Staff Volunteering Scheme – Guidance for Staff
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1 Introduction

1.1. It is recommended that early discussions take place between yourself and your manager, as far in advance as possible, about your plans to participate in voluntary activities or events, to enable you both to consider how this may be accommodated.

2 Making an application

2.1. Applications to undertake voluntary activities (regular or one-off commitments) are to be made to your line manager via the Volunteering Scheme Application Form. The application form should state the activity and organisation you wish to contribute to, how much time is being requested and how this opportunity will contribute to the community and to your own personal and professional development.

2.2. As part of your application your manager may ask you to present a written letter of recognition of your volunteering commitments, from the voluntary organisation, to demonstrate your contribution to the project.

3 Applying for flexible working arrangements

3.1. Flexible working arrangements may be more appropriate for regular voluntary activities. Any requests for flexible working arrangements are to be made through the normal flexible working application process.

3.2. Please note that whilst the University will endeavor to agree such requests, your line manager is entitled to turn down requests should they compromise the needs of the department.

4 Applying for leave

4.1. Staff who apply for voluntary opportunities which are for a full day or more, may be asked to use part of their annual holiday entitlement or agree with their manager a short period of unpaid leave, to accommodate leave for such events.

4.2. All requests for leave should be made as far in advance as possible, with discussions taking place with your line manager even before commitments are finalized. Following discussion with your line manager, formal requests for leave are to be booked in advance through the normal procedure for requesting leave. To avoid disappointment, it is recommended that requests for leave are made as soon as voluntary dates are confirmed by the organisers.
4.3. Please note that whilst the University will endeavor to agree such requests, your line manager is entitled to turn down requests should they compromise the needs of the department.

5 Volunteer’s checklist

5.1. Communicate Early & Often

- Discuss your plans for volunteering with your manager at your earliest opportunity.
- Take the time to explain the volunteering commitments to your manager and inform them of what time off you are expecting to need to take off.
- If this is to be a regular voluntary commitment, ensure that you meet regularly with your manager to ensure that the agreed flexible working arrangements to accommodate your commitment are still acceptable.

5.2. Requesting Leave

- If you wish to request to work flexibly to accommodate a regular voluntary activity, ensure that you have first considered the needs of your department/colleagues.
- Submit your leave requests at an early opportunity or, where dates have yet to be confirmed, inform your manager of likely leave dates which you would like to request leave for well in advance.
- Be patient whilst your request is being considered.