Volunteering and Mentoring | University of Chester

A department within Student Services

How to Guide for Volunteer Opportunity Providers

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FAQ's

Thank you for your interest in advertising your volunteer activities to our students. The Volunteering and Mentoring Team at the University of Chester aim to help students make the most of their time whilst studying through volunteer opportunities within the University and in the wider community.

We welcome any charity or other not for profit organisation who has volunteer opportunities that would be available to our students to register with us. We have campuses in Chester and University Centres in both Warrington and Shrewsbury for any in person activities, as well as a dedicated page for any activities that could be completed from home.

By registering with us, you will be able to advertise your activities directly to students and be added to our mailing list to receive notification of any events or campaigns that we are running.

We look forward to working with you and promoting your opportunities to our students.

The Volunteering and Mentoring Team

University of Chester

Email: volunteering@chester.ac.uk

Phone: 01244 511550

Our offer to you.

By registering with us we can support your volunteer recruitment through promotions and tailored support, including:

- Access to your own provider account on our Volunteer Portal, which allows you to upload as many volunteer roles/ activities as you have available and manage any volunteer applications
- Direct promotion of your volunteer activities to students who use our Volunteer Portal. We currently have over 1600 students accessing the Portal. Students can browse the opportunities available and receive weekly emails with information on any new activities that have been listed that meet their preferences.
- Meet with one of the team to discuss your volunteer roles and learn more about the services we have available
- Further promotion is available through our social media pages. We can feature one of your volunteer roles through one of our "featured Friday" posts, host an Instagram live with one of your staff and share any videos or further content you may have. Please contact us to discuss this.
- We also host events during the year, including a Volunteer Fair in October and Student Volunteering Week in February. Providers who are registered with us will receive email notifications of any events and how they can get involved. We also run an annual Provider Information session.
- For Christmas and Summer we compile a list of opportunities which are taking place at those times. We will provide you with plenty of notice if you would like to contribute to these opportunity lists.
- We are also able to promote your activities directly to academic departments that deliver courses that might be relevant to your role.
- You may also be interested in partnering with us to run a student-led project to contribute to the services you offer. Please contact us if you would like to find out more.

We look forward to working with you and supporting your volunteer activities.

The Volunteering and Mentoring Team

University of Chester

A department within Student Services

<u>How to register</u>

Top tip: Make sure you have your public liability insurance certificate and health and safety policy available before starting your registration.

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1) Select *Looking for Volunteers* As well as seeing the registration and login boxes, you will also be able to view our provider terms and our privacy notice, which we would recommend reviewing before completing your registration. **For first time users please select "Provider Registration " to start the registration process.**

2) There are two stages to registration; the first stage requires submitting the basic information required to set you up as a group on the Volunteering website.

Stage 1

You are required to provide:

- Organisation Name
- Location (this is which Campus you wish to offer opportunities – the options are Chester, Shrewsbury, Warrington, All, Chester & Warrington or Chester & Shrewsbury)
- Organisation description/overview (this only needs to be brief as you will be able to add further information once you have registered)
- Organisation contact information
- Primary contact person details (usually your details)

Once done please select *Continue Registration.*

You will then be directed to our Terms and Conditions. Please read these carefully (If you haven't already) as it outlines what we expect from a Provider as well as what you can expect from us.
Once read you will then need to tick the agreement. *If you are unable to meet these requirements or have any questions please get in touch.*

You will then need to set up a password of between 6 and 50 characters
Then press *Continue Registration*

Stage 2

a) You will then be directed to the Provider details tab. You can add more information at this stage. You can include hyperlinks here so please feel free to add social media links or website links here. If you have a logo please add this by selecting Browse and then Update (*a logo, or picture if you don't have a logo, makes an advert stand out to students so we would recommend adding this if you can).
Once done, you can click *Continue.*

b) At this stage you can add your Public Liability Insurance Information. Although there is space to add both Public Liability and Employer's Liability Insurance, only the PLI is a requirement of the website. If you do not have Employer's Liability you can add your PLI here as well.
Once added click *Continue.*

c) You will then be directed to our Policies page. Like the Insurance page, you have the option to upload multiple policies (Health & Safety, Expenses and Volunteers Policy) but only a Health & Safety Policy is an essential requirement of the website.
Once added click *Continue.*

When you reach the end of the Policies page, press *Continue* and a message will then appear to let you know your changes have been saved.

We will then review your account and either activate it or get in touch if we have any questions within 10 working days. Once your account has been activated you will receive an email notifying you of this and to inform you that you can now start uploading volunteer activities.

Adding a Volunteer role/activity.

Please note: If you register as a provider but do not add any volunteer activities, students will be able to see your provider information but will not be able to apply to volunteer with you unless you have added some activities to your account.

Once your provider registration has been approved by us and you have received your email notification, you will be able to start uploading as many volunteer roles/activities as you wish!

1. Log back into the website https://volunteering.chester.ac.uk/providers/ and then click on *Add New Opportunity*

2. When adding a new opportunity you will be asked to provide various details i.e role title, role summary and the number of volunteers required.

3. You will also need to make sure the contact details field has the correct contact name and email. It should automatically be filled with your name, if this is not the case please select the name of the contact who is responsible for recruiting. They will receive the email notifications for when a student applies for this role/activity. Once added click *Continue*

4. Next you will be asked further details about your role. These include; benefits to self (i.e. what skills a volunteer might get through volunteering with you), benefits to others (i.e. how you and your clients may benefit from their volunteering), hours per week, details of any training you offer, location, transport details (i.e. if they would require their own transport or if you have details of public transport they can use), DBS checks (if required) and who will be responsible for the volunteers. Although only the DBS check field is mandatory, we would recommend completing the other fields to provide students with as much information as possible regarding your opportunity. Once completed click *Next.*

5. On the Dates/Applying page – if your opportunity is ongoing please leave the activity dates blank. If there are specific application dates please put these in or else you can leave this blank. You will also be asked to enter a message to be included in the acknowledgement email sent to volunteers when they apply. We would recommend adding information here on when they can expect to hear from you, any information you may wish to share about the application process, and a contact for your organisation. If you have any online application forms you could also add the link to this in your welcome message. Once completed click *Next.*

6. You will then be shown the Volunteers tab, this is how you will view the names and contact details for ant volunteers that apply for your role/activity. Once viewed click *Next.*

7. Next you will be asked to complete Activity Types tab. These activity types allow students to filter the opportunities listed, and they can also set preferences based on these activity types to receive a weekly email with any new opportunities that have ticked these opportunity types. These are your

opportunity to demonstrate to students the type of the volunteering they would be getting involved in. After you chosen which location the role/activity takes place, we would suggest selecting up to 5-10 activity types for your role. Once completed click *Next.*

8. Next you will be asked to complete the Employability skills tab. Please choose the employment skills you believe a student may gain from volunteering in this role/ activity. Once completed click *Next.*

When you get to the final page click *Save Changes.*

Once you have completed the above, your activity will be listed as "pending approval" and we will be notified of this. We will then review your role/ activity listing and either activate it or get in touch if we have any questions, within 10 working days. Once your role/ activity has been activated you will receive an email notifying you of this and it will be live on the volunteer portal. Students will now be able to view the details of your activity listing and apply!

Images taken before Covid-19

Monitoring volunteer applications

Once your role/ activity is live, students can view the information available, and if they are interested, have the option to select "I am interested". This will then automatically add them to your volunteers list for that activity.

You will be notified by email of any applications. We would recommend contacting any students who apply as soon as possible to keep them engaged in your opportunity.

If you have included a link to an online application form in the acknowledgement email, we would still recommend that you contact the student just to remind them how they can apply.

We would ask that students are contacted within 10 working days as much as possible.

1. To find out their contact details log back into your provider account and select the opportunity the student has applied for and select the "Volunteers" tab (*4th from the left*).

2. You will then see the names, emails and phone numbers of any students who have applied. Please use their email to contact them with any relevant information.

3. To manage your volunteer lists for each role/ activity, we would recommend updating the statuses of any students that have applied. Once they have commenced volunteering you can update their status to "accepted" on your volunteer list. This will also update the student's profile and they can record volunteering hours to that volunteer role.

4. If a student does not commence volunteering with you, you can update their status to "not accepted". They will then be removed from your volunteer list for that role/ activity. Please note, we would recommend leaving up to 6 months before updating a student's status to "not accepted" to allow time for the student to engage with the role and to complete the application process.

Images taken before Covid-19

Keeping your provider account updated.

If you wish to update any details on your account or edit any information, please log into your provider account, and use the below tips for keeping your details updated.

Top tip: If you make any edits or changes to your provider details, remember to select "save details" when you have finished.

Changing/Adding new contacts

On the contacts tab you will see a list of all the contacts for your organisation. The "Status" column will tell you if they are currently active or inactive. Only those listed as active are able to access the provider account.

1. To add a new contact to your account, click "add contact" at the top left of the screen and complete the contact details for them (including creating them a temporary password) and click "*save changes".*

2. To remove a contact, on the right-hand side next to each contact you will see a red cross which provides the option to "deactivate". Make sure to check whether that person was the named contact for any of your active volunteer roles and update this to the new contact.

3. To edit a person's contact information, click on their name (highlighted in blue) and make the changes as you wish and click *save changes*.

Adding or updating Insurance/Policies.

Your Public Liability Insurance will require updating each year. If you forget, we do send regular emails informing you, you will then have 1 month from that email being sent to update your insurance. This can either be done by emailing us a copy or updating the Insurance section of your provider account with your new Insurance details by changing the expiry date for your Insurance policy and uploading your new Insurance certificate.

Like the insurance page, the policies tab works in the same way. You will have already uploaded your organisation's Health & Safety Policy but if this updated, or you have a new policy you wish to add please update this.

What to do if you forget your password

If you forget your password, please send us an email and we can provide you with a temporary password to log back into your account. Once you have logged back into your

account, you can change your password to something more secure by first selecting "provider details" then the "change password" tab to the right. You will need to enter the temporary password we have sent you, then add in the password you would like to change it too. Remember to select "change password" once you have finished.

Deleting/editing an advertised opportunity (role/activity)

When you log into your provider account you will see all your opportunities listed. The status to the right will indicated whether the role is currently active or pending approval.

1. To edit a role/activity: You can edit any of the information in any of the opportunity details boxes and then *Save Changes*. This will change the opportunity to "pending approval" and the Volunteering Team will review this and activate the opportunity.

2. To delete a role/activity: If you would like to remove an activity we would recommend emailing us on volunteering@chester.ac.uk and let us know which opportunity you would like to delete. You can also take the opportunity off display, which will mean students can no longer see the activity listing. To do this, select the opportunity and then the "dates/applying" tab where you will see the option to "Take off display". Remember to save changes!

> *Top tip: If you would like to re-advertise any deleted roles please do email us and we can make the role active again.*

How to create more interest in your opportunity?

Although we will assist as much as possible with the promotion of your volunteer opportunities, we are unfortunately unable to guarantee that students will apply to the activities that you advertise on the website.

Consider whether you have included enough information in the activity listing to help students decide whether it is the right opportunity for them.

If you would like us to try to create more interest, drop us an email (volunteering@chester.ac.uk) and we can make your opportunities featured on www.volunteering.chester.ac.uk which means your opportunity will appear on a student's profile when they log into our website and it will also appear on the email which is sent to student's on the website each Tuesday (this is sent to students who haven't selected to opt out of these and are interested in the areas your opportunity offers)

We can also add your opportunity to our Social Media. Each Friday we host a #featuredfriday where we share the details of a voluntary organisation. To do this, again drop us an email and if you have any additional photos, images etc we can use please attach this to the email.
Depending on the amount of requests we get for this and the time of year, we may not be able to add your opportunity that week but will do it ASAP.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- *How are you supporting charities during covid-19?*

Although we recognise that some of your face to face opportunities may have been suspended, or are just starting to be offered once more, we are still encouraging our students to volunteer if they can. We have added new information to our site to signpost students to virtual or remote volunteering which can be done from home. We also want to let them know how they can support the local community if it is safe for them to do so.

We have added a 'Covid-19/Social Distancing Filter' to the section where you can add new activities and would encourage you to utilise this if you have any remote opportunities to upload that our students can support you with. We would also suggest that you update the 'acknowledgement email' on the activities you already have active on our website to explain your current situation.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any ideas for opportunities you would like to share.

- *I wish to recruit University of Chester students as volunteers, what should I do first?*

Please register on our website as a Volunteer Provider where you will also be able to view our Terms and Conditions.

Once you have registered, a member of the team will review your registration, and if all the details are in place your registration will be activated, following which you can start adding volunteer roles to recruit volunteers.

- *We are a profit-making organisation, can we still recruit volunteers?*

We can only advertise volunteer opportunities for community, charitable and other not-for profit organisations including Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs) and community interest companies (CICs). If you are a profit making organisation and you have paid roles available, please contact our Careers Department if you wish to recruit students for these roles on careers@chester.ac.uk

- *Can we advertise an internship?*

We are only able to advertise internships with charitable organisations, however we ask that you consider the availability of our students and the time available to them (we encourage our students to undertake no more than 16 hours of volunteering per week). For this reason, internships during term time will not be advertised.

- ***We sometimes have 'one off' opportunities, can you advertise these?***

Yes! Please put these as an activity on the website as this will then make it visible to volunteers. If you also email us details of the date, time, location and the volunteer role description for your event then we can also advertise them on our social media pages. We also compile specific emails at Christmas and Summer to advertise one off opportunities, if you are a registered provider on our website you should receive our emails regarding this.

- ***We have promotional materials and further information about our opportunities, can we send you copies?***

Unfortunately, we don't have a specific space for leaflets and posters. However, we are happy to put electronic materials on social media.

- ***Our roles require volunteers to have specific skills and experience, how can we ensure we recruit students who meet these requirements?***

When you add an activity to the website there is the option to indicate the type of volunteering you are offering and to also indicate the specific skills you require or can be developed. On the University of Chester website you will find a course list which may also give you an idea of the skills students have. We cannot set opportunities to only be visible to certain groups of students, so if you do require certain experience/ skills, ensure that you make this clear in the role description.

We can also send information on your opportunity to specific academic departments, please get in touch if this is something you would like assistance with.

- ***Our role require volunteers to complete DBS checks, is this something you can assist with?***

If an activity involves a volunteer completing regulated activity, and therefore requires a DBS check, we expect the organisation to administer the check free of charge for the volunteer. We do not usually complete DBS checks on behalf of an organisation as legally we would be unable to share the results with you.

You can indicate on your activity listing whether the role will require a DBS check. Please note, an International student may also be required to apply for a Certificate of Good Conduct towards their DBS check.

- *Our role requires a volunteer to provide references, are there any issues with this?*

If your role requires at least two references, please be aware that some students may struggle to provide employer references. You may need to have some flexibility on the type of references you require to support the student to volunteer with your organisation. For example, could you accept a reference from their Personal Academic Tutor or another member of university staff that knows the student?

- *What should we do if there is a problem with a volunteer, or we find that they are not suitable at application stage?*

As we are unable to manage who applies for your opportunities via the website, we would recommend having a recruitment process in place (even if this is very informal) so that you are able to check their suitability for a role. If after following your usual procedure for dealing with issues with volunteers, you are still experiencing problems or have concerns about one of your student volunteers, please contact us and we will help to resolve this where possible.

- *How will you use our data?*

Please see our Privacy notice [here](#) for information on how we store and process your organisation's data.

Still got a question which wasn't answered? Please email us on volunteering@chester.ac.uk and we will be happy to help.