

Volunteer Agreements

A volunteer agreement is a description of the arrangement between the organisation and a volunteer for the voluntary work they will do.

It informs a volunteer what they can expect from the organisation and what they agree to undertake.

It will largely be determined by what is in the volunteer policy but is a specific document based on an individual volunteer's situation.

A volunteer agreement should include details of:

The organisation's commitment to provide adequate:

- Induction and training
- Support, supervision and feedback
- Expenses
- Health and safety
- Equal opportunities
- Insurance

That the volunteer commits to:

- Work to the best of their ability
- Follow policies and procedures
- Maintain confidentiality
- Make a specific time commitment
- Inform you if they are unable to do their voluntary work
- Provide references if required

Having written volunteer policies and agreements does **not** create contracts of employment. In fact, a volunteer policy helps to clarify the unique contribution volunteers make to an organisation and shows how this is distinct to that of paid workers. In order to be certain of not creating a legal contract with volunteers here are a few simple measures that can be taken when creating formal documents:

- Avoid the language of legal rights and obligations e.g. employer/employment, contract, sick leave, annual leave, holiday entitlement.
- Insert a clear statement on written documents that no legal contract or relationship of employment is being created.
- A contract is more likely to be implied if a volunteer is required to do something in return for something else. The organisations expectations should be written in terms of hopes not obligations.
- Ensure that your volunteer policy is a working document that puts into practice how your organisation works with volunteers in the way that your policy states.