
Working with Volunteers and Students Policy & Procedure

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V2.0	September 2020	Moved to new template	Formatting changes	
V.3.0	October 2022	Updated to reflect review of volunteer strategy	Updates to roles & responsibilities, updates to terminology, updated supporting tools	
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1 Policy Statement

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide procedural guidance and direction for the implementation of robust, high-quality volunteering or student placement services within Brainkind, whilst minimising any potential risk. For further support when recruiting, training and managing volunteers, please refer to the Volunteering Management Guide, linked in the supporting documents section of this policy.
- 1.1.2 It is the policy of Brainkind to work positively and co-operatively with volunteers (who may also be students) and students and to appreciate the benefits, contribution and support they provide to our organisation.
- 1.1.3 The Brainkind offers opportunities for practice-based learning for students and trainees studying for a professional qualification in an allied health profession, nursing or clinical/counselling psychology. Brainkind recognises the contribution that students and trainees can make to our organisation and is committed to providing a high-quality learning environment.
- 1.1.4 Brainkind also recognises its duty of care to the people we support, visitors, staff, contractors, students, and volunteers. It is therefore essential that volunteers/students are screened prior to them commencing any activities for Brainkind, that Safeguarding is appropriately considered and effectively put in place and that they are given Health & Safety guidance and trained appropriately for the tasks they will be asked to undertake. Due to the nature of the work undertaken we are not able to accept students or volunteers under the age of 18 within our services. Students aged between 16 and 18 may be accepted for short placements within support service departments based at CSS Burgess Hill or Westgate Court, Wakefield.
- 1.1.5 The overarching aim is to: Evidence the Brainkind's commitment to involving volunteers/students directly within the organisation to:
 - Contribute to the delivery of our services/departments.
 - Make sure we are responsive to the needs of the people we support.
 - Provide different skills and perspectives.
 - Contribute to the education and training of the AHP, nursing, and psychology workforce across the UK.
 - Offer opportunities for participation by people who might otherwise be exclude.



2 Scope

- 2.1.1 This policy applies to all services located in England, Wales, and Scotland.
- 2.1.2 This policy applies to:
- All Brainkind staff and workers/suppliers of services who are involved in the recruitment, selection, management or support of volunteers / students or who work alongside them.
 - All students and volunteers
- 2.1.3 This policy is non contractual and may be amended from time to time at the discretion of Brainkind.
- 2.1.4 All employees have a duty to follow all relevant professional codes of conduct and/or any rules contained. For employees, non-compliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the Disciplinary policy and procedure.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	RESPONSIBILITIES & ACCOUNTABILITIES
Line Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessing the feasibility of engaging volunteers and agreeing volunteer recruitment with relevant Regional Manager or Director• Commencing the recruitment process, including making use of recruitment campaign materials• Interviewing & selecting volunteers• Ensuring that each volunteer is registered, has been through all required pre-engagement checks and is approved to undertake agreed activities.• Undertaking a risk assessment with the volunteer to agree activities and boundaries for their role.• Identifying and briefing a supervisor.• Ensuring volunteers receive a structured induction and sign a volunteer agreement and keeping a record of this locally.• Ensuring the volunteer completes relevant training including elements on health and safety, fire procedures and confidentiality.• Following the management guide to resolve any problems that may arise.• Completing quarterly feedback sessions with volunteers



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completing leaver interviews when volunteers decide to leave us.
Clinical Lead / AHP Practice educator/ Senior nurse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informing the unit manager of intention to take on students or trainees and start – end dates.• Liaison with HEI regarding offer of placement• Liaison with student/trainee to organise placement.• Ensure all appropriate risk assessments have been completed.• Ensure appropriate planning for learning opportunities, supervision and support for student/trainee in accordance with professional training requirements.• Ensure the student/trainee is fully inducted including aware of key policy (fire procedures, safeguarding, equality diversity and inclusion, health and safety and confidentiality)• Ensure that the student/trainee has a wide range of learning opportunities including all members of the service team.• Ensure that consideration is given to evaluating the placement experience for the student/trainee and that this feeds into the quality of practice based learning for future students/trainees
Regional Managers & Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting the benefits of volunteering to their services and departments.• Supporting the service manager to assess the feasibility of volunteers in each of their services, using a risk-based approach.
All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assigned Supervisor – working with the volunteer/student to provide guidance and advice and feedback any concerns to the service / department manager in a timely manner.• All other staff – to work in an inclusive way with volunteers / students.
People Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The administration of volunteers/students including setting up new volunteers/students on the system and terminating leavers• Collating exit data from leavers• Providing advice and support to Regional Managers/Managers/Service Managers on the application of this policy
CRT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Posting vacancies on volunteering websites• Filtering application forms to the relevant service or department



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring pre-engagement checks (references) are completed
L&D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creation of My Learning Cloud account for volunteers• Administering any volunteer surveys and collating feedback for Managers
Financial Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Timely payment of expenses

4 Principles

4.1.1 The following key principles outline the Brainkind's approach to working with Volunteers/ Students:

- We recognise that voluntary work and student/trainee placements brings benefits to volunteers and students themselves, to the people we support and to staff.
- We will ensure that volunteers and students are properly integrated into the organisational structure and culture, and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to Brainkind.
- We will not introduce volunteers or students to replace staff.
- We expect that staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and students and, where appropriate for students, will actively seek to involve them in their work.
- We recognise that volunteers and students require satisfying volunteering opportunities and personal development and will seek to help them meet their needs, as well as providing the training for them to do their work effectively.
- We will endeavour to identify and cover the costs of involving volunteers and students.
- We recognise that the management of volunteers and students requires designated responsibilities within specific posts.
- We will endeavour to involve volunteers and students from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and ensure our volunteering opportunities are as accessible as possible.



5 Procedure

5.1 Recruiting volunteers and students

- 5.1.1 Please refer to the Volunteering Management Guide for the detail on the recruitment process of volunteers and students (not on clinical placement) and to access the forms and tools required including role descriptions, recruitment campaign materials, application form, interview template and offer letter.
- 5.1.2 All volunteers/students (not on clinical placement) will be subject to a screening process prior to their engagement, including:
- An application form
 - Informal interview/discussion
 - Eligibility to work in the UK document checks
 - References (2 references are required)
 - Medical questionnaire
 - Volunteers (inc. volunteer students) - DBS/PVG Criminal Record Check should be completed. These should clearly indicate the person is a volunteer, so the check is completed free of charge.
- 5.1.3 For students/ trainees on clinical placement they will be required to produce the - Disclosure completed by their university or college.
- 5.1.4 Should an adverse criminal record check be received then Brainkind will follow its DBS/PVG policy and procedure to ascertain whether the volunteer/student is suitable to undertake activities with vulnerable/protected adults. This may result in the volunteer/student not being able to carry out activities with Brainkind and the people we support. Health Students on placements from colleges should have had their DBS/PVG checks and medical screening by their college, however, this should be verified by the Service prior to the student commencing their placement.

5.2 Records

- 5.2.1 All volunteers and students who are actively engaged in activities to support Brainkind are required to be registered centrally with People Services. Minimum details will be held on volunteers. This will include application/registration form, references, placement details, emergency contact details, correspondence, and any other relevant information in accordance with Brainkind Policies.



5.3 Age restrictions

- 5.3.1 Due to the nature of some of the people we support' disabilities and the levels of supervision required Brainkind are unable to allow individuals under the age of 18 to work in our services and under 18's will only be offered office-based activities within our Central Support Offices.

5.4 Supervision/Support

- 5.4.1 All volunteers/students will be supervised by a member of trained staff. The assigned supervisor will provide regular support.
- 5.4.2 Students who are not on clinical placements should never be working unsupervised and supervision sessions will be arranged to provide the opportunity for ongoing guidance and advice as needed. Where the volunteering role is emotionally demanding these sessions will also provide volunteers with the opportunity to access emotional support from Brainkind.
- 5.4.3 Volunteers are generally not permitted to lone work with the people we support and should be supervised at all times.
- 5.4.4 Practice placement for clinical students and trainees will require them to undertake activities with the people we support on a lone basis. Should this be the case, an appropriate risk assessment must be undertaken by their clinical supervisor and discussed with the student. The supervisor is responsible for assessing the student's competence as part of a learning contract to carry out unaccompanied work with the people we support and will monitor and evaluate the student's/trainee's performance throughout the placement. The supervisor should be fully aware of guidance from their professional body and HCPC/NMC with regard to delegation and working with students/trainees.

5.5 Training and Induction

- 5.5.1 All volunteers/students will be given clear guidance and training in order for them to perform agreed tasks/activities or duties to an agreed standard. Please refer to the Volunteering Management Guide for more details of the tools available to support including the Volunteer Induction materials, Volunteer Agreement and Volunteer Handbook.
- 5.5.2 In summary, volunteers will undertake mandatory training which will include Health & Safety awareness and fire prevention and awareness and manual handling (objects). They will also undertake Safeguarding Adults, Equality & Diversity and Data Protection (GDPR) training as the concept of confidentiality may be new to



many volunteers/students. Mandatory refresher training should be completed in accordance with the frequency periods as detailed in the L&D policies.

- 5.5.3 For clinical students, the supervising person will check the level of recent training through the HEI including manual handling, health and safety, infection control, data protection, and safeguarding (this will often be included in the student passport). Any gaps in training will be identified and documented in the learning contract and an action plan to complete the relevant training will be developed according to need and role – this may include use of e-learning and face to face sessions run by learning and development. Areas to consider include manual handling, de-escalation/physical intervention, infection control, health and safety, food hygiene, dysphagia, basic CPR, etc.

5.6 Health & Safety

- 5.6.1 Brainkind will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the volunteer's/student's health, safety, and welfare whilst at work in accordance with the Brainkind's Health & Safety Policy.
- 5.6.2 Volunteers/students also have a duty of care to take care of themselves and others who might be affected by their actions. They should not act outside their authorised area of activity or outside their level of skill or knowledge.
- 5.6.3 Volunteers/students should report all incidents to their supervisor or the duty manager and their clinical supervisor (if applicable).

5.7 Expenses

- 5.7.1 Volunteers undertaking activities for Brainkind will not be paid a salary. However, Brainkind will reimburse volunteers for travel and subsistence expenses in line with the Brainkind's Expense Claims Procedure. If the volunteer anticipates a need to claim for any such expenses, they should discuss this with their supervisor prior to incurring such expenses in order that they fully understand whether these will be covered. This arrangement also applies to unpaid students.
- 5.7.2 Students may be paid, depending on the agreement between Brainkind and the educational establishment. All payments must be agreed in advance, detailed in a written agreement between Brainkind and the educational establishment and authorised by the relevant Regional Manager prior to the student placement commencing.
- 5.7.3 On occasion a student will receive payment through their HEI or NHS Trust depending on the type of qualification they are undertaking but are unlikely to receive any payment from Brainkind. The clinical supervisor must be clear



regarding any payment agreement prior to the placement starting and discuss with the regional manager.

5.8 Provision of professional practice placement

- There should be an identified person in service who will co-ordinate student/trainee placement for each profession – this will usually be the Clinical Lead, a senior clinician or ward manager.
- The placement co-ordinator will ensure that therapists offering student/trainee placement have completed appropriate practice educator training with an accredited HEI, or similar supervisor training of psychologists with a university clinical training programme (or equivalent).
- The placement co-ordinator will maintain links with local HEIs and offer placement opportunities as resources allow within the unit.
- On offer of a placement, they will contact the allocated student/trainee and ensure that they have completed appropriate DBS/PVG checks and medical screening through their HEI, they will request their student/trainee passport or similar (for example research passport) and ensure they are aware of any disability, health or learning needs that the student/trainee may wish to disclose prior to the placement.
- The student/trainee will be sent appropriate pre-placement information about the service and expectations and any risk assessments completed.
- The HEI may require particular documentation such as offer forms, contact details for the clinical supervisor, and information regarding the student's support and welfare during the placement.
- The student/ trainee co-ordinator will ensure that all placement assessments are completed according to the placement learning outcomes and that contact is maintained with the HEI – this is often through a named tutor and may include a half-way visit to the placement.
- The clinical supervisor will ensure that the student/trainee is set up with log in for Brainkind IT systems and has access to email and relevant Brainkind folders or MS Teams channels.
- The service will ensure that there is a suitable workstation available for the student.

5.9 Final year students on paid clinical placements

5.9.1 For final year students on paid clinical placement with us, all policies relating to employees will apply. The following will also apply;

- A completed form, agreeing the salary to be paid, must be fully signed off before the placement can be accepted.



- A clear development programme and set of objectives for the duration of the placement must be collated prior to the student starting and regularly referred to and updated throughout the placement.
- When appropriately inducted and risk assessed in the role there may be occasions when the student may interact with a service user without direct supervision
- The student must continue to adhere to all relevant University policies also applicable during their placement.
- If the student drops out of their course for any reason during their placement, then the placement would also end, due to the two being inherently linked.

5.10 Insurance

- 5.10.1 Volunteers/students will be covered by Brainkind's personal injury and professional and public liability insurance. The insurance will not cover unauthorised actions or actions outside the volunteering agreement. Students or trainees on clinical placement may be encouraged to take out additional professional liability insurance.

5.11 Policies & Procedures

- 5.11.1 Volunteers and work experience students are not subject to all the Brainkind's Policies and Procedures as they are not employees,
- 5.11.2 Students/ trainees on clinical placements would be expected to adhere to all policies that apply to employees.
- 5.11.3 However, some policies such as those relating to health and safety, confidentiality and safeguarding vulnerable adults/children impose responsibilities on every individual whilst they are on Brainkind premises and/or undertaking their duties/activities.
- 5.11.4 Volunteers/students are expected to work in accordance with Brainkind's Equality and Diversity Policy and prevent discrimination on any grounds.

5.12 Drivers

- 5.12.1 Any volunteer/student who will be transporting the people we support using a Brainkind vehicle must have a valid driving licence (held for over 6 months) and Brainkind's normal procedures will be complied with in this regard. Volunteers/students must not use their own vehicle to transport services users.



- 5.12.2 Where the volunteer/student is using their own vehicle on Brainkind business, they must provide Brainkind with a copy of the vehicle's insurance policy, MOT certificate and full-service history along with their driving licence.
- 5.12.3 All accidents, motoring offences or police cautions which occur whilst driving the Brainkind's vehicles, or undertaking work for Brainkind, must be reported to the Service Manager or relevant Manager. Brainkind will not pay parking fines or fines associated with motoring offences.

5.13 Corporate Volunteering Days

- 5.13.1 Corporate day volunteers who come to Brainkind for an event sponsored by a local employer will, in the majority of cases, be exempt from the recruitment procedures and from signing volunteer agreements. However, a risk assessment will be undertaken by a suitably qualified employee and these individuals will be supervised whilst on site by trained employees to protect themselves, our staff, and the people we support. The Volunteer Induction Checklist provides details of the areas of Health & Safety to be covered.
- 5.13.2 Corporate day volunteers should never be left alone with the people we support as different compliance checking has been followed for these volunteers.

5.14 Working with Vulnerable/Protected Adults and/or Children

- 5.14.1 Volunteers/students carrying out activities within the Brainkind's Services may not have experienced working with vulnerable adults/protected adults and/or children prior to becoming a volunteer or undertaking a student placement with Brainkind. Therefore, care should be taken to ensure that the volunteer/student understands the challenging environment in which they may be undertaking their activities and the types of behaviour from the people we support, and techniques from staff, that they may witness.

5.15 Investigations

- 5.15.1 Should a volunteer/student witness an incident/accident or have relevant information which may need to be used in an internal investigation by Brainkind (such as safeguarding, disciplinary or grievance investigation), or external investigation by any third-party organisation (such as police, local safeguarding team, or DBS/PVG) it is an expectation that the volunteer/student participates fully and co-operatively with Brainkind and relevant bodies. This may include writing a statement, being interviewed, or attending a formal meeting to give evidence.
- 5.15.2 If a complaint is made against a volunteer/student it may be appropriate that the individual refrains from undertaking activities whilst enquiries are being undertaken



into the allegation(s). If this is the case, the volunteer/student will be notified accordingly and will also be asked, at the appropriate time, to provide their own statement/information. Once enquiries have been undertaken, the volunteer/student will be provided with appropriate feedback and notified of any further action that is deemed necessary. In cases relating to a student/trainee on a clinical placement, we would also need to inform their education establishment.

- 5.15.3 Should a volunteer/student wish to raise concerns in accordance with Brainkind's Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure but does not feel able to do so, Brainkind has a dedicated Whistleblowing telephone line, the details of which can be found in the relevant Policy and Procedure and also on posters around Brainkind's services.

5.16 Leavers

- 5.16.1 When volunteers/students move on from their role with Brainkind they will be invited to provide feedback on their experience by completing a leaver interview with their assigned supervisor or a member of the management team.
- 5.16.2 Volunteers and students have the right to request a reference. This can be requested from the People services team at CSSHR@brainkind.org. Volunteers and students will be supported to move on to other options.

6 Associated Policies & Procedures

- 6.1.1 Other Policies and Procedures to be operated in succession with:

- [Recruitment Policy](#)
- [Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy](#)
- [Working in the UK](#)
- [Criminal Records Check Policy](#)

7 Supported Documents & Templates

- 7.1.1 Supporting documentation and appropriate templates are available to accompany this policy and procedure and can be located on The Hub.
- Volunteering Management guide
 - Volunteer handbook
 - Recruitment campaign materials
 - Application form
 - Volunteer role description



- Interview template
- Volunteer work offer letter
- Volunteering Agreement
- Volunteer Induction
- [Volunteer Student Protocol](#)
- [Volunteer feedback template](#)
- [Leavers interview template](#)