



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



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Welcome

Hello and welcome to Uppertunity. The aim of this handbook is to create a one-stop information point where you would be able to access all the information you are likely to need in relation to Uppertunity and volunteering with us.

This handbook provides information on expectations, support and policies which are currently in effect in specific relation to volunteers. These policies may be modified or supplemented, as part of our continuous effort to improve operations and to make Uppertunity a better place.

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with Uppertunity. Without volunteers, we would not be where we are today or be able to achieve the many things we do. We at Uppertunity believe that volunteers can bring a variety of skills, experience and enthusiasm, and helps raise awareness about Uppertunity's cause, profile, aims and objectives. By providing volunteering opportunities, we provide opportunities for social inclusion, skills development and potential routes to employment. Uppertunity also believes that volunteering can help to improve health and wellbeing for individuals. We also believe that volunteers can bring with them a different perspective to the organisation, one that reflects the views of the community and client group.

It is our ambition to make sure anyone who gives their time to us feels valued, understood and proud to be part of Uppertunity. We look forward to having you part of our journey.

About Uppertunity

1. What do we do?

We are a registered Community Interest Company (a type of non-profit social enterprise), working with individuals (16+) with learning disabilities, autism and mental health barriers. We focus on an individual's strengths and aspirations, then work with them to realise their potential, leading to self-worth and independence. We do this through: creative workshops, group and community work, mentoring, skill development programs, meaningful volunteering roles and social events.

Our 4 mission aims are:

1. We believe in equality for all. We empower individuals and help create, develop and maintain purpose and self-worth.
2. We champion the development of mindsets which enable people to reach their optimum self. We use a mixture of methods that bring about an inner resilience, challenging people's perceptions of themselves and their own capabilities of shaping their world.
3. We create social change by demonstrating that everyone has strengths and skills to offer their world. We all have a calling and a purpose we can serve that provides self-fulfilment.
4. We create environmentally sustainable communities through community partnership and climate friendly methods.

2. What do we do?

Our current services we offer are:

- Weekly Warriors: Our programme of activities that take place each week, including art, sewing, woodwork, active groups etc.
- Daring for Development: Our skill and capacity building program
- Serendipities: Our social change space in the form of a café in the City Centre, offering unique food, social events, volunteering, job roles and catering.
- Energising the Everyday: An inclusive training programme run at Serendipities, involving life developing skills and gaining knowledge and practical skills in hospitality
- UppMakes: Our creative skills program where individuals upcycle, while developing life skills.
- Growing Places: Our therapeutic garden volunteering programme where volunteers are in charge of creating a beautiful environment within Uppertunity's premises.
- The Upside: Our pluralistic mentoring service to help resolve personal problems, including My Journey.

3. History of Uppertunity

- Uppertunity was set up on the 15th of September 2015 as community interest company by two founders, Danielle and Darryl.
- In October 2015, the first therapeutic art group, scribbles, was set up (with no funding, just the positive attitude of the founders). We were based in various local community centre. We started adding more and more groups, as well as a gardening group in April 2017.
- In June 2017, Uppertunity moved into their very own premises at The Circle, receiving funding support for rent.
- We then received funding to trial a personal development programme, now known as Daring for Development.
- In July 2019, we opened Serendipities. This our café in Dundee City centre that provides a training pace for our members.
- Uppertunity has also won awards for growth, young entrepreneur and for our garden spaces at The Circle.
- We have hosted various events since opening such as craft fairs, camping trips, community lunches and more.

4. Organisational Structure

Uppertunity is a registered Community Interest Company limited by Guarantee. We are a social enterprise that trades for the good of the community and with social aims. We have an asset and profit lock: all assets and profits must be permanently retained within the CIC and used solely for community benefit and aims.

We have a Board of Directors. This board makes all the final decisions of the organisation. None of the board members are paid, it is voluntary. Uppertunity then has a manager and various project workers who all work together to run Uppertunity and Serendipities. We then have volunteer facilitators who help the project workers and volunteer members who help the organisation achieve its aims. We also have placements from different organisations. We then we have all our amazing members who use our facilities.

We are person centred, placing an emphasis on mutual respect and trust. Every single member, staff and volunteer are a part Uppertunity and not merely a recipient of a service. Everyone is part of the big team and everyone's voice matters.



Ways to get involved

There are various of ways for you to get involved in our work. Here are just a few examples of the opportunities we offer.

- **Group facilitator:**

Group facilitators help assist with the various groups Uppertunity offers. They help explain and facilitate the group activity, and socialise and interact with members, as well as inspire them in their work. Groups include art, jewellery making, games, cooking and baking.

- **Gardening facilitator:**

At Uppertunity, we have our own gardens part of our 'Growing Places' project. Gardening facilitators help our member volunteers develop and manage these gardens. They help explain and facilitate garden tasks.

- **Serendipities cafe facilitator:**

At Uppertunity, we have our own café in the centre of Dundee called Serendipities. This is where we provide safe and inclusive training for adults with additional needs, as well as events and space hire for likeminded groups. Café facilitators help train and develop our café volunteers whilst developing and encouraging our ethos.

- **Events facilitator:**

Events facilitators help plan, run and/or market events at our main location, our café, or external locations. Events include bake offs, camping trips, social nights, girl's night and more.

- **Marketing volunteer:**

Uppertunity finds it important to keep our clients, volunteers, and staff in the loop of all our exciting news. Marketing volunteers help make this happen. They manage the quarterly newsletter, both printed and online; produce promotional materials which advertise Uppertunity's services, including posters, leaflets, business cards etc.; and help improve current and future marketing opportunities of Uppertunity, including Facebook, Website, e-mails etc.

- **Fundraising:**

As Uppertunity is a non-profit organisation, we are reliant on outside funding to keep costs to a minimum to our clients. You can help by hosting your own event to raise money for Uppertunity or help plan and run fundraising events.

- **Volunteer Board Director:**

A board or company director helps manage the day-to-day business activities and finances and to ensure all statutory filing obligations are met. Directors are responsible for the performance of the company, as dictated by the board's overall strategy.

Volunteer policy

1. Definition

A volunteer with Uppertunity is someone who, without expectation of financial reward beyond reimbursement of expenses, performs a task at the request of and on behalf of the organisation. There is a minimum age of 16 to volunteer, and no maximum age.

2. Involvement of volunteers

2.1. Volunteers support the overall strategic aims of Uppertunity by:

- Ensuring our services meet the needs of our clients
- Providing new skills and perspectives
- Increasing our contact with the local community we serve
- Supporting and achieve the overall strategic aims of the Uppertunity

2.2. Uppertunity is committed to involving volunteers directly within the organisation to:

- Contribute to the delivery of our services
- Make sure we are responsive to the needs of our users
- Provide different skills and perspectives
- Offer opportunities for participation by people who might otherwise be excluded
- We will not introduce volunteers to replace paid staff

3. Our commitment to our volunteers is:

- We will always treat you with respect, consideration, and appreciation
- We will give you accurate and truthful information about Uppertunity
- We will ensure you have a clear idea of your responsibilities and role
- We will provide you with support through regular meetings or discussions, offering you fair, honest, and timely feedback on your work
- We will provide you with the opportunity to work as part of a team, to contribute to the welfare of the community and Uppertunity, and to be recognised for your contribution
- We will give you the opportunity to give feedback about your volunteer experience as well as Uppertunity as a whole
- We will give you the chance to grow and develop as a volunteer through participation in other activities, special training events, meetings, and more responsible positions
- We will provide volunteers with the leadership and tools they need to reach their potential
- We will ensure that volunteers are properly integrated into the organisational structure and that mechanisms are in place for them to contribute to the organisation's development

Uppertunity CIC

- Staff at all levels will work positively with volunteers and, where appropriate, will actively seek to involve them in their work
- We will provide a safe and healthy environment to work in
- We will have transparent recruitment procedures
- We will reimburse the volunteer for all agreed out of pocket expenses
- We will handle volunteer data in accordance with data protection policies
- All Interviewing and engaging with volunteers will be in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation
- We will ensure volunteers are recognised for their time and commitment through team nights out, volunteer awards and regular thanks.

4. What we expect from you:

- Always treat Uppertunity staff, members, supporters and fellow volunteers with respect, consideration, and appreciation
- Act in a professional way whenever you represent Uppertunity
- Behave and act in a way that doesn't discriminate against or exclude anyone
- Provide as much notice as possible if you are unable to fulfil your volunteering commitment, or if you no longer wish to be involved in a project
- Follow all policies and procedures set out by Uppertunity
- Participate in the feedback process by letting us know how you feel about your experience and giving constructive suggestions for improvement
- Develop your skills as a volunteer by participating in training and development opportunities. Learn as much as you can to do the best job possible

5. Support

- Induction: When first joining Uppertunity, you will have the opportunity to go over what Uppertunity is and stands for, your role, the code of conduct, support available, and the relevant policies and procedures
- Training: We want to ensure that you feel happy and confident to carry out your role. At Uppertunity, we will provide you with as much training opportunities as possible to develop your skills.
- Mentoring: You'll receive ongoing mentoring from the manager which involves reflection and planning for your future, as well as have an opportunity to raise issues and for you to talk constructively about your involvement with us.

6. The Volunteer's Voice

Volunteers are encouraged to express their views about matters concerning Uppertunity by:

- The volunteers being offered the opportunity to take part in weekly, monthly, and annual meetings
- Encouraging volunteers to voice their suggestions anonymously
- Uppertunity listening to any concerns that volunteers may have and make every reasonable effort to resolve them

7. Legal requirements

All volunteers are treated fairly and equally and will not be separated or treated differently to employees other than in regard to paid employment laws.

- 7.1. Recruitment: We operate a fair and equal recruitment process that is open to everyone from all backgrounds and areas of the community.
- 7.2. PVG's: Any staff or volunteer who will be in direct contact with protected and vulnerable adults, will require to submit a mandatory PVG check. During recruitment, an individual will be able to disclose any information they feel relevant to their post.
- 7.3. Insurance: All Uppertunity volunteers are covered by our Employers and Public Liability Insurance which provides an indemnity in respect of Uppertunity's legal liability to pay damages and expenses in respect of death, bodily injury, disease or illness arising out of and in the course of their involvement in the charity. A copy is available from management.
- 7.4. Health and Safety: Volunteers are covered in Uppertunity's Health and Safety procedures and policies, copies which can be found in the organisations health and safety folder.
- 7.5. Grievances: Uppertunity has a policy to help deal with grievances that volunteers may have. In line with this policy, volunteers have the right to discuss any concerns they may have with their named contact at any time. Should the contact person be unable to resolve the problem, they will follow the procedure described in the policy.
- 7.6. Confidentiality: volunteers will be bound by the same requirements for confidentiality as paid staff. A copy of the confidentiality policy can be found in the organisational handbook.
- 7.7. Endings: Volunteers will be able to end the agreement to volunteer at any time with as much notice period as possible. On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference if they have completed 2 months volunteering. All volunteers will receive an exit interview and will be supported to move on to other options.

Code of Conduct

1. Aim

This policy outlines our expectations regarding all employees', volunteers and placements behaviour towards their fellow team, clients, and overall organisation. We promote freedom of expression and open communication, while at the same time expecting the same respect back. We expect all team members to follow this code of conduct and to foster a well-organized, respectful, and collaborative environment. The policy provides guidelines on the required behaviour in a wide range of situations, including usual work hour activities, social events and out of hours activities that directly reflect on Uppertunity.

This Code of Conduct is not a contractual document and Uppertunity reserves the right to amend it at any time. Any breach of the Code will be considered a disciplinary matter, which could result in disciplinary up to and including dismissal.

The main principles are as follows.

- Everyone complies with laws and regulations.
- Everyone rejects bribery and corruption
- Everyone avoids conflicts of interest.
- Everyone respects the confidentiality of all personal and corporate information
- Everyone promotes diversity and equality, treating people fairly and with respect
- Everyone maintains a safe and healthy environment for people to work in and are proactive in managing responsibilities to the environment
- Everyone supports those who have any suspicions of any misconduct, malpractice, illegal or unethical behaviour and report their concerns in confidence to the appropriate channels.

2. Zero Tolerance

While this Code gives guidance in certain situations, there are specific areas where Uppertunity has a policy of zero tolerance. These are:

- Unsafe, illegal, or unethical working practices
- Violence and aggression
- Discrimination, bullying and harassment
- Bribery and corruption
- Retaliation or action against anyone who speaks up and, in good faith, reports a wrongdoing

3. Compliance with law

All employees and volunteers must protect our company's legality. They should comply with all environmental, safety and fair dealing laws. We expect employees

and volunteers to be ethical and responsible when dealing with our company's finances, products, partnerships and public image.

4. Health and safety

Uppertunity places a high priority on providing a safe workplace and minimising the risks. Effective safety management requires the active involvement of every employee and volunteer, and every employee and volunteer has a legal duty to look after their own health, safety and welfare and that of those around them. Employees and volunteers are expected to follow procedures outlines in the health and safety folder.

5. Environment

Uppertunity is committed to preventing, or, at the very least, minimising, any harmful effects it causes to the natural environment. It encourages all employees to conduct their work in accordance with the highest environmental practices and the minimising of waste, aiming to reuse wherever possible.

6. Respect in the workplace

All employees and volunteers should respect their colleagues, fellow team members and clients. **We won't allow any kind of discriminatory** behaviour, harassment, or victimization. Employees and volunteers should conform with our equal opportunity policy in all aspects of their work, from recruitment and performance evaluation to interpersonal relations.

7. Protection of Company Property

All employees and volunteers should treat **Uppertunity's** property, whether material or intangible, with respect and care. They should not misuse any equipment and should respect all kinds of incorporeal property. This includes trademarks, copyright and other property (information, reports etc.). They should only be used to complete duties. Employees and volunteers should protect company facilities and other material property from damage and vandalism, whenever possible.

8. Conflict of interest

We expect employees to avoid any personal, financial or other interests that might hinder their capability or willingness to perform their job duties. Any potential conflicts of interest must be declared so that individuals are not involved in decisions that could be regarded as biased.

9. Professionalism and Attitude

All employees and volunteers are expected to work in a professional manner including using positive language, avoiding swearing, limit moaning, encourage positive health and wellbeing, avoid shouting, have an overall positive attitude and

display good role model attributes. If employees and volunteers are to have any meals at the workplace, they are asked to bring healthy meals to encourage positive health and wellbeing attitudes.

10. Personal Appearance

All employees and volunteers are expected to dress professionally. This includes: no midriffs on show, no short dresses or skirts, no low tops, show awareness of bodily and smoke odour and respond appropriately, avoid clothing with negative or swear words, and wear clothes comfortable to work in.

11. Job Duties

All employees and volunteers should fulfil their job duties with integrity and respect toward clients, fellow staff and the community. Supervisors and managers mustn't abuse their authority. We expect them to delegate duties to their team members, taking into account their competences and workload. Likewise, we expect team members to follow team leaders' instructions and complete their duties with skill and in a timely manner. All team members should be friendly and collaborative. They should try not to disrupt the workplace or present obstacles to their colleagues' work. We encourage mentoring throughout our company.

12. Confidentiality

Uppertunity is committed to the maintenance of the highest level of integrity in all its dealings with clients, customers and staff. This extends not only to commercial confidentiality but also to the protection of personal information received in the process of providing a service.

13. Tardiness and Absenteeism

Employees must follow their schedules and volunteers are expected to follow their agreed schedules. We can make exceptions for occasions that prevent employees from following standard working hours or days, but generally we expect employees, and volunteers, to be punctual when coming to and leaving from work.

14. Collaboration

Employees and volunteers should be friendly and cooperative when working in collaboration with other companies, groups and organisations. We respect the ethos and regulations of external staff and volunteers, and we expect the same respect and attitude in return. We aim to meet in agreement to what works best for our clients and staff.

15. Equality, diversity and inclusion

An important core value of Uppertunity is the promotion of inclusivity and diversity. It seeks to ensure that the workplace is supportive of all employees and volunteers

and one where individual respect is shown to all clients, volunteers and employees, regardless of age, (dis)ability, gender, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, ethnic background, culture, sexual orientation, religion or belief, sex or any other factor. All staff will be supported and encouraged to perform to their potential. For further information, employees should refer to the Equal Opportunities policy.

16. Communication

All employees must be open for communication with their colleagues, supervisors or team members. Uppertunity aims to communicate all information that is relevant to all clients, volunteers and employees.

17. Policies

All employees and volunteers should read and follow our company policies. If they have any questions, they should ask their supervisors or the manager.

18. Social media

Employees and volunteers may use social media for work purposes (such as LinkedIn) or for personal use (for example, Facebook). Any use of such social media must be respectful of Uppertunity's reputation and that of all its team members. Employees and volunteers must not disclose confidential information when using personal social media. For further information, employees should refer to the Social Media policy. Failure to comply with this policy is a disciplinary offence. It may amount to gross misconduct and could result in summary dismissal.

19. Relationships with other members of staff and clients

Uppertunity does not concern itself with the private lives of its any staff unless they affect its effective operation or its reputation. Members of staff who are relatives or who have a close personal relationship should not normally have a supervisory, assessing or authorising relationship with each other. Employees and volunteers must inform their line manager if they have a close personal relationship with another employee or a client which could be considered by colleagues or other, as impacting on the way they conduct themselves at work.

20. Criminal offences

For the avoidance of doubt, an employee and volunteer must inform their manager in writing if they are under investigation for a criminal act (including road traffic offences) or have been arrested in connection with a criminal action. They must also inform their manager in writing if they have been found guilty and convicted of any offence or received a police caution. This will not result in dismissal. The need for this information is to ensure that all employees and volunteers are not barred from working with vulnerable individuals. Failure to disclose this information may be treated as a disciplinary offence. Furthermore, if

an employee commits a criminal offence outside employment, Uppertunity will investigate the matter to ascertain whether there is any connection between the offence and the individual's employment. If there is an adverse finding in this respect, this could result in the employee's dismissal under the disciplinary procedure. Any information will be treated fairly in conjunction with equality laws.

21. Conduct outside work

As a general rule, what employees and volunteers do after working hours and away from the premises is a personal matter. However, Uppertunity will become involved in the following circumstances: At office parties, events and other work-related social occasions; At third-party occasions where the individual has been invited in their capacity as a representative of Uppertunity; At work-related conferences and training courses, locally or away. All policies will continue to apply at all these events. An employee should not bring Uppertunity's name into disrepute at any time. Improper behaviour will lead to investigation and possible disciplinary action, including dismissal and in cases of gross misconduct, a summary dismissal.

Being a great employee and volunteer

How to be a great employee or volunteer

An employee or volunteer is someone who is capable of great change! You have the opportunity to make a difference

1. It's all about your attitude! If you have a good energy, you spread it around and lift other people's moods. If you're negative, you lower the mood and push people away
2. Be creative! You don't have to be arty to be creative, just explore different ideas and experiment
3. Be a good role model! Show positive behaviour including the attitude you have towards life, the food you eat at the work place
4. Show initiative! Don't wait to be told what to do. If you're not sure, ask if there's anything to do or if someone needs help
5. Keep walking around during group workshops, ask if members are okay. If no one needs help (this is rare), sit next to someone and do some creative work with them
6. Be non-judgmental and open minded! You will work with various different people, both with staff and clients...people who have autism, Muslim, lesbian, limited education, depression, transgender etc. No matter a persons characteristics, they have something beautiful to offer the world.
7. Be sensitive, caring and empathetic! You will hear sensitive information and difficult stories. Don't brush it off, listen and be there for that person.
8. Work as a team! Share ideas with each other, be a friend, help out with the boring stuff like cleaning and paperwork and share smiles!
9. Make mistakes! Don't strive for perfection, it's about the journey. Members relate to people who are human. Mistakes are lessons, so let's learn together
10. Have fun!



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How to be a great facilitator

How to be a great facilitator

A facilitator is a person, volunteer or paid staff, that assists another person to achieve a desired outcome

1. **Enthusiasm!** The individuals you work will often have low self-esteem and be shy. We are there to be that support so the journey isn't so scary
2. **Lead, don't do!** We are there to guide and assist, we are not there to do everything for the person
3. **Be a good role model!** Speak positively and behave positively, this includes attitude about others and your health
4. **It's about the journey, not the destination!** We are not aiming for perfection, we are aiming for personal development. Perfection often damages this, let the person make mistakes. It may not be what you want, but that doesn't matter
5. **Build confidence!** A lack of confidence often lowers a mood. Give compliments, but also make sure they are unique to the individual...*"I love how you used those colours together, great choice!"*
6. **Go at the persons pace and build from there.** If we push too hard, it damages confidence, if we don't push enough, the person will never know their true potential
7. **Never underestimate a person!** We don't assume anything about a persons ability, regardless if they are female, in a wheelchair, have low muscle tone, have autism etc. Good facilitators make dreams happen!
8. **Listen and communicate!** The individuals you work with will often not be listened to and will sometimes not have learnt social skills, we are here to help
9. **Be aware of your body language!** Stand or kneel at the height of the individual who are working with. Don't speak in a baby voice, this is patronizing. We treat individuals the way they deserve. This builds their confidence
10. **Empower! Help individuals claim control of their life and experience the life they desire**



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Recruitment and Selection Procedure for Volunteers

1. Policy Statement

Uppertunity encourages the use of voluntary workers to assist the organisation to meet the aims and needs of our clients. Voluntary workers supplement employees but are not, and must never be, a substitute for them.

2. Who Does This Procedure Apply To?

This procedure applies to:

- Voluntary workers
- Placements

It does not apply to:

- Placements where Uppertunity is the employer; or
- Placements for children of school age. Such placements should only be arranged as part of a structured work experience programme arranged by the school or college

Volunteers within schools may be covered by this procedure by specific acceptance of the governing body.

3. The Law

Volunteers are not employees of Uppertunity. They therefore do not benefit from any of our conditions of employment such as payment for work, holidays or sickness.

We have a duty of care to all individuals who visit our premises. Our public liability insurance insures the organisation against accident or injury to visitors including volunteers whilst on our premises.

4. Procedure

Where a manager is considering using a volunteer, the manager should prepare a Volunteer Job description. The Volunteer Job description should be approved by the board. The placement specification should consider:

- The benefits to the organisation and to the individual of using a voluntary worker
- Tasks to be performed by the voluntary worker
- Working dates, hours and arrangements
- Who will supervise the voluntary worker

The manager should consult about the use of voluntary workers with:

- Employees in the area where voluntary workers are to be used;

- Clients, if applicable

5. Arrangements to be Made

Before starting voluntary work, the manager should ensure that:

1. Voluntary workers provide basic personal details, normally through completion of an application form.
2. Where it is necessary to select an individual from a pool of potential applicants, that the applicants are short-listed and interviewed against a person specification.
3. Voluntary workers must complete the following checks in accordance with guidance contained in the Recruitment and Selection policy before they can work with us:
 - Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 declaration
 - Two references. This is mandatory where the volunteer will have substantial access to vulnerable groups but optional for other work areas
 - Criminal Records Bureau clearance. This is mandatory where the volunteer will have substantial access vulnerable groups
4. Induction and supervision arrangements are put in place
5. The details of the voluntary placement are confirmed, in writing, to the volunteer

Volunteer Training and Development Policy

1. Induction

It is the policy of Uppertunity that all staff and volunteers will receive a general induction on:

- the aims and objectives of the organisation
- the nature and operation of the programme or activity for which they are recruited
- a specific orientation on the purposes and requirements of the position which they are to fill
- the organisations handbook and all the relevant policies
- training relevant to their post

2. On-The-Job Training

- 2.1. Uppertunity requires that all staff and volunteers receive specific on-the-job training to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their task including first aid and/or REHIS
- 2.2. The timing and methods for delivery of such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the position and the capabilities of the volunteer. Uppertunity requires, dependant on individual situations, that all staff and volunteers complete the necessary training within a year of starting their post.

3. Mentoring and Supervision

Each staff member and volunteer will be assigned a supervisor or line manager who will provide support and mentoring during the individual's connection with the organisation. Uppertunity requires that the supervisor and staff member or volunteer have two official supervision sessions a year, where they discuss current and future progress, and share any concerns. Uppertunity would like to make staff and volunteers aware that mentoring and support is readily available to them at all times.

4. Staff Involvement in Orientation and Training

Uppertunity requires that staff members with responsibility for delivery of services should have an active role in the design and delivery of both orientation and training of volunteers. Those staff who will be in a supervisory capacity to volunteers shall have primary responsibility for design and delivery of on-the-job training to volunteers assigned to them.

5. Volunteer Involvement in Orientation and Training

Uppertunity requires that experienced volunteers should be included in the design and delivery of volunteer orientation and training, as well as ongoing support for newly joining volunteers.

6. Continuing Education

Staff and volunteers should attempt to improve their levels of skill during their terms of service. Uppertunity requires that additional training and educational opportunities should be made available to staff and volunteers during their connection with the organisation. This continuing education may include both additional information on performance of their current assignment as well as more general information and might be provided either by the organisation or by assisting the volunteer to participate in educational programmes provided by other groups.

7. Conference Attendance

Uppertunity encourages staff and volunteers to attend conferences and meetings which are relevant to their assignment and roles, including both those of the group and of other organisations. Uppertunity requires that prior approval from the staff or volunteer's supervisor should be obtained before attending any conference or meeting if attendance will interfere with their work schedule or if reimbursement of expenses is required.

Volunteer Expenses Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all volunteers receive equal treatment when claiming reasonable out-of-pocket expense. Uppertunity believes that volunteers should not be out of pocket for the contribution they make to the community or company.
- 1.2. Expense claims should not exceed actual expenses incurred. If a volunteer is paid in excess of their expenses, this will be interpreted as payment for work done, and any welfare benefits could be affected. The volunteer could be liable to pay tax on this money, and the organisation could fall foul of minimum wage legislation. Asylum seekers are also affected, with strict Home Office guidelines warning that anything beyond remuneration for actual expenses will be construed as payment for illegal work.

2. Definition

2.1. Actual out-of-pocket expenses include:

- Travel to and from the place of volunteering, within a 15-mile radius
- Travel in the course of volunteering
- Postage, telephone calls, etc. paid for by the volunteer
- Cost of equipment, protective clothing, etc.
- Travel to and from the place of training events and courses, within a 15-mile radius

3. Reimbursement of Expenditure

- 3.1. Volunteers incurring out-of-pocket expenses in the course of their volunteering will be required to supply appropriate evidence of expenses, such as receipts, on the appropriate claim form which will be made available by the manager of the organisation.
- 3.2. Volunteers will receive tea and coffee at no cost to themselves when at the office/work base.
- 3.3. Volunteer expenses can be claimed in the following circumstances:
 - 3.3.1. Public Transport: Where possible, volunteers should use public transport. Full reimbursement of fares incurred will be paid provided that appropriate tickets and receipts are provided. Where the use of a car is likely to be more cost effective, then a car can be used subject to discussing this with the manager beforehand.
 - 3.3.2. Taxis - People with Disabilities: The taxi fare should be claimed using the approved claim form and receipts; copies are available from the manager of the organisation.
 - 3.3.3. Car Allowance: Travel/mileage expenses necessarily incurred by volunteers in the performance of their official or other authorised duties will be reimbursed after authorisation by their line manager.

3.3.4. Other reasonable out-of-pocket expenses must be: Approved in advance by the manager, made on the approved claim form, copies are available from manager

	First 10,000 miles in tax year	> 10,000 miles in tax year
Cars / Vans: regardless of engine size	40p	25p
Motorcycles	24p	24p
Bicycles	20p	20p

4. Use of cars, Vehicle Road Worthiness and insurance

- 4.1. All volunteers must insure their cars for business use before they can be authorised to use their car on official business. Volunteers who do not comply with this requirement will not be able to use their vehicle for volunteering with Uppertunity. All volunteers using their own car will be required to show a valid MOT certificate and complete a form agreeing to the upkeep of their vehicle.
- 4.2. Uppertunity will not permit volunteers to use their vehicle for business use where the volunteer has not provided such information. This is especially important where a volunteer is asked to use a vehicle for work purposes on an irregular basis. Uppertunity will undertake to check to ensure that the necessary insurance is in place.
- 4.3. Business use of a car includes transporting service users to and from group locations and transporting employees to and from work locations

5. Childcare

- 5.1. Uppertunity recognises that the need for childcare can be a barrier to volunteering for anyone with young children. We believe that volunteering is as valuable as employment and formal education for personal and career development and that it is crucial in building strong, active communities.
- 5.2. The expense of childcare is a challenge for most parents, whether they are working, studying or volunteering. It is often easier for parents to get state financial help with childcare if they are working or studying.
- 5.3. Any volunteer with childcare needs should discuss options with the organisation's manager regarding Uppertunity's ability to offer assistance to contribute/pay childcare expenses.

6. Claiming Expenses

6.1. All claims must be authorised by manager and forms should be submitted to the manager or line manager.

7. Appeal Rights

7.1. Any volunteer who considers that the provision relating to the reimbursement of expenditure has not been properly applied shall be able to pursue the matter through Uppertunity's grievance procedure.

Volunteer Grievances and Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Uppertunity aims to create a work environment where volunteers feel valued at work. Uppertunity also recognises that there may be occasions when volunteers have concerns or grievances and this grievance procedure enables individual volunteers to raise grievances more formally.
- 1.2. This procedure provides an open and fair way for volunteers to make known their problems and aims to enable grievances to be resolved quickly before they fester and become major problems.
- 1.3. Volunteers and line-managers are encouraged to discuss ordinary, day to day concerns informally. This allows them to be addressed promptly and can stop situations escalating unnecessarily.

2. Informal Procedure

- 2.1. In the first instance, if any volunteer has a grievance about their volunteering or a colleague, they should discuss it informally, as soon as possible, with their Line Manager or another manager if the grievance involves the line manager. The Manager will take the grievance seriously and ensure that everything is done to try and resolve the issue informally. It is hoped that the majority of concerns will be resolved at this stage. A note of the meeting and agreed actions will be kept.

3. Formal Procedure

3.1. Stage 1:

- 3.1.1. If a volunteer feels that the matter has not been resolved through informal discussions, they should put the complaint in writing to their line manager. If the complaint involves the staff member's line manager, the complaint should be put in writing to another manager in the organisation or the Board of Directors.
- 3.1.2. A meeting will be held between the volunteer and their line manager (or other appropriate person) to respond to the complaints raised. The meeting will be an opportunity for the volunteer to explain their complaints and share how they would like them to be addressed. The volunteer has a right to be accompanied to the meeting.
- 3.1.3. Following the meeting, the line manager (or other appropriate person) will give a written response within 5 working days of the meeting outlining how the complaint(s) will be responded to. If the complaint is against another member of staff or volunteer or requires further investigation, the line manager (or other appropriate person) will need to carry out further meetings or investigations. In this case, the 5 working days limit above, may need to be extended. The response will follow this meeting and include a reference to the right of appeal.

3.2. Stage 2:

- 3.2.1. If the volunteer feels the issue has still not been resolved satisfactorily, the volunteer must raise the matter, in writing, with the Board of Directors. The Board will invite the volunteer to a meeting where they can discuss the matter and establish how best to resolve the situation. The volunteer has a right to be accompanied to the meeting.
- 3.2.2. Following the meeting, the Director will give a written response within 5 working days of the meeting outlining how the complaint will be responded to. If the complaint is against another member of staff or volunteer, or requires further investigation, the Director will need to carry out further meetings or investigations. In this case, the 5 working days limit above, may need to be extended. The response will follow this meeting and include a reference to the right of appeal.

4. Right of Appeal

- 4.1. If the volunteer wishes to appeal against any grievance decision, they must appeal, in writing within five working days of the decision being communicated to them by the Board of Directors. The Board will convene an appeals sub-committee to hear the appeal and the staff member will be invited to a meeting with the appeals sub-committee. The volunteer will have the right to be accompanied to the appeal meeting.
- 4.2. The Chair will not form part of the appeals sub. The appeals sub committee's decision will be final.

5. Further Procedure

- 5.1. If the complaint is about the organisation, the volunteer has the right to take the complaint further to the Companies House.

6. Dismissal

- 6.1. Uppertunity will not dismiss any volunteer without a valid reason of misconduct, followed by formal disciplinary action. Examples of misconduct include, but do not end at:
 - 6.1.1. Refusal to comply with reasonable requests from the immediate supervisor
 - 6.1.2. Prolonged absence from a role where specified duties and/or attendance is required
 - 6.1.3. Incapacity to perform the duties of the post effectively due to drunkenness or unauthorised drug-taking
 - 6.1.4. Harassment of any Uppertunity employees, volunteers, members, visitors, clients or partners
 - 6.1.5. Breach of confidentiality
 - 6.1.6. Breach of Uppertunity's regulations, rules or conditions including those relating to Health and Safety
 - 6.1.7. Prolonged bad attitude
 - 6.1.8. Serious misrepresentation or negative representation of the organisation
 - 6.1.9. Prolonged unsatisfactory performance of the duties of the role