

# **Leeds University Union**

## Health & Safety Guidance and Procedures for Volunteering Projects and Societies

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Produced by Volunteering and Community  
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## **Health & Safety Guidance and Procedures for Volunteering Projects and Societies**

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## **Why Health and Safety is Necessary**

As a volunteering project coordinator/organiser/leader it is your responsibility to arrange the Health and Safety of your project. It is not an easy task and requires a lot of responsibility and for this reason we strongly recommend that each project has 2 project coordinators at least.

Your risk assessment and Health and Safety paperwork show that you have properly considered the safety implications of what you are about to do and that if there are any risks involved, you have taken action to reduce them as much as possible. It does not mean that there are no risks but that there are control measures in place to ensure that no-one gets hurt.

On a more serious note, should someone be hurt on a project organised by you, your risk assessment is what protects you from being personally negligent. Just think about it, if you organise a trip for local children to a local woods, without doing any research, and the paths are in disrepair and one of the children falls and cuts themselves, it **is** your fault. The children would not have gone there if not for you having organised the trip! This is easily avoided though, just ring the local countryside ranger and ask the condition of the paths and it's suitability for the activity you have got planned. Better yet, visit it yourself and check it out. If you're not sure how to make your plan a safe reality, then just ask the Volunteer Development Coordinator.

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### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

All volunteering projects must risk assess any activity undertaken outside of meetings and session planning that takes part in the union building.

Special care and consideration must be taken by the organisers of volunteering projects. Your duty of care is for the members of your society but you must also consider the safety of the beneficiaries of your project (who may be vulnerable), your volunteers, potentially members of the public and yourselves.

Find out about your Duty of Care as a project coordinator, guidance on how to fill out an LUU risk assessment and to find the blank template at <http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/clubsandsocieties/safety/>

As soon as you start to plan an activity you should inform the Volunteer Development Coordinator of your plans (you'll submit your plans for the term at the beginning of the term). You must submit an electronic version of your risk assessment (for every different activity you plan to do) to the Volunteering Development Coordinator at least 7 days prior to the date you intend to undertake the project, and ideally at the

start of the term. You must clearly mark the date of the project on the first page of the Risk Assessment. The reason you've got to submit it early is that we take your risk assessment seriously. We will check it and the Student Activities Manager, Geoff Banks, will be consulted if necessary and any alterations will be fed back to you so you can then alter the master copy of the document and send it back to the Volunteer Development Coordinator.

Once you've been notified that your risk assessment is satisfactory you must print two copies. Sign both and put one in your project Health and Safety file (you should take this with you on your project). The second signed copy should be given to the Volunteering Development Coordinator (or put in their in tray if they are out of the office).

If the Volunteering Development Coordinator is sick or on holiday the documentation must be submitted in the same way to the Health and Safety Manager (g.banks@leeds.ac.uk).

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### **CODES OF GOOD PRACTICE / VOLUNTEER BRIEFING**

Not all of your volunteers are going to read your risk assessment in great depth, and it is nearly certain they will not be able to recall most of the points on it if you quiz them a few hours later. Therefore, you should also complete a code of good practice, which is what your volunteer briefing is made up of.

This is a bullet pointed list of important things that all volunteers on the project should remember and bear in mind at all times. It's a general list of rules for your project.

The most important information could be put onto a card the size of a credit card, then you can print them on card and give a copy to all volunteers to store in their pocket for the duration of the project, even if it is a bigger document then all of your volunteers should have a copy and it should form part of their training. It should include things like "the ratio of volunteers to young people must never fall below 1:2", "In case of emergency the emergency services are best reached on 122" and "the fire exit is through the door at the back of the room". If you need help with this or would like to see good examples of codes of good practice then ask the Volunteering Development Coordinator.

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### **VENUES AND ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF LUU AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

If your volunteering project takes place in a venue which is not owned by LUU or involves an activity which you will not be leading (e.g. a horse riding centre, community centre, lesson you're helping at or

hostel) then some safety considerations will not be your responsibility but the responsibility of the organisation you're working with / hiring space from etc.

This does not mean that you can just assume everything is ok and forget about it. You need to ask them for a copy of their public liability insurance, risk assessment, a basic procedure for the activity (if applicable) and a copy of any professional qualifications they hold (if applicable e.g. an instructors qualification).

Finally if you're working with another organisation and your volunteers are essentially just 'turning up' at their session, then you should get this in writing. An email is adequate (but save a copy and forward one to the Volunteering Development Coordinator). You must check with them that they have insurance and a risk assessment (you need to keep a copy as proof that you have checked). Do not forget that if you are transporting people to the venue/session, you are responsible for them in transit and might have to risk assess that part of the activity.

Once you've got a copy of these things submit them with your risk assessment to the Volunteering Coordinator at least 7 days prior to the event.

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## **CONSENT FORMS AND MEDICAL INFO**

**Clients** → If you're working on a project with children and there isn't a partner organisation taking responsibility then you should get written consent from each young person's parent or guardian for the activity(s) you're intending to undertake. You must check that all of your volunteers have a clean enhanced CRB disclosure. You must also collect the names, ages and contact details of the young people and their next of kin, any allergies, special medical conditions, any medication that they are currently taking, behavioural issues e.t.c. In an extreme case where one of the young people is hospitalised then you will have to act as the responsible adult until you can contact a parent or guardian. You will need to be able to give the emergency services the right information. Before undertaking a project you need to submit an electronic list of the young people/vulnerable adults attending in the form of your pre-project form, to the Volunteering Development Co-ordinator. You must include emergency contact details for their next of kin because, in the case of an accident, university security will phone and these contact details will need to be passed on.

A note on medical information: project coordinators must make sure children have the medication they need to hand e.g. if they are asthmatic, do they have their inhaler?

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Finally you must ask permission to take photos/video of a young person and you should also ask permission to use a plaster if needed. Ask the Volunteering Development Coordinator if you need help with these "consent letters" or would like to see good examples.

Please note that you must keep these forms confidential at all times. If you are receiving these forms by post, they must clearly be addressed to "Your Name", "Your Project name" Volunteering and Community, Leeds University Union, PO Box 157, Leeds, LS1 1HU to avoid them getting lost in the internal post. If they are arriving by fax then send them to the machine on level two (0113 380 1416) and staff there will seal them in an envelope and put them in your pigeon hole as soon as they arrive. You should then keep them in your project file, which will go with you on the project and be stored confidentially. You may use our locked filing cabinet. The Volunteer Assistant and Development Coordinator have keys to this filing cabinet and you can gain access during the advertised drop in hours weekdays in term time. You must arrange to collect the forms within these times and if you need to return them out of hours please discuss this with your Development Coordinator.

**Volunteers** → You're also responsible for the students that you've encouraged to volunteer. You should collect medical and allergy info from them too and submit a list of names and student numbers to the Volunteering Development Coordinator 7 days prior to the project. In an emergency, details of next of kin can be obtained from the university's central database. There is a model volunteer info form available on the unions website in the safety section mentioned earlier.

**Handling and storage of these forms** → It might sound obvious but you need to take these consent and medical forms with you in your project file. They should be kept safe and in confidence for data protection and child protection reasons. Upon returning from your project these files should be handed to the Volunteering Development Coordinator who will ensure they are stored properly.

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## **INSURANCE**

Provided that you follow these rules you and your volunteers are covered by Leeds University Union's Public and Employers Liability insurance. If you do not follow the rules contained in this document you might not be covered and worse than that your volunteers might not be covered either. If you have any questions or need a copy of the insurance document then ask the Volunteer Development Coordinator.

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## **TRAINING**

Projects coordinators and in some instances, volunteers, require training in order to run or take part in the projects. You must attend this training. Some of the types of training that you might need are listed below. The training needs for your project are detailed in your handover packs.

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## **DRIVING**

In order to drive a vehicle for an LUU project or society, you must talk to the Student Activities reception for advice and to register as a driver with them. Drivers of cars must be over 18 and hold a clean license. To drive a minibus (with a MAM under 3.5 tonnes) carrying 9-16 passengers, you must be over 21, have a clean license more than 2 years old and pass the MIDAS driving assessment. You can register as an approved driver and sign up for a MIDAS test at the ARC reception, the cost is approximately £38. Full guidance on driving can be found at <http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/clubsandsocieties/resources/>

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## **FOOD PREPARATION**

If you intend to prepare food for anyone other than yourself then you should gain a certificate in Basic Food Hygiene. It may sound over the top but it has been known for activity groups to go away for the weekend and for everyone to get food poisoning! You can sign up for this course at the Student Activities Office at a cost of £20.

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## **FIRST AID**

If you are taking volunteers and clients on a project and it is not at a venue or in partnership with another organisation where you know (and have in writing or email) there is already a trained first aider, then you should gain a first aid qualification. The qualification you need for non-residential projects is 'Emergency First Aid at Work' (1 day) and for residential projects it is 'First Aid at Work' (3 days). They need to be HSE approved. Both St John Ambulance and the British Red Cross offer courses. It is also worth looking at the Leeds City Council website.

You should always take a fully stocked first aid kit with you on a project and one first aider with first aid kit per vehicle. You should include the cost of one of these in your budget if you do not already have one. You should check that they are full before you go out and if you use anything you should re-stock it upon your return (some supplies can be obtained from the Student Activities reception on level one or the Helpdesk in the foyer). If you are not sure what your first aid kit should contain, guidance can be obtained from the Red Cross and St John's ambulance. If you are working with young people then you should include a tick box on your parental consent form which asks permission

to use a sticking plaster on the young person as allergies are quite common and you could do more harm than good.

You must also plan routes to the nearest hospital to your project. If your project will be doing activities in different centres, plan a route from each centre to the nearest hospital.

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### **MANUAL HANDLING**

Back injuries are one of the most common types of injury and if your project involves lifting, carrying, repetitive movements of any kind then you should undertake and provide training for your volunteers to protect them from injury and to protect you from any claims made as a result of injury. If this is a requirement of your project contact the Volunteering Development Coordinator.

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### **CRIMINAL RECORDS BUREAU CHECKS**

If your project involves young people or vulnerable adults then you and all of your volunteers must have an enhanced CRB; it is no longer acceptable to have just submitted an application. To ensure that this is the case you must submit a list of volunteers' names and CRB numbers on the pre-project form, to the Volunteering Development Coordinator. (Action volunteers can only sign up to certain projects when CRB checked by LUU so taking numbers is not a requirement as the office already has them). If you are working with a sessional worker/project leader you don't have to ensure that they're CRB checked (but if they are then take their CRB number) you just need to ensure that they're never left alone with a young person or group of young people.

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### **CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING**

As a project coordinator working with children or young people it is compulsory that you have undertaken the full Level One Introduction to Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People training session which is run by Leeds Safeguarding Children Board. You must submit a copy of your certificate to the Volunteering Development Coordinator. You must do this in advance of running your project. Ask the Volunteering Development Coordinator for more details of these courses. You should also ensure that all volunteers attending your project have had child protection training.

This is in order to protect the young people that you work with from any rogue individual who uses volunteering to gain close contact with children, to be able to report any signs of abuse to the Social Care Team and also to protect your volunteers from any false accusations.

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## **GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

1. The student-child ratio should **never** fall below 1:3, 1:2 for swimming, and 1:1 is preferable for residential. There should always be a minimum of 4 volunteers, and ideally there should always be one member of each sex on every project. (Legally, adult to child ratios are 1 to 10 outside and 1 to 30 inside but we have higher ratios to help with safeguarding)
2. Avoid ever being in a one-to-one situation with a child.
3. Never hit a child and try to avoid unnecessary physical contact. Be careful of things such as play-fighting, wrestling, etc and anything which involves bodily contact with a child.
4. Never restrain a child unless their safety or that of others is at risk.
5. When taking children / young people to the toilet, volunteers should be of the same sex as the child (whenever possible.)
6. Volunteers must not, under any circumstances inform a child/young person where they live or encourage them to visit you outside Action project times. If you feel a young person is in need of such support outside the project, inform the Volunteering Development Coordinator.
7. Be aware of registers and regularly check all the children are there.
8. Do not allow children into kitchens if you are using a kitchen.
9. Report all disclosures or suspicions of abuse. You are legally obliged so don't promise that you will keep secrets (see below for more info).
10. Never give medication including pain killers unless you have the written consent of the parent/guardian. Ask for medical information on consent forms and make sure children have the medicine with them that they need. If project coordinators must help administer it, then make sure you have instructions from the parent/guardian on what to do.
11. Make sure all volunteers have been screened (i.e. have a CRB, 2 positive references and child protection training).

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## **BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT TRAINING AND REPORTING**

As project coordinator, you must undertake full Behaviour Management training from either the YMCA or Education Leeds as appropriate. It is also your responsibility to ensure that all volunteers attending your project have had basic behaviour management training and have been adequately briefed before attending a session. Discuss this with the Volunteer Development Coordinator.

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## REPORTING

**Accidents/Incident report form** → The purpose of reporting accidents, incidents, near misses is to look at how frequently accidents occur and if anything could be done differently in the future so that they can be avoided. They may also serve to protect you should any legal action be brought as a result of an accident.

Examples of incidents, accidents, near-misses

- Any time a first aid kit needs to be used
- Any injury which causes the injured party to stop the activity
- Anything which could have seriously hurt someone but on this occasion luckily didn't

Should an accident, incident or near miss occur while on your volunteering project, you should report it back to the Volunteer Development Coordinator within 48 hrs (but ideally the next morning) of the incident occurring using the incident report form. See: <http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/clubsandsocieties/safety/> for blank forms. You can submit them electronically or by handing in a hard copy to the Volunteering Development Coordinator. If the incident is serious (someone was hospitalised, the emergency services were called, someone was arrested, a missing child, a child or vulnerable adult protection issue occurred) then you must contact the Volunteer Development Coordinator, as soon as possible, either in person by calling into the Volunteer Office or by phone 0113 380 1325. If the Volunteer Development Coordinator is ill or on holiday then contact/submit your forms to Geoff Banks in Student Activities on 0113 380 1414. If you need to contact us out of hours then please call University security on 0113 343 2222, give your contact details and ask for them to be passed on to the Volunteer Development Coordinator or Geoff Banks urgently. **If it is a safeguarding issue, please contact one of the designated officers whose numbers are on your emergency numbers card.**

**Safeguarding disclosures** → You must report all child protection and vulnerable adult protection issues to the Volunteer Development Coordinator ideally the next morning and at the latest 48 hours after the occurrence. The child protection training will give you an understanding of what to report. If in doubt report it. You must use the Safeguarding reporting form, <http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/volunteeringandcommunity/resources/>

Examples:

- When a disclosure of abuse is made
- Unexplained bruises

- Highly sexualised behaviour

This list of examples is not exhaustive. Your training on safeguarding children will give you a clear understanding of what to report and what signs and symptoms an abused child may display.

**Physical contact form** → Any time you touch a child you should record and report it using the physical contact form. This form should also be used when a client sustains an injury during an activity or if they have an unexplained bruise or mark before the event/project. This protects you and the child. If there are any witnesses record their details on the form too. To obtain this form, contact your Dev Co.

**Behaviour Management reporting** → If there is a behaviour management incident on your project you should report it on a standard incident report form as soon as possible to the Volunteer Development Coordinator, or at least within 48 hours of it occurring. This is so that we can check that the behaviour of young people on projects is kept to an acceptable level and so extra training for volunteers can be arranged or any other issues addressed, if necessary.

**Emergencies** → In case of a serious child protection issue (i.e. a child arrives on a project with a serious injury, a major disclosure is made or a parent fails to collect a child who is too young to go home alone), contact the Volunteer Development Coordinator on 0113 3802 325 who will alert Social Care. You may also contact one of LUU's designated officers (see your emergency contact card for the numbers. **YOU MUST TAKE THIS WITH YOU**). During out of hours, phone one of the designated officers whose numbers are on the emergency numbers card. The emergency contact for social care is 0113 398 4702.

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## PHOTOS

You must **not** take a personal camera with you on a project or take any photos of clients on your phones. If you would like to take photos of your project, you must gain consent from the clients of your project and use an Action/V&C camera. Please get them to fill in a photographic consent form. If the clients are children, their parents/carers must fill in the form. These forms need to be handed to the V&C staff.

**Facebook:** Only put photos on Facebook if you have explicit consent. If you have a society website, you may put them on this if you gain consent.

**Storage:** Photos must be stored on the Union 'O Drive' and not on personal computers. Make sure you upload them in the office and delete them from the camera straight away. You must know the names of the individuals in the photo and save them so we can identify the project, the date and who is in the photo (and refer back

to consent forms if needed). Create a project folder; within this create a date folder; save the photo with a name such as 'photo1' and then make a Word document listing who is in that photo to save in that file too.

Please try not to take lots of photos as this makes it harder to track what photos we have, who is in them and is difficult to then meet data protection and confidentiality needs.

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### **PROJECT HEALTH AND SAFETY FILE**

You should put all of your Health and Safety information together in a file which you take with you on your project. For data protection reasons you must keep this file confidential and safe. It should contain;

- Risk assessment, insurance and safeguarding policy from external centres

- Volunteer medical forms inc. CRB numbers if applicable

- Consent forms

- Risk assessments

- Reporting forms

- Routes planned and routes planned to hospitals

- Pre-project form

- Volunteering Briefing

- A copy of LUU's insurance certificate

- Your volunteer training certificates

- And if you like, this guidance document

- Emergency safeguarding numbers card

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### **WHAT TO DO NEXT**

Use the checklist at the back of this guidance to see which of these measures you need to take and then arrange a meeting with the Volunteer Development Coordinator to discuss the Health and Safety of your project. Bring along your first attempt at a risk assessment if you are confident to have a go as this will speed up the process. It is best to get this out of the way early on so you can get on with enjoying your project!

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### **WHAT IF YOU DO NOT FOLLOW THESE PROCEDURES**

If you have any questions about what you need to do, read this guide again and make a list of what you think is required for your project. Then make a list of what you think you need to do and email the Volunteer Development Coordinator to make an appointment to discuss the requirements of your project.

If you don't follow the above procedures then LUU will consider your project unsafe and will tell you not to continue with it until you have all the relevant safety precautions. We will;

- Cancel any room and vehicle bookings you have made
- Cancel any bookings of stalls and the grassed area
- Freeze your bank account
- Suspend any pending grant transfers

And most importantly if something goes wrong and you end up in court we'll have to say that these things were required of you and you didn't do them!

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## **IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

Student Activities Safety Coordinator: Geoff Banks  
0113 380 1412/ [g.banks@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:g.banks@leeds.ac.uk)

Volunteering Development Coordinator: Claire Henly  
0113 3801 326/ [c.henly@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:c.henly@leeds.ac.uk)

University Security: 0113 343 2222  
More information: <http://www.luuonline.com/getinvolved/safety.php>

## CHECKLIST

Not all of the items in this list will be applicable to your volunteering project but you need to consider all of them, even if only to rule them out. Your Volunteering Development Coordinator will be able to help you decide what your health and safety requirements are so please ensure you go to any meetings they request with you.

What you need to do for your project	Tick
Attend Volunteering society/project training	
Submit a list of planned activities with dates at start of term to your Development Coordinator	
Risk Assess your project activities. You need to submit a general risk assessment at the start and additional versions for each project	
Volunteer Briefing. You need to submit a general volunteer briefing at the start and additional versions for each project	
Risk assessments, insurance and (if applicable) safeguarding policies for external venues and activities outside of LUU	
Consent Forms and Medical Info for clients	
Volunteer Medical forms	
Child protection Training and reporting	
Driving: become a MIDAS trained driver or registered driver (if applicable)	
Food Hygiene (if applicable)	
First Aid at work (residential) or Emergency First Aid at Work (non-residentials)	
Criminal Records Bureau Checks	
Behaviour Management Training	

Signed ..... & .....