



USU values the contribution of volunteers and recognises the important role they play in creating a vibrant, inclusive and connected student community.

Volunteer Guidelines

What is Volunteering?

Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain. It is an unpaid role undertaken by choice and without compulsion.

1. Safe and Fair Volunteer Environment.

All volunteers have the right to participate in a safe, secure, healthy, fair and respectful environment that is free from intimidation, bullying, violence, discrimination and harassment.

The volunteers should not undertake work that is unsafe, unethical, against their personal principles, or for which they have not received adequate training or support.

Volunteers must respect the privacy and confidentiality of students, staff, members and fellow volunteers.

The Volunteers Program Coordinator may determine that a volunteer is unable to participate in a volunteering activity or shift where there are reasonable concerns regarding the volunteer's health, safety, wellbeing, behaviour or ability to safely participate. This decision may be made to protect the safety and wellbeing of the volunteer, other volunteers, staff, partner organisations or members of the public.

2. Feedback, Concerns and Complaints.

Volunteers have the right to provide regular feedback about their experience and raise concerns or complaints.

Information about feedback and complaints processes are accessible on the Rosterfy portal and USU VTeam Instagram.

3. Volunteering is Always a Choice.

Volunteering is voluntary and there is no compulsion to participate in any activity.

If at any point you no longer wish to undertake a task or continue volunteering, you must inform the Volunteer Programs Coordinator and withdraw from the shift.

4. Respectful Behaviour.

All volunteers are expected to treat fellow volunteers, staff members and community members with dignity, respect and kindness. While volunteering, you may be seen as representing USU and are expected to always behave professionally.

This includes:

- Being polite and approachable
- Greeting others and engaging positively
- Working collaboratively with fellow volunteers and staff.
- Support fellow volunteers where appropriate.
- Communicate respectfully and constructively.
- Contribute to a positive, inclusive and supportive team environment.
- Following reasonable directions from supervisors and staff

If you experience or witness inappropriate behaviour, you are expected to report it.

Bullying, intimidation, harassment, discrimination and other forms of inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated.

5. Support and Wellbeing.

Volunteers have access to support systems both internally and externally.

Support is available through:

- Volunteer supervisors
- The Volunteer Programs Coordinator
- University support services
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services where applicable

Volunteers are encouraged to seek support whenever they need assistance or are experiencing difficulties.

Volunteers **must** inform the Volunteers Programs Coordinator about any medical condition, allergy, injury or accessibility requirement that may impact their volunteering during **recruitment or onboarding** so reasonable support can be provided.

6. Volunteer recognition and benefits.

The volunteer is rewarded points for every shift. They can use this points to redeem USYD Merch, food and beverage vouchers or courses (such as Barista, RSA, First-Aid).

The volunteer is also eligible for referrals (performance based), recognition letters (for academic and non-academic purposes). The volunteer recommended to use their volunteering experience for official recognition with the Sydney Impact Program.

7. Reward points.

- Volunteers must redeem any accumulated reward points before graduating.
- Volunteer reward accounts will be disabled once an individual is no longer a current student.
- Volunteers may redeem a maximum of 1,000 reward points per calendar month.

8. Distinction Between Volunteer and Paid Roles.

Volunteer roles are distinct from paid positions.

If you believe you are performing duties that appear excessive or equivalent to paid work in a way that feels unfair, you should immediately notify your supervisor or the Volunteer Programs Coordinator.

9. Safety and Right to Decline Tasks.

Volunteers should not undertake any task that they believe may negatively affect their physical health, psychological wellbeing or personal safety.

If you identify a risk or feel uncomfortable performing a task, you should stop and immediately inform the Volunteer Programs Coordinator or your supervisor.

10. Managing Concerning Behaviour.

Concerning behaviour will be addressed through a staged process:

1. Initial discussion and debrief with the Volunteer Programs Coordinator.
2. Formal final warning if the behaviour continues.
3. Removal from volunteering opportunities if the behaviour persists.

Examples of concerning behaviour include:

- Ignoring volunteers, staff or supervisors
- Consistently refusing to communicate appropriately
- Sulking or displaying unprofessional behaviour
- Using inappropriate language
- Bullying or harassment
- Yelling or aggressive behaviour
- Being rude or disrespectful
- Excluding or isolating others
- Ignoring reasonable communications from Volunteer Programs staff
- Failing to follow programme rules and procedures
- Refusing to follow reasonable directions from supervisors or staff

The staged process may not apply in cases of serious misconduct, safety concerns, unlawful behaviour, bullying, harassment or violence. In these circumstances, USU may suspend or remove a volunteer immediately.

11. Maximum Volunteer Hours.

At USU, volunteers may not undertake more than 16 hours of volunteering per week unless approved by the Volunteer Programs Coordinator. This is intended to support student wellbeing and ensure volunteering remains complementary to academic commitments.

12. Volunteering Does Not Guarantee Employment.

This is a volunteer position and is unpaid.

Volunteering may provide valuable experience and may assist in future employment opportunities. However, participation as a volunteer does not guarantee employment or progression into a paid role.

Volunteers should not expect a paid position because of their volunteering activities.

13. Attendance, Notice and Cancellations

Volunteers are expected to be reliable and communicate changes to their availability as early as possible.

If you are unable to attend a scheduled shift or activity, you must notify Volunteer Programs Coordinator as soon as possible via email or text message.

Email: volunteer@usu.edu.au

Phone: 0403188411

Failure to attend without notice may affect access to future volunteering opportunities.

14. Report incidents, hazards and emergencies immediately

Volunteers must immediately report any incidents, injuries, hazards, near misses or emergencies to the Volunteers Programs Coordinator. For external placements, you will receive a pre-placement email and a briefing highlighting your point of contact. In most cases the Volunteer Programs Coordinator will be present, however the briefing will explain your point of contact.

15. Working with Partner Organisations

From time to time, volunteers may participate in activities delivered by external organisations. Prior to attending, volunteers will receive information about the activity, including the meeting location, date and time, emergency contacts, expected duties, site-specific safety requirements and who to report to on arrival. Volunteers must follow the instructions provided by the host organisation and any briefing provided before the activity commences.

Reference Documents:

1. NSW Volunteering Strategy 2020-2030
2. National Standards for Volunteer Involvement – Implementation Guide (2024)
3. National Standards for Volunteer Involvement – Volunteer Australia
4. NSW State of Volunteering Report – The Centre for Volunteering
5. NSW Volunteer Charter

The guidelines were updated on 28 July 2026.