



Kent Union Volunteering: Volunteers Disciplinary Procedure Briefing

For the purpose of this document, volunteers refer to any student or staff volunteer known to Kent Union volunteering, and working within Kent Union Volunteering systems and structures.

As a volunteer with Kent Union, volunteers are required to be aware of the Volunteer Code of Conduct that outlines their rights and responsibilities while taking part in all Kent Union activities. In addition, all volunteers are bound by Kent Union's Comments and Complaints Procedure and Student Discipline Procedure, both of which are available on the Volunteering Web pages, by request from the Volunteering Co-ordinators or other members of Student Activities staff or Mandela Reception. As of September 2004 these procedures will also be available on line at www.kentunion.co.uk.

There are, however, occasions where it may be necessary for the Volunteering staff at Kent Union to issue sanctions against volunteers where general Kent Union procedures are not applicable or relevant. This procedure is outlined below. It should be noted that in any case where laws or sector guidelines have been breached, the issue will be handed over to the appropriate authority, and the Managing Director and Union President notified.

Kent Union Student Discipline Procedure

Behaviour that could warrant disciplinary proceedings by Kent Union include (this is not an exclusive or exhaustive list):

- Threats of or actual, physical or verbal abuse against staff, students, Sabbatical Officers or members of the public on Union premises.
- Damage to Union property.
- Contravening Kent Union and/or University policies and/or procedures.
- Any other conduct that may be deemed detrimental to the operation, reputation and/or organisation of Kent Union.

Volunteers who are subject to the above proceedings should consult the Kent Union Student Discipline Procedure for more information on appeals, sanctions and the Disciplinary Committee. Sabbatical and student Officers, the Kent Union Advice Centre and Course Tutors may also be able to provide support and information. Staff volunteers should seek advice and information from the appropriate official, such as a line manager or trade union representative.

Kent Union Volunteering Discipline Procedure

Behaviour that could warrant disciplinary proceedings by Kent Union Volunteering include (this is not an exclusive or exhaustive list):

- Breaking the Kent Union Volunteering Code of Conduct
- Contravening the rules, guidelines or other policies/procedures of the voluntary placement, agency or department.
- Threats of or actual physical abuse against Kent Union staff, staff or clients of voluntary organisations or members of the public.
- Damage to Kent Union property, or that of the voluntary placement(s).
- Claiming fraudulent expenses or theft from Kent Union or the voluntary placement.
- Any other conduct that may be deemed detrimental to the reputation, organisation or operation of Kent Union, Kent Union Volunteering or a voluntary placement.

Any volunteer who is subject to the above procedure may receive one or more of the sanctions listed below. The Director of Membership Services will hold confidential records of all volunteering disciplinary matters securely for two years.

Levels of Sanction

Period of Investigation: Volunteers will be temporarily removed from their voluntary placement should a complaint be made, for the duration of a brief investigation into the complaint. This investigation will take no more than five working days. During this period, the volunteer will be asked to submit in writing an account of the issue against which a complaint has been made. This investigation will be conducted by the Volunteering staff and will be reported to the Director of Membership Services. Once the investigation has been completed, the volunteer may either return to their placement, or chose to begin a different placement, or may be subject to greater sanctions (see below).

Level One: Volunteers who are found to have breached minor elements of the Kent Union Volunteering Procedures or placements guidelines may be given a formal written warning, outlining the breach and advising them of proper procedures. The volunteer will be required to sign the warning, acknowledging that they understand the reason for it and how to avoid such sanctions in the future.

Level Two: Volunteers who are found to have breached Kent Union Volunteering Procedures or those of their placement organisation may be asked to leave their placement. This will occur when volunteers receive their first valid complaint, and if the complaint is of a mild to moderate nature. It may be possible for the volunteer to begin a different placement with Kent Union volunteering once the nature of their complaint has been discussed, and once causes for the breach are understood.

Level Three: Volunteers who are found to have breached Kent Union Volunteering Procedures, or those of their placement organisation in a moderate or persistent manner will be asked to leave Kent Union Volunteering altogether for the safety of themselves and others. The Volunteer staff in conjunction with the Director of Membership Services will make this decision. Volunteers who fall into this category may also be subject to the Kent Union Student Discipline Procedure.

Level Four: Volunteers who are found to have breached Kent Union Volunteering Procedures, or those of their placement organisation in a serious and/or persistent manner will be subject to the Kent Union Discipline Procedure and potentially legal or other recourse. Kent Union Volunteering staff will pass such complaints onto the Director of Membership Services who will then deal with the complaint.

Volunteers should also note the following:

- Volunteers are subject to the policies and procedures of Kent Union and Kent Union Volunteering, but are also subject to the policies and procedures of the voluntary organisation with which they are working, and other legal and sector frameworks. Volunteers are advised to seek clarification on the Codes of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures of their placement organisation when they commence their volunteering.
- Advice, information and support on appealing or responding to complaints are available from many sources. In the first instance, the Volunteer Co-ordinators will advise the volunteer how to proceed, but the Director of Membership Services, student officers, other Kent Union staff and the Kent Union Advice Centre may also provide assistance.
- Any complaint about Kent Union Volunteering, its staff or its work should be made to the Director of Membership Services in the first instance. However, Sabbatical Officers or the Director of Central Services may also be approached.