

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Recruitment and selection
3. Induction and training
4. Expenses
5. Supervision and support
6. Insurance
7. Equal opportunities and diversity
8. Health and safety
9. Grievance and complaint procedures
10. Confidentiality
11. Data protection
12. Student leadership

1. Introduction

Volunteering is a department within Sheffield Hallam University Students' Union. Volunteering is a student-led department which works in partnership with other Hallam Union departments and the local community sector, offering a diverse range of volunteering opportunities for Sheffield Hallam University staff and students.

Through these opportunities we:

- Make a positive contribution to Sheffield
- Enhance students' personal development
- Forge strong links between Hallam Union and the local community

Our aims are:

- To offer a broad range of **accessible voluntary opportunities** and experiences
- To provide a **supportive environment** to give volunteers the opportunity for personal development
- To make sure our opportunities address a clear **community need** and make a difference to the local community
- To **raise awareness** of volunteering and work in **effective partnership** with Hallam Union, Sheffield Hallam University the local community sector and the national network
- To keep up to date with and raise awareness of **good practice** in volunteering
- To ensure that our activities are **financially viable and sustainable**

The values which underpin our aims and objectives are as follows.

Volunteering:

- is committed to equality of opportunity and fair treatment and strives to make activities accessible to all
- believes volunteering and volunteers should be better valued and values the contribution students make to the local community
- will operate professionally at all times
- will be student-led and student-centred, empowering people and encouraging initiatives

- values the diversity of student volunteers
- will provide an open, friendly, supportive and non-judgemental environment

2. Recruitment and selection

2.1. Principles

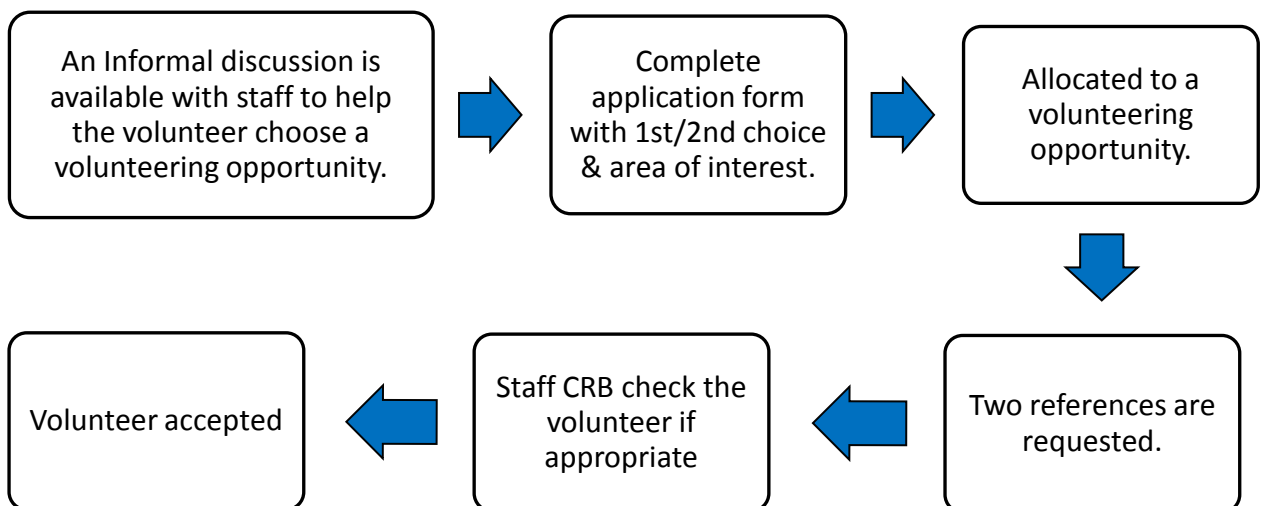
The following principles apply to Volunteering's recruitment and selection:

- Hallam Union is a membership organisation, and therefore members should be encouraged and enabled to undertake any activity they wish, as far as possible. If this cannot be achieved, alternative options should be considered.
- Recruitment and selection procedures are clear and transparent - the same rules apply to all.
- Recruitment and selection policies and procedures comply with Hallam Union's commitment to equal opportunities (see section 7).
- Only Sheffield Hallam University students and staff may volunteer through Volunteering with Hallam Union.

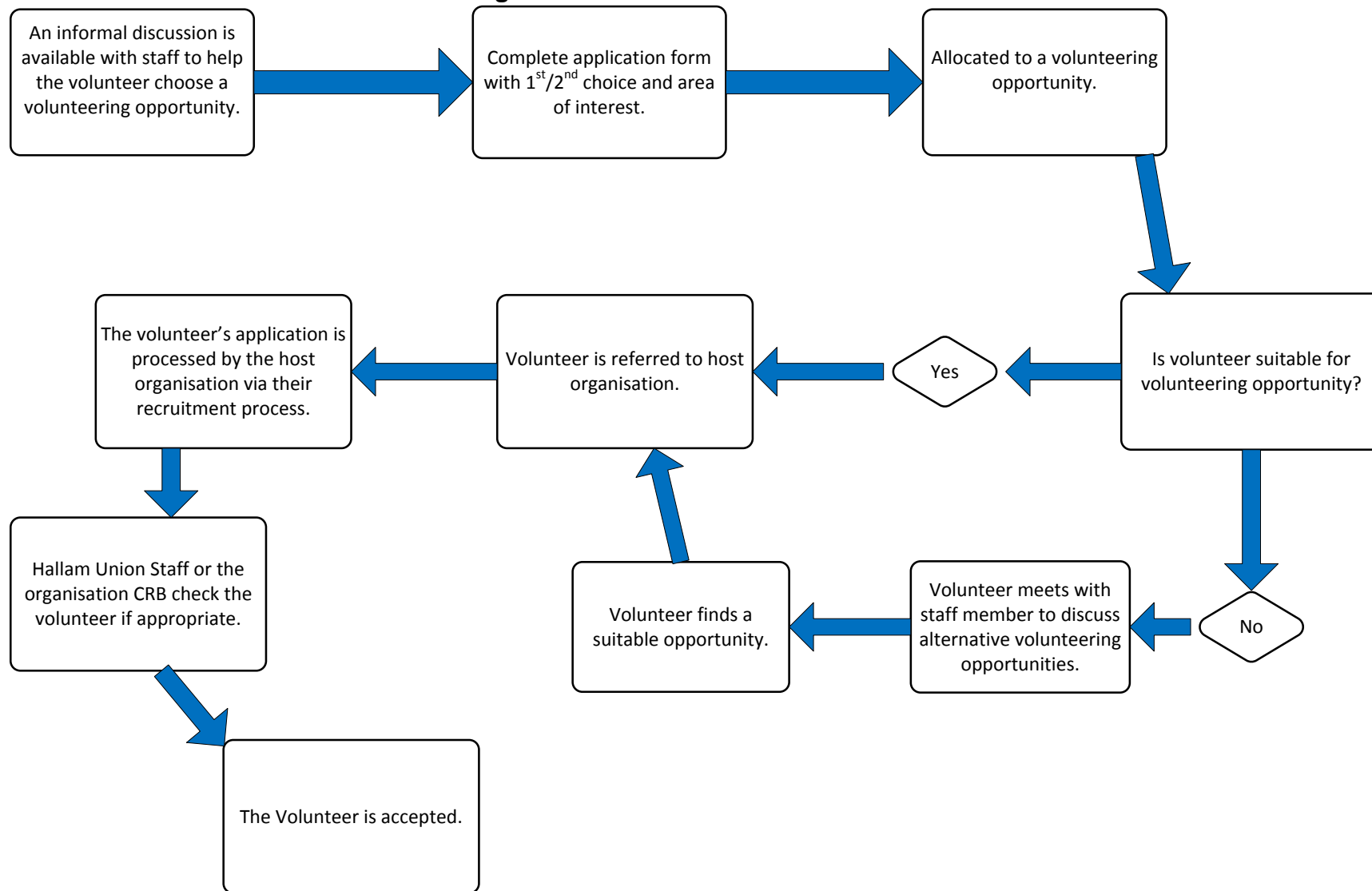
2.2. Procedure

Staff allocate volunteers to volunteering opportunities and seek to place as many volunteers as possible on their first choice. Volunteering also tries to ensure that volunteering opportunity has a range of volunteers in terms of experience, year, and skills, and that each opportunity has an adequate number of volunteers. Where opportunities are oversubscribed, priority is given to returning volunteers and decisions are made based on the merit of the application form.

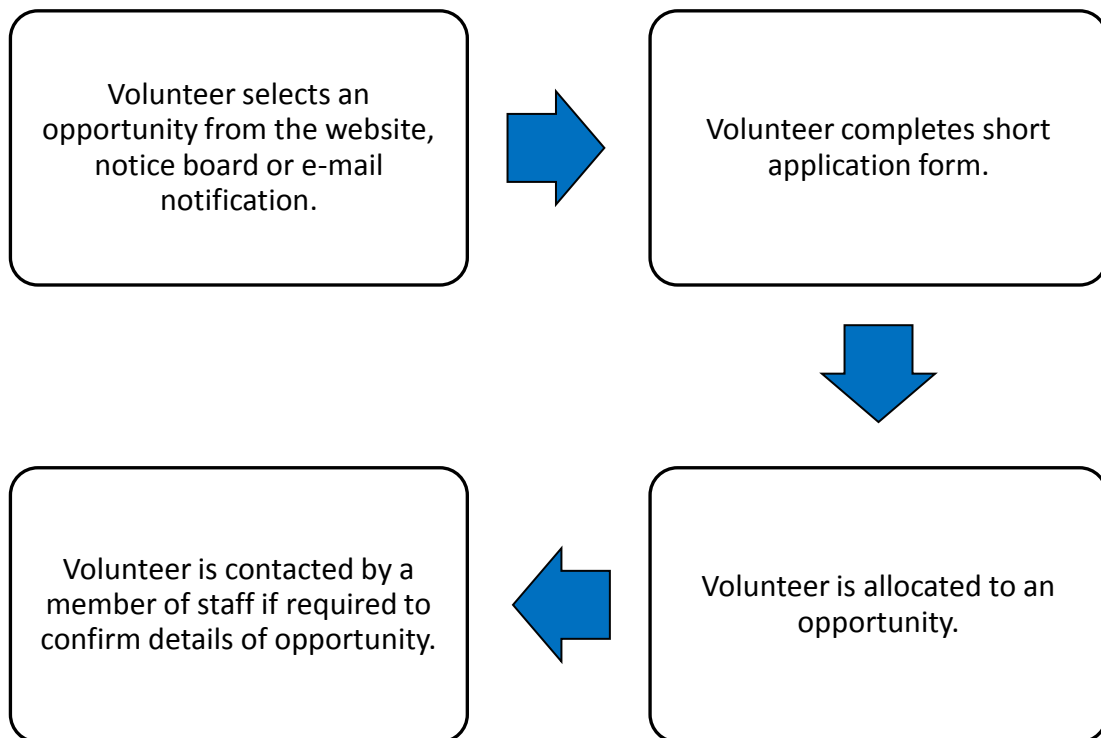
2.2.1. Procedure - Team Projects



2.2.2. Procedure - Individual Volunteering



2.2.3 Procedure - One Off Opportunities



2.3. References

Two references are requested for every volunteer on a team project or individual opportunity. Volunteers can see their references at their request. If a volunteer's references are not satisfactory, Hallam Union will seek a third reference. References are deemed unsatisfactory if they lack evidence that the referee has had a professional relationship with the applicant. Volunteering staff are unable to contact referees at addresses overseas unless an e-mail address is provided and the reference is provided in English. References are seen as part of a screening procedure. Where two references are unobtainable, Volunteering will accept applicants IF they have participated in other screening procedures, such as induction, training, and CRB checks (where relevant). In rare circumstances where information from a reference places doubt on an applicant's ability to volunteer, it may result in an application being refused. This will be dependent on a final decision which will be made by the Union's Chief Executive Officer and the Union's Officer Committee.

2.4. Criminal record checks

Criminal record bureau checks will be carried out according to the Hallam Union CRB Disclosure Policy & Procedure.

2.5. Team Project leader selection

Usually a team project will have only one leader. If more than one person applies to be a leader, all the applicants will hold a group discussion with the Volunteer Support Worker to discuss the demands of the role and what they feel they can offer to it. The aim of the discussion is for the group to self-select a leader. Should they fail to reach a decision, a panel consisting of the Volunteer Support Co-ordinator, Volunteer Support Worker and a representative of the Volunteering Committee will

decide the team project leader for that year. In some situations where two volunteers apply to lead a team project they can agree to share the leadership and be joint project leaders.

2.6. Committee recruitment and selection

The Volunteering Standing Committee will be recruited and selected through an election. Section 5.3 of this policy contains details of the available positions. All members of Hallam Union are eligible to nominate themselves for election. Elections must be publicised so that all volunteers have opportunity to nominate themselves if they wish. All candidates must run against RON (re-open nominations). Voting arrangements must also be fair and publicised so that all volunteers have the opportunity to vote. Only current volunteers may vote. Voting must be anonymous. Only staff members may be involved in organising the voting arrangements and counting votes, not volunteers, to ensure the vote is fair. The candidate for each position with the most votes is elected to the position.

3. Induction and training

3.1. Induction

Volunteering will provide an induction for every volunteer, which will include information about the following:

- volunteer rights and responsibilities
- health and safety
- safeguarding of children/young people/vulnerable adults (whichever is relevant)
- how to claim expenses
- how Volunteering will communicate with them
- training opportunities
- the Hallam Award
- where to find policies and procedures

This information is also contained in the 'Welcome to Volunteering' booklet, which all volunteers will receive.

3.2. Training

Hallam Union will provide a comprehensive training programme designed to equip volunteers with the skills to carry out their particular role. Hallam Union is committed to the personal development of volunteers and will provide training to contribute to this wherever possible. Volunteering will make diversity training available to all volunteers.

4. Expenses

Expenses will be paid according to the Volunteering Expenses Policy and Procedure, which states that expenses are available to all volunteers who incur out of pocket costs in the course of their volunteering. Receipts are required in all cases. Expenses claim forms will be available from the resources section of the website or from any member of staff. All expenses must be agreed in advance with a member of staff. Expenses which may be reimbursed include childcare, refreshments, transport, volunteering materials, postage and phone calls and activity costs.

5. Supervision and support

5.1. Support from the Project Leader

With the support of Hallam Union staff, project leaders are encouraged to support their team through regular meetings, training sessions and informal meetings and social events.

5.2. Support from staff

Every volunteer is allocated a named staff member who will provide support and supervision.

This support includes:

- initial briefing meetings to discuss the volunteering opportunity
- identification of and communication with community partners and schools
- identification of training needs and provision of training opportunities
- facilitation of financial processes and room booking
- provision of resources and equipment
- provision of references if requested
- ongoing informal support as required.

Staff ensure that all activities are carried out safely and within the guidelines of good practice.

5.3. Support from the Committee

The committee is made up of the following elected posts:

- Access and Participation Officer
- Events Officer
- Fundraising Officer
- Graphic Design Officer
- Marketing and Communications Officer
- Publicity Officer
- Volunteer Support Reps
- Sports and Culture Rep

The committee elect a chair and secretary from within the elected representatives/officers.

The Committee's Volunteer Support Reps ensure that the Committee are aware of issues faced by volunteers, and endeavour to solve problems. They act as representative figures for all volunteers and a communication stream between volunteers and the committee.

The Committee Officers offer a variety of support to all volunteering activities according to their particular role (together with the Support Teams), and this is described in the 'Welcome to Volunteering' booklet which is available in the Activities Pod or can be downloaded from the Volunteering website. The Committee also makes strategic decisions about Volunteering.

6. Insurance

Most volunteering activities and social events are covered by the Union's insurance policies. Additional insurance may be required for some activities - staff should consult with the Member Services Manager to ensure all activities are adequately covered. Some clarifications have already been sought - details can be found in G:\Hallam_Volunteering\UUSHV\Policies\Insurance.

The following items are **not** usually covered by the Union's insurance policy:

- products liability and public liability for fundraising events off campus (section D exclusion 17)
- dangerous activities including: rock climbing, abseiling, canoeing, jet-skiing, water-skiing, swimming, pony-trekking, sub-aqua diving, dry slope skiing, clay-pigeon shooting, archery, horse-riding, BMX cycling, assault course, barfly jumping, bungee jumping, pole climbing, caving, parachute jumping, ballooning, gliding, flying, bonfires, firework displays, driving of any vehicles by people who would not be allowed to drive that vehicle on a public road.
- some conservation activities including burning brush, and dry stone walling
- foam parties

If volunteers wish to plan fundraising events off campus, staff **must** check this with the insurance company (Endsleigh 01242 866800) first as this is not automatically covered, even if it has been covered in the past.

If a volunteer wishes to use their own car for any volunteering activities, this car must be checked and registered with the Union first, via the Volunteer Support Co-ordinator.

If outside contractors are employed to provide major attractions, staff should check that the provider has adequate public liability insurance with an indemnity limit at least as large as the Union's own insurance. Staff should also obtain a copy of the policy and check that the event organiser is covered as a 'principal' under the contractor's policy.

Volunteers must be normally resident (this means resident for at least 14 days) in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Isles or the Isle of Man, **and** be acting under the authority of the Union, **and** be engaged in an official activity of the Union, in order to be covered by Union insurance. It is therefore vital to ensure all volunteers sign-up formally otherwise they may not be covered.

7. Equal opportunities and diversity

The Union's [Articles of Governance](#) state that:

The Union will seek at all times to:

- 3.1. ensure that the diversity of its membership is recognised and that equal access is available to all members of whatever origin or orientation
- 3.2. promote and encourage contact and co-operation between students in all matters affecting their interests without regard to ethnic origin, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability or age.
- 3.3. pursue its aims and objectives independent of any political party or religious group.

The Volunteering Committee has an Access and Participation Officer whose role is to support Volunteering to comply with the above quoted sections of the [Articles of Governance](#), as well as the Union's [Equal Opportunities Policy](#). The Access and Participation Officer will do this through diversity training for volunteers, recruitment of underrepresented volunteers and promoting accessibility.

Volunteering will also:

- ensure its written and electronic materials are as accessible as possible
- make all reasonable adjustments to ensure its activities are accessible
- ensure diversity training is available to all volunteers

Volunteering places the safety and wellbeing of volunteers at the core of all its activities. Any volunteer who feels they have been wrongly treated, harassed, discriminated against or intimidated whilst volunteering should immediately report the incident to their Hallam Union Staff Support or another member of the Volunteering Staff Team.

If staff are not immediately available, the volunteer must take themselves out of harms way and safely leave the environment, taking another volunteer with them if possible. If the situation is deemed unsafe/intimidating for all volunteers they must immediately cancel and return to the union/home and report the incident to the Activities Pod.

In response to any such complaint, staff will re-evaluate and reassess the appropriateness of the volunteering opportunity and where possible make suitable adjustments, or re-place the volunteers ensuring the safety and security of volunteers is safeguarded.

8. Health and safety

Volunteering with Hallam Union makes all efforts to reduce risks and ensure the safety of all its volunteering activities, and complies with Hallam Union's [Health and Safety Policy](#) and its associated policies.

In addition, it is the policy of Volunteering that:

- all volunteers will receive any appropriate health and safety training before carrying out their activities
- a risk assessment will be carried out before an activity takes place, and signed off by the Volunteering Staff or Hallam Union Staff Support
- the risk assessment must be kept and filed
- suitable provision for first aid treatment must be arranged for activities taking place away from the Union.
- staff will notify the Union and University of trips taking place overnight, and ensure that those on the trip have emergency numbers for the Union, University, and are aware of the 999 number
- all volunteers have the right to a safe environment in which to volunteer, and the responsibility not to endanger themselves or others

9. Grievance and complaints procedure

All complaints and grievances will be taken seriously. If a volunteer has any grievance or complaint regarding another volunteer, staff member or any other person or issue, he/she should report the incident to a member of Volunteering staff. The staff member will then work with the volunteer to resolve the problem. If the issue concerns a staff member, then the volunteer should report the matter to their line manager who will deal with the complaint. If this course of action does not resolve the problem, or the volunteer is not satisfied with the outcome, then the volunteer should follow Hallam Union's [Complaints Procedure](#) which can be found on in the STRATEGY AND GUIDANCE document which is part of the Union's [Articles of Governance](#).

10. Confidentiality

Volunteers should keep what they learn about other volunteers in confidence. They should also keep what they learn about service users in confidence. Volunteers are not expected to retain any written records on volunteers or service users. Records should be stored by Hallam Union securely and in line with the Data Protection Act. There are some circumstances where volunteers would be expected to breach confidentiality in order to uphold the safety and welfare of service users. These circumstances are:

- if he/she is told any information about terrorist activity (Prevention of Terrorism Act 1989)
- if he/she is told about anything that compromises a child or vulnerable adult's safety (such as any form of abuse)
- if he/she is told about any planned criminal activity
- if he/she is summoned to court with a legal obligation to provide evidence.

In these circumstances the volunteer **must** report the information to their named staff support who will inform the relevant authority. The volunteer **must not** disclose information to any other source.

11. Data protection

Volunteering is fully committed to compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The following principles will apply when handling personal information:

- Personal information is only processed with the knowledge of the person to which it relates.
- Only information that Volunteering actually needs is collected and processed.
- Personal information is only seen by those who need it to do their job.
- Personal information is retained only for as long as it is required.
- Decisions affecting a person are made on the basis of reliable and up to date information.
- Information is protected from unauthorised or accidental disclosure.
- Volunteering will provide a person with a copy of their personal information on request.
- Inaccurate or misleading data will be corrected as soon as possible.

12. Student leadership

Volunteering with Hallam Union is committed to being a student-led department. All significant decisions other than those of day-to-day management issues will be submitted to the Volunteering Committee for their input.