



Scottish Disability  
Sport

## Volunteer Policy

Reviewed by Board – August 2023

### Introduction

Scottish Disability Sport (SDS) has the vision of sport and physical activity in Scotland being welcoming and inclusive for participants with disabilities. Volunteers have a long history of supporting activities run by SDS. Indeed, it is not an exaggeration to say that volunteers are fundamental to SDS's ability to provide a wide range of quality sports and physical activity opportunities for participants with disabilities across Scotland; Board trustees, coaches, carers, and events support staff all enable SDS to deliver a diverse, inclusive and accessible programme of activities.

SDS is appreciative of the time, energy and skills that volunteers bring to the Association. This Volunteer Policy has been developed to demonstrate that commitment and sets out what support and training SDS volunteers should expect, where they fit into the Association and will help to ensure fairness and consistency across all volunteers. The Policy also sets out what SDS expects of its volunteers.

### Recruitment & Induction

In order to recruit volunteers from all communities, SDS encourages diversity in volunteering and welcomes volunteers from all backgrounds. SDS staff work proactively with a range of partners who work with people who may want to volunteer. These include schools, colleges, universities, governing bodies of sport, sports clubs, local authorities, leisure trusts and third sector organisations. Staff also advertise volunteer opportunities through local and Scotland wide networks and actively promote volunteer opportunities through equality and diversity organisations and members' families and friends.

When a specific volunteer opportunity is advertised, the following recruitment process is followed:

- The opportunity is advertised widely.
- Applicants complete a Volunteer Application Form and Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form.
- If undertaking regulated work, become a PVG Scheme member.
- SDS staff review all applications received and interview suitably qualified and experienced individuals.
- References are followed up.
- The successful candidate is offered the volunteer position.

Once allocated a volunteer position, all volunteers will receive an induction from an SDS staff member. At their induction meeting, volunteers will be provided with:

- Details of the volunteer opportunity.

- An introduction to SDS and key policies.
- An introduction to working with SDS members.
- A briefing about support available for SDS volunteers.
- Information about what SDS expects of its volunteers.

All new volunteers will be asked to sign SDS's Code of Conduct. Due to the nature of SDS participants and athletes, new volunteers who will be undertaking regulated work will also be required to become a PVG Scheme member. Volunteers will also be given details of any training relating to their volunteer role. No volunteer will commence regulated work with SDS without first becoming a PVG Scheme member.

An SDS staff member or experienced volunteer will accompany the volunteer to their first activity, introducing them to the other volunteers, paid staff and members. The SDS staff member will ensure that the volunteer is clear and comfortable about their role before leaving them to work independently.

People approaching SDS speculatively regarding potential volunteer opportunities are also welcome. When this occurs, the process outlined above will be followed. In these cases, SDS staff will try to find a best match between a volunteer's skills, experience and interest and the potential volunteering opportunities available.

SDS has produced a comprehensive Valuing People resource which includes detailed information on recruitment, suggested roles, inductions, training, recognition and retention, as well as a number of templates that can be adopted and used to support best practice.

### **Retention and Training**

Appropriate training will be offered to all volunteers. This may be related to working with people with disabilities, sport specific qualifications, first aid or safeguarding. These training opportunities are provided both to ensure the quality and safety of SDS programmes and to protect and develop SDS volunteers. Some sessions will be particularly important and volunteers should make every effort to attend those sessions.

### **Regular Support**

All volunteers will meet with a named SDS staff member or experienced volunteer annually. This will provide the opportunity for volunteers to discuss their volunteering role, any successes and challenges encountered and ensure that the right support is available from SDS to support volunteers to develop their role, skills and experience. Useful training will be highlighted here. These sessions should also be used by either party to raise any concerns and suggestions for improvements.

### **Recognition**

SDS recognises the significant role that volunteers play within disability sport in Scotland. We will recognise and promote best practice and commitment at every opportunity including promotion through all forms of media and recognition through local and national awards.

### **Out of Pocket Expenses**

SDS are committed to providing all volunteers with out of pocket expenses for costs incurred whilst volunteering for SDS. Out of pocket expenses can cover travel & costs of fuel used in the course of volunteering or refreshments / meals (only in relation to a full day's volunteering where on site catering is not provided).

Out of Pocket expenses can be claimed by completing the Volunteer Expense Claim Form, accompanied by appropriate receipts. Prior agreement from an SDS staff member is always required before any claims of this nature are made.

## **Respect and Confidentiality**

Volunteers are a valuable asset to SDS. As such they should expect to be treated with the same respect as anyone else associated with SDS in line with SDS's Equal Opportunities Policy and regardless of a age, disability, gender, race, religion/belief, sex, marriage/civil partnership or pregnancy/maternity. All volunteer personal information records will be treated as confidential.

In return, volunteers should make every effort to keep confidential any information they are party to about SDS. If, as a volunteer, someone discloses to you confidential information that you think may be a safeguarding issue, you should follow the procedure set out in SDS's Safeguarding Policy.

## **Health and Safety**

SDS has a responsibility to avoid exposing volunteers to risks to their health or safety. A copy of the SDS Health & Safety Policy is available on [www.scottishdisabilitysport.com](http://www.scottishdisabilitysport.com), and can be accessed by volunteers. If you are unable to fulfil a commitment for which they have volunteered, volunteers should make every effort to inform the relevant SDS staff member as soon as possible.

## **Insurance**

SDS's public liability insurance provides appropriate cover for all SDS volunteers. In return, volunteers should make every effort only to volunteer for activities that have been agreed with an SDS staff member. Volunteers should also make every effort to attend training sessions identified as important by SDS staff.

## **Dealing with Problems, Complaints or Disputes**

SDS is committed to ensuring that all volunteers are treated fairly and with respect. We are also keen to maintain quality standards of service to our participants and athletes. Where volunteers experience a particular problem they should first try to resolve it informally with their contact SDS staff member. Similarly, where a problem is raised about a volunteer, it will first be raised informally with the volunteer by their contact SDS staff member. It is hoped that most problems, complaints and disputes can be resolved in this way.

However, when this proves impossible or when allegations are of a sufficiently serious nature, the SDS Complaints Handling Policy should be followed. This policy exists to ensure that all formal complaints and disputes are dealt with and resolved in a fair and transparent way.

## **Policy Review**

SDS will update this policy every two years in line with the SDS Policy Review Cycle and will ensure it remains up to date and meets the needs of coaches, volunteers and the wider Association.