



## SECTION 8 Volunteer Guidelines

### Definition of a Volunteer

Before using this document it is important that you understand what is meant by the term '**Volunteer**' and why people volunteer. It is also important to distinguish between the terms, '**Member**', '**Worker**' and '**Volunteer**' in a Phab club/project situation. In order to clarify individual roles and responsibilities, the following definitions should be used.

- A Member** is someone who participates in group activities, when and how they choose. They may volunteer to take on some responsibilities for activities on odd occasions – they could be supported to become a volunteer, if they wish, when they feel ready)
- A Volunteer** is someone who comes with a level of responsibility agreed with the leader/committee/members. Someone who has expectations of you as a group, and of whom you also have expectations, could be such a member/leader/supporter/enabler.
- A Worker** is someone employed for payment by the club/project/committee/ local authority with contractual obligations to do a specific job.

It is important to remember that people in all of these roles may be disabled or non-disabled.

THE FOLLOWING LISTINGS ARE FAIRLY EXHAUSTIVE AND ARE INTENDED TO COVER MOST EVENTUALITIES.  
PLEASE READ THEM IN THAT CONTEXT.

## **Volunteers' Roles**

When considering 'taking on' a volunteer you should consider the following:

### **1. What will the volunteer be doing?**

- List all tasks.
- Identify key tasks and any aspects that might be difficult, as well as any aspects that might require particular skills.

### **2. When and where will the volunteer be doing it?**

- Identify the number of working hours.
- Consider any flexibility required - i.e. if the volunteer is expected to lock up premises at the end of an activity/event, it is likely that they will have to wait for people to vacate the building.
- Identify the location of the job - does this vary? Geography of the building(s).
- If it's a driving job you should be clear on pick up points etc.
- Identify any need for transport and whether this need can be met?

### **3. With whom?**

- Identify relationships between volunteer and paid staff/other volunteers.
- Consider if it is a solitary position or whether the volunteer will work as part of a team.
- Identify the system of management.

### **4. What level of supervision and support will be offered?**

- Identify a support system.
- Identify a method of supervision.
- Organise an induction period.
- List any training that will be available - state if this is compulsory.
- Decide upon a probationary period.
- Draw the volunteer's attention to the **Complaints Procedure**, in Section 5 **The Background Work**.
- Identify any expenses that will be available to the volunteer and how to claim (stress any limits/budgets).

### **5. What's in it for the volunteer?**

Identify rewards that the volunteer could get out of the job:

- Being part of a team.
- Increase of personal awareness and understanding.
- Personal development - training opportunities - and an increase in confidence and self-esteem.
- Improved social life.
- Sporting opportunities.
- Holiday opportunities.
- Meeting a wide range of people.

## Job Descriptions

When compiling a job description, remember to include:

- What the volunteer will be doing.
- How many tasks the position involves.
- What each task involves.
- How often the volunteer will work.
- How long the volunteer will work for.
- Where the volunteer will be working.
- Who the volunteer is responsible to.
- Who the volunteer is responsible for.
- Who will provide support to the volunteer.
- How regularly the volunteer will receive supervision.
- What form the supervision will take.
- The level of travelling expenses the volunteer is entitled to claim.
- What training will be given, whether or not it is compulsory and how long it will take.
- What the volunteer should do when they want to give up the voluntary role.

The following Job Descriptions may be useful:

a)

<b>Job Title:</b>	<i>Mini-Bus Driver</i>
<b>Accountable to:</b>	<i>Club Leader/Chair/Committee Member/Development Worker</i>
<b>Responsible for:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>Day-to-day checks, e.g. oil, lights, water, etc., as defined in vehicle documentation, are carried out prior to journey.</i></li><li>- <i>Safety of passengers whilst in vehicle, e.g. seat belts, clamps, as per safety regulations.</i></li><li>- <i>Ensuring an appropriate escort is on the vehicle.</i></li><li>- <i>Collection and return of vehicles and keys.</i></li><li>- <i>Collection and dropping off of passengers.</i></li><li>- <i>Filling in of logbook.</i></li><li>- <i>Informing accountable person (see above) of any changes to driving licence or medical conditions.</i></li><li>- <i>General continual awareness of Health and Safety Regulations.</i></li></ul>

b)

<b>Job Title:</b>	<i>Coffee Bar Assistant</i>
<b>Accountable to:</b>	<i>Club Leader/Chair/Committee Member/Development Worker</i>
<b>Responsible for:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>Operating appropriate kitchen equipment.</i></li><li>- <i>Serving customers.</i></li><li>- <i>Operating stock control system.</i></li><li>- <i>General continual awareness of basic hygiene practices.</i></li></ul>

## **Planning A Recruitment Campaign**

You will either decide that you need a volunteer, or a potential volunteer will approach you directly or via a third party. The first part of this section concentrates on what to do if you decide you need a volunteer.

### **First thoughts**

- Is there a job description for the task/role?
- What skills do you need the person to have?
- How large a time commitment do you require from a volunteer for this post?

Have you also considered why some people may choose not to volunteer?

- Concerned about over commitment.
- Afraid of being out of pocket.
- No one has asked them to volunteer.
- They have a restricted view of volunteering.
- Young/disabled people may think that volunteering is boring, or will entail them being "bossed about" by older/non-disabled people.

Many people who do decide to volunteer drop out because of insufficient support, training and/or expenses.

### **What benefits are you offering your volunteer?**

#### **Benefits for a volunteer:**

- Going to a place of interest e.g. Lake District, France etc
- Meeting new people and making new friends.
- Trying new activities.
- Working as part of a team.
- Having a lot of fun.
- Learning new skills e.g. organisation, care, finance, childcare, management, mentoring etc.

**What other information do we need to tell prospective volunteers?**

- The aim(s) and objectives of the organisation
- Age group - children/youth/adults etc.
- Mix of group - disabled/non-disabled/ male/female etc.
- When we are going.
- What we like doing.
- **What we want them to do:**  
We want you to come if you can - drive, cook, put up tents, be a friend, enjoy yourself, join in, organise trips, take care of the finances, speak the language of the country we are going to (if abroad) etc. Use information from your Job Description.

**DON'T FORGET to tell people who to contact and when, make sure that there is someone to receive and respond to applicants' telephone calls/letters/e-mails etc.**

## Advertising for Volunteers

Once you have considered all of the above you need to decide how you are going to tell people that you need volunteers.

When drafting an advert or designing publicity material you should take the following into account:

- Is your message clear?
- Have you **emphasised** the **benefit(s)** for the **volunteer** - these must be truthful as in most cases they will be the reason(s) the person volunteers.
- Is your message engaging, will it keep the reader's/listener's/watcher's interest?
- Have you given clear instructions on how to respond to the advert and provided contact details?

### What methods are you using to advertise for volunteers?

Will your message reach everyone? (refer to Phab's Equal Opportunities Policy). The following is a list of ways in which you could advertise for volunteers, the list is not exhaustive, but does contain most of the major media and should contain some suggestions appropriate to your needs.

- Newspapers - Local, National and Freesheets.
- Local Volunteer Bureaux.
- Phab publications - Local and National.
- Specialist publications i.e. Disability Now!
- Radio - Local and National.
- Word of mouth.
- Television services - some independent stations have free slots for community groups to use e.g. "**Community Service Broadcasts**".
- Audio and/or video tape.
- Leaflets/Information sheets/posters located in suitable places e.g. Libraries, local shops, Doctors surgeries etc.

Below is a Sample Advert:

**Wanted – Volunteer Drivers**

**Can you drive a mini-bus?**

**Do you have a couple of free hours  
on a Thursday evening?**

Anytown Phab Club needs a mini-bus driver to enable 12 of our disabled and non-disabled members to get to our weekly meetings at Anytown Town Hall.

It's a great opportunity to meet new people and help in your local community.

Previous experience preferred. CRB checks will be carried out.

**Please contact John Smith on Anytown 1234 567**

### **What happens after the initial response to your advert?**

- Application form sent out - all new volunteers must complete the **Application Form** at the end of this section. (If however you require specific skills and need to know about them prior to interview you should attach an additional form).  
The Application forms serve several essential functions.
- They provide the necessary information for your records such as the volunteer's name, address and phone number. The volunteer may also include information pertaining to their health and contact details for their doctor.
- They provide a signed document, which outlines the duties the volunteer has agreed to participate in, and may also define their time involvement.
- They give a volunteer's written consent for further specified checks such as references and Criminal Records Bureau.
- Interview (formal or informal) – refer to interview process as outlined further on in this section.
- Who is responsible for selection?
- Is any induction training planned?

## **Create a shortlist**

- Have you followed up all the responses to advise whether the applicant has obtained an interview or not? Although many companies no longer send letters to those they do not wish to interview, volunteer enthusiasm is a valuable commodity and by not replying you may lose future supporters or those who you may wish to recruit for a different project.
- Start vetting and screening process if appropriate - for insurance purposes you are required to vet all volunteers who will be working either with children, anyone under the age of 18, or vulnerable adults.
- Carry out interviews
- Take up references/CRB checks..

# Interview Process

## Five steps to good interviewing

### 1. Preparation

- Allow time for the interview.
- Allow time for follow-up between interviews - remember you may need to write up any notes, make phone calls, take nature breaks etc.
- Find a suitable place for the interview - the environment during an interview is very important. You should consider the level of privacy, comfort, the seating plan, accessibility (refer to the Access Audit Checklist in Section 4 **Setting up a Phab Club**), etc.
- Plan the interview, taking into consideration the following points:
  1. What is it for?
  2. What do you need to know?
  3. What does the interviewee need to know about you?
  4. Will the interview be selective, or is it more about information exchange and choosing from a range of opportunities?
  5. If the interview is for a particular job, do you have a clear job description in mind or on paper? - See **Sample Job Descriptions**.
  6. Read through all the submitted Application Forms and analyse the job description in order to formulate questions.
  7. Plan those questions you will ask in order to get all the information you need.
  8. Have relevant information, leaflets etc, to hand and properly organised before interview.

### 2. Introduction to the interview

- Explain who you are, what the organisation is about and what the interview is for.
- Explain how long the interview is likely to last and what will happen after it.

### 3. Asking Questions

Consider the type of questions you are going to ask during an interview carefully, depending on your choice of question you can have a strong effect on the direction in which it progresses.

- **Closed Questions**

Closed questions tend to produce short, factual answers, usually a "Yes" or "No". Very often an interview will start with a series of closed questions to get things going and to record basic details about the interviewee. Closed questions can also be used to slow down a talkative interviewee. Used too often, however, they can make an interview seem like an interrogation.

e.g.       Where do you live?  
              What is your name?  
              How old are you?  
              Did you come by car today?  
              Do you want some tea?

- **Open Questions**

Open questions usually bring out longer answers and give the interviewee a chance to open up and tell the interviewer more about him/herself. The answers to open questions can give important clues to the motivation, attitudes, knowledge and experience of the interviewee. These should be used to get the other person talking. Open questions are usually of the **WH**- type.

e.g.

**WHat**     - happened?  
              - did it involve?  
              - did you do?

**WHy**       - did that happen?  
              - did you do that?

**WHen**     - have you worked with children/disabled people before?  
              - did it happen?

**HoW**       - did you organise the party?  
              - did you plan the staff rota?

**WHere**    - do you see yourself in 5 years time?  
              - would you like this job to lead to?

**WHo**       - was involved?  
              - do you think should be involved in the selection process?

- **Either-Or questions**

These questions give the respondents a choice of answers and can therefore be quite a useful way of gaining information, but be aware that this type of question may bias the answer given.

e.g. Are you better at talking or listening?  
Do you prefer tea or coffee?

- **Hypothetical questions**

These are used to ask interviewees to imagine what would happen if a set of conditions were true or, what would they do if certain conditions were met. They are asked to imagine a situation and then to give a theoretical answer. These have to be used with care and are no substitute for evidence of actual behaviour in the past.

e.g. What would you do, if .....?  
How would you feel, if .....?

- **Multiple questions**

These are a collection of questions which are all asked together. It can confuse interviewees and may mean that they only answer one part of the question.

e.g. What do you enjoy most about your work, and why, and can you give an example of this?

- **Leading questions**

This type of question implies the answer that the interviewer would like to receive and may not produce very accurate or honest responses from the interviewee, it may also make them feel very uncomfortable.

e.g. You'd rather work with computers, wouldn't you?  
You'd like a drink, wouldn't you?

- **Comparative questions**

These questions ask interviewees to rate items/activities/priorities etc. Sometimes these questions will refer to areas previously covered, but they do not necessarily need to.

e.g. You've told me about the key duties in your current position - please rate them in order of importance for me.  
Please rate the following volunteer characteristics in order of importance.

#### 4. Try to avoid

- Loaded or leading questions.
- Multiple or complicated questions.
- Ambiguous questions.
- Excessive reaction to certain answers.
- A preoccupation with only one topic.
- Making assumptions.
- Suspicions based only on appearances.
- Being argumentative.

Remember an interview is not an interrogation, nor is it a counselling session. It is an information finding exercise.

#### 5. Listening and Observing

- Perhaps the most important, and often under-developed, skills.
- Listening is an active process. It requires concentration and work.
- The listener should be open-minded and aware of what is being said.

#### Interview Tips

##### DO:

- Give the interviewee the opportunity to express himself or herself.
- Ask clear questions.
- Maintain eye contact, positive body language, a friendly tone of voice, etc.
- Show an interest in the interviewee.
- Consider seating, it is probably better to be informal for a voluntary position.
- Be courteous.
- Ensure there will not be any interruptions.
- Use drawing-out skills.
- Welcome the interviewee.
- Be concise when asking and answering questions.
- Give good clear information.
- Use a relaxed accessible venue.
- Give information about what will happen next.
- Give notice of the interview date in good time.
- Give your interviewee opportunity to ask questions.
- Give constructive feedback to unsuccessful applicants.
- Try and make the interviewee relaxed.
- Prepare your questions **before** the interview.

**DO NOT:**

- Rely on hypothetical questions.
- Put the interviewee on the spot.
- 'Play games' with the interviewee.
- Make assumptions about the interviewee's abilities.

Ask the interviewee suitable questions to establish why they are interested in volunteering with Phab. You might find it helpful to use the following checklist:

- To explore feelings about working with certain groups of people
- To facilitate change
- "I can do that"
- Community needs
- Contact for information and influence
- Access to people/children/resources
- Skill-sharing
- Personal/family history of volunteering
- To feel good about themselves
- Networking
- CV credibility
- Stepping stone

Ask the interviewee suitable questions to establish their core values. It may be useful to review this form after receiving the applicant's references:

- Reliability
- Non-discriminatory attitude
- Non-judgemental
- Personal developmental skills (training)
- Listening skills
- Communication skills
- Self-motivation
- Initiative
- Confidentiality
- Willingness to learn
- Ability to motivate others
- Flexibility
- Approachability
- Confidence
- Enthusiasm
- Willingness to join in
- Enabler



## VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM

Phab Club/Project .....

Address .....

.....

Telephone No .....

Meeting day(s)/time(s) .....

Leader/Chair .....

Address .....

Telephone No .....

## VOLUNTEER DETAILS

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Telephone No .....

Date of Birth.....Occupation .....

Volunteer Role Applied for/in which presently engaged .....

Accepted/Expected/Agreed Duties.....

Do you have any specific requirements to carry out these duties?.....

Referees (who must be over 18, have known you for at least two years and must not be related to you)

Name .....	Name .....
Address.....	Address.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
Tel No .....	Tel No .....
Occupation .....	Occupation.....

You must ensure your referees are happy to supply a reference. Phab will check references in addition to carrying out a Criminal Bureau Records check.

**Phab MISSION STATEMENT:** To promote and encourage opportunities where disabled and non-disabled people share experiences on an equal basis, thereby working towards an inclusive society.

I have seen and agree to implement Phab's Child/Vulnerable Adult Protection and Equal Opportunities Policies (see Phab pack). I confirm the information given above is correct, I accept the duties and give permission for all checks to be undertaken.

Signed (Volunteer) ..... Signed (Leader/Chair).....

Dated..... Dated.....



## Letter to Referee

### Confidential

Date:

Dear

Your name has been given by..... as a referee as  
they wish to be a volunteer at.....

Their duties would include.....  
.....

This means that ..... will be working with vulnerable  
children and/or adults.

Would you please, therefore, give us your considered opinion as to whether  
..... is suitable for this role.

Yours sincerely

Club Leader/Secretary

**Phab exists to promote and encourage disabled and non-disabled  
people to come together on equal terms to achieve inclusion within  
the wider community**



## Volunteer Reference Form Confidential

Name of person applying for volunteer role: \_\_\_\_\_

Role applied for: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to the above-named: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you known them? \_\_\_\_\_

In what capacity do you know them? \_\_\_\_\_

To your knowledge have they worked with children or vulnerable adults in the past? If yes, please give details (continue on a separate sheet if needed):

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Do you have any reservations about them acting in this role? If yes, please give your reasons (please continue on a separate sheet if needed):

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General Comments:

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Please complete the following details about yourself:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please return completed form to: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Volunteer Appraisal

Phab would not be able to run without the support and help of thousands of volunteers throughout the country. To show how valuable a volunteer's contribution is to your club/project and give the volunteer an opportunity to discuss their workload and progress in a formal and unbiased setting, you should hold regular appraisals. Appraisals should be held annually, or at six monthly intervals, and provide both the volunteer and the appraiser the opportunity to celebrate the volunteer's achievements and look at even better ways that they can work together in the future.

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The Appraisal could look at the areas outlined below:

### Experience

- Which areas of work have you been involved in during the last year/six months?
- What have you particularly enjoyed?
- What have you not enjoyed doing?
- Have you done anything new this year/over the last six months?

### Learning

- Do you think you have learnt anything from your experiences in the last year/six months?
- Has anything happened since your last appraisal that you are unsure of or do not understand?

### Change

- If you could change any of your actions over the last year/six months what would you do differently?
- Is there anything that would have made your experiences as a volunteer better?

### Needs

- What would you need to make these changes?
- What would you like to learn?
- Would you like any training?

### Where

- Where can you get this information/training?
- Where can we find you/you find the support you need?

### Goals for next 12 months

#### This appraisal ought to include:

- Update of job description if appropriate.
- Record of achievement sheets.
- Record of training completed.