Volunteer Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Maritime Academy Trust (the **Trust**) actively encourages the appropriate use of voluntary workers. The Trust recognises the considerable benefits that volunteers can bring and the links that they make between academies, the Trust and the local community.

1.2 A volunteer is a person who gives freely of their time, skills and experience without expectation of financial reward. Volunteering can take many forms; some tasks can require particular skills whereas others require no specific skills. Volunteering may be a one-off activity, for a limited time to complete a particular activity or project, or carried out on a frequent basis.

2. Status

2.1 A volunteer is not an employee and will not have a contract of employment with the Trust or benefit from any of the Trust's terms and conditions of employment.

2.2 Individual academies will agree a role with the volunteer and there will be an expectation that the volunteer will meet the requirements of the role.

2.3 The volunteer is free to refuse to fulfill the role and the academy is not bound to provide the opportunity. It is expected that both the academy or Trust and the volunteer will provide as much notice as possible if unable to meet these expectations.

2.4 Volunteers will not be used as a substitute for paid employees.

3. Occasional Volunteers

3.1 Some activities may involve volunteers on a one-off, short-term basis. If the duration of a volunteering opportunity is one day or less and not likely to recur, the recruitment process detailed in paragraphs 4 – 6 will not apply.

4. Recruitment

4.1 Individuals wishing to be considered for a position as a regular volunteer are required to complete a volunteer application form.

4.2 If there is a suitable volunteering opportunity an interview should be arranged to ascertain the individual's suitability.

4.3 The prospective volunteer will be required to undertake a number of checks prior to commencement of the voluntary position.

5. Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Checks

5.1 Volunteers who are unsupervised and are undertaking 'regulated activity' will require an enhanced DBS and Barred List check. The definition of 'regulated activity' includes where individuals:

(a) are responsible, on a regular basis in a school, academy or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or

(b) carry out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in an academy or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or

(c) engage in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

5.2 Volunteers who are undertaking the above activities but who are supervised will not be

deemed to be undertaking ‘regulated activity’. Supervision is defined as:

(a) supervision by a person who is in regulated activity;
(b) the supervision must be regular and day to day; and
(c) the supervision must be “reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children”.

5.3 Volunteers who are not undertaking regulated activity may not be subject to a Barred List check. An academy will be required to undertake a risk assessment to determine whether an enhanced DBS is required. The following should be considered:

(a) the nature of the work with children;
(b) what the establishment knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers; (c) whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on suitability;
(d) whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check.

Details of the risk assessment must be recorded and retained.

6. References

6.1 Two references will be required for volunteers. References can be accepted from the following:

(a) employers or former employers, colleagues and ex-colleagues;
(b) other professionals, to include social workers, probation officers, solicitors, tutors, or religious leaders; or
(c) personal friends, but not partner.

7. Other Checks

7.1 Volunteers will be subject to the same requirements in respect of the Childcare Disqualification Regulations as employees.

7.2 A ‘right to work’ check must be undertaken and recorded for volunteers.

8. Reasonable Adjustments

8.1 As part of the application process potential volunteers will be asked if they have a disability or medical condition for which they may require additional support.

8.2 In the event that a condition is disclosed it may be appropriate to arrange a meeting to ensure the individual's fitness to undertake the role, arrange a risk assessment and ascertain if any reasonable support or adjustments can be facilitated. There is no legal obligation on the Trust or its schools to implement ‘reasonable adjustment’ for volunteers.

9. Health, Safety and Insurance

9.1 The Trust has responsibility for the health and safety of volunteers. An academy will provide the volunteer with appropriate health and safety training and in turn volunteers are expected to comply with health and safety policies and procedures.

9.2 The Trust will ensure that appropriate insurance is in place in respect of personal injury. The Trust also holds public liability insurance.

10. Supervision & Training

10.1 All volunteers will have a designated supervisor who will provide advice and support as required. The supervisor will maintain regular contact with the volunteer.

10.2 Volunteers may be provided with any in-house training appropriate to their volunteering role.

11. Raising Concerns

11.1 If a volunteer has any problems in respect of an employee or a pupil they should raise the issue immediately with their supervisor who will respond in a timely manner in line with Trust policies.

11.2 In the event that a volunteer wishes to raise a formal complaint they may do so in line with the process detailed in the Trust complaints procedure.

12. Confidentiality

12.1 Volunteers will be required to sign a Data Confidentiality Agreement which will set out the expectations regarding the disclosure of confidential information regarding the Trust, its employees and pupils.

13. Volunteer Agreement

13.1 When an offer has been made of a volunteering opportunity the volunteer will be asked to enter into a volunteering agreement with the Trust/Academy. The agreement will confirm the following:

(a) the volunteer's role;
(b) expectations in terms of conduct;
(c) supervision arrangements;
(d) any training that the volunteer is expected to undertake;
(e) health & safety requirements;
(f) insurance cover that will be provided; and
(g) the process for terminating the arrangement.

14. Expenses

14.1 Volunteers are not eligible to receive expenses.

15. Policies & Procedures

15.1 Volunteers are expected to comply with all statutory regulations, including child protection, health and safety, anti-discrimination and data protection. Volunteers will also be expected to comply with the Trust's policy on Equal Opportunities.

15.2 The supervisor will ensure that the volunteer has been provided with any policies and procedures appropriate to the volunteering role.

16. Ending the Arrangement

16.1 Either party can end the arrangement at any time without any requirement to provide a specified period of notice. However, it is expected that appropriate notice is provided, along with reasoning, for ending the placement.

17. Records

17.1 Copies of all documents in respect of the volunteering arrangement, to include the application form, volunteer agreement and record of checks will be maintained appropriately in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018.