

Policy Ref:
HR20



Volunteer Policy

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Approved By	SMT
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SASP are committed to our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) which sets out our ambitions for advancing and celebrating diversity and inclusion at every level of our organisation.

This stamp indicates areas in our policies / procedures that focus on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion.

Policy Update Record (Version Control)		
Date	Author	Change(s)
20/07/2021		Original policy approved.
28/10/2024	Laura Carter	Minor wording change in introduction Change of wording to the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion statement Addition of section 13, professional boundaries
26/11/2024	SMT	Approved

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Introduction

Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership (SASP) is dedicated to increasing the health and happiness of residents in Somerset through physical activity and sport. SASP is a charitable trust and a member of the nation-wide network of 43 Active Partnership's, sharing a mission of transforming lives through sport and physical activity. Each Active Partnership is independent, governed by a Board of Trustees and funded through Sport England, and grant giving bodies, companies and individuals who share their mission.

Our vision is to "achieve healthier and happier communities in Somerset through physical activity". We inspire and enable positive life choices through sport and physical activity, and we do this by:

- Providing accessible opportunities locally for all ages and abilities, prioritising those who are least active.
- Addressing inequalities and removing barriers to physical activity and sport.
- Supporting clubs, communities, schools and the workforce to embrace physical activity.
- Bringing together organisations and partners to create positive change to enable active lives for all.

A volunteer is someone who contributes their time, skills and experience freely in the support of the delivery of services to the community. The purpose of this policy is to ensure we have a consistent approach to supporting volunteers within SASP.

SASP recognises the valuable contribution volunteers make to our organisation and the service it provides. SASP offers a wide variety of volunteering opportunities across numerous programmes for people with skills, experience or interests. These opportunities can be for short periods, but some can develop into enduring relationships between volunteers and SASP. Volunteers and employees will be treated with the same dignity and respect across the organisation; however, a volunteer is not an employee of SASP and there is no binding contractual relationship between volunteers and the organisation and volunteers are not a replacement or substitute for paid employees.

This policy applies to volunteers engaged in supporting the delivery of SASP services and sets out the terms governing their engagement and ongoing relationship with SASP, supported by individual volunteer agreements. This Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or before if needed, consultation with volunteers will be sought in the review process.

Recruitment

Volunteers will be recruited through a variety of different routes, but usually through one of two means:

1. A prospective volunteer may approach SASP to offer their time, skills, and experience e.g., to gain experience in working in a specific role or to complete a community aspect to an award
2. Alternatively, SASP may identify one or more volunteering opportunities and actively seek to recruit volunteers

In all cases the engagement of volunteers should adhere to safe recruitment principles, it will include:

- Completion of a registration form to include 2 references (employments or personal) and a self-declaration form if relevant
- Informal interview to discuss the voluntary role

- Completion of the SASP Volunteer Agreement
- Appropriate checks prior to engagement relevant to the role including references and criminal record

The Volunteer Agreement will set out the role and responsibilities of SASP and in return the expectations placed on volunteers as a representative of SASP. The Agreement is not to be seen as a Contract of Employment but acts as a safeguard for both parties. A DBS check will be made when relevant.

Volunteers must be at least 14 years of age. Before accepting a volunteer application from an U18, the consent of a parent or guardian must be obtained. Clear information regarding the activities involved must be provided to the parent or guardian and the volunteer. Volunteers who are U18 must not volunteer before 7am or after 7pm or for more than two hours on any school day or Sunday. Enhanced supervision is required, and robust safeguarding measures and risk assessments should be in place.

Induction

All volunteers will receive a 'volunteer induction' to welcome them to the organisation and their role. The purpose of the induction is to ensure that volunteers are suitably equipped with the information and skills needed to perform their role. Any induction will include the following:

- Volunteer role description (designed by the relevant staff member and included in the Volunteer Agreement)
- Organisation overview
- Volunteer Handbook
- This Volunteer Policy and copies of relevant policies as outlined in this policy
- Other information as appropriate to the volunteer role
- Any relevant training

Support and Training

Volunteers will be supported and supervised by a member of staff from SASP (either the Volunteering Project Officer or the Project Lead). The staff member will act as the volunteer's first point of contact to discuss any problems or issues that may arise throughout the volunteer's journey. The staff member will keep in regular contact with the volunteer to provide recognition as well as allowing the volunteer regular opportunities to discuss their role and personal development. Relevant training will be provided to the volunteer to ensure they are suitably prepared for the role they are undertaking; this will include the volunteer induction as well as training specific to the volunteer's role.

Health & Safety

SASP has a responsibility for the health and safety of volunteers. Volunteers have a duty to take care of themselves and others who might be affected by their actions. Volunteers should not act outside of their authorised area of work and should report all accidents to the SASP staff member acting as their first point of contact. Volunteers are to be made aware of the SASP Health & Safety Handbook and if a volunteer is involved in an accident, the procedures should be the same as that for an employee.

Safeguarding

Everybody has the right to be safe no matter who they are or what their circumstances. Safeguarding is about protecting children, young people and adults at risk from abuse or neglect.

SASP is committed to providing safe, enjoyable activities and sporting opportunities for young people and vulnerable adults. SASP have a moral and a legal obligation to ensure that highest possible standard of care for those children, young people and adults who use our service. SASP's [Safeguarding Policy](#) applies to all volunteering opportunities where the volunteer engages with children, young people and adults at risk. This will be covered in the initial induction and further training will be provided wherever appropriate.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

At SASP, we believe that when people feel respected and included, they can be more engaged, satisfied and motivated. Whilst we have more to do to advance equality, diversity and inclusion, we're investing time and resources to move our organisation forward. We are committed to building a diverse and inclusive organisation that represents and celebrates the different perspectives of our staff, our board, our partners and the communities we serve. For more information on our ambitions for equality, diversity and inclusion please look at our [website](#).



Insurance

All volunteers are covered by SASP's insurance policy whilst they are engaged in work as a volunteer on behalf of SASP. SASP cannot insure the volunteer for the use of their motor vehicle for volunteering activities. It is the volunteer's responsibility to inform their motor insurance company if they use their vehicle in the act of volunteering.

Expenses

SASP values volunteers and wants to ensure that there are no barriers to volunteer involvement. SASP endeavours to ensure that costs to the volunteer are negligible. Any out-of-pocket expenses will only be paid if this has been agreed in writing by SASP beforehand.

E-Safety

Volunteers must recognise their responsibilities, be aware of safeguarding issues and the risks of the use of social media. Volunteers must be aware of and agree to the terms of the SASP E Safety Policy outlined in the [Safeguarding Policy](#).

Clothing

If required, volunteers will be provided with appropriate clothing for the activity they are undertaking.

Confidentiality

Volunteers are likely to become aware of confidential information about SASP, its employees, customers and suppliers. Volunteers should not disclose this information or use it for their own or another's benefit without the consent of the party concerned. This does not prevent disclosure once the information is in the public domain (unless it has been made public because of the volunteer's breach of confidentiality) or where the law permits or requires disclosure.

Personal information about volunteers, such as name, contact details and records of volunteering for the organisation, must be stored in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (2018). Volunteers are not protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which covers whistle blowing as part of

employment law. Volunteers can use SASP's Whistleblowing Policy, if necessary, but they will not receive statutory protection or compensation as they are not SASP employees.

Problem-solving Procedure

The relationship between SASP and its volunteer workforce is entirely voluntary and does not imply any employment relationship. However, it is important that SASP is able to maintain its agreed standards of service to the clients who use it, and it is also important that volunteers should be able to make a valuable contribution to this service. It is also important that any problems and complaints are dealt with fairly, openly, and consistently. If a volunteer has a complaint about SASP, a member of staff, or another volunteer they should:

1. Initially explain their dissatisfaction with the SASP staff member acting as their first point of contact.
2. If that does not resolve the issue, then a meeting with the SASP staff member acting as their first point of contact will be convened (if the issue involves the SASP staff member acting as their first point of contact then the volunteer should request a meeting with their first point of contact's Line Manager).
3. If that does not resolve the issue, then a formal meeting with the CEO should follow.
4. Every effort will be made to try and resolve issues to the mutual satisfaction of SASP and the volunteer within 14 days of the complaint being raised.

If there is a complaint about a volunteer or concerns about their conduct or performance, it will be dealt with in the following way:

1. Initially, a meeting with the SASP staff member acting as their first point of contact who will explain the concerns.
2. If this does not resolve the concern, then a meeting with the CEO will be convened.
3. If the concern persists the volunteer will be advised that their services are no longer required.

At all stages in this process the volunteer may have a volunteer 'colleague' accompany them to any meeting where the problem is discussed. If the volunteer has behaved in a manner that may constitute gross misconduct, for example theft, bullying or violence, they will be asked to step down whilst the matter is investigated. A meeting will then be held with the volunteer, the SASP staff member acting as their first point of contact and the CEO where the volunteer will be able to put their case. Under consideration of all the available facts, if the complaint is upheld, the volunteer will be asked to leave. The volunteer has a right to be accompanied at any such meeting to discuss their alleged misconduct. If a volunteer's services are dispensed with on a matter of gross misconduct they have a right to appeal to the CEO and they will receive a written response within 14 days.

Professional Boundaries

We want volunteering to be an enjoyable and positive experience and know friendships are often forged, but it is important in your role as a SASP volunteer you do not assume any additional responsibility other than that relating to your role, and you do not take on any tasks that fall outside the remit of the programme. If you are asked to take on additional tasks or 'private arrangements' please do contact SASP to declare this, this is to ensure we are safeguarding you as a volunteer but to also clarify what tasks are happening outside of the programme and where the responsibility of SASP ends.