

Human Resources

Staff Volunteering Policy

LONDON
SCHOOL of
HYGIENE
& TROPICAL
MEDICINE



1. Introduction

- 1.1. Volunteering benefits everyone involved and enriches the culture of the School. As part of our commitment to sharing our knowledge and engaging with a broad range of people, the School has developed a Staff Volunteering Policy, which facilitates the participation of staff in a wide variety of voluntary opportunities within the community.

2. Aims

- 2.1. The aim of this policy is to inform employees and managers of the School's position on staff volunteering and to provide a framework for the process. It has been designed to enable members of staff to be proactive in identifying suitable voluntary activities that mutually benefit the individual, the School and the local community.

3. Definition

- 3.1. In this context, a staff volunteer is an employee of the School who engages in activities that fall outside their usual role. These activities should be approved by the School and benefit the local community, including the School itself.
- 3.2. Activities could be those organised by staff that take place at the School (e.g. volunteering at an internal activity open to the public), or those co-ordinated by an external organisation (e.g. a primary school literacy programme).
- 3.3. Public engagement linked to an individual's research activity does not fall within the definition of volunteering. If you are interested in getting involved with public engagement, please contact the School's Public Engagement Coordinator at publicengagement@lshtm.ac.uk.

4. Key Principles

- 4.1. The School recognises the positive and meaningful impact of staff participating in voluntary activities:
 - To make a difference to people's lives and share knowledge

- 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 new experiences for personal development;
 - To gain confidence, motivation and a sense of achievement;
 - To enhance social/personal wellbeing and work-life balance.
- 4.2. When considering applications for staff wishing to volunteer, it is important for managers to assess the possible benefits such arrangements may bring to the individual and the workforce.
- 4.3. It is important for all staff to recognise that any request to undertake voluntary activities will be considered on an individual basis and will be made in line with business needs.

5. Volunteering Conditions

- 5.1. The policy applies to all School employees.
- 5.2. Employees may apply for up to 2 days' paid leave per year (pro-rata for staff who work part time) to participate in voluntary activities.
- 5.3. Volunteering time will be granted at line managers' discretion. It is recommended that early discussions take place between the employee and their manager, as far in advance as possible, about the employee's plans to participate in voluntary activities or events, to enable both to consider how this may be accommodated.
- 5.4. The release of employees from work to participate in voluntary work must be balanced against the other demands and priorities of the Faculty/Department/Service area and as such, time-off for this purpose is not an entitlement.
- 5.5. Volunteering allowance cannot be carried from one leave year to the next.

6. Making an Application

- 6.1. Applications to undertake voluntary activities (regular or one-off commitments) are to be made to your line manager. Please complete the **Staff Volunteering Application Form**. The application should state the activity and organisation you wish to contribute to, how much time is being requested and how this opportunity will contribute to the community and to your own personal and professional development.
- 6.2. As part of your application, your manager may ask you to present a written letter of recognition of your volunteering commitments, from the

voluntary organisation or colleague organising activities at the School, to demonstrate your contribution to the project.

- 6.3. Please note that whilst the School will endeavour to agree such requests, your line manager is entitled to turn down requests should they compromise the needs of the department.
- 6.4. If the request is approved, a copy of the application form should be sent to the Human Resources team to help it monitor the policy.

7. Insurance, Risk & Health and Safety

- 7.1. It is important that employees undertaking volunteering projects ensure that the projects are covered by the appropriate public/employers' liability insurance and meet health and safety requirements.

8. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

- 8.1. In situations where the volunteer is required to have substantial contact with young people or vulnerable adults (e.g. elderly people, adults with a learning disability), it is likely that they will need a current enhanced DBS check (for details please see the DBS checks page of the government web pages). It is the responsibility of the volunteering organisation and/or the individual employee to identify when this check would be necessary and ensure that this has been undertaken before they commence any volunteering activity.

9. Examples of Volunteering

- 9.1. Volunteering takes place in a wide variety of organisation contexts and draws upon a huge range of skills. Some volunteering activity may include:
 - Tutoring a secondary school student to improve their exam results
 - Helping to run public activities taking place at the School
 - Supporting an environmental project with an NGO
 - Being a volunteer explainer at a museum
 - Trustee of a Charity
 - School Governor in Camden