



## **Volunteering Policy**

### **Voluntary & Community Organisation**

**Review Date: November 2016**

**Last Reviewed: November 2015**

**Issue Status: CURRENT Issue No: 1 Issue Date: June 2012**

**Archive: Date added to Archive: \_\_\_\_\_**

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## **Volunteering policy**

### **Introduction**

This policy has been prepared for the benefit of members of the public who may volunteer their time for YCA. This policy does not apply to the Council's relationship with voluntary organisations where other arrangements could apply.

YCA appreciates that volunteers contribute valuable assistance and experience that would otherwise not be available and in turn can themselves gain valuable working experience that can enhance their skills and enable self-fulfillment. It is therefore important that the YCA encourages the participation of volunteers under supervision, whilst ensuring the safety and security of all parties.

### **Purpose of a volunteering policy**

The Policy:

- Formally acknowledges and supports the role of volunteers
- Sets out the principles governing the involvement of volunteers and provides a set of procedures to ensure good working practices
- Defines the roles, rights and responsibilities of the YCA and of its volunteers
- Encourages and enables, rather than limits, the involvement of volunteers

### **Definition of volunteering**

Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship and is essential to democracy. It is a commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community and can take many forms. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for personal financial gain.

## YCA Volunteering Policy

### **The role and value of volunteering**

The YCA:

- Recognizes, values and supports the important part volunteers have to play in the life and work of all service areas
- Recognizes that the scope for volunteering is wide and includes work in the YCA's premises, in the community and in the countryside
- Recognizes that volunteering can contribute to raising individual self-esteem, self-confidence and competencies as well as to the regeneration of local communities, increasing access to cultural heritage and supporting those that may feel socially excluded
- Will support its employees who are involved in voluntary activity

### **Principles of volunteering**

The YCA agrees to abide by the following five fundamental principles:

- Choice - voluntary involvement must be a freely chosen option without sanction or penalty, pressure or coercion
- Diversity - volunteering should provide opportunity for people from varied backgrounds. Equal opportunities principles are basic to supporting diversity
- Reciprocity - giving voluntary time and work must be recognised as establishing a reciprocal relationship in which the giver also receives
- Recognition - explicit recognition of the value of the work volunteers contribute to the YCA, to the community, and to wider social and economic objectives
- Respect - for any special skills, qualifications or experience of volunteers and help to use and develop them

### **Responsibility of the YCA general**

The YCA will:

- Ensure that the work of volunteers complements that of employees and that they will not be asked to work in ways that lead to a decrease in paid employment

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- Not ask volunteers to do the work of paid staff in times of industrial action. However, volunteers may continue with their regular work
- Ensure that staff at all levels are clear about the role of volunteers and foster good working relationships between staff and volunteers i.e. at induction
- Make sure that training and support is provided for those working alongside and managing volunteers
- Ensure that the safety and well-being of service users is paramount.
- Ensure that the standard of care and conduct of volunteers should be of the same high quality as that of employees
- Ensure that tasks performed by volunteers will be clearly defined so that all concerned with their activities are sure of their own responsibilities
  - Ensure that there is no conflict of personal interest

### **Recruitment and selection**

The YCA will:

- Make it the responsibility of the contact person to recruit and select volunteers and where appropriate to work with outside agencies on the recruitment process
- Recruit volunteers from all sections of the community in line with the YCA's Equal Opportunities Policy and Recruitment Policy
- Acknowledge the importance of social inclusion and recognise that all prospective volunteers have something of value to offer
- Make all reasonable efforts to find a placement for everyone who offers their time and energy. Where this is not possible volunteers will be referred to the local CVS for matching
- Place volunteers in accordance with appropriate volunteer recruitment and selection procedures. However, volunteer placement will be defined by the needs of each section of the YCA and by its service users
- Ask volunteers to set out in a standard format the experience and skills they can bring to a project/service and a final decision will be taken following an informal discussion

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- Require two references which will demonstrate a prospective volunteer's good character
- Ensure that volunteers are selected on their suitability for the volunteering task, matching the volunteers' skills, talents and interests with the YCA's needs
- Not set arbitrary age limits unless there is a strong and clear case for doing so
- Advise volunteers about the scope of activities in writing outlining clearly the duties and responsibilities for each activity and may be used for evaluation purposes by the designated contact person

### **Screening**

The YCA will make sure that where unsupervised access to children and vulnerable adults is involved; the YCA will adhere to the recommendations in the Police Act of 1997 and undertake a risk assessment. This may result in requiring volunteers to undertake criminal record vetting, for which the YCA will pay.

### **Security**

The YCA will:

- Maintain a record of basic information which will include contact information for health and safety and insurance purposes and a record of activities undertaken. This information will be subject to the Data Protection Act and will be treated in the strictest confidence. (see YCA's Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy)
- Ensure that volunteers are issued with identity badges which will be carried at all times when working in YCA buildings and in the community
- Ensure that volunteers are made fully aware of security and access rules and restrictions attached to buildings or land upon which they carry out volunteering activity

### **Information and Training**

The YCA will:

- Ensure that volunteers receive a full information pack about their area of work and their responsibilities to each individual service section. This will include information on processes to ensure fair treatment

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- Provide volunteers with induction and training in the specific tasks to be undertaken (should this be required). Volunteers will also receive ongoing opportunities for learning and development as appropriate (See YCA's Training and Development policy)
- Ensure that volunteers are given opportunities to contribute to the decision making process of the team, section and the YCA and that procedures are put in place to enable the views of volunteers to be represented
- Take into account that not all volunteering activities prove successful, and work with volunteers to ensure they are allocated to the most appropriate project and task whilst they remain on the volunteer register
- Take advantage of external opportunities for training volunteers, especially where subsidised training costs are available

### **Support and supervision**

The YCA will:

- Ensure that a named contact person (YCA Employee or Member of the Management Committee) is assigned for supervision, advice and support. They will agree objectives with the volunteer and have reviews and feedback on progress, future developments and talk about any issues they wish to discuss.
- Provide opportunities for volunteers and staff to meet
- Be responsible for providing every volunteer with appropriate and adequate space for working and materials and equipment to carry out their role effectively

### **Expenses**

The YCA will ensure that there is a clear, consistent and accessible system for reimbursement of expenses. (See YCA's Petty Cash Procedure)

### **Insurance**

The YCA will ensure that volunteers are adequately covered by insurance while they carry out their agreed duties both on YCA's premises and in the community and that they will be treated in the same way as staff for liability purposes.

### **Health and Safety**

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The YCA will ensure that volunteers are given information on the YCA's Health and Safety Policy.

### **Driving**

The YCA will ensure:

- That a familiarisation exercise is carried out with the vehicle to be driven
- That volunteers who use their own vehicles for the purposes of YCA business will have an appropriate drivers license, insurance and MOT

### **References**

The YCA will ensure volunteers, on the basis of their voluntary work, will be provided with a reference from their named contact person.

### **Leaving**

The YCA will:

- Offer volunteers the opportunity for an exit interview and acknowledgement of the volunteer's contribution in the form of a thank you letter

### **Responsibility of volunteers**

Volunteers will:

- Accept the values and standards of the organisation
- Participate in induction sessions and other core training dependent on the placement area
- Abide by the YCA's policies and procedures, particularly in relation to confidentiality, accident reporting, health and safety, equal opportunities and criminal record or reference check (where applicable)
- Accept that the service requires reliable volunteers that are able and willing to work at specified times
- Inform the relevant member of staff or contact person if they are unable to attend, and if possible in advance
- Give reasonable notice if unable to continue volunteering
- Raise any issue of concern relating to their volunteer work with the contact person

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- Be able to meet the demands of the work without risk to their health. They may be required to complete a health questionnaire and undertake health screening procedures

### Monitoring and evaluation

The YCA will monitor and evaluate the Volunteer Policy and will consult regularly with all relevant parties.

### The Voluntary Sector

The Volunteering Policy and accompanying procedures are intended primarily for use by the YCA's employees and volunteers. A commitment to the principles contained in the policy would also be expected from voluntary organisations whose volunteers provide help within the YCA. However, the YCA respects the independence of these voluntary organisations and recognises that they are responsible for the management either solely or jointly with the YCA for the volunteers working on specific projects or services. The YCA will also expect that organisations commissioned by them to carry out work, which involves volunteers should have a volunteering policy which adopts a similar commitment to those outlined in this document.

Name(Printed):	Position:
Signature:	Date:

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Signature:	Date:

**Last reviewed November 2015**