

Volunteering Policy

People Directorate

Policy number: VOL 1

Issue number: 001

Issued by: Volunteering Team

Date issued: January 2021

Date last reviewed: February 2025

Review date: February 2027



**Because no one
should face death
or grief alone**

Contents

1.	Equity Statement.....	3
2.	Introduction	3
3.	General Principles	3
	3.1 Our Commitment to Volunteering	3
	3.2 Volunteer Guidelines.....	3
	3.3 Volunteer recruitment and selection	4
	3.4 Interviews and taster sessions.....	4
	3.5 References.....	5
	3.6 Role profiles.....	5
	3.7 Induction, training and development	5
	3.8 Support for Volunteers.....	5
	3.9 Reward and appreciation	5
	3.10 Complaints and Concerns.....	6
	3.11 Moving on	6
	3.12 Equity and inclusion	7
	3.14 Safeguarding young people and adults	7
	3.15 Expenses.....	7
	3.16 Health and Safety	8
	3.17 Insurance	8
	3.18 Data protection and confidentiality	8
	3.19 Volunteer voice	8
3	Eligibility	9
4	Useful Links	9

1. Equity Statement

Sue Ryder designs and implements policies, procedures and ways of working that meet the diverse needs of our clients, service users and employees. We ensure that our policies don't discriminate and consider the unique needs of certain identities and communities. This document has been reviewed to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment on the protected characteristics of their age, disability, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity. We consider the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 whilst going above and beyond to protect people who aren't protected in the act, for example, non-binary people.

2. Introduction

Volunteers are a fundamental part of our workforce at Sue Ryder. This policy outlines our principles for recruiting, inducting, and appointing volunteers, ensuring fair treatment and clear expectations for both volunteers and the organisation.

3. General Principles

3.1 Our Commitment to Volunteering

Our ambition is for every volunteer to feel valued, respected, and proud to be part of the Sue Ryder team. We are committed to creating a volunteering experience that is rewarding, inclusive, and supportive. We recognise the invaluable contributions volunteers make to our work and will invest time and resources in developing opportunities that benefit both the charity and our volunteers. We are dedicated to making sure that volunteers' voices are heard and that their opinions are valued.

3.2 Volunteer Guidelines

What volunteers can expect from us. We will:

- Provide the training volunteers need for their role and offer opportunities for them to grow and develop their skills.
- Make sure volunteers feel appreciated and celebrate their achievements.
- Provide regular support in a way that suits them.
- Ask for volunteers' feedback and create opportunities for them to help shape our future.
- Resolve any concerns volunteers have promptly, fairly and compassionately.
- Find a role that fits the volunteer's skills and interests, one that they will enjoy while helping the charity reach its goals.

Volunteers will:

- Make sure they understand and maintain the boundaries of their role.
- Respect the confidentiality of people in our care and their colleagues.
- Act as an ambassador for Sue Ryder, connecting positively with everyone they encounter in their role.
- Carry out any training that is needed in their role.
- Ask their manager if they are unsure of something or need additional support or advice.

We both will:

- Embrace diversity and prioritise inclusivity.
- Be kind, respectful, and supportive.
- Demonstrate Sue Ryder's values and behaviours in everything we do.
- Make sure that data is stored and handled safely and securely.
- Take steps to make sure all our volunteers and patients are safe.
- Follow Sue Ryder's policies and procedures.

3.3 Volunteer recruitment and selection

Sue Ryder welcomes diverse volunteers and supports an accessible recruitment process, matching volunteers to suitable roles through careful selection and training. Volunteers can apply using a printed or online application form. They can also apply through partnership or placement schemes with other organisations. Volunteer placements depend on the needs of local teams at that time.

Volunteers must be at least 18 years old, though we accept 16-year-olds in a small selection of healthcare and fundraising team roles. For details, please see our Involving Young Volunteers policy or contact your local Volunteer Coordinator.

Application forms and related documents are available to all staff on the Volunteer section of Rydernet.

We may need to consider the digital footprint, media profile, or social media presence of prospective volunteers and whether there is anything in the public domain which could, by association, indirectly or directly damage the reputation of Sue Ryder. This may lead to Sue Ryder declining the person's offer to volunteer with us.

3.4 Interviews and taster sessions

After a successful application, potential volunteers will be invited to a casual interview or a 'taster session' to see if they enjoy the experience. If a role doesn't feel right for them, we will

help them find other options within Sue Ryder or point them to other organisations that can help them find volunteering opportunities.

3.5 References

Some of our Volunteer roles require references. Volunteers in those roles will need to give the names of two people who can provide references for them.

In exceptional circumstances, we can make exceptions for people without referees. In those cases, we will put safeguarding measures in place such as more regular one-to-ones and a period of shadowing an experienced volunteer before working alone. Agencies like Probation Services, Prison Services, and other placement providers can also serve as referees.

3.6 Role profiles

All volunteers will have a role profile which has been signed off by the national Volunteering Team. Role profiles will clearly describe the tasks volunteers will carry out so that both staff and volunteers understand the scope and boundaries of the role.

3.7 Induction, training and development

All new volunteers will be welcomed warmly. They will be introduced to members of their team and receive a local induction that leaves them feeling confident about their role.

To ensure the safety of our volunteers, staff, patients, and customers we require all volunteers to complete training when they start and, in some cases, refresher training each year. Volunteers will have free access to various online materials and e-learning programs that will help them feel confident in their roles. They are encouraged to learn new skills and take on different roles if they wish.

3.8 Support for Volunteers

Volunteers will receive ongoing support and guidance from a Sue Ryder staff member or a Lead Volunteer. One-on-one meetings will vary based on the volunteer's responsibilities. All volunteers will have regular chances to discuss their roles, give feedback, and identify any support they need. All volunteers should be offered a support meeting at least once per month; this could be in a group or one-to-one setting.

3.9 Reward and appreciation

At Sue Ryder, we greatly appreciate our volunteers and recognise that their skills and dedication are essential to our mission. We have a comprehensive reward and recognition program that honours their hard work and achievements. This includes a national Length of Service Award to honour milestones, celebrations during Volunteers Week, local seasonal events, and nominations for various awards. Volunteers are frequently acknowledged on our website, social media and internal communication channels.

We understand that appreciating volunteers means they consistently feel respected, safe, encouraged and heard. We are dedicated to creating this experience for every volunteer.

3.10 Complaints and Concerns

Sometimes, things can go wrong. When this happens, we encourage volunteers to speak up so we can address issues and make improvements.

Sue Ryder has a 'Talk to Us' complaints policy for volunteers. This policy explains how we will promptly and fairly deal with complaints made by volunteers. It is simple to understand and guides staff and volunteers through every step of the process. If you have questions about making a complaint, please email volunteering@sueryder.org, and we will be happy to help you.

If we have any concerns about a volunteer's conduct, we will approach the matter with compassion and respect. Volunteers will be informed about the concern and given constructive and supportive feedback.

A volunteer's placement may be ended if the Charity decides there is adequate reason to do so. Examples that could lead to this include:

- A breach of confidentiality
- Actions that harm the charity's reputation
- Any acts that disregard Sue Ryder policies or procedures including Equity and Diversity
- Physical or verbal abuse of a service user, members of staff, other volunteers, customers or the public
- Theft from the charity, staff, other volunteers or service-user

More information can be found in our Addressing Concerns About a Volunteer policy.

3.11 Moving on

Volunteers can choose to stop volunteering whenever they want. If a volunteer decides to

leave, we will ask them why they are leaving. We appreciate any feedback that can help us make volunteering better in the future. The volunteer can also choose to stay connected with Sue Ryder to learn about our work and possibly volunteer again later.

We can give references to help volunteers secure other volunteering or employment opportunities.

We can provide a basic professional reference outlining the dates and nature of the person's placement with Sue Ryder. These requests should be sent directly to the Volunteering team at volunteering@sueryder.org

Character reference requests should be sent directly to the local Coordinator or Shop Manager. More details about providing references for volunteers can be found in our Volunteer Leavers and References guide.

Volunteers must return all items that belong to the charity if they stop volunteering, including their volunteer ID badge, any safety devices, and any technology like phones or laptops that were provided.

3.12 Equity and inclusion

Sue Ryder is committed to creating an environment that is equitable, diverse and inclusive for all volunteers, present and future. We believe that everyone at Sue Ryder is equally important, and we celebrate diversity and the value it brings. We want to be an organisation where everyone feels a sense of belonging; where there are no barriers to volunteers realising their unique potential; and where every individual feels valued, respected and accepted.

Sue Ryder will continually work to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of the volunteer experience. We will prioritise equity, diversity and inclusion in our strategic plans for volunteering and our day-to-day work in shops, centres, and communities.

3.14 Safeguarding young people and adults

Sue Ryder is committed to safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults by complying with all relevant legislation and best practices. Volunteers in roles involving contact with these groups will be informed of their safeguarding responsibilities and receive regular training and supervision. We will also obtain references and seek Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks when necessary.

3.15 Expenses

We want to make sure volunteers who want or need to claim expenses can do so freely and without barriers. We also need to monitor volunteer expenses so that the cost of volunteering is transparent and budgeted appropriately. The Charity must comply with HMRC regulations and there is a risk of financial penalties being applied to the Charity and individuals because of non-compliance.

Volunteers can claim certain out-of-pocket expenses, provided they submit receipts as proof of their expenditures. The details of what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim are explained in the Volunteer Expenses Policy. Volunteers should talk to their manager before beginning any activity that may result in expenses. The manager will explain what can be reimbursed and how to calculate expenses.

3.16 Health and Safety

Sue Ryder is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of all its volunteers, staff and visitors. Volunteers are responsible for upholding safety standards and must complete health and safety training for certain roles. Any health and safety concerns should be reported to their line manager or the volunteering team at volunteering@sueryder.org

3.17 Insurance

Volunteers are covered by Sue Ryder Public Liability insurance for specific activities. Volunteers should not carry out tasks that have not been approved by a member of staff, as they may not be insured.

3.18 Data protection and confidentiality

Sue Ryder securely collects and maintains volunteers' personal information in line with the Data Protection Act 2018. Volunteers must adhere to confidentiality standards, complete relevant training, and may need to sign declarations to protect the privacy of supported individuals, colleagues, and employees. Those working from home must also sign a Working from Home agreement to ensure compliance with data protection laws.

3.19 Volunteer voice

Sue Ryder values the opinion of volunteers and will seek feedback on the charity's work and their volunteering experience. We will involve volunteers in decision-making through the National Volunteer Forum, and they can also share feedback and ideas with their local Coordinator at any time. Other avenues include:

- Suggestion boxes located on the Volunteer Hub
- Email volunteering@sueryder.org
- Participating in the annual Volunteer Voice survey

3 Eligibility

In the context of this policy, a volunteer is a person who performs a service willingly and without pay to support Sue Ryder's work. This includes people spending time with Sue Ryder through work experience, supported volunteering programmes, and those who are referred to the charity through community sentencing.

The policy is for all Sue Ryder volunteers and any Sue Ryder staff who work alongside or provide support to volunteers.

Associated Policies and Procedures

Volunteer Leavers and References

Talk to Us – Volunteer Complaints Procedure

Addressing Concerns About a Volunteer

Volunteer Expenses Policy

4 Useful Links

[Your online volunteering hub](#) | [Sue Ryder](#)