

Club Volunteer Recruitment Guidance



This document can support with the recruitment of volunteers to support across all areas of a club's work.

A robust volunteer recruitment process will ensure a positive experience for volunteers, build trust and ensure that the volunteers know what is expected of them to maintain high standards in all areas of a club's delivery.

Why do people volunteer?

[Research shows](#) that volunteers are 18% more likely to feel proud of themselves and 10% more likely to have higher self-esteem, emotional wellbeing and resilience, compared to non-volunteers. Volunteers benefit from a sense of belonging and purpose, making new friends and learning new skills in the process.

Volunteer roles in sport are a great way for people to give back to a sport or club that they care about; get their foot in the sports industry, or to return to it, depending on their circumstances.

Sports volunteers are people who have a true passion for sport and want to express that passion through their actions.

Organisations should actively encourage volunteers, understand the importance of volunteers in sport and focus on how to support them effectively.

I'm new to working with sports volunteers. What do I need to know?

If you're new to supporting sports volunteers there are a few basics you should be aware of.

Law, safeguarding and health & safety

As a minimum you should know a bit about the law in relation to volunteering, what the rights and responsibilities of volunteers are, and what your organisation's rights and responsibilities are.

What is the difference between employees and volunteers?

Volunteers don't have the same rights as employees as they're not paid for their work. They should therefore not have a contract of employment. You might be given a volunteering agreement, but this is not the same as an employment contract.

The main differences between an employee and a volunteer are:

- A volunteer doesn't get paid for their work. As a volunteer, you're not allowed to receive any payment, benefit in kind or other reward for your work. If they're being paid, they might be legally classed as an employee. This also counts for training that is not related to their volunteering role at your club. A volunteer may get expenses reimbursed, but these should only be out-of-pocket expenses and not a pre-estimate of expenses
- A volunteer doesn't have any obligations to the club – the voluntary work they do is of their own free will
- A volunteer agreement shouldn't have any language that suggests employment. It should therefore not be called a contract but an agreement, and it should use words like 'role' rather than 'job description' and list 'expectations' rather than 'duties' or 'obligations'.

Insurance considerations

Clubs who are affiliated to Scottish Squash are provided with Employer's Liability Insurance via our partnership with Marsh Sport. Volunteers are covered under this policy, with further information available [here](#).

Safeguarding

Do all volunteers need a PVG check?

Not all volunteering roles require a PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) check. However, clubs are legally required to assess volunteering roles and determine whether it's one that requires a PVG check.

Do we need extra safeguards if we have volunteers who are under 18?

If you have volunteers under 18, this may affect the screening, training and support you need to provide the other volunteers who work with them.

For example, if another volunteer is likely to have close and unsupervised contact with someone under 18, they should go through a PVG check and your club should have a safeguarding policy. Make it clear to volunteers over 18 that these safeguarding procedures apply to some of the volunteers they're working alongside, as well as the participants at your club.

Do we need extra safeguards if volunteers work with children or vulnerable adults?

If your club supports children, young people or vulnerable adults as participants or volunteers, then it should have a safeguarding policy and procedures. These should include checking anyone applying for a volunteer role that involves close and unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults.

How do I assess and manage the risks in relation to volunteering?

When considering risk in relation to volunteering, you need to consider how volunteers themselves should be protected in their roles, as well as the risk that involving volunteers poses to your organisation.

Consider volunteer risk alongside other areas of risk for your club or group and as part of an overall risk assessment.

For example, if you were carrying out a risk assessment for a sports event your club was organising, you'd consider volunteers alongside sports participants, the general public and any staff.

You can find out more information about how sports clubs and groups can assess risk using the links below:

- Volunteer Scotland – [Good Practice Guide](#)

How can we fulfil our responsibilities for the health and safety of our club's volunteers?

Your club has a responsibility for the health and safety of people who visit, work, or are affected by your club's activities.

This includes:

- Players and competitors
- Volunteers and staff
- Members and supporters
- Parents or other visitors
- Competition support staff
- Contractors.

Undertaking risk assessments and having a clear sports health and safety policy will help you to manage this obligation.

Additionally, if your club has paid employees, you'll be required to meet further health and safety standards. These clubs fall within the main scope of the Health and Safety at Work Act. They're required to ensure safe systems of work and a safe working environment for their staff and others using the premises where the work takes place.

What information should we hold on volunteers? How should it be stored and protected?

As a club, you may find you need to store a range of information about volunteers. For example, this might include volunteers' contact details and personal information, their bank details, information on any health conditions they have, and notes from any meetings and supervision sessions you've had with them.

As with any personal data held by an organisation, the Data Protection Act applies to data stored on volunteers. The Act covers the processing, use, accuracy, relevance and protection of such data and how long it can reasonably be stored. We recommend looking at the guidance provided by the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) for more information.

Do we need to pay our volunteers expenses?

Legally you don't need to pay volunteer expenses, but it's good practice to do so. While volunteering isn't paid, it shouldn't cost someone money to help your club or group.

Volunteer Recruitment Checklist

Pre-recruitment phase

- ☐ Define the area of work which the individual will support with.
- ☐ Identify the period of work for which the volunteer will be required
- ☐ Complete a basic job description and person specification (Appendix A)

- ☐ Consider all requirements of the vacancy, for example will the volunteer be working with children and therefore require a PVG?
- ☐ Advertise the vacancy where appropriate eg. share with universities, Scottish Squash vacancies page etc.

Recruitment phase

- ☐ Once applications have been received, pick up a conversation (if appropriate) to find out more about the potential volunteer.
- ☐ If proceeding with the "appointment" request copies of any qualifications relevant to the role, if required eg. coaching certificate, driving licence check code etc.

Post-recruitment phase

- ☐ Work with the volunteer to complete the club induction process
- ☐ Complete PVG check and encourage completion of CWPS training (if relevant to the role).
- ☐ Confirm details of best point of contact for the volunteer.
- ☐ Confirm expenses which can be claimed by individual and method for doing so.

Expectations and support

Following the recruitment phase, candidates will need ongoing support and encouragement to ensure their experience as a volunteer is positive. Club committees should consider the best way to do this eg. Informal chats, 1 to 1 meetings etc.

Where necessary, any concerns linked to expectations agreed in the Volunteer Agreement should be addressed at the earliest possible opportunity, and through discussion with the volunteer.

During their time with the club

- ☐ Be clear about the individual's tasks
- ☐ Communicate clearly - Ask the volunteer what they need, what they'd like to be doing, how everything is going.
- ☐ Celebrate their successes - Volunteers may feel isolated from the club's successes. It's important that your club celebrates their achievements and contributions and explains how they're impacting the bigger picture.
- ☐ Provide opportunities - When volunteers are at organisations, it's a great opportunity for them to learn new things. Make sure you give opportunities for the volunteer to develop new skills.
- ☐ Appreciate them!