Staff Volunteering Scheme
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1 Introduction

1.1. Newcastle University is committed to its civic responsibility by taking an active role in the community. As part of this commitment, the University, where possible, would like to support those staff wishing to participate in voluntary activities, to enhance their wellbeing and development. Volunteering is defined as carrying out tasks or providing services for individuals or community organisations without financial payment or compensation from the individual or organisation.

2 Scope

2.1. This scheme is for University Employees.

3 Key Principles

3.1. The University recognises the positive and meaningful impact of staff participating in voluntary activities:

- To make a difference in people’s lives
- To be part of, and contribute to, the local community or environment
- To learn or develop new skills or enhance skills
- To meet new people and gain experiences for personal development
- To gain confidence, motivation and a sense of achievement
- To enhance social/personal wellbeing
- To enhance work-life balance

3.2. When considering application for staff wishing to volunteer it is important for managers to assess the possible benefits that such arrangements may bring to the individual or workplace.

3.3. When considering the use of flexible working arrangements to accommodate voluntary activities, it is important for managers to assess and evaluate the potential business implications, such as the potential impact on costs, supervision, other staff, and the Units’ clients/customers/students.

3.4. It is important that all staff recognise that any request to undertake voluntary work will be considered on an individual basis and will be made in line with business needs.

3.5. Support and guidance will be provided for staff and managers on how best to implement and manage flexible working arrangements and relationships to accommodate voluntary activities. Guidance will be provided for managers on
how to consider requests for volunteering fairly.

3.6. If a manager is unable to support a request for Volunteering, a reason must be given to the member of staff.

3.7. “Go Volunteer” in the Students’ Union will provide the focus for information, advice and support for staff who wish to volunteer.

4 Provision for leave for Volunteering

4.1. Volunteering may be for a one off event over a day/number of days or may be a regular commitment weekly/monthly.

4.2. The University will give consideration to releasing a member of staff during work time, for a reasonable amount of time off to participate in voluntary activities. This may include using flexible working arrangements, using annual leave, applying for additional leave or taking a short period of unpaid leave. Managers may wish to include Volunteering as part of their Annual Plan and contribute to their Community Engagement commitment.

5 Formal Safeguards for Volunteering

5.1. Arrangements for DBS (Disclosure and Baring Service) Checks, if required, Health and Safety arrangements, Risk Assessments and Insurance will be monitored by Go Volunteer. The normal provisions for Volunteering are to ensure that these are arranged by the Charity/Organisation providing the Volunteer opportunity.

6 Relationship with time off for Public Duties

6.1. Requests for time off for Volunteering will take account of any arrangements a member of staff already has for time off for Public Duties such as JP, Local Councillor or School governor or time off for Reserve Forces.