



## DCFL Volunteering Policy



For more information or a question about this policy  
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DCFL is a trading name of Hertfordshire Community Learning  
Charity Registration: 1164867

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## Introduction

Dacorum Communities for Learning (DCFL) run affordable training in local community centres in a variety of subjects.

### **Aims of the Volunteering Policy: -**

- To set out the principles and working practices for voluntary involvement in DCFL and ensure that best practice is followed
- To provide a reference document which covers all aspects of DCFL's relationship with volunteers for everyone who is concerned with recruiting, supporting, developing and managing volunteers and promoting voluntary activities.
- To ensure that volunteer involvement in DCFL is understood and accepted by paid staff, volunteers and committee members and there is clarity about why we involve volunteers.

**Volunteering** is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of the community, and can take many forms. It is undertaken by choice, without concern for financial gain.

### **Core values**

- Everyone has the right to volunteer without experiencing discrimination, and DCFL has a responsibility to treat volunteers fairly
- Volunteering is a matter of free choice and there can be no compulsion to become a volunteer.
- Volunteering is a valuable and integral part of society and volunteers deserve support and recognition.
- Volunteers assist in effecting social change and improving quality of life, and play an essential role in alleviating the effects of poverty, ignorance, inequality and injustice.

DCFL recognises the unique and special contribution that volunteers make to society and in particular to the work of this organisation. Volunteer involvement in appropriate tasks and projects is welcomed as it has a positive effect on our services. Volunteers bring a variety of skills and a fresh perspective, adding value to all activities and supporting our sustainability. They have a unique role which is quite different from that of paid workers. They can offer time and passion to a particular project, cause or issue, and by involving volunteers DCFL is able to build stronger links with the community in which it works. Volunteers act as ambassadors, promoting the organisations activities and services.

DCFL:

regularly by the Board of Trustees.

- DCFL will aim to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage. A procedure covers complaints either by or about volunteers.

### **5. Training and personal development**

DCFL recognises that volunteers' motivation for volunteering may change over time and the skills they develop in their volunteering may change what they want to do.

- Training relevant to volunteer's roles will be provided
- Volunteers motivations are met with appropriate tasks and those with extra support needs are enabled to volunteer wherever possible.
- DCFL recognises that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will seek to help volunteers meet these needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their tasks effectively.
- Volunteer support/supervision sessions establish volunteers satisfaction with their current role and identify training needs, suggested changes to the role etc.

### **6. Involving, rewarding and recognising volunteers**

Volunteers contribute to decision making and are fully involved in the organisations activities.

- DCFL aims to get volunteers together at least twice a year, through training or the AGM.
- Email updates keep volunteers up to date with the organisations activities, and other volunteering activities outside the organisation.
- Volunteers receive appropriate recognition for their efforts. We don't forget the importance of a simple thank you!

more of the following methods, dependent on the role:-

- \* Informal or formal interview
  - \* References - all volunteers are required to give names of 2 people who can be approached for personal references. Acceptable referees do not include family members, and should have known the potential volunteer for at least 1 year.
  - \* Trial period
- Where appropriate, DBS checks will be required

### 3. Induction

The initial welcome and induction that new volunteers receive is key to their retention

- An information pack will be provided for new volunteers.
- All volunteers will receive an induction relative to their role so that they are prepared for the tasks allocated to them.
- All volunteers will be given a named person to contact
- DCFL will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisation and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to our work.
- Volunteers are bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff.

### 4. Support and safety

All volunteers will have a named person as their main point of contact. They will be provided with appropriate support, which will offer opportunities for feedback on progress, discussion of future developments and the chance to air any problems.

- Volunteers are covered by insurance and are included in health and safety policies.
- *Out of pocket expenses are met wherever possible and practicalities of expense reimbursement are laid out in induction.*
- Volunteers not wishing to claim their expenses can donate them back to the organisation. Expenses, other than for travel, may be met, providing approval is sought in advance. All volunteers are required to itemise and submit expense claims on a simple, standard form, which can be obtained from the DCFL Office.
- In some circumstances, expenses will be paid in advance with the approval of the DCFL Managers.
- Rates of reimbursement (e.g. for mileage) will be set and reviewed

- does not introduce volunteers to directly replace paid staff
- expects that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work
- recognises that volunteering is a two way process, with volunteers giving their time to help, and in return gaining some benefits for themselves.

### DCFL's involvement with volunteers covers 6 areas:-

#### 1. Planning for Volunteer involvement

- DCFL recognises the importance of planning. Volunteer involvement requires the investment of time and resources, particularly for new volunteers.
- Volunteer tasks are developed imaginatively with short term and ongoing opportunities.
- Role descriptions are produced and volunteer tasks are thought out thoroughly before advertising for help.
- When planning new projects, volunteer's expenses are included in budgets so that volunteer activities can be appropriately supported.
- Policies which cover volunteer activities are regularly reviewed by the committee/trustees.

#### 2. Recruitment and selection

The recruitment of volunteers follows good practice guidelines.

- Volunteering is open to everyone and DCFL is committed to equal opportunities; in its services and in the recruitment of its volunteers
- Volunteers are recruited using a variety of advertising methods
- Potential volunteers are contacted promptly by phone, letter or email and recruitment processes are fair, efficient and consistent.
- Volunteers are required to complete a simple application form
- All prospective volunteers are interviewed to find out what they would like to do, their skills, suitability and how best their potential might be realised.
- DCFL will endeavour to ensure that a volunteer is suitable for a role. Where there is a choice of volunteers for a role, DCFL will select the candidate based on merit. This might be their relevant experience or knowledge, or previous commitment to the organisation.
- If the volunteer, or DCFL decides that the volunteer task is inappropriate / unsuitable for whatever reason, feedback and discussions include the opportunity to explore other options.
- Volunteers will be selected and screened for suitability through one or