

# Student Volunteering Procedure (MPF1073)

## GOVERNING POLICY

This procedure is made under the [Student Support and Engagement Policy](#).

## SCOPE

This procedure applies to all volunteer activities undertaken by students at the University of Melbourne or facilitated by the University of Melbourne.

## PROCEDURE

### 1. Management of external student volunteer activities

1.1 Coordinators of student volunteer activities based at an external host organisation will enter into a volunteer letter agreement with the host organisation, based on the required templates available on the [Professional Placements and Volunteering website](#), as follows:

- A Volunteer Letter Agreement (Student Benefit) for activities which provide a work experience or personal development benefit to the student
- A Volunteer Letter Agreement (Community Benefit) for activities which provide a clear benefit to the community.

1.2 Coordinators of external volunteer activities will confirm the following with the host organisation before the volunteer activity begins:

- that the host organisation will take appropriate steps to provide a safe working environment for the student
- that the host organisation is insured to cover any legal and safety-related liabilities associated with the volunteer activity, including appropriate public liability insurance as a minimum
- that the host organisation supervisors are prepared to accept the responsibility and carry out the duties outlined by the University in relation to the volunteer activity
- that the position is genuinely voluntary and requires a minimal time commitment and students have flexibility in negotiating their own hours or concluding their participation at any time.

1.3 Coordinators of external volunteer activities must ensure they are aware of the rights of student volunteers (refer to the Volunteers Australia publication [Volunteer Rights and Volunteer Checklist](#)).

1.4 The University's insurance will cover all external volunteer activities where:

- the individual is accepted as a currently enrolled University of Melbourne student who has not completed their course requirements;
- the activity is undertaken with the prior knowledge and consent of the University; and
- the proposed activity is either a:
  - o compulsory requirement of the student's course of study
  - o an associated complimentary activity to the student's current course requirements, where the relevant faculty or graduate school has entered into a written volunteering agreement with a host organisation.

### 2. Management of student volunteer activities at the University

2.1 Volunteer activities at the University must not include tasks which the University would ordinarily pay a staff member to perform. Volunteers will not be used to substitute for the work of paid employees nor threaten the livelihood of any University employee.

2.2 Coordinators of student volunteer activities based at the University will prepare a student volunteer acknowledgement with each student involved, based on the required template (see section 1.1).

2.3 Coordinators of student volunteer activities will ensure students are selected to participate in accordance with the University's commitment to equal opportunity and other relevant legislation, and in accordance with the [Student Volunteering Guidelines](#).

2.4 Where volunteer work will involve contact with children, the volunteer must obtain clearance via a Working with Children (WWC) Check. A Police Check may also be required for some roles, as determined by the coordinator of the volunteer activity.

2.5 Coordinators of student volunteer activities will ensure that student participants have adequate information, training and resources to undertake their tasks, and will reimburse agreed out-of-pocket expenses.

2.6 The head of the organisational unit responsible for the volunteer activity will ensure that student participants receive adequate induction on Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) responsibilities, first aid and emergency/evacuation information.

2.7 Volunteers will report any EHS incident and/or hazard to the coordinator of the activity or the head of the organisational unit as soon as reasonably practicable.

2.8 Students participating in volunteer activities who have access to personal information in the course of their duties must abide by the Privacy Policy.

2.9 Coordinators of student volunteer activities will:

- resolve complaints or grievances that arise in relation to a volunteer, where possible
- refer any complaints or grievances that cannot be resolved to the relevant department manager or head of the organisational unit.

2.10 The University may terminate a volunteer placement or activity at any time.

2.11 Students participating in volunteer activities may conclude their participation at any time and should advise the coordinator of the activity of their intention at the earliest opportunity.

2.12 Students participating in volunteer activities are not employees of the University and are not subject to award and industrial conditions (although they are covered by the [Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#)).

2.13 Students participating in volunteer activities are covered by the University of Melbourne's Insurance Program under the following classes of insurance:

- **Public Liability:** Where the student volunteer is held to be legally liable for causing personal injury and/ or property damage in connection with their University of Melbourne approved student volunteer activities.
- **Personal Accident:** All student volunteers (up to 85 years) are covered for "Non-Medicare" medical expenses and ancillary benefits, under this no-fault policy, for an "injury" sustained

during and in the course of undertaking their approved University of Melbourne voluntary activity. This insurance provides similar cover to private health insurance funds, such as hospital and ancillary benefits. Due to Federal Government legislation, the University's Insurer is not permitted to reimburse medical expenses, which have a "medicare item-number", such as a doctor's consultation, surgeon's fee or an x-ray expense.

- Professional Indemnity: All student volunteers are covered by the University of Melbourne's Professional Indemnity Insurance, where they are held to be legally liable arising out of any negligent act, error or omission in the conduct of University of Melbourne's professional business. Under this insurance it is a condition of cover that the student is required to act under the supervision of a qualified practitioner, whilst within their accepted capacity as a student.

2.14 Coordinators of volunteer activities will ensure appropriate recognition for the contribution that student volunteers make to the University community.

### 3. Responsibilities of students

3.1 Students will ensure they do the following before commencement of a volunteer activity:

- complete all required documentation
- provide personal information to their volunteer coordinator to identify themselves, record emergency contact details and inform the University of any health conditions which may have consequences for their particular role.

3.2 Students will ensure they do the following during a volunteer activity:

- adhere to all by-laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the external host organisation, or the University, as appropriate
- maintain a level of conduct appropriate to a student in a professional setting
- maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality regarding their volunteer experiences and information which they have gained through the volunteer activity, in accordance with the external host organisation's privacy requirements, the Privacy Policy and the Privileged Information Accessed through Studies Procedure
- advise the volunteer activity coordinator, and the external host organisation supervisor where relevant, immediately of any incident or concern regarding their safety and well-being during the volunteer activity.

### RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Privileged Information Accessed through Studies Procedure](#)
- [Professional Placements Policy](#)
- [Professional Placements Procedure](#)
- [Professional Placements and Volunteering website](#) (for letter templates)
- [Student Support and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Student Volunteering Guidelines](#)
- [Volunteer Rights and Volunteer Checklist](#)

### DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
host organisation	Organisation, institution or other employer that is not the University of Melbourne at which a student undertakes a professional placement or volunteer activity.

<b>host supervisor</b>	Employee of the host organisation responsible, in part or in whole, for supervising student(s) undertaking a professional placement or volunteer activity.
<b>student</b>	Under the University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic), a person enrolled at the University in a course leading to a degree or other award, or a person who is designated as a student or is of a class of persons designated as students by the Council.
<b>student acknowledgement</b>	Documentation signed by both the University and the student which sets out the intention of a volunteer activity and the responsibilities of the student and the University.
<b>Volunteer Letter Agreement</b>	Legal agreement between the University and a host organisation which sets out the intention of a volunteer activity and the responsibilities of both parties.

## IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER

The Manager, Policy and Projects, Melbourne Students and Learning is responsible for the promulgation and implementation of this procedure in accordance with the scope outlined above. Enquiries about interpretation of this procedure should be directed to the implementation officer.

## REVIEW

This procedure is to be reviewed by 30 November 2016.

## VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections Modified
1	Provost	29 Mar 2012	21 Aug 2012	New version arising from the Policy Simplification Project. Loaded into MPL as Version 1.
2	Provost	24 Oct 2012	24 Oct 2012	Amendments to policy references.
3	Provost	10 Feb 2014	10 Feb 2014	Full review and update as part of formal review cycle.
4	Provost	11 Jun 2014	11 Jun 2014	Clarification to section 1.4 regarding University insurance coverage for volunteers.