



University of Brighton

Active Student
Volunteering Service



Advice and guidance: students who are volunteering/working on their community-based placement from home – ‘remote working’ – during the Covid-19 situation

General University response and information for students

Central university advice and guidance for all students has been brought together into one place on the [new COVID-19 Student Update website](#). This can also be accessed via [the COVID-19 page on the University website](#).

Checklist for remote volunteering/community-based placements:

- **INSURANCE:** The host organisation must ensure their insurance covers the volunteering activities the student is doing for the organisation from home
- **DSE & WORKSPACE SET UP:** Students should comply with all the requirements of safe display screen equipment (DSE) and workspace set up as far as is possible: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/how-to-sit-correctly/>. Students should set up their work area at home to mimic best practice in their usual space of work.
- **REMIT OF ROLE:** Students should not be undertaking any activity for their organisation, other than agreed at home volunteering. Boundaries and understanding of remit are both key.
- **MEETINGS:** To manage the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and for insurance cover purposes, it is not appropriate for students to arrange meetings at their home address or in any public place, following the government’s recent COVID-19 legislation on social distancing. ‘Meetings’ should take place online or via phone.
- **HEALTH/SUPPORT NEEDS:** Students with a pre-existing health condition or support need who are concerned about volunteering from home or feel they may need reasonable adjustments to do so, should contact Active Student and their supervisor to take steps towards necessary arrangements.

- **EQUIPMENT:** Volunteers may need to be lent equipment to carry out their at home volunteering e.g. a laptop, phone etc. Organisations should make provision for this where possible and appropriate for the role.
- **KEEPING IN TOUCH:** Students should keep in contact with their supervisor and supervisors are expected to support and guide their student volunteers and placement students using remote working means e.g. e-mail, telephone and video calls.
- **INFORMATION SECURITY:** Security of information (GDPR and confidentiality) still applies to remote working. The use of password protected devices and keeping sensitive or personally identifiable information secure still applies. This includes data on community organisations, its staff, volunteers and clients. Confidential spaces for calls may need to be created and the use of secure online platforms to hold information and documents is suggested, to avoid volunteers saving confidential information onto their own devices. All volunteers need to be made aware of and ensure they are knowledgeable about their organisation's GDPR policies and procedures.
- **ACCIDENTS:** Students need to report an accident at home in relation to their volunteering or placement work activity to their supervisor **and** the university: to the Active Student Volunteering Service and their module tutor; the latter applies only if they are undertaking a community-based placement as part of their degree.
- **RISK ASSESSMENTS:** It may not be necessary to undertake any other form of risk assessment in relation to volunteering at home, as students will be familiar with their home environment and any precautions that would be suitable and appropriate. Risk assessments are normally only used in connection with more significant risks. Organisations will need to decide if a risk assessment is required for their role(s) dependent on the activities and client base e.g. this may involve amended Safeguarding procedures for remote working.
- **DBS CHECKS:** The Volunteer Centre within Community Works in Brighton and Hove have advised in terms of DBS Checks that: "...DBS is still important for certain roles, but DBS have made some concessions including the use of older DBS checks and use of email or scanned document checks." They advise organisations to check with Safety Net: www.safety-net.org.uk/contact
- **LIMITATIONS:** The University acknowledges that that some volunteers or placement students may need to stop and may not be able to work remotely, for various reasons. Active Student also acknowledges that many community sector volunteering roles/placements cannot be done from home due to organisations policies and/or procedures.

How to get in touch with Active Student

Telephone: 01273 644145 Please leave a message and we will get back to you

Organisations or university staff e-mail: activestudent@brighton.ac.uk

Student e-mail: volunteering@brighton.ac.uk

We wish all our community organisations, volunteers and community based placement students well.

Beth, Kat, Naomi and Nadia

Active Student Team