Volunteer Management (Including Volunteer Researcher) Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This document sets out the process for administering and managing volunteer engagements at the University.

(2) This Procedure must be read in conjunction with the Volunteer Management (Including Volunteer Researcher) Policy (the "Policy").

Section 2 - Procedures

Documenting the Volunteer Role

(3) The supervisor must ensure that:

a. each volunteer role is defined, communicated, and reviewed in consultation with all relevant stakeholders; and
b. the tasks to be performed through a volunteer role are set out in a volunteer role description.

Assessing and Managing Risk

(4) The supervisor must ensure that a risk assessment is completed to ensure all safety and operational risks are identified and mitigated as far as reasonably possible. Consideration should be given to, but is not limited to:

a. the tasks to be completed and time commitment required;
b. supervision, training and instruction requirements and who will provide this;
c. access requirements to systems or buildings;
d. information the volunteer will need access to and restriction from (for example, commercially sensitive information);
e. equipment needs, including personal protective equipment;
f. operational risks and controls already in place, or needed;
g. safety hazards and any existing or new controls to eliminate or reduce the likelihood of injury;
h. clearance checks required; and
i. the nature of the volunteer engagement and any additional insurance requirements.

(5) The risk assessment must be included with the Volunteer Role Description for approval by the authorised delegate.

Approval of Volunteer Roles

(6) Approval of a volunteering role should be in accordance with this Procedure and its overarching policy, and the University's Delegation of Authority policy and its associated documents.

(7) The authorised delegate may request additional information or support from specialist advisors (for example, health and safety officers or the University risk/insurance officer) before approving the volunteer role.

Recruiting Volunteers

Volunteer Screening and Clearance Checks

(8) The supervisor is responsible for undertaking appropriate screening of each volunteer to ensure they are suitable for the volunteer role they will perform and that any risks associated with the individual are identified and considered. Screening may include, but is not limited to:

a. assessment of skills, experience, and training;
b. assessment of the volunteer's ability to meet the functional demands of the volunteer role (for example, lifting, bending, walking);
c. reference checks;
d. identity check;
e. confirming any required clearance checks have been completed and evidence provided; and
f. proof of any additional insurance requirements has been provided.

(9) Clearance checks may include, but are not limited to:

a. Working rights checks for international volunteers;
b. National baseline security check;
c. Police check;
d. Child protection/working with children check.

Approving the Appointment of a Volunteer

(10) Each volunteer must complete a volunteer registration form and provide evidence of all required clearance checks.

(11) Where the screening or clearance checks introduce any new risks to the University, the Supervisor is responsible for disclosing these to the authorised delegate who will be approving the volunteer appointment.

(12) Each volunteer engagement must be approved by an authorised delegate in writing.

(13) Once approved, the Supervisor must make an invitation to volunteer in writing (Volunteer Engagement Letter) and provide the volunteer with a copy of the approved volunteer role description.

Induction, Training and Supervision

(14) The supervisor is responsible for ensuring the following induction, training and supervision requirements are met:

a. Volunteers must be made familiar with the University's policies, procedures, and Staff Code of Conduct obligations through an induction program.
b. A local safety induction must be completed with the volunteer prior to them commencing the volunteer work activity. This should include, but is not limited to:
    i. how to report hazards, incidents and injuries;
    ii. local area first aid officers, and floor wardens;
    iii. Standard Operating Procedures and safe work practices;
    iv. what to do in an emergency; and
    v. any specific local area supervision, risks, or access requirements.
c. Volunteers must be provided with any necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) required to safely perform their activities, and receive training and instruction in the correct and proper use of the PPE.

d. Approval must be obtained from the relevant area supervisor to access high-risk facilities where necessary, and additional supervision in these areas must be provided where necessary (eg radiation facilities or PC2 facilities).
e. Volunteers must be provided with training appropriate to the volunteer role they will perform.
f. Volunteer access to IT systems can be requested through registration as an IT affiliate. Information regarding IT affiliate access is available on the Types of User Accounts webpage.
g. Volunteers must be provided with ongoing supervision to enable them to undertake their roles and responsibilities and to ensure the activities being performed by the volunteer are consistent with the approved volunteer role.
h. Where the volunteer arrangement is expected to extend beyond a 12 month period, an annual review of insurance arrangements and clearances must be undertaken.

Withdrawing a Volunteer Engagement

(15) Withdrawal of a volunteer engagement must be approved by the delegate.

(16) Withdrawal of the volunteer engagement will be advised in writing. The University will make reasonable efforts to provide feedback on the reason for withdrawal, as appropriate and feasible.

(17) The University will ensure the volunteers exit is handled in a respectful and confidential manner.

Expenses

(18) Volunteers may be reimbursed for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses (for example, travel or food expenses) provided that:

a. approval has been obtained by the supervisor;
b. a suitable receipt is provided; and
c. the expenditure is in accordance with the Purchasing, Companion Card and Petty Cash Policy and its associated procedures.

(19) Reimbursement claims can be submitted via FlexiPurchase for University staff or the Expense Reimbursement Form for all other volunteers.

Insurance

(20) In the event of a claim against the University policy, the volunteer will need to produce the completed volunteer role description and engagement letter as proof of their being authorised by the University.

(21) Work experience volunteers associated with another organisation (e.g. TAFE students, secondary school students) must provide proof of Personal Accident and Public Liability insurance from their associated organisation prior to commencing their work experience. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that such proof is provided.

(22) Volunteers providing professional services in association with a third party must provide proof of minimum levels of Personal Accident, Public Liability, and Professional Indemnity insurance. Other insurances may be required, depending on the type of volunteer engagement (for example, medical malpractice).

(23) Advice on insurance requirements can be obtained through insurance@newcastle.edu.au.

Record Keeping

(24) Volunteering opportunities and engagements processed via the Uni Crew Volunteering process will be maintained within that system.

(25) For all other volunteering engagements, the following information must be maintained by the area responsible for the activity of the engagement:

a. approved volunteer role description;
b. risk assessment;
c. completed volunteer registration (including any required clearance reports or additional insurance policies);
d. volunteer engagement letter; and
e. withdrawal of a volunteer engagement letter, as appropriate.

(26) Records must be made available for the purposes of insurance and/or auditing purposes.

(27) All records must be maintained in accordance with the Records Governance Policy.

Volunteer Researchers

(28) Volunteer researchers are subject to the Responsible Conduct of Research Policy and all applicable research processes, including but not limited to declaration of conflicts of interest and relevant interests, research ethics training and approvals. The Chief Investigator is responsible for ensuring the volunteer researcher receives training and instruction to enable compliance.

(29) An intellectual property agreement must be established where a volunteer researcher is engaged in research activities with potential commercialisation. Refer to the Intellectual Property Policy and Procedure.

(30) A formal research plan must be developed for a volunteer researcher and their performance monitored against the plan.

Status and Details

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Effective Date	8th February 2024
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Responsible Executive	Martin Sainsbury Chief People and Culture Officer martin.sainsbury@newcastle.edu.au
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Risk" - Effect of uncertainty on objectives. Note: An effect is a deviation from the expected, whether it is positive and/or negative.

"Risk assessment" - The overall process of risk identification, risk analysis, and risk evaluation.

"Work experience volunteer" - Means an individual who is approved to undertake vocational work experience at a University facility without remuneration in the form of salary.

"Intellectual property" - Intellectual property (IP), as defined by the World Intellectual Property Organisation, refers to creations of the mind: inventions; literary and artistic works; and symbols, names and images used in commerce. Intellectual property is divided into two categories: Industrial property includes patents for inventions, trademarks, industrial designs and geographical indications; and Copyright covers literary works (such as novels, poems and plays), films, music, artistic works (e.g. drawings, paintings, photographs and sculptures) and architectural design. Rights related to copyright include those of performing artists in their performances, producers of phonograms in their recordings, and broadcasters in their radio and television programs.

"Research" - As defined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, or any replacing Code or document.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

"Volunteer researcher" - Means an individual, other than a visiting or conjoint appointment, Higher Degree by Research candidate or participant in a formal student exchange program, who is invited to participate in research activities without being employed or remunerated by the University. This includes international placements and a University of Newcastle student with approval to participate in research activities outside of their assessable course or program requirements. An international volunteer researcher would normally: i. be at least eighteen

years of age; ii. have been studying or engaged in their field of expertise for at least the last twelve months prior to the visit; iii. have sufficient English proficiency to undertake a research program; iv. have adequate health insurance; v. not be enrolled at post-graduate level at another Australian institution; and vi. hold an appropriate visa for the purpose and duration of stay.

"Affiliate" - A person or organisation legally obligated to, or informally associated with the University. Categories of affiliates are outlined on the University website.

"Delegate" - (noun) refers to a person occupying a position that has been granted or sub-delegated a delegation of authority, or a committee or body that has been granted or sub-delegated a delegation of authority.