

The information below is an overview of requirements and for further more detailed information, support and guidance plus associated templates etc please contact the BVA Group Development Team via telephone 01256 423816 or email admin@bvaction.org.uk (please quote "BVA Group Assistance" on title). www.bvaction.org.uk

A quick guide to preparing 'job descriptions' for volunteers. These are not jobs, so be careful to avoid using the language of employment!

You should try to provide written outlines or descriptions of volunteer roles. They should be consistent across your organisation. You must ensure the role descriptions comply with any volunteer policy you have. **These are crucial to make sure staff and volunteers understand the roles.**

Written descriptions also:

- give more information to the volunteer than is possible at an interview
- allow you to show where the volunteer's contribution fits in to the organisation
- offer a list of tasks so the volunteer can compare these with their skills and expectations
- provide a basis for measuring activity levels and performance
- describes the desired outcome of the role
- help others understand how the role fits in with their own.

What to include in volunteer role descriptions

A role description should include the following:

- title of role
- objective(s) of role
- a broad outline of tasks and activities to be undertaken
- targets or measurements of performance.

You could also include:

- who the volunteer reports to
- the location of the role and when the volunteering will take place
- how the role fits in with the work of the organisation
- standards of behaviour and dress (if appropriate)
- skills and qualifications – both essential and desirable
- necessary personal qualities (if appropriate).

Defining the volunteer's position within the organisation

Try to give volunteers straightforward boundaries and structures with clear lines of reporting. Volunteers need to understand their position in the organisation. Staff who supervise volunteers should be aware of any special requirements the volunteers have. If you pay attention to these details it will benefit your staff as well as the volunteers.

Legal issues with volunteer role descriptions

Volunteer role descriptions can look a lot like job descriptions. They are descriptions of tasks to be undertaken, but for unpaid roles. However, the role description should only ever describe the expectations of a role.

You must be careful not to imply a volunteer is under contract to perform specific tasks. If it appears that a volunteer is being employed by your organisation, they may be eligible for full employment rights. You could also find yourself unintentionally in breach of a number of employment regulations.

Examples

Some good examples of volunteer role descriptions are [available via CVS Cheshire East](#) and include Administration, Befriender, Book keeper, Fundraiser, PR and Marketing, Receptionist and Treasurer.