

UMSU Volunteer Policy

Policy title	Volunteer Policy
Effective date	October 2023
Review Date	October 2024
Policy Owner/s	Volunteering Manager and CEO
Scope	This policy applies to all UMSU Volunteers, UMSU Staff, and Elected Student Representatives. This policy is incorporated into the UMSU Volunteer Agreement.
Purpose	<p>The purpose of this Policy is to clearly define the role of volunteers within UMSU and to set out best practice principles to guide the management of volunteers. This Policy has been developed taking into consideration the <i>National Standards for Volunteer Involvement</i>, developed by Volunteering Australia. The National Standards provide a framework to ensure the successful engagement of Volunteers and is designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• incorporate the values and maximise the benefits of Volunteer involvement.• develop effective Volunteer involvement strategies and practices.• involve Volunteers in meaningful and useful activities that contribute to the outcomes of the organisation's work.• ensure the rights of Volunteers are protected and that they are supported to carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Policy Statement

UMSU recognises and values the commitment and contribution which Volunteers make to enhance the University of Melbourne Student community. UMSU further recognises the important role Volunteering plays in enriching student participation and wellbeing. Volunteer opportunities are offered to meet the needs of both the broader University of Melbourne student community and UMSU, thereby UMSU's Volunteering programs will:

- enhance and extend the provision of UMSU's services, programs and activities provided for the student community.
- provide meaningful opportunities for social interaction and connection.
- foster and enhance participation by students in the university community.
- increase student awareness of and participation in UMSU activities.
- provide meaningful opportunities for professional and personal development by supporting skills development and enhancing participants' knowledge and experience.

UMSU is committed to operating its Volunteering programs in accordance with all relevant federal and state legislation, and in accordance with organisational policy and procedures.

Definitions

Elected Student Representatives: are those students elected to positions in UMSU, including Student Office Bearers, Student Departmental Committee members, and UMSU Student's Council.

Staff: are employees of UMSU engaged by a contract of employment.

Volunteering: Volunteering Australia defines volunteering as “*time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain.*”

Volunteers: are individuals who:

- willingly giving their time, without expectation of financial gain, to benefit the University of Melbourne student community and UMSU.
- are registered with and have the approval of UMSU to undertake activities in designated volunteer positions.
- undertake activities that complement and enhance, but do not replace, the services provided by UMSU Staff or Elected Student Representatives.

For the avoidance of doubt, the following roles are not considered Volunteers for the purpose of this Policy:

- UMSU Staff.
- Elected Student Representatives.
- Individuals on work placement, paid internships or work experience programs.

Principles

Volunteer engagement at UMSU is led by the following principles:

- **Leadership and Management:** The CEO and Management Team lead and promote a positive culture towards Volunteering and implement effective management systems to support Volunteer involvement.
- **Commitment to Volunteer Involvement:** Commitment to Volunteer involvement is set through vision, planning, and resourcing in support of the organisation's strategic direction.
- **Volunteer Roles:** Volunteers are engaged in meaningful roles which contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals, and objectives.

- *Recruitment and Selection:* Volunteer recruitment and selection strategies are planned, consistent, and meet the needs of the organisation and volunteers.
- *Support and Development:* Volunteers understand their role and gain the knowledge, skills, and feedback to perform their role safely and effectively.
- *Workplace Safety and Wellbeing:* The health, safety, and wellbeing of volunteers is protected in the workplace.
- *Volunteer Recognition:* Volunteer contribution, value, and impact is understood, appreciated, and acknowledged.
- *Quality Management and Continuous Improvement:* Effective volunteer involvement results from a system of good practice, review, and continuous improvement.

Policy Requirements

The core requirements of the Volunteer Policy are outlined below.

Rights of Volunteers

The safety and welfare of volunteers is an important responsibility of UMSU. To enhance the experience for volunteering, UMSU acknowledges volunteers have the right to:

- be provided with an orientation / induction to UMSU and their specific role(s).
- be interviewed and engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation.
- have personal and confidential information treated accordingly.
- be recognised as a valued team member.
- receive clarification of their role through a Volunteer Role Description.
- agreement regarding assigned hours and conditions.
- access to sufficient training to perform assigned duties to the standard required.
- information and consultation on matters directly or indirectly affecting their roles and duties.
- support and supervision by qualified staff.
- adequate insurance cover and a healthy, safe working environment.
- be made aware of and access to the Grievance Procedure.
- reimbursement for pre-approved out-of-pocket expenses.
- access to this Volunteer Policy and any other relevant policies and procedures.

Responsibilities of Volunteers

Volunteers equally have obligations to UMSU and are required to:

- commit to their Volunteer position.

- be punctual and reliable.
- notify in advance regarding changes to their availability by contacting the relevant supervisor.
- notify UMSU of any extended leave, inability to attend, or lateness for a rostered shift.
- notify UMSU of any changes in contact details or personal circumstances relevant to their role.
- accept responsibility for their individual actions and behaviour.
- abide by the UMSU Volunteer Policy, all other UMSU policies, including the Acceptable Conduct Policy, as well as all relevant laws, University policies, guidelines, and procedures.
- Sign and abide by the UMSU Volunteer Agreement.
- respect the rights and privacy of others.
- carry out the duties listed in their Volunteer Role Description(s) and participate in induction and training.
- notify their supervisor of any potentially hazardous situation or workplace safety issues.
- report any injury or incident incurred whilst Volunteering with UMSU.
- support other team members and ask for support when needed.
- give advanced notice of their intention to withdraw from their Volunteering.
- use social media responsibly and in accordance with the UMSU Social Media policy, and in a manner which does not disparage UMSU, its members, Staff, Elected Student Representatives or other Volunteers.
- promote a positive image of UMSU whilst performing Volunteer duties.

Eligibility for Volunteering

Individuals interested in Volunteering will be assessed for suitability against the following criteria:

- availability for the respective Volunteering role.
- Their suitability for Volunteering, taking into consideration their interests, skills, attributes, experience, and the requirements of the role they are applying for.
- Satisfactory completion of any training requirements for their role.
- Outcomes of a valid Working with Children's Check.
- Signed Volunteer Agreement.

Working with Children's Check

As a Child Safe Organisation UMSU is committed to compliance with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. UMSU has a commitment to child safety and well-being through

the recruitment and screening of Staff and Volunteers, and requires each Volunteer at UMSU to have a valid Working with Children Check. UMSU may also require two reference checks for volunteers in direct contact with children (under 18 young people).

Volunteer Confidentiality

Volunteers' personal and health information will be maintained in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and the *Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)*. The collection, use and management of Volunteers' personal and health information is also governed by UMSU's *Privacy Policy*.

Volunteer Insurance

While performing Volunteering activities with UMSU, Volunteers must sign a relevant Volunteer Agreement to ensure the scope of their activities is mutually agreed, that there are clear commencement and termination dates, and authorised activities and access to any UMSU records or systems is defined. This supports all parties to ensure UMSU can seek to claim the relevant insurance coverage for Volunteers in respect of Volunteers, including:

- *Personal Accident Insurance* following an accidental injury occurring during their Volunteer activities.
- *Public Liability Insurance* against personal injury and or property damage to third parties.

Procedure for the Resolution of Volunteer Grievances and Disputes

In the first instance, every effort should be made to resolve a grievance between the relevant individuals at the point at which it occurs. Volunteers are required to notify their program supervisor of the problem at the earliest opportunity. If required, the issue will be escalated to the Volunteering Manager and if necessary, the Divisional Manager, People & Community. Where complainants remain aggrieved, disputes and grievances will be addressed in accordance with the applicable UMSU or University policy.

Supervision, Support and Accountability of Volunteers

UMSU will provide all volunteers with the level of supervision appropriate to their role. Supervisors will have the appropriate experience or expertise and ensure that volunteers are familiar with the expectations of the role, and the type of feedback they can expect. All

volunteer supervisors will ultimately be accountable to and take direction from the Volunteer Manager.

Volunteers should be aware that if they are performing below the requirements of their role as set out in their role description, they will be provided constructive feedback, and support to build sufficient capacity to meet expectations. Where, after the appropriate support is provided, identified performance issues or risks cannot be eliminated or mitigated, the Volunteering Manager may at their discretion offer the Volunteer an alternative role, otherwise the Volunteer's engagement with UMSU will end.

If Volunteers are deemed to be putting themselves or others at risk, or otherwise act, or fail to act, in breach of any UMSU Policy, including the Acceptable Conduct Policy, UMSU may elect to end the volunteering relationship without further notice.

All Volunteers are ultimately accountable to and take direction from the UMSU Volunteering Manager, Divisional Managers, CEO, OHS Manager and other UMSU staff as required.

Critical Incidents

UMSU Volunteers are provided with the same debriefing opportunities as Staff following a critical incident. Volunteers who are enrolled students of the University are also able to seek free, confidential, short-term professional counselling through the University of Melbourne Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS).

Reimbursement and Honoraria

Volunteers perform all duties on a philanthropic basis and in conformity with the definition of Volunteering in this policy. Volunteers do not receive remuneration or payment for their work, other than reasonable reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses directly related to the UMSU Volunteer program if prior approval is provided in writing from the UMSU Volunteer Manager for reimbursement of the expense.

Monitoring and Compliance

This policy is to be reviewed annually by the Volunteering Manager to ensure it remains consistent with UMSU's objectives and obligations. Any proposed amendments to this Policy

will be discussed and approved by the Divisional Manager, People & Community and endorsed by the Students' Council.

Nothing in this policy precludes the CEO from taking any relevant action in their sole discretion to ensure UMSU meets its obligations at law and complies with the University SSAF Funding Agreement in force at the relevant time.

Other Applicable Laws and Policies

This Policy has been developed to reflect the requirements of the following federal and state legislation, Regulations, and Standards.

- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic)
- *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth)
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic)
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic)
- *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic)
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth)
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth)
- Volunteering Australia, The National Standards for Volunteer Involvement, 2015

Related Policies

- UMSU Acceptable Conduct Policy
- UMSU Privacy Policy
- UMSU Health & Safety Policy (OHS Policy)
- UMSU Child Safe Policy
- University of Melbourne Provision and Acceptable Use of IT Policy

Responsibility for Implementation	Volunteering Manager; Divisional Manager, People & Community & CEO
Status	Approved 13 October 2023
Approval Body	Students' Council