
ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ENGLAND-

VOLUNTEERING POLICY (OCTOBER 2020)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers and is relevant, un-waged staff and volunteers within The Islamic Centre of England (“The Charity”). It aims to create a common understanding and to clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure the highest standards are maintained in relation to the management of volunteers.

2. OUR COMMITMENTS

2.1 We recognise volunteers as an integral part of The Charity. Their contribution supports our mission and strategic aims. We aim to encourage and support volunteer involvement to ensure that volunteering benefits The Charity, its projects and the volunteers themselves.

2.2 We are committed to offering a flexible range of opportunities and to encouraging a diversity of people to volunteer with us, including those from under-represented groups such as youth, people with a disability, older people and people from minority communities.

2.3 We recognise that there are costs associated with volunteer involvement and will seek to ensure adequate resources are available for the development and support of volunteering.

2.4 We recognise that people have a right to participate in the life of their communities through volunteering and can contribute in many ways. We recognise our responsibility to organise volunteering efficiently and sensitively so that the valuable gift of the volunteer's time is best used to the mutual advantage of all concerned.

3. *WHO IS A VOLUNTEER?*

3.1 Volunteers are individuals who undertake activity on behalf of The Charity, unpaid and out of their own free choice for any activity which:

- Is undertaken freely, by choice;
- Is undertaken to be of public/community benefit; and
- Is not undertaken for financial gain.

3.2 Work experience placements and internships are not the same as volunteering. Trustees are volunteers with responsibility for governance of the organisation.

3.3 Volunteers may be involved on a one-off, short term or on a longer term, regular basis. They may be involved:

- In the direct delivery of our projects;
- On our Board of Trustees or in our offices;
- In community engagement to raise awareness of our projects and objectives; or
- In one off events and promotional activities.

3.4 Volunteers are valued for

- Bringing additional skills and new perspectives to The Charity;
- Enabling us to be more responsive and flexible in our approach;
- Championing our cause within the wider community; and
- Enhancing the quality of our work and the projects we deliver.

4. *ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES*

4.1 The Trustees have the responsibility for the development and co-ordination of voluntary activity within The Charity, including volunteering policies and procedures and the welfare of volunteers.

4.2 The volunteer role is based on trust and mutual understanding. There is no enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, for the volunteer to attend or to undertake particular tasks or for The Charity to provide continuing opportunities for voluntary involvement, provision of training or benefits.

4.3 However, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability. Reciprocal expectations are acknowledged – both of what The Charity expects of volunteers and what volunteers can expect of The Charity.

4.4 The Charity expects volunteers:

- To be reliable and honest;
- To uphold our values and comply with our policies;
- To contribute positively to our objectives and avoid bringing us into disrepute; and
- To carry out tasks within the agreed guidelines.

4.5 Volunteers can expect:

- To have clear information about what is and is not expected of them;
- To receive adequate support and training;
- To be treated with respect and in a non-discriminatory manner;
- To receive out of pocket expenses;
- To have opportunities for personal development;
- To be recognised and appreciated;
- To be able to say ‘no’ to anything they consider unrealistic or unreasonable; and
- To know what to do if something goes wrong.

5. *RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION*

5.1 Equal opportunities principles will be adhered to in recruiting volunteers.

Opportunities will be widely promoted so as to attract interest from different sectors of the community. Positive action to target recruitment may be used where appropriate.

5.2 Information will be made available to those enquiring about volunteering, including written role descriptions which set out the nature and purpose of the volunteering role, key tasks, skills required and benefits. A risk assessment will be undertaken on all volunteer roles.

5.3 Recruitment will usually involve an informal interview, application form and the taking of references; the process will be defined and consistent for any given role - for example the recruitment process for trustees, regular volunteers and for volunteers for one-off events will be tailored in each case and may differ from one another.

5.4 Where applicants are not able to be placed in their preferred role, they will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss any alternative volunteering roles that may be available.

6. *INDUCTION AND TRAINING*

6.1 Volunteers will be given induction and training appropriate to the specific tasks to be undertaken.

7. *SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION*

7.1 Volunteers will be offered support and supervision as appropriate and this is discussed during induction.

7.2 Arrangements may vary according to the volunteer and the role undertaken, and may include telephone support, group meetings or one-to-one reviews.

8. *RECOGNITION*

8.1 Volunteers will be given the opportunity, where relevant, to share their views and opinions with Trustees, at meetings.

8.2 Formal recognition of the contribution of volunteers is expressed through annual reports, website articles and social media.

9. *DEALING WITH PROBLEMS*

9.1 The Charity aims to treat all volunteers fairly, objectively and consistently. We seek to ensure that volunteers' views are heard, noted and given full consideration.

9.2 We will attempt to deal with any problems informally and at the earliest opportunity. All volunteers will have a named person to whom they can turn in the case of any difficulty. Where informal resolution is not possible, the matter will be referred to the Trustees.

9.3 Volunteers will be made aware of our Complaints Policy and how to use it. They will also be made aware of how inappropriate behaviour by volunteers will be addressed by The Charity.

10. *IMPROPER BEHAVIOUR AND CONDUCT*

- 10.1 The Charity understands and fully appreciates that volunteers are an important and integral part of the work we do. It praises such volunteers and understands their commitment towards shared objectives, more so when they are dedicating their own time free of charge. However, this does not deter away from the fact that The Charity strives to provide a congenial and amiable environment for all which is free from physical, psychological, written, or verbal intimidation / harassment. Any individual who is or has been culpable of acting in this manner will be subject to our formal disciplinary process which may lead to dismissal. The Charity takes a very strict and no-nonsense approach in dealing with any and all matters pertaining to intimidation and harassment whether physical or verbal.
- 10.2 Everyone is therefore under a strict duty to report any matter which may be deemed to be intimidation or harassment and should there be a question mark concerning the veracity of a possible breach, one should err on the side of caution and report such matters to the Trustees immediately.
- 10.3 All such complaints and reports should be addressed to the Trustees either by writing (preferably) or orally by speaking to one of the Trustees.
- 10.4 Further, it be noted that The Charity does not permit nor does it endorse the solicitation or distribution of any material on its premises or other venues associated with the work of The Charity unless and until such has been authorised by the Trustees in writing. The Charity shall not be liable nor shall it be responsible for the solicitation or distribution of such material where it has no knowledge of its existence and would, so soon as it becomes aware of it, report such matters to the police, and other relevant bodies.
- 10.5 Anyone associated with The Charity must treat others with respect, and must hold the highest levels of honesty and integrity in their interactions with others and a defiance of this will not be tolerated.
- 10.6 Improper behaviour and conduct comprises of a whole plethora of physical, written, or verbal behaviour. This includes, but is not limited to:
- i. Physical abuse;
 - ii. Mental abuse;
 - iii. Assault;
 - iv. Improper, abusive, profane, or rude behaviour;
 - v. Racial abuse which includes racial insults;
 - vi. Slurs corresponding to a person's ethnic origin or composition;
 - vii. Unwelcome sexual advances, insinuations, jokes, or comments;
 - viii. Displaying offensive or un-Islamic materials;
 - ix. Physical damage to any property / fixtures and fittings of The Charity, its neighbours, associates, and others.
- 10.7 Improper behaviour and conduct can be due to a single incident or a number of incidents, whether related to other incidents or not.

10.8 Any and all allegations of improper behaviour and conduct will be treated with the highest level of seriousness, and must be reported to the Trustees as soon as practicable. The trustees will cause proper inquiries of, and investigation into all matters complained of and will then advise as to the most appropriate cause of action against the accused.

11. EXPENSES

11.1 Volunteers will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim.

12. MOVING ON

12.1 When volunteers move on from volunteering with us, they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience by way of an exit meeting.

12.2 Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options and those who have remained with The Charity for at least 3 months will have the right to request a reference.

BY the order of the Trustees.

**The Islamic Centre of England,
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APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
AT THE MEETING HELD ON