

Randwick City Library Volunteer's Policy

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Objective

The purpose of this document is to detail policies, practices and guidelines for the volunteer program offered by Randwick City Library.

Policy Statement

1. Introduction

Randwick City Library (RCL) operates through three library locations providing community members access to information, culture, recreation and heritage resources. The use of volunteers allows the community to become involved in enhancing the Library services and supplement the efforts of paid staff in special projects.

2. Definition

Library volunteers are defined as people who undertake activities:

- of benefit to the community
- of their own will
- without monetary reward

The following are NOT considered to be volunteers:

- Students seeking formal work experience from high school and those who seek industry placement as part of the course requirement in tertiary institute
- Those who are under the 'return to work' or 'light duties placement' from other part of Council or organisation

Volunteering by people who are unemployed:

- Volunteering is not an acceptable long term alternative for a person seeking paid employment; however it can be valuable as it provides opportunities to learn new skills, maintain existing skills, increase self-esteem and obtain current referees and also familiarise with current workplace.
- No one person should volunteer for more than an average of 10 hours per week.

3. Policy

The decision to engage the service of volunteers will be based on:

- Careful assessment of the tasks that can be performed by volunteers

- Prior evaluation of the skills and/or knowledge that volunteers can provide to the Library
- Relative costs and benefits of using volunteers
- Assessment of the impact on paid employment opportunities within Randwick City Library
- The Library shall make use of the services of volunteer workers chosen to supplement and not to replace the work done by trained and paid Library staff
- An assessment of the capacity of the service point to manage and co-ordinate the tasks to be done by volunteer workers

RCL will ensure volunteer-based services are:

- adequately supervised and managed
- of consistent quality, and
- adequately resourced

Tasks to be performed will be clearly defined and matched to the volunteer's expectations, interests, time commitment and skills:

- This involves a detailed description of the task and a competent assessment of the volunteer worker
- Tasks/duties must be meaningful, not contrived or designed to 'make work', and should not exploit volunteers. Volunteer workers will not be assigned to perform tasks that staff are reluctant to do

Where volunteer workers are used, RCL shall provide and publicise a clear statement detailing:

- Why volunteers are being involved
- Their roles and responsibilities
- Code of practice

Sources for the recruitment of volunteers will include:

- Community or local papers
- Posters or brochures displayed in the library
- Students or senior citizens groups
- Community service organisations

Selection and recruitment

Prospective volunteers will complete an online application form (via the RCL website <https://www.randwick.nsw.gov.au/library/about-the-library/library-volunteers/apply-to-volunteer>) which is designed to meet the needs of RCL and/or a specific project. Applicants are asked whether they have a police record and whether they would agree to a police background check, although this may not actually happen. Applicants will be asked to supply one personal reference. Volunteer workers will be recruited and selected for tasks in a fair, open and equitable manner.

Students seeking to fill school community service requirements are asked to provide a letter from the school or teacher detailing the assignment.

Training and supervision

Volunteer workers will be working closely with Library staff. Training and skills needed to perform the task will be provided. Each volunteer will be assigned one primary staff member to guide them in their work. All volunteers will be adequately supervised.

Recognition

Recognition is an important component of a Volunteer program and is often the only reward for the volunteer worker. RCL will recognise the contributions of volunteers through proper acknowledgement in formal and informal events and the issue of certificate of service.

4. Rights of Volunteers

- Be advised of RCL policies and procedures, service guidelines, standards and expectations
- Be given a suitable assignment and clear statement of the tasks to be performed
- Be given sufficient training to enable them to carry out their tasks
- Be adequately supervised
- Be able to speak to and be heard by a senior staff member if they have concerns and/or complaints
- Be informed about workplace protocol
- Be respected and treated as co-workers
- Be provided with equipment necessary to do the job
- Be able to work in a suitable, welcoming and pleasant environment
- Proper insurance cover when performing tasks in the workplace
- Adequate WH&S protection

5. Code of Practice

Code of practice for volunteers

- To provide appropriate references as required
- To be reliable in their commitment to the tasks assigned
- Volunteers are recognised by the public as representatives of the Library and as such are expected to act in accordance with library policies, to perform the volunteer activities to the best of their abilities
- To maintain confidentiality in respect of all information gained in the course of their work
- To observe the requirements of NSW Work Health and Safety Act and report WHS hazards or concerns to supervisor
- To record attendance for insurance and other purposes
- To accept and follow directions from their supervisor
- To provide feedback to their supervisor on the progress of projects/tasks they are involved
- To undertake training as required
- To report problem as it arises

Code of practice for RCL engaging volunteer's service

To promote excellence in service and maximise the quality of volunteer's experience, RCL will:

- Make an appropriate commitment to meet the legitimate expectations of volunteers and to encourage ongoing feedback from volunteer workers
- Interview volunteer applicants to match the most suitable applicant to the tasks available
- Provide to volunteer workers induction program, training, support and supervision, task description and workplace conditions similar to that given to paid staff
- Have appropriate forms of recognition for the work done by volunteers, which will include mentioning in
 - Newsletters, internal and external
 - Social functions
 - Certificates of service
- Undertake periodic reviews to ensure that volunteer tasks continue to be relevant and appropriate for volunteers to perform
- Change or terminate a volunteer's placement when necessary with ample prior notice

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