Volunteering Leave Policy

1. Introduction

Birkbeck is proud of its commitment to widening access and engagement and recognises the importance that staff volunteering can have to help further these aims. Birkbeck employees play an important role in contributing to the local community and beyond. The College seeks to support employees who wish to undertake volunteering either within the community or with a registered charity. The community group or registered charity must be consistent with the ethos and values of the College.

This policy is separate and in addition to the Public Duties Policy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees.

3. Principles

Volunteering has a number of benefits such as contributing to an individual’s wellbeing, enhancing the skills and experience of a team, facilitating knowledge exchange and embedding an organisation’s corporate and social responsibility.

To support this, employees will be entitled to one day’s paid volunteering leave per year, to undertake volunteering either within the community or with a registered charity. Paid volunteering leave will only apply on a day that the employee is due to work and will not be paid in addition. The volunteering leave year will run from October to September; days cannot be accrued nor carried over.

Employees must seek the approval of their leave date, from their line manager, well in advance. Staff volunteering leave will be at the discretion of the line manager and requests should take into account the operational needs of the College.

Examples of volunteering could include, but are not limited to:

- School support e.g. reading, career talk, school governor activities
- Community support e.g. conservation work
- Community access and engagement e.g. career workshops; Knowledge Exchange activities
- Volunteering at a registered charity

For other ideas on how and where to volunteer, please see below:
• Do it: [https://do-it.org/](https://do-it.org/)
• Volunteering Matters: [https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/](https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/)
• Reach Volunteering: [https://reachvolunteering.org.uk/](https://reachvolunteering.org.uk/)

The College occasionally organises its own ad-hoc volunteering schemes, for example to support its Knowledge Exchange agenda. Such activities should be recorded as volunteering leave but will be **in addition** to the day’s volunteering leave allowed under this policy.

### 4. Risk Assessments, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks and Insurance

Employees should ensure that where they are volunteering has undertaken appropriate risk assessments, DBS checks and has suitable insurance before they undertake the volunteering. The College will not be liable for such matters whilst the employee is on volunteering leave. Staff should ensure that their personal safety is paramount.

### 5. Recording and evaluation

Staff Volunteering should be recorded on Business World, subject to the limits within this policy. Volunteering leave taking place at another organisation should be logged under ‘Staff Volunteering Leave (external)’. Volunteering leave taking place within the College should be logged under ‘Staff Volunteering Leave (internal)’.

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<tr>
<th>Approval provided by:</th>
<th>HRSPC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date approved by Committee:</td>
<td>October 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Author and Job Title:</td>
<td>Natalie Pancheri (HR Project and Policy Lead)</td>
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<td>List of related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines:</td>
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- [Annual Leave Policy](#)
- [Public Duties Policy](#)