



English Bridge Union Volunteer Code

Aims of the code

The volunteer code sets out the responsibility of the EBU to volunteers in the organisation and the role and requirements of volunteers within the organisation. It is a recognition of worth and value that seeks to define the role of volunteers and how they can expect to be treated.

Volunteering comprises a shared experience in which there should be a mutual benefit for both the volunteer and the EBU. Hence the need for a code that covers all their roles and responsibilities, and the duties and responsibilities of the EBU itself.

The aim of the code is to ensure good practice in the involvement of volunteers in the work of the EBU, and promote understanding of the respective rights, roles and responsibilities of volunteers in the organisation.

Volunteers would normally expect to sign a [Volunteer Registration form](#). This will include some basic contact details and an address for correspondence. These records will be stored and accessed in a way that complies with [current data protection legislation](#).

Who/what is an EBU Volunteer

We appreciate the range of volunteer roles and responsibilities within the EBU. These include:

- EBU Board members.
- Committee members.
- Team leaders and coaches.
- Squad leaders.
- Ad hoc support – one off volunteering.

Volunteer rights

Volunteers should:

- be given a clear description of their role as a volunteer and responsibilities within the organisation;
- be given the name of someone in the organisation that will look after their interests whilst they volunteer, and who will offer them appropriate induction, training and support and regular supervision;
- be assured that any information shared with the organisation is kept confidential and is in compliance with current data protection legislation;
- be given the same protection under health and safety regulations and public liability as paid workers;
- be offered opportunities for training and skills development, appropriate for their role and tasks as a volunteer;
- not be exploited. They should not be used to replace paid workers, have unfair demands made on their time or be asked to do something which is against their principles or beliefs;
- be given the chance to play a part in decision making within the organisation;
- be able to take a break from or cease to volunteer.

Volunteer responsibilities

Volunteers should:

- accept the organisation's aims and objectives and work within agreed policies and procedures;
- do what is reasonably requested of them, to the best of their ability;
- treat information obtained whilst volunteering in an appropriate confidential manner and adhere to the organisation's confidentiality policies, as well as complying with current data protection legislation;
- recognise that they represent the organisation and therefore need to act in an appropriate manner at all times;
- honour any commitment made - notifying the organisation in good time should they be unable to keep that commitment e.g. for holidays;
- be willing to undertake appropriate training as necessary for the voluntary work undertaken;

- recognise the right of the organisation to expect quality of service from its volunteers;
- share suggestions for changes in working practices with the EBU.

EBU responsibilities

The EBU has underwritten its mission to provide and develop contract bridge in England with a set of core values about its responsibilities in relation to all of its stakeholders. These encompass:

- Fairness and respect.
- Honesty and integrity.
- Consideration and mutual trust.
- Personal development.
- Recognition of merit and commitment.
- Co-operative and inclusive working.

Insurance and expenses

The EBU will ensure that appropriate insurance arrangements will be made for volunteers to cover them whilst undertaking duties on behalf of the EBU.

Out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed including travel at the same rate as for salaried staff up to the limit laid down in the procedures manual, available from the office in Aylesbury.

Where work is carried out over a mealtime, a subsistence allowance may be paid, or a meal provided. Refreshments etc. will be freely available to volunteers as for paid staff.

All volunteers will be made aware of the above rights and conditions without having to ask. Details of current rates for expenses, how to claim, and the nature and extent of insurance cover must be readily available on request from the office in Aylesbury.

Conditions such as rates for expenses, allowances, etc. will be reviewed periodically.

Recruitment

The EBU is committed to providing the same level of support for its volunteers as its salaried staff.

The EBU recognises that there can be a crossover between volunteer roles and responsibilities, and those of salaried staff. These roles and responsibilities will be kept as separate as feasible so that volunteer staff do not encroach upon the work of salaried staff.

Staff will not, in general, be involved in working for the EBU in a voluntary and a salaried capacity.

Volunteers will be recruited and selected accordingly to their ability to perform required tasks and/or roles. A clear description (verbally and in writing where possible) of the volunteer's task/role will be provided. This will include a clear statement of their rights responsibilities and obligations.

The EBU will not unfairly exclude or discourage the involvement of potential volunteers or allow discrimination against them on grounds of any protected characteristics under current anti-discrimination legislation.

Any training required to enable volunteers to fulfil their roles or develop the role will be paid for by the EBU.

Volunteers will not be asked to work in conditions considered unsuitable for paid staff and will have the same provisions made for them regarding Health and Safety matters.

Children, other young people and vulnerable adults

The EBU is conscious of the special responsibility it has in respect of its Junior Squads and indeed young people more generally as well as other vulnerable adults. There is a specific [Code of Conduct for those working with Junior Squads](#).

There is also a [Safeguarding and Good Practice Guide](#). The document is intended to be definitive in respect of the activities of the EBU itself, as a direct employer of staff and volunteers working with young people, and as guidance for all bridge clubs affiliated to the Union. The procedures consist of some advisory guidelines and some mandatory procedures.

Support and training

Nominated members of staff and/or Committee Chairs where appropriate, will be responsible for the selection of volunteers. Clear lines of communication will be identified.

Volunteers will receive a role description and a [Volunteer Agreement](#) containing full information about their chosen area of work.

Volunteers will be consulted in decisions which affect them.

Volunteers will be invited to start working for a trial period before agreeing to a longer-term arrangement.

Recognition of merit

Periodic provision of tokens of recognition will be made in addition to the public recognition and awards system that currently exists.

Confidentiality

The EBU recognises the importance of maintaining confidentiality for all the various stakeholders in the organisation including those who volunteer.

Committee and sub-committee members will be made aware of the [Committee Code](#). This code applies to Board Members, members of Standing Committees and members of other Committees (taken as a whole) established by the EBU. Those applying to stand for the EBU and its Committees will be deemed to have accepted this code in its entirety.

Volunteers have a duty to respect the confidentiality of others in the organisation in respect of social media ([Social Media Policy](#)). Failure to maintain confidentiality is a serious matter and may result in the volunteer being asked to stop volunteering or in more serious cases may be subject to disciplinary sanctions.

Abusive behaviour

It is expected that staff and volunteers adhere to appropriate standards of behaviour which are described in the code of conduct and the codes and policy documents which have been described.

Appropriate disciplinary procedures and sanctions, as detailed in Appendix A of the [Bye-Laws](#) of the EBU, will be taken where these standards are ignored.

The EBU will not tolerate abusive behaviour, whether verbal, written or physical, by any member of the EBU towards any of its staff, Tournament Directors or voluntary workers. If any stakeholder behaves in such a way, the EBU will cease to deal with the individual concerned and may implement its disciplinary process which can result in sanctions and indeed expulsion from the EBU.