



Unity without Uniformity - Diversity without Division

Unity in Diversity (Swansea 2015)

Volunteer Handbook

Website: www.uidswansea.wordpress.com

Twitter: @uidswansea

Contact: unityswansea@gmail.com

Welcome to Unity in Diversity

Thank you for your interest in joining UiD. We hope you will enjoy your time with us and will quickly feel a valued member of the group.

We are a drop-in centre opening twice a week for asylum seekers and refugees on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4.00pm to 8.00pm. We offer friendship, food, English lessons and a welcoming, peaceful place to be. We also run a football team which practices on Sundays.

The group rose like a phoenix from the ashes of the Cyrenians meltdown in February 2015. We suddenly found ourselves with nowhere to meet and with no paid workers. We quickly found a new home at Carmarthen Road U.R. Church and set ourselves up officially as a small association with trustees, a constitution and bank account. The group is run entirely by volunteers and we welcome new people who share our vision and commitment.

Volunteer Opportunities

Tuesday and Thursdays: 4.00pm to 8.00pm.

Befriending, kitchen duties, English teaching, teaching other skills including I.T. skills, general clearing and tidying up.

Football practice. Sunday afternoons.

(See "Unity in Diversity FC" Facebook page for updated info)

Helping organise practices. Befriending, taking part in practices.

Other opportunities

Fundraising, helping with admin tasks, organising events and liaising with other groups. Bringing your own skills to the group and devising/starting new activities.

Becoming a volunteer

Please come and participate for two or three weeks. If you then decide you wish to become a dedicated team member/volunteer you will need to fill in the “Application for volunteering” form. One of our team will then have a chat with you and together we will agree your role and commitment. The agreement will include our commitment to you and yours to us. It is an important part of the role that you keep your commitment. We are not looking for casual volunteers. We want people who will share our passion and work hard to make the group a better place.

We will ask you to familiarise yourself with our volunteer policy which is laid out in the rest of this booklet.

The UiD Volunteer Policy

Principles: UiD recognises the time, energy and skills offered by volunteers benefits the work with asylum seekers and refugees and the volunteers themselves.

UiD:

- Will ensure that volunteers are fully integrated into the team so they can contribute effectively to the work of UiD
- Recognise that volunteers require satisfying work and personal development and will help volunteers meet these needs as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.
- Will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers.
- Will provide a mentor/supervisor for each volunteer.
- Will endeavour to recruit volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure our volunteer opportunities are as accessible as possible.

Statement of Principles of good practice: In involving volunteers, we will be guided by the Welsh volunteering forum code of good practice.

Recruitment

We aim to recruit volunteers from all sections of the community in line with UiD’s Equal Opportunities Policy.

Volunteers may be asked for references for posts requiring particular experience or skills.

Volunteers are likely to come into contact with vulnerable people and/or be in a position of trust. They will therefore be asked to provide information about any criminal convictions via a self-disclosure form.

Volunteer Agreement

In engaging volunteers, we recognise the rights of volunteers.

We will:-

- Agree with volunteers their area of work and responsibilities.
- Provide a mentor who will provide regular support and give the opportunity for an ongoing dialogue about developing the agreed role, discussing concerns and giving guidance as needed.
- Encourage volunteers to be pro-active in helping improve the work of UiD.
- Keep minimum records including the registration form, attendance record, correspondence and any other relevant information in accordance with the UiD confidentiality policy.
- Ensure there is a clear and accessible system to enable volunteers to claim expenses.
- Take all reasonably practical steps to ensure health, safety and welfare of volunteers in accordance with the UiD Health and Safety Policy.
- Will provide references based on the work of the volunteer at UiD.

- We expect volunteers will:
 - Carry out their tasks in a manner which enhances the aims and values of UiD.
 - Work within agreed guidelines and remits
 - Be reliable, completing commitments wherever possible
 - Respect confidentiality and abide by the data protection policy
 - Attend training and support sessions where agreed.
 - Will work in accordance with UiD's Equal Opportunities Policy and will prevent discrimination on any grounds.
 - Will abide by the UiD code of behaviour.

Insurance: Volunteers will be covered by insurance while carrying out agreed duties.

Problems/Concerns: UiD has a policy to help deal with grievances or concerns that volunteers may have. In line with this policy we expect volunteers to discuss any concerns with their mentor or any trustee at any time.

If the problem is not resolved they will refer the matter to the Chair of the Trustees and ultimately to the Trustees Group.

Code of Behaviour

All adults involved in UiD activities should follow this code of behaviour.

All leaders and volunteers should:

- Treat everyone with respect.
- Act as a good role model of appropriate behaviour.

All adults involved with UiD must:

- Remember that their actions, remarks and gestures can be misinterpreted, no matter how well intentioned
- Ensure that at least one other person is within sight when working with young people.
- Provide access for participants to talk through any concerns they may have.
- Encourage participants to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.
- Recognise that caution is required when dealing with bullying, bereavement, abuse and other sensitive issues.
- Not have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.
- Not jump to conclusions about others.
- Not to trivialise harassment or child abuse issues.
- Not show favouritism.

Policies

These are documents which set out the manner in which we work, and often the reasons for doing things a chosen way. Some are legally required documents to ensure we are operating well, others are the standards we have chosen to work to and which we expect all volunteers to agree to.

Some Policies have 'boundaries' in them...clear things you, as a volunteer, can or cannot do. Others have guidance on behaviour and the standards we strive to reach in working as a team together and with others.

All volunteers are encouraged to chat about the practical aspects of following any /all of our policies so that they remain relevant and useful as well as give suggestions for other improvements and ideas of further projects.

Remember it is often the 'new person' who sees things with clear eyes and a different perspective—your input is both valued and vital for our continual high standards and desire for improvement!

You **will not** be asked to read **all** full policies BUT you will need to understand those that relate directly to the role you will hold, and all volunteers have to understand and agree to abide by the child protection policy and data protection policy as well as follow agreed safety protocols. ***Don't worry – we will give you any help you need to understand them.***

Before you start we will give you further information about:

- Child Protection Policies (including alcohol/drugs, weapons and contact policies)
- Data Protection Policy and Confidentiality
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Support & Evaluation of volunteer skills and roles
- Complaints & Disciplinary Procedures
- First aid & Accident / incident Policy
- Fire procedures
- Food Hygiene & Safety
- Manual Handling & Lifting
- Security of the Building and Property/Personal Property
- Being a team member at the project

Health & Safety Policy (+ risk assessment of your role)

- UiD will carry out a risk assessment of all voluntary roles.
- All volunteers will be given suitable training regarding any activities they are asked to do.
- Volunteers must not lift very heavy items even when trained in lifting unless by prior agreement
- Volunteers are covered by insurance BUT they are also responsible to say 'no' where asked to do an activity beyond their known capabilities.

Safeguarding

UiD will;

- Plan work to minimise situations where the possibility of abuse of vulnerable adults, young people or children may occur.
- Have policies and procedures on the management and supervision of all activities and provide training on the implementation of them.
- Give all volunteers clear roles and carry out the full recruitment procedure for all volunteers involved with children/vulnerable adults including essential References and Vetting & Barring.
- Use supervision and support as a means of protecting young people and children - no adult should be alone with one child at any time.
- Follow an established system whereby young people and children know they may talk with an independent person
- Implement and issue guidelines to all volunteers with children and young people on how to deal with abuse. Ensure training is available on the use of these guidelines.
- Follow the Home Office code of practice Safe from harm

Data Protection & Confidentiality Policies

UiD abides by data protection laws for any data we hold.

In addition we have policies covering confidential information which may be heard during the course of voluntary activities.

All volunteers will be taken through this policy and, if their role requires it, asked to read, checked for understanding, and be asked to sign agreement of the confidential nature of their role.

Breach of this policy leads to automatic exclusion.

Team Work

At UiD we delight to serve each other and while you volunteer with us we ask that you respect each person and treat them with courtesy, regardless of role, age, nationality, belief or whether they are a volunteer, staff member or someone from the community using the services provided.

Each of us brings a different perspective and attitude and we value diversity in community. If you have an issue working with any individual, we encourage you to share and work through with the person concerned and are happy to support you to do that. We have a robust 'anti-bullying' policy and personal support is always available if issues do arise. Any form of bullying will lead to exclusion from the group.

Team work is vital for us and we recognise there is an important difference between constructive criticism and being critical in a personal way. We value team trust and integrity and strongly discourage gossip, actively working to support people to work through differences, gain personal skills and enjoy the volunteering experience at UiD. Volunteers are asked to commit to and respect team work and individuals.

Training

We will offer specific training when a volunteer has been with us for a minimum of four weeks, shown clear commitment to the programme and would like to gain skills.

Training is voluntary - no-one 'has to' be trained however some roles are limited to those who have been trained for practical or legal reasons.

Where a volunteer has specific needs (soft skills, basic skills or other) which would hinder the training we will do all we can to address the needs and offer support if the volunteer wishes to participate in training. We are always happy to chat through any issues, training needs or support required and will do what is possible to provide support.

Point of Contact for Unity in Diversity:

Wayne Yare, Secretary. Email: wayneyare@gmail.com Tel.07944 523256

Rosie Buxton, Chairperson. Email: rosie@urcwales.org.uk Tel: 01792 875939