

Oxford Brookes Volunteer Centre Policy - For Community Partners

This policy is intended to establish and maintain clear, consistent standards of good practice for charities and third sector organisations using Oxford Brookes Student Volunteer Centre to promote UK-based volunteering opportunities to students.

For more information, please contact: volunteering@brookes.ac.uk

Our aim is to:

- Act as a link between students at Oxford Brookes and the wider community.
- Advertise and promote mutually beneficial volunteering opportunities, enabling students to make a positive impact within the community through sharing their skills and enthusiasm whilst boosting their confidence and employability.
- Support and encourage students to engage in volunteering activity and to then reflect on their experience volunteering.

Oxford Brookes will:

- Provide a free and professional brokerage service. We do not select volunteers for external organisations through brokerage.
- Promote local and national volunteering opportunities to all students across the University, working closely with faculties and departments to direct students to relevant roles.
- Maintain regular contact with the Community Partner, offering ongoing support and the opportunity for feedback.
- Invite Community Partners to register interest for relevant events, such as Oxford Brookes' Volunteer Fair and Volunteer Wednesdays and social media promotion.
- Gather data to assess student interest and the success of opportunities.
- Recognise and celebrate the achievements of student volunteers.

The Community Partner will:

- Confirm 'not for profit status' i.e. are you a registered charity, social enterprise (CIC, Cooperative etc), and provide your relevant registration number.
- Provide a clear volunteer role description on the volunteering portal, where expectations are realistic and achievable and where voluntary activity will not replace the work of paid staff.
- Provide Oxford Brookes with evidence of Public Liability Insurance and robust Health and Safety protocols.
- Inform Oxford Brookes if students will be lone working or volunteering in a client's home.
- Carry out any risk assessments and address any safeguarding issues in relation to your volunteering posts
- Comply with all relevant UK legislation.

- To strictly observe the Government CoronaVirus (COVID-19): Guidance and support <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- Respond to queries from prospective volunteers in a timely manner and contact all applicants with the outcome of their application.
- Undertake any necessary checks as required, such as DBS checks, visa eligibility checks for international students and references.
- Provide appropriate training and induction for volunteers to carry out their assigned tasks safely and efficiently.
- Provide ongoing support and supervision, ensuring volunteers are aware of all relevant policies and procedures.
- Keep accurate records of Oxford Brookes students who are volunteering in line with GDPR regulations.
- Keep Oxford Brookes informed of any changes to the role or within the organisation that will impact on volunteers.
- Offer feedback to Oxford Brookes.

Please note that:

- We adopt NCVO's definition of volunteering:

'any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individual or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives.'

You can find further information about the distinction of volunteering and voluntary work on the [NCVO website](#).

- It is good practice to have a written volunteer agreement in place. You can find guidance about volunteer agreements on the [NCVO website](#).
- Students fit volunteering around their academic studies and other responsibilities, such as part time work. We advise students not to exceed 15 hours a week for activities outside their studies.
- The academic year is split into two semesters. A high number of students leave Oxford and return home during University vacation periods. Please refer to our semester dates [here](#).

Please be aware that we are unable to advertise the following on our volunteering portal:

- International roles.
We aim to support the local community and continue to make Oxfordshire and its

surrounding areas even better places to live!

- Roles that could be classed as voluntary work or employment.
We work hard to ensure opportunities are mutually beneficial, offering students the opportunity to gain and develop transferable skills. Please refer to NCVO's definition of volunteering above.

You can find further guidance on volunteers' rights at www.gov.uk/volunteering.

- Roles deemed unsuitable for students or that may possibly bring Oxford Brookes University into disrepute.
We may refuse to promote further roles from any organisation who breach this understanding and, at our sole discretion, remove (or not publish) advertisements which we consider to contravene UK law, or to be otherwise suitable.
- Charities that are not registered and do not have effective health and safety protocols, policies or insurance in place.

Feedback on our services:

We welcome your feedback, both positive and negative, as it drives the continuous quality improvement of our services. Should you be unhappy with any aspect of our service and wish to raise a concern, please speak to a member of staff on 01865 484670 or email volunteering@brookes.ac.uk in the first instance. If we cannot resolve your concern, it will be passed to the Head of the Careers Service. We aim to provide an initial acknowledgement within three working days.

Updated: July 2020
Next review: July 2021