

# WEA volunteer policy





## 1. Background

The WEA has a proud tradition of voluntary and democratic practice and has been a membership organisation for over 100 years. Individuals, local communities and the Association all benefit from the networking and influence that arises out of volunteering. Volunteers contribute to the WEA charitable mission by giving their time freely and making a difference in their communities. Volunteers support the WEA in a range of roles, including organising courses through branches / Scottish local associations, acting as learning champions and classroom support and contributing to the governance of the Association. Regardless of role it is important that we protect volunteers by ensuring that volunteers are well looked after and that they are treated with respect and dignity. The hopes and expectations of volunteers must also be clear and understood by all staff and volunteers.

## 2. Purpose

The aim of this policy is to produce a clear framework for the deployment of volunteers in the context of the strategic aims and needs of the Association. This policy is intended to help promote a constructive partnership between volunteers and staff, tutors and students. The WEA is committed to making volunteering an enjoyable and worthwhile activity which meets both the individual's as well as the organisation's needs. This will include:-

- Celebrating the diversity of volunteers and their contributions to the work of the WEA
- Identifying routes and support to enable volunteers to move into governance roles at local, regional and Association level
- Ensuring that priorities and actions relating to volunteering are cross-referenced in all relevant strategic, operational and development plans

WEA asks that volunteers abide by the vision, mission and values, principles and policies which form the framework of the Association.

## 3. Values

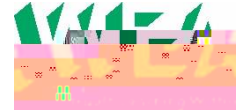
- Volunteers are valued equally with students, tutors, staff and all other stakeholders
- The range and diversity of volunteers involved in the WEA should reflect our students and the communities in which we work
- Volunteering is welcomed and facilitated with minimal bureaucracy whilst protecting and supporting people and complying with relevant legislation and regulations

## 4. Scope

Anyone who is actively involved in the work of the Association, and gives their time freely is regarded as a volunteer. This policy outlines the expectations that will apply generally, however each role or function may also have additional procedures or regulations, such as the requirement for a DBS check. Further supporting information is available in the Branch Handbook. The trustees of the Association and anyone in a governance role, all of whom are volunteers, will have to comply with additional legal requirements which are detailed in the WEA governing documents. This policy covers the WEA's work across England and Scotland.

## 5. Equality and diversity

The WEA is firmly committed to diversity in all areas of its work and believes that opportunities should be open to all regardless of social class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, religion, colour, race or ethnic or national origin. We believe that we have much to learn from diverse cultures and perspectives and that teamwork promotes mutual interests, harmony,



respect, co-operation and understanding between people from diverse backgrounds. We will regularly evaluate and monitor our progress towards improving diversity.

## 6. Procedures

### 6.1 Recruitment and selection

We will not seek to limit the range of voluntary activities that may be undertaken across the Association, locally and regionally. However, we will identify the more common voluntary activities and provide related information as an annexe to this policy. Volunteers may be recruited









## 3. Responsibilities

### 3.1 Volunteers

Volunteers should ensure that their expenses are:-

- Claimed accurately in line with policy, and legitimately incurred for WEA business
- For activities which were authorised in advance by the relevant manager
- Made on the correct current expenses claim form
- Provided with all original supporting receipts and documentation attached
- Submitted to the relevant staff member for approval as soon as possible after being incurred

**Important note:** Activities likely to incur expenses for volunteers should be authorised by managers in advance – the WEA cannot accept liability for expenses arising from activities which have not been authorised.

### 3.2 WEA staff members

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Where receipts have been lost, or have not been obtainable, a missing receipt declaration form should be completed and sent with the relevant claim, stating the reason the receipt(s) is missing. In line with the WEA financial regulations and policies, a maximum of 3 missing receipt declarations is



## 6.8 Taxis

Taxis should not normally be used except where one or more of the following conditions exist:-

- The use of a taxi is required because of permanent or temporary disability

- There is a risk to staff or volunteer due to location and/or time of day

- The taxi is carrying other passenger(s) also travelling on WEA business and it is cheaper than the equivalent standard public transport cost

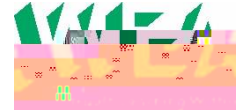
- There is equipment or materials which needs transported

- The time incurred in taking public transport would make a journey by taxi more economic or reasonable

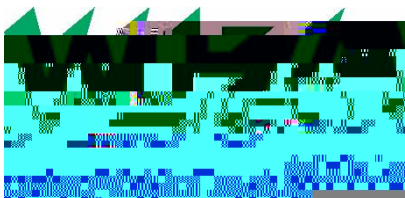
## 6.9 Hire cars

There may be occasions where a hire car is necessary or deemed a cheaper alternative to train journeys, for example in instances where a number of volunteers are travelling on WEA business from and to the same location. Car or any other transport hire should be pre-authorised by the appropriate senior manager. In most circumstances any such hire will be organised directly by





	Where activity giving rise to expense will result in an arrival home after 8.00pm			
Refreshments	e.g. beverage on journey	£5.00	Yes	No



Appendix 2

## WEA volunteer code of conduct

**Introduction** - The WEA welcomes and values the contribution of members and volunteers who enhance the learning experience of our students. The WEA wants volunteers to have a positive experience in a supportive environment. This volunteer code of conduct is intended to establish





