perform their role appropriately.

We have tried to make this procedure as simple and clear as possible and we aim to ensure that any problems are dealt with in a fair and professional way.

### If you have a complaint

The Students' Union will deal with any complaint sensitively, promptly, effectively and in strict confidence.

You should talk to the Volunteer Coordinators in the first instance; they will try to resolve the issue and record the outcome. The Volunteer Centre has an online form that students can fill out if they are not comfortable emailing a Coordinator directly, which can be found on our website: <http://www.angliastudent.com/volunteering/support/>. If you are not satisfied with the outcome at this stage, you may wish to make a complaint more formally. In this instance, you should follow the Students' Union's complaints procedure (available on request and online at [www.angliastudent.com](http://www.angliastudent.com)).

Where there is misconduct or a breach of rules, your line manager will meet with you to discuss the circumstances.

## What is 'misconduct'?

The following examples are normally regarded as misconduct:

- Sexual, racial or other harassment, or conduct contrary to the ethical values of the Students' Union.
- Deliberate and serious breach of confidentiality relating to client records/information.
- Serious misuse of the organisation's computers, email or internet access.

If, after the meeting with the volunteer, the line manager and the Volunteer Coordinators, it is agreed that a breach of the rules has occurred, the volunteer will be excluded from volunteering within the Students' Union.

## Volunteer Tasks

If you are finding it difficult to perform your role effectively with the Students' Union, in most cases it is possible to review tasks/roles and find a better match to suit your skills and abilities. If no suitable alternative roles can be found within the Students' Union we can help you to find suitable roles within other organisations where you can develop your skills and be supported.

If you feel that the tasks you are required to do as a volunteer are inappropriate, please contact your line manager/supervisor or a Volunteer Coordinator.

## Section 3: Volunteer Awards and Recognition

### Volunteer Accreditation and Recognition

#### References

If you require a reference for an external organisation volunteer role, it is advised you use your personal tutor, course or module leader, current or previous line managers or someone who has known you in a professional capacity for 2 years, who are not friend or family member.

Please note that it is at the Volunteer Coordinator's discretion whether or not they provide a reference if requested.

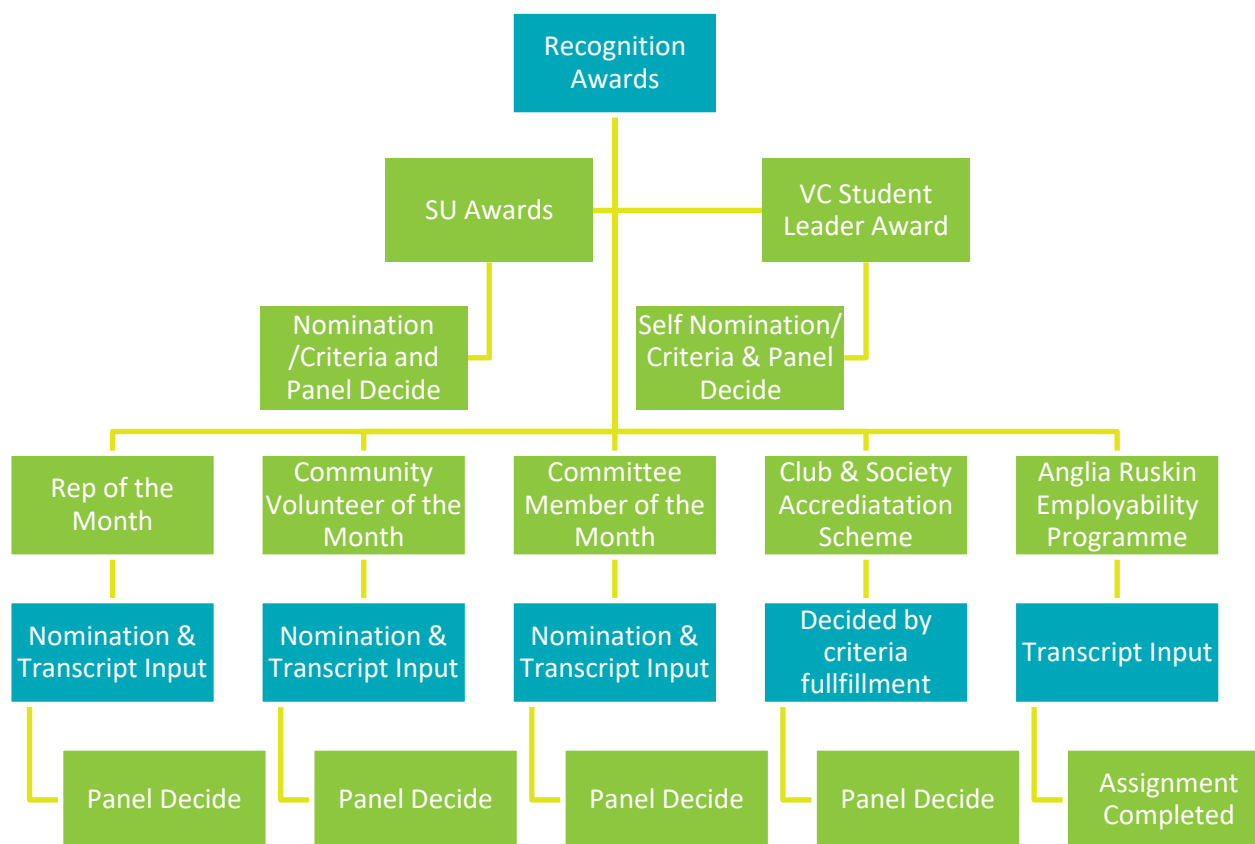
#### Recognition

Anglia Ruskin Students' Union Volunteer Centre recognises the work of its volunteers as extremely valuable and believes that volunteers' commitment and performance should be recognised as widely as possible.

Volunteering efforts are recognised in a number of ways:

- **Volunteer Awards** – Bronze, Silver, Gold certificates based on hours and skills logged by volunteers on their online volunteering profiles.
- **Community Volunteer of the Month** - A monthly award for nominated student community volunteers to recognise their achievements.
- **Rep of the Month** – A monthly award for the nominated course rep.
- **Committee Member of the Month** – A monthly award for the nominated society committee member.
- **Skills Transcript** – an online platform where student volunteers can log their hours and skills that they learn volunteering.
- **Anglia Ruskin Students' Union Awards** – student volunteers can be eligible for nomination for a variety of annual awards.
- **The Vice Chancellor's Student Leader Award** – An extra-curricular award worth £1,000.

Below is a visualisation of the student volunteer awards structure:



External organisations may also have volunteer recognition processes in place, including accredited training relating to specific volunteering activities.

## Employability

All volunteers are encouraged to develop their personal and professional skills to enhance their employability. Volunteer Coordinators are available at all times to discuss volunteers' progression within their chosen field and to help volunteers promote the skills gained through volunteering on their CVs.

-Anglia Ruskin Students' Union Volunteer Centre also provides students with an online volunteering portal where volunteering hours and skills can be logged and accredited. These logs can then be downloaded at any time in the form of a 'Skills Transcript'. Trustees, Reps, Committee Members, Sports and Community volunteers are all advised to log their hours and skills and by doing so they can also be eligible for awards offered by Anglia Ruskin Students' Union and Anglia Ruskin University.

Volunteers should also be aware of the Anglia Ruskin Employability Programme. This short programme is endorsed by the UK's largest management body, The Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM) which is recognised by employers. The programme is delivered by the university and any current ARU student studying at a core campus can take part. This course is free for all ARU students and once completed, students will have a nationally recognised qualification that sets them apart from other candidates. The skills that volunteers can log on the SU website are complimentary to the Employability Programme and volunteers who have logged skills online are greatly encouraged to take part in the programme. For more information, contact the Volunteer Centre or the ARU Employability Service.

## Section 4: Internal Volunteer Policies and Procedures

### Safeguarding Policies

#### Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

Volunteers may be required to submit to a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS; formerly CRB) before being placed within certain organisations or roles; failure to do so or a negative outcome on a check could result in that opportunity being refused. A DBS check is required where your volunteering role involves working with children or adults at risk.

All students must provide details of their criminal record when returning their completed form to the registered organisation. If you have any convictions, reprimands, or warnings and the information was not disclosed on completion of the DBS form this could prevent you from being offered a volunteering placement.

The police provide the DBS with access to all convictions held (Police Act 1997) and under this same act the DBS has a statutory duty to include details of every conviction, caution, reprimand and warning on the DBS certificate. If you need further information about this act please see the Home Office website at [www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk).

#### External Organisations Policy:

External organisations will have a DBS code of practice which is relevant to their activities and they will conduct the necessary checks for you to volunteer with children and/or adults at risk. If a volunteer receives a negative outcome on a DBS check provided by an external provider, they are not obliged to tell the Volunteer Centre.

#### Anglia Ruskin Students' Union Policy:

As an organisation, we work with an external registered organisation using the DBS to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust. The Students' Union complies fully with the DBS code of practice and undertakes to treat all volunteers fairly. It also undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

We make every subject of a DBS aware of the existence of the DBS guidelines and copies are available on request.

Further information on DBS checks can be obtained from the Volunteer Coordinators or from:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service).

## Policy for Protection of Children and Adults 'at risk'

### Definitions

For the purpose of this policy and guidelines, the term 'child' means any person under the age of 18.

'Adults at risk' are people who are, or may be, in need of community care services because of mental or physical disability, age or illness, and who are, or may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

### Purpose

All volunteers who come into contact with children or adults at risk have a responsibility to protect them from inappropriate or harmful actions and situations. This means ensuring that children and adults at risk are safe whilst participating in Students' Union activities, and ensuring that volunteers are aware of how to respond should they have any anxieties about the safety of participants.

Anglia Ruskin Students' Union recognises the importance of the welfare of children and adults at risk and their right to protection from all forms of abuse.

It is equally important that volunteers do not put themselves in a situation where they might be at risk of harming children or vulnerable adults, or of being accused of doing so.

This policy applies to all participants and volunteers in Students' Union activities. If your internal group, such as a Students' Union club or society, is going to be involved with children or adults at risk, particularly if there is no responsible outside body involved (e.g. a school), contact your Volunteering Coordinators for further advice **before** running the activity.

For volunteers in **external projects/organisations**, please refer to the organisation's guidance and procedures around the protection of children and adults at risk. If there appears to be no policy in place and you are volunteering unsupervised with children or adults at risk, contact your Volunteering Coordinator in the first instance.

### Safe Practice

Here are some simple guidelines for volunteers to avoid compromising situations on projects (external organisations will also have guidelines for their opportunities). By following these, volunteers will keep themselves safe.

- Avoid physical play and rough games.
- Avoid planning activities that involve you working in isolation with a child or adult at risk.
- Create and maintain a safe and caring environment that enables children and adults at risk to raise concerns about attitudes or behaviour they do not like.
- Challenge activities which are abusive (e.g. initiation ceremonies, bullying), including those from a child or adult at risk's peers.
- Only restrain a child or adult at risk if they are endangering themselves or others, and only if you have received training in doing so. Make a note of what happened **as soon as possible** after the event.
- Be aware of your demeanor and actions when comforting an upset child or adult at risk.



## Compromising Situations:

- Avoid one-to-one situations; for example, children needing toilet trips should be taken by a same sex pair of volunteers.
- If, in an emergency, a volunteer is alone with a child or adult at risk, inform a colleague and attempt to put yourself in a location where you can be seen or where there is easy access, e.g. by leaving a door open.
- Always be in sight or ear shot of at least one other adult.
- Never take young people to your home or give them your home address, phone number, or other personal information such as social media.
- Do not allow yourself to be drawn into vulnerable situations.
- Do not ever remain in a situation you are uncomfortable with.
- Keep safe boundaries and use your common sense.

## Types of Abuse:

**Physical:** any type of physical harm, including smacking, hitting, shaking and intoxication.

**Sexual:** anything that uses children or vulnerable adults for the sexual gratification of adults, including encouraging the watching of pornography.

**Emotional:** withholding of love and kindness, repeated undermining of self-esteem, verbal abuse and behaviour which suggests that the victim is of little or no worth.

**Neglect:** not meeting basic physical and emotional needs, including leaving a child or vulnerable adult on his or her own, not providing basic provisions of food or clothing, lack of care for health, and not preventing harm.

## A protection/safeguarding issue may come to the notice of a volunteer in several ways:

- A child or adult at risk may make a direct and full disclosure of abuse.
- A child or adult at risk may make a comment which suggests abuse.
- It may be obvious that a child or adult at risk has sustained an injury.
- A child or adult at risk's behaviour may suggest the possibility of abuse.
- The behaviour of a volunteer or staff member may suggest that they are not a suitable person to care for children or adults at risk.

## What to do if abuse is suspected or disclosed:

1. Listen, observe, and notice. Stay calm and think before you act. Reassure the child or adult at risk that you are taking them seriously.
2. A confidential record should be kept of the disclosure using the child or vulnerable adult's own words, and recording their demeanor and actions. Do this **as soon as possible** and keep the record in a safe place.
3. Do not take sole responsibility. Tell your line manager or the Volunteer Coordinators in private what you have been told. Do not disclose the information to anyone else.
4. Be sensitive – keep questions to a minimum and be sure that you are absolutely clear about what you have been told. Avoid closed or leading questions and let the child or adult at risk do the talking.
5. Acknowledge how difficult it must have been for them to confide in you and reassure them that they are not to blame. Continue to offer support to the child or adult at risk and do not rush off. Do not make promises that you are unable to keep, and avoid saying things like, 'It will be alright.'

6. Explain that you **cannot** keep what the child or adult at risk has told you a secret, and that you have to pass the information on so that something can be done about it. You have a **legal obligation** to report abuse.
7. It is **not** your responsibility to notify the family of the disclosure – that is the responsibility of social services.
8. Do not cover up for a colleague whom you suspect or know is being abusive – report it immediately.
9. Share information in private immediately with any of the following:
  - If external:** the Line Manager or Designated Protection Officer in your external organisation.
  - If internal:** Jo Harbrow-Harris, Activities and Operations Director (01223 460008)
10. The child or adult at risk must **NOT** be asked to repeat the allegation.

Only in extreme circumstances when you expect the child or adult at risk to be in immediate danger should you stop them from going home and contact social services or the police. If you think the child or adult at risk is in immediate danger or you are unable to contact the above, contact social services:

Cambridgeshire: Children and Young People 03450 455203, out of office hours 01733 234724; Adults at Risk 03450 455202, out of office hours 01733 234724.

Chelmsford: Children and Young People 08456 0037634, out of office hours 08456 061212; Adults at Risk 08456 037634, out of office hours 08456 061212.

Alternatively, contact the police by dialing 999.

### **Additional Information: For volunteers working regularly with children or adults at risk**

Children and adults at risk who are being abused are most likely to tell people that they trust and with whom they feel safe. Volunteers who work with children or adults at risk on a regular basis often share close relationships and may be the sort of person in whom a child or vulnerable adult might place their trust.

#### **Remember:**

- Keep yourself safe.
- Do not cover up for a colleague whom you suspect or know is being abusive – report it to one of the Volunteer Coordinators (Cambridge: 01223 460008/Chelmsford: 01245 258178)
- If you feel unable to approach the Volunteer Coordinators, we advise you to contact Jo Harbrow-Harris, Activities and Operations Director, on 01223 460008.
- If you feel unable to do this, you have the option to report it to social services (see contact details above).
- The Volunteer Coordinators can provide support for you, including providing any information or pastoral support required.

**If you know about the abuse of children or adults at risk, you have a legal obligation to report it to the authorities. Failure to do so is aiding and abetting abuse and will be taken seriously by legal authorities.**

**Do not discuss the matter with other volunteers.**

## Equal Opportunities and Diversity

1. Anglia Ruskin Students' Union is committed to a comprehensive policy of equal opportunities for all our volunteers, as reflected in the university's equal opportunities policy, mission statement and strategic plan, and the plans for development of the Students' Union.
2. The aim of this policy is to create an environment whereby volunteers are treated fairly and equally, regardless of gender, including gender reassignment, race, ethnic or national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, socio-economic background, family circumstance, spent offences, age, physical appearance or any conditions which cannot be shown to be justified.
3. The Students' Union is committed to ending all discrimination, and to taking positive action to enable disadvantaged and under-represented groups to participate fully in all aspects of Students' Union volunteering activity.
4. It is the responsibility of all volunteers of the Students' Union to behave in a non-discriminatory manner and to help change practices and procedures which deny or limit equality of opportunity or treatment.

### Implementation

1. Anglia Ruskin Students' Union will monitor its engagement with all volunteers and will review the position of traditionally under-represented students group. If needed, the Students' Union will work with those groups to find ways of improving participation in activities and representation.
2. Anglia Ruskin Students' Union will monitor and reassess its own practice and procedures to ensure that they are in no way discriminatory to or exclusive for any particular group.
3. Anglia Ruskin Students' Union will commit itself to applying misconduct procedures and will expel volunteers who have behaved in a discriminatory manner from their voluntary roles.

## Confidentiality and Data Protection

The Students' Union Volunteer Centre is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of its service users. In normal circumstances no information about an individual will be given to an external organisation or internal staff member without prior permission; however, we recognise that sometimes this is not always possible. In this situation you will be told what will happen and why.

Situations where information will have to be shared:

- Where the health and safety of any volunteer, or another individual, may be at risk.
- Following the disclosure to a volunteer of abuse, or details of other criminal activity (see Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults section).

A system of records will be maintained for each volunteer, including:

- Initial registration and contact details
- Copies of all written and email communications
- Reports or correspondence received from other organisations related to the volunteer
- Any other relevant documentation
- Equal opportunities monitoring details

These personal records shall be considered confidential within Anglia Ruskin Students' Union and the Volunteer Centre. All files are secure and only accessible to those who need to know their contents. The equal opportunities monitoring records of ARU students and recent graduates will be held for one year. After this period, all paper records are destroyed and database records will be deleted. Contact details for alumnus will also be deleted from the Volunteer Centre mailing list.

Data from these records may be used for statistical purposes, and figures drawn from data may be included in reports. These reports will not contain names, addresses or any other information that could identify any person, unless specifically agreed in writing with that person.

If students feel that their confidentiality has been breached, they should contact the Volunteer Centre in the first instance to resolve the situation.

### Responsibility of Volunteers

It is important that information about other people and students is kept confidential. Volunteers and students working in the Students' Union may only pass on information when a disclosure of abuse or criminal activity is made or if they are concerned that an individual may be at risk. Students' Union volunteers will also be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement (Appendix 1).

### Representation of Anglia Ruskin Students' Union

*Prior to any action or statement that might significantly affect or obligate Anglia Ruskin Students' Union.*

Volunteers are not authorised to talk to the press; if you are approached, please refer them to the Students' Union President.

## Health and Safety

The objective of this policy is to reduce the likelihood of injury by proactively managing risk. This action will be at a level that complies with all legal requirements in the UK and current best practice recognised by Anglia Ruskin University and the Students' Union. Where possible this will be completed without compromising the volunteering activity.

### Volunteer Responsibilities

Volunteers are responsible for their own actions and for following the reasonable instructions of the person responsible for organising the safe delivery of specific activities, whether in a Students' Union role or an external project/organisation role.

### Within the Students' Union:

Everyone within the Students' Union has a duty to provide for the health, safety and welfare of themselves and others.

### Responsibilities of the Students' Union can be summarised as follows:

- The Students' Union, through the Volunteer Centre, are responsible for assessing the suitability, from a health and safety perspective, of external opportunities and projects. Where volunteers are placed with an external organisation, a copy of that organisation's health and safety policy will be obtained.
- Within the Students' Union, primary responsibility for health and safety rests with the Students' Union Chief Executive.
- Staff and project leaders are responsible for implementing good health and safety practices during activities.
- The Students' Union safety arrangements are part of the university's overall safety policy; health and safety will also be included as agenda items on Students' Union staff meetings.
- The Students' Union staff team are responsible for distributing appropriate health and safety information and appointing suitable project leaders. They are also responsible for developing and monitoring systems and procedures that ensure student activities are undertaken within the Students' Union safety policy.

### Arrangements for health, safety and welfare

The Students' Union Volunteer Centre will endeavour to fulfil its responsibilities to its volunteers via the following:

- Co-operating and communicating with internal/external organisations to obtain relevant health and safety information about prospective and ongoing opportunities and projects.
- Provision of public liability insurance for Students' Union volunteers.
- Distribution of relevant information to volunteers.
- An effective system of recording and investigating accidents and risks for internal Students' Union and university volunteers.

## Insurance

Public Liability insurance is provided for all volunteers engaged in Anglia Ruskin Students' Union projects and events. Where volunteers are placed within an external organisation, the organisation's insurance will cover them.

Volunteers should check their activities are covered by the Union's insurance by speaking to their relevant member of Students' Union staff.

Activities and events organised and run directly by volunteers should have a relevant risk assessment completed prior to the event.

If you are volunteering abroad, the public liability insurance may not include third-party cover. This does not prevent you from taking a volunteering position which requires you to volunteer overseas, but you should speak to the Volunteer Centre to find out more information and to obtain a list of questions to ask of the organisers running the overseas project which might help with your decision.

## Reviewing the Policy

It is an aim of this policy to create an environment where safety issues can be openly discussed. At an operational level, a review may only need to involve those people directly affected. It is everyone's responsibility to raise problems if safety is compromised.

The Students' Union Chief Executive will review the policy annually. This may happen more often following new laws, processes, hazards, activities or problems.

## Section 5: Additional Information for Volunteers

### Volunteering and Tax Benefits

Please note: This information was taken from [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) and was correct at the time of writing.

You are free to volunteer whilst you are receiving benefits as long as the work you do is unpaid, and you continue to meet the conditions of your benefit. Always check with your benefits adviser before you start volunteering.

#### How voluntary work is defined

In terms of benefits and tax credits, you will be considered a volunteer if you:

- Do not receive any money for the work you do (this does not include reasonable expenses).
- Are not legally obliged to volunteer.
- Do something for a not-for-profit organisation or community project.
- Do something for someone who is not a family member.

Volunteering should not affect your right to benefits, as long as the only money you receive is to cover your volunteering expenses; for example, expenses to cover travel from home to the volunteering location.

There are no limits on the amount of hours you can volunteer for (unless you receive Employment and Support Allowance, which restricts work and volunteering to sixteen hours per week), nor any restrictions on the types of organisation you can volunteer for, with the exception of those on Tier 4 student visas (see following section). The only requirement is that you continue to meet the conditions of the benefit or tax credit you are receiving. Please remember when committing to volunteering roles that they should not adversely affect your studies or wellbeing.

It is always advisable to discuss your choice of voluntary work with your benefits adviser before you start. Your benefits adviser will vary depending on the type of benefit you receive. It could be your local council or the Department for Work and Pensions.

For further information please visit [www.gov.uk/volunteering/when-you-can-volunteer](http://www.gov.uk/volunteering/when-you-can-volunteer).

## Students from outside the UK

The Students' Union Volunteer Centre strives to find volunteering opportunities for all students. However there are certain exceptions where your choices may be restricted because of the limitations of the UK immigration visa that you hold.

- If you have a **Tier 4 visa** you are eligible to take part in volunteering activities and/or paid work. This means that you are allowed to take part in ongoing, regular volunteering or paid employment. However, you are only allowed to take part in these activities up to a maximum of **twenty hours per week**. For example, you could take part in a combination of five hours volunteering and fifteen hours paid work, equaling twenty hours.
- If you hold a **Student Visitor visa** you are NOT allowed to take part in ongoing volunteering activities. However, you can get involved in one-off activities, and the Volunteer Centre can advise you on the opportunities that are available to you.

If you need further advice about the conditions of your visa please contact the International Student Advice Service: [www.anglia.ac.uk/isas/work](http://www.anglia.ac.uk/isas/work).

## Student Feedback

The Students' Union constantly seeks new ways to improve our services. To help us to do this we welcome suggestions and feedback from everyone involved in our activities.

Your feedback is important to us and will be gathered through feedback forms, surveys, one-to-one meetings, online and via email correspondence. If you have been happy with the service offered by the department and told us about your experience, we may use this feedback on our promotional material, subject to your agreement.

This document is available electronically upon request.  
Please ask a member of staff.



## Section 6: Appendices

### Appendix 1

#### Confidentiality Agreement

I will maintain the confidential information of Anglia Ruskin Students' Union and will not disclose any information about any student, person or organisation that I am working with to any third party during the course of my volunteering role with the Students' Union and Volunteer Centre unless I am given permission to do so. I understand that I am only able to disclose information about an individual if there has been a disclosure of abuse or criminal activity or if I believe an individual is at risk.

I understand that breaching confidentiality may lead to termination of my volunteering role within the Students' Union.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2

### Volunteer Agreement

This Volunteer Agreement describes the arrangement between ARU Students' Union and yourself. We wish to assure you of our appreciation of you volunteering with us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding.

#### Part 1: The Organisation

As a volunteer with ARU Students' Union you can expect:

##### General

- A supportive and positive environment that ensures that you enjoy your volunteering and get the most from your experience.
- To be treated with respect and courtesy.
- Respect to your right to privacy.
- To be informed of relevant and up to date information.

##### Induction and training

- To provide a thorough induction on the work of ARU Students' Union, its staff, your volunteering role and the induction and/or training you need to meet the responsibilities of this role. The Volunteer Handbook provides full details of the organisation.

##### Supervision, support and flexibility

- To explain the standards we expect for our services and to encourage and support you to achieve and maintain them.
- To provide a named line manager who will meet with you regularly to discuss your volunteering and any successes and problems.
- To do our best to help you develop your volunteering role with us.

##### Expenses

- To reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses following the procedures in the Volunteer Handbook: Please keep all your receipts to give to us when we reimburse your expenses.

#### 5. Health and safety

- To provide adequate training and feedback in support of our health and safety policy, a copy of which is in the Volunteer Handbook.

#### 6. Insurance

- To provide adequate insurance cover for volunteers whilst carrying out their volunteering roles which have been approved and authorised by us

#### 7. Equal opportunities

- To be treated fairly regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, age, parental or marital status, disability, religion, race, ethnic or national origins or social/economic background.
- To ensure that all volunteers are dealt with in accordance with our equal opportunities policy, a copy of which is set out in the Volunteer Handbook.

### Problems

- To try to fairly resolve any problems, complaints or difficulties you may have while you volunteer with us;
- In the event of an unresolved problem, to offer an opportunity to discuss the issues in accordance with the procedures set out in the Volunteer Handbook.

### Recognition

- To provide the opportunity to log volunteering hours and skills and be recognised through the following schemes:
  - Volunteer Awards
  - Volunteer of the Month Awards (subject to nomination and panel decision)
  - SU Awards (subject to nomination and panel decision)
- To inform you of additional award schemes you will be eligible for through Anglia Ruskin University including:
  - Anglia Ruskin Employability Awards
  - Vice Chancellor’s Student Leader Award
  - John Spence Community Prize

## Part 2: The Volunteer

In return we ask that you:

- Support ARU Students’ Union fulfil its aims and objectives.
- Perform your volunteering role to the best of your ability.
- Remember that you are a representative of Anglia Ruskin Students’ Union.
- Treat fellow volunteers, students and staff with courtesy and respect.
- Follow the ARU Students’ Union procedures and standards, including health and safety, safeguarding and equal opportunities, in relation to its staff, volunteers and clients.
- Maintain the confidential information of ARU Students’ Union and of its clients as set out in the Confidentiality Agreement.
- Meet the time commitments and standards which have been mutually agreed to and to give reasonable notice so other arrangements can be made when this is not possible.
- Provide referees as agreed who may be contacted, and to agree to a Disclosure and Barring Service check being carried out where necessary.
- Let us know if you wish to change the nature of your volunteering.
- Let us know if we can improve the service and support that you receive.

This agreement is binding in honour only, is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intend any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_