

Volunteer Policy

Policy Statement

Volunteering is an important part of what Transitions UK do. We recognise that volunteering remains integral part of our work and what we achieve. We also understand that volunteering can help to improve the quality of life for both those who take part or are the beneficiaries of volunteering activity.

Our intention with volunteering within Transitions UK is to remove any potential barriers to participation and develop a team of volunteers that involve a wide range of people reflecting a variety of backgrounds, skills and qualities that can add value to the services provided by the charity.

Investing in our volunteers is one of our key priorities, as we want our volunteers to be provided with the outcomes they are looking for – whether it is gaining new skills, experience or training or just giving them the opportunity to do something positive that benefits their local community.

Transitions UK understands that a volunteer's contribution can help provide an enhanced service to its users, whilst offering both practical rewards and satisfaction for the volunteers themselves.

The role of the volunteer is to provide additional input, and is not intended in any way to replace or substitute the role of paid employees. Essentially, volunteers add an important and unique contribution to the quality of the service. We value our volunteers and the contribution they make towards the service needs.

Transitions UK will ensure its policies and practice are reviewed and updated as regulations and legislation develops and is committed to continuing good practice; the charity will ensure that commitment reflects its particular charitable objectives and its historic and present mission to those in need.

Purpose

Transitions UK aims to recruit, screen and train volunteers for our services supporting young people aged 15-25 in order to help them achieve their potential. This document describes Transitions UK's policy on volunteers.

The following principles will apply within Transitions UK:

- In all cases, Transitions UK staff and volunteers will work within the Transitions UK Vision, Mission & Values statement.
- Volunteers will be treated well and encouraged to:
 1. have goals and begin to meet them;
 2. increase their self-worth and/ or confidence;
 3. Increase their skills.

The purpose of the policy is to provide overall guidance and direction to our volunteers and the staff who develop and support them. The policy should be viewed alongside all Transitions UK policies and procedures.

Recruitment

Local volunteering agencies are kept informed of opportunities available within Transitions UK. All volunteers are also encouraged to tell suitable friends and acquaintances about Transitions UK opportunities. Information is sent to anyone expressing an interest in volunteering with Transitions UK and an interview will be offered.

Recruitment is in line with the Equality Act and Transitions UK Equal Opportunities policy as well as all other Transitions UK policies and procedures.

Induction and Training

All Transitions UK volunteers are required to attend the two training sessions which will cover safeguarding, health and safety, equalities and diversity, disability and the volunteer induction. Other required training courses are listed in each role description, and vary with different roles. Volunteers should check the specific requirements for the role they are volunteering for.

Volunteers can request to be updated on training and attend sessions again if they feel this is necessary. If Transitions UK employees feel volunteers require further training, they can also arrange this with volunteers. This will be discussed with volunteers in advance of the request.

Support and Supervision

All volunteers will have a supervisor assigned to them when they start their volunteering work with Transitions UK. The regularity of supervisor contact will vary with the role, but all roles will have contact details of their supervisor for any interim needs. In addition to this volunteers can contact the Transitions UK staff team for further support.

All volunteers can request a meeting with a Transitions UK staff member if they feel they need extra support at any time.

Expenses

Transitions UK can reimburse expenses incurred by volunteers on agreed Transitions UK activities. Please see the Expense Claim Procedure for further details. If a volunteer is unsure whether an expense can be claimed, they should ask their supervisor or the chairman in advance, who will be able to advise them.

Insurance

Volunteers are covered by the employers and public liability policies of Transitions UK agreed activities.

Equal Opportunities & Diversity

Transitions UK is committed to offering equal opportunities to all potential volunteers who satisfy the requirements for any volunteering role within the organisation [see recruitment section]. It is also very important that all volunteers are welcoming of all other volunteers, and treat each other with respect at all times. For further information please see the Equal Opportunities policy document.

Transitions UK is committed to developing and maintaining an organisation in which differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds and needs are valued. Transitions UK aims to give opportunity to those with diverse backgrounds and experiences to participate and contribute, wherever this does not increase risks to others involved in the organisation in any way.

Health and Safety

Transitions UK aims to ensure its volunteers are safe and not exposed to health risks when volunteering with Transitions UK. Volunteers must conform to the health and safety training received and the volunteer agreement guidelines whenever they are engaged in Transitions UK agreed activities or represent Transitions UK.

The Transitions UK Health and Safety Policy can be reviewed on request.

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

The Grievance Policy & Procedures and the Disciplinary Policy & Procedures documents can be reviewed by volunteers on request.

Confidentiality

Transitions UK volunteers often have access to confidential information, and Transitions UK has access to volunteers' information, so care must be taken to keep all such information confidential. For further information please request to see the Confidentiality Policy document.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored periodically to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law.

It will be reviewed annually or earlier if there is any significant change in legislation or internal procedure.

Next Review date: January 2017
