

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society

Information For Volunteers

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Introduction

WELCOME

Thank you for offering to give your time and experience to assist us. The Society relies on volunteers to help achieve our objectives.

The objects of the Society are to:

- a) advance the education of the public in traditional Scottish country dancing and its music; and**
- b) preserve and further the practice of traditional Scottish country dancing and its music.**

In furtherance of the Objects, the Society will carry out the following Activities:

- a) provide, or assist in providing, education or instruction in the practice of Scottish country dancing;**
- b) promote and publish, in any suitable physical and electronic form, information and music relating to Scottish country dancing; in particular to publish, or cause to be published, descriptions of Scottish country dances with music and diagrams in simple form and at moderate price;**
- c) collect books, manuscripts, illustrations and other memorabilia relating to Scottish country dancing and to the Society; and**
- d) do all such other things permitted by law as may be considered by the Society to be incidental or conducive to the attainment of the Objects**

We provide equal opportunities and are committed to the principle of equality regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. We will apply policies that are fair, equitable and consistent with skills and abilities. Volunteers can assist by supporting us in implementing these policies to ensure equality of opportunity.

This document has been developed to take into account UK legislation, and it's application will therefore have to be adapted by Branches to meet the differing jurisdictions out with the UK.

General Information

A) CHANGES IN PERSONAL DETAILS

We have a duty of care to anyone who volunteers for the Society. In the case of an emergency we may need to contact you or someone on your behalf, so please notify us of any emergency contact details.

B) STATEMENTS TO THE MEDIA

Volunteers are requested to not make any statement to reporters from newspapers, radio, television etc. in respect of our organisation. Any enquiries should be directed to the Chair / Chief Operating Officer (COO).

C) VOLUNTEERS' PROPERTY

No liability is accepted for any loss of, or damage to, property brought to 12 Coates Crescent.

D) RECORD CHECKS

Should this position involve the care of children or adults at risk, the following is necessary: -

- a) Completion of a Level 2 with barred check list, disclosure check (PVG scheme) from Disclosure Scotland, through the RSCDS.

E) INSURANCE

While volunteering on Society premises, you are covered under our insurance policies against any injury you suffer or cause.

F) EXPENSES

You are entitled to claim the following expenses incurred during volunteering with us:

- a) Travel to and from home to the place of volunteering.
- b) Travel costs incurred during volunteering.

Expenses must be claimed on an expense claim form and be supported by receipts, ticket stubs or other evidence wherever practicable. We only reimburse actual expenses incurred. The deadline for submitting expenses is **2 months** after the volunteering activity.

G) DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Should you have any problems related to your treatment by staff, other volunteers or members, please raise these with the Chair or COO who will attempt to resolve the issue.

Standards

Volunteers are expected to behave responsibly while representing the Society. The behaviour listed below would result in us refusing any further voluntary assistance from you.

- a) grossly indecent or immoral behaviour, deliberate acts of unlawful discrimination or serious acts of harassment;
- b) dangerous behaviour, fighting or physical assault;
- c) incapacity or poor performance caused by intoxicants or drugs whilst volunteering;
- d) possession, supply or use of *drugs;

*For this purpose, the term 'drugs' is used to describe both illegal drugs and other psychoactive (mind-altering) substances which may or may not be illegal.

- e) taking part in activities which result in adverse publicity to ourselves;
- f) theft or unauthorised possession of money or property, whether belonging to other volunteers, staff, other Society members or a third party;
- g) destruction/sabotage of our property, or any property on the premises;
- h) serious breaches of the health and safety rules which endanger life;
- i) maltreatment of other volunteers, staff or other members;
- j) failure to report an incident of abuse, or suspected abuse by other volunteers, staff, other Society members or a third party;
- k) convictions for any offence which might affect your suitability for the volunteering duties you are involved in.

Security

A) CONFIDENTIALITY

- 1) All information that: -
 - a) is or has been acquired by you during, or in the course of your volunteering duties, or has otherwise been acquired by you in confidence,
 - b) relates particularly to the Society, or that of other persons or bodies with whom we have dealings of any sort, and
 - c) has not been made public by, or with our authority,shall be confidential, and (save in the course of our operations or as required by law) you shall not at any time, whether before or after ceasing to volunteer, disclose such information to any person without our prior written consent.
- 2) You are to exercise reasonable care to keep safe all documentary or other material containing confidential information, and shall at the time of ceasing to volunteer with us, or at any other time upon demand, return to us any such material in your possession.
- 3) You must make yourself aware of our policies on data protection in relation to personal data and ensure compliance with them at all times.

B) VIRUS PROTECTION PROCEDURES

In order to prevent the introduction of virus contamination into the software system at 12 Coates Crescent the following must be observed:

- a) unauthorised software including public domain software, USBs, external hard drives, CDs or internet downloads must not be used; and
- b) all software must be virus checked using standard testing procedures before being used.

C) USE OF COMPUTER EQUIPMENT.

In order to control the use of the Society's computer equipment and reduce the risk of contamination the following will apply:

- a) the introduction of new software must be checked and authorised. You cannot introduce new software of any kind without approval.
- b) only authorised individuals will have access to our computer equipment.
- c) only authorised software may be used on the organisation's computer equipment.
- d) unauthorised access to the computer facility may result in us refusing to accept any further voluntary assistance from you.
- e) unauthorised copying and/or removal of computer equipment/software will result in us refusing to accept any further voluntary assistance from you.

D) E-MAIL AND INTERNET POLICY

1) Internet

Where appropriate, duly authorised volunteers may access/ use the Internet. You may only release information via the internet with prior agreement. The use of the internet to access and/or distribute any kind of material which is offensive or unrelated to your tasks will result in us refusing any further voluntary assistance from you.

2) E-Mail

You may only use the e-mail system with prior approval and unauthorised use may result in us refusing any further voluntary assistance from you.

Volunteers using the e-mail system should observe the following points:

- a) they comply with our communication standards.
- b) Flame mails (i.e. e-mails that are abusive) must not be sent. Hasty messages sent without proper consideration can cause upset, concern or misunderstanding.
- c) if e-mail is confidential the user must ensure that the necessary steps are taken to protect confidentiality. The Society will be liable for infringing copyright or any defamatory information that is circulated within the organisation or externally.
- d) offers or contracts transmitted by e-mail are as legally binding on the organisation as those sent on paper.

We will not tolerate the use of the e-mail system for unofficial or inappropriate purposes including:

- a) any messages that could constitute bullying, harassment or other detriment.
- b) on-line gambling.
- c) accessing or transmitting pornography.
- d) transmitting copyright information and/or any software to the user.
- e) posting confidential information about the Society, other volunteers, staff, other Society members or a third party.

E) RIGHTS OF SEARCH

- 1) We have the right to carry out searches of volunteers and their property whilst they are at 12 Coates Crescent.
- 2) If you should be required to submit to a search, you will, if practicable, be entitled to be accompanied by a third party to be selected from someone who is on the premises at the time.
- 3) Whilst you have the right to refuse to be searched, refusal by you to agree to being searched could result in us refusing to accept any further voluntary assistance from you.
- 4) We reserve the right to call in the police at any stage.

Health, Safety and Welfare

A) SAFETY

- 1) You should make yourself familiar with the health and safety requirements and any hazards associated with your responsibilities or while visiting 12 Coates Crescent.
- 2) You must not take any action that could threaten the health or safety of yourself, other volunteers, staff, Society members or a third party.
- 3) You should report all accidents and injuries at 12 Coates Crescent, no matter how minor, in the accident book.

B) REFRESHMENT MAKING FACILITIES

At 12 Coates Crescent, we provide refreshment making facilities. Please help us keep these facilities clean and tidy.

C) SMOKING POLICY

Our policy of not smoking at 12 Coates Crescent must be observed at all times.

D) ALCOHOL & DRUGS POLICY

- 1) We have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety and welfare at work of all staff, volunteers, Society members and members of the public. Similarly, you have a responsibility to yourself and others. The use of alcohol and drugs may impair the safe and efficient running of the Society and/or the health and safety of our staff, volunteers, Society members or other parties.
- 2) If, during volunteering with us, your performance or behaviour are affected as a result of alcohol or drugs, or we believe you have been involved in any drug related action/offence, you may be subject to further action and, dependent on the circumstances, this may lead to us refusing any further voluntary assistance from you.

E) LOST PROPERTY

Articles of lost property should be handed to the COO who will retain them whilst attempts are made to discover the owner.

F) HYGIENE

- 1) Any exposed cut or burn must be covered with a first-aid dressing.
- 2) If you are suffering from a contagious disease you must not attend 12 Coates Crescent without clearance from your own doctor.
- 3) Contact with any person suffering from an infectious or contagious disease must be reported before attending 12 Coates Crescent.

Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy

A) STATEMENT OF POLICY

- 1) The terms equality, inclusion and diversity are at the heart of this policy. 'Equality' means ensuring everyone has the same opportunities to fulfil their potential free from discrimination. 'Inclusion' means ensuring everyone feels comfortable to be themselves and feels the worth of their contribution. 'Diversity' means the celebration of individual differences in the Society. We will actively support diversity and inclusion and ensure that all our volunteers, Society members and staff are valued and treated with dignity and respect. We want to encourage everyone in the Society to reach their potential.
- 2) We recognise that discrimination is unacceptable and equality of opportunity is a feature of our practices and procedures. Breaches of this policy will lead to investigation and, if appropriate, further action up to and including us refusing any further voluntary assistance from you.
- 3) The aim of the policy is to ensure that volunteers, Society members and staff are not discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- 4) We will ensure that the policy is made available to volunteers, staff and any other relevant parties.
- 5) We will maintain a neutral environment in which no one feels under threat or intimidated.

B) SELECTION

- 1) We will endeavour to ensure that any parties involved in the decision making with regards to appointing volunteers will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions.
- 2) We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of voluntary opportunities.
- 3) We will not confine our process with regards to obtaining volunteers to areas or media sources which provide only, or mainly, volunteer applicants of a particular group.
- 4) All those who offer to volunteer for us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on the contribution they can make.
- 5) All those involved in the volunteering process decision making will periodically review the criteria to ensure that they do not unlawfully discriminate.
- 6) We will not disqualify any volunteer because he/she is unable to complete any forms unassisted unless personal completion of the form is a valid test of the standard of English required for the safe and effective performance of the volunteering activity.

Working with Volunteers – RSCDS

Procedures

1. Introduction

1.1 . This set of procedures should be read in conjunction with the RSCDS Volunteer Policy. It applies to RSCDS volunteers who are elected or appointed for a range of duties/tasks and undertake this voluntary work on our behalf. In relation to its Trustees, the RSCDS complies with the requirements of Scottish Charity law and the Scottish Charity Regulator, which are detailed in the RSCDS Constitution.

1.2 . The RSCDS relationship with volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and commitment.

Volunteers who are part of regular Committees or Groups can expect to receive:

- clear information on the duty/task for which they have been selected;
- induction appropriate to the duty/task;
- regular support and supervision from their line manager (usually the relevant person on the Management Board) as required;
- a brief annual appraisal/review with their line manager;
- occasional meetings with other volunteers or RSCDS groups, as appropriate to the task

2. Complaints and Grievances

2.1. The following procedure outlines how issues of complaints against a volunteer unsatisfactory performance and volunteer related grievances will be dealt with by the RSCDS, whose preference will be to resolve issues informally, swiftly and in the best interests of the RSCDS and the volunteer.

2.2 Complaints

(This process excludes any complaint raised in relation to a protected characteristic which will be dealt with under the appropriate RSCDS process.)

2.3 Volunteers undertaking a particular role within the RSCDS/Committee Members

2.4 If a complaint against a volunteer is received the relevant member of the Management Board e.g. Convener, Group or Panel Lead will discuss the matter with the individual concerned and seek to resolve the issue with the complainant. Any discussions will be non judgemental, conducted with due regard to privacy and confidentiality and focus on a problem solving solution. Possible outcomes may include the following;

- offer of increased personal support
- further guidance and/or relevant training
- in exceptional circumstances termination of the agreement between the RSCDS and the volunteer

2.5 Repeat complaints will be investigated similarly. Three successive complaints of a similar nature which are upheld may lead to the following;

- reallocation of duties/tasks
- offer of alternative duties/tasks
- termination of the agreement between the RSCDS and the volunteer

2.6 If an agreement is terminated then the volunteer will have the right of appeal to either the Chair Elect or the Chair of the HR Panel within 14 calendar days of being notified in writing of the outcome. The Chair Elect or Chair of the HR Panel will review the original decision and will communicate the outcome of this in writing. The outcome made will be final.

2.7 Trustees

A similar process for complaints as detailed above will apply to Trustees. However, the following will apply;

Role	Initial Discussion	Review
Trustee	Chair Elect or Chair of the HR Panel	Chair
Chair of the HR Panel	Chair Elect or Convener	Chair
Chair Elect	Chair of the HR Panel	Chair
Chair	Chair Elect or Chair of the HR Panel	Panel of the MB

At all times the RSCDS will comply with Scottish Charity Law and the Scottish Charity Regulator which will take precedence over the procedures detailed. In all cases above concerning a Trustee if the recommendation after initial discussion is to terminate the agreement between the RSCDS and the Trustee then this recommendation will require to be put to the Management Board and be approved in line with para 35 of the Articles of Association. In this circumstance there is no further right of review.

3. Unsatisfactory Performance

3.1 Unsatisfactory performance will in part be determined by the nature of the duty/task being undertaken by the volunteer, but is likely to include:

persistent failure to meet deadlines, respond promptly to communications, attend meetings;
persistent poor time-keeping;
failure to respect individual privacy and/or RSCDS confidentiality; behaviour which would bring the RSCDS name into disrepute, eg appearing under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs whilst engaged on RSCDS business

3.2 In the event a line manager is concerned about unsatisfactory performance, the matter will be addressed in the first instance as for Complaints above. In addition, matters of privacy, confidentiality, safeguarding or disrepute are likely to result in the instant removal of the volunteer from the duty/task, with the opportunity of further discussion/review with the line manager within 14 calendar days. Again, if an agreement is to be terminated, the volunteer can appeal to the Chairman Elect/Chair of the HR Panel within 14 calendar days of this decision being communicated. The subsequent decision of the Chairman Elect/Chair of the HR Panel is final.

Volunteer Grievance

4.1 A grievance is a concern, problem or issue between an volunteer and another volunteer or member of staff within the RSCDS.

Examples include:

- Personal disputes between volunteers, or between volunteers and members of staff.
- The breakdown of relationships between volunteers due to personality conflicts.

- Misunderstandings about the nature or boundaries of a volunteer's role.
- Antagonism between a volunteer and the RSCDS.

4.2 If the grievance is with another person the volunteer should try and talk to the other person, explain why they are unhappy and see if the problem can be sorted out between themselves.

4.3 In some cases, a direct approach may not be possible or advisable, in which case the volunteer should go straight to the next stage but be prepared to explain why the direct approach was not attempted.

4.4 The volunteer should discuss their grievance, as soon as possible, with their 'line manager' e.g. Convenor/Working Group, Panel Chair or if it involves the line manager, with either the Chair Elect or Chair of the HR Panel.

4.5 The line manager should take the grievance seriously and ensure that everything is done to try and resolve the issue.

4.6 The line manager should meet with the volunteer/s as soon as possible to ask them to explain their grievance, to seek their view on the situation and establish what outcome they are seeking.

4.7 The line manager should also meet with the person or group who is being complained about. This is to corroborate the facts, seek their view on the issue and to find out what outcome they would expect.

4.8 If necessary, and without breaking any confidences, the line manager may need to talk to others to help shed light on the root cause of the problem.

4.9 Depending upon the nature of the grievance, possible solutions that may be explored are:

- Making sure those involved understand their roles and responsibilities
- Defining clearer boundaries to the roles
- Adjusting roles and responsibilities so they better suit the individuals' capabilities or preferences
- Advice about behaviour or conduct .

4.10 The volunteer should be notified of the outcome after 14 calendar days.

4.11 If the outcome does not result in agreement or a positive outcome, the volunteer should initiate the review process.

5.1 The grievance should be set out in writing, including specific details and evidence if applicable, and it should be sent to the Chair Elect or Chair of the HR Panel. It should stick to the facts and avoid language that is inflammatory, insulting or abusive. A meeting will take place with the volunteer raising the grievance either in person or virtually, as soon as possible, to discuss their grievance. This will usually be within 14 calendar days of receiving the grievance.

5.2 If it is necessary to gather further information before coming to a conclusion, the person leading the appeal will inform all parties of this and the likely timescale involved.

5.3 Decisions on how to resolve the situation should seek to be jointly agreed between the parties and will be given in writing. Possible solutions may be:

- Regular meetings until either or both volunteers understand their role, their responsibilities, and the relevant policies.
- Some training or mentoring.
- Division or separation of roles so that the parties do not have to work together.
- Re-assign either or both volunteers to a new role, perhaps better suited to their skills and motivations. This allows an enthusiastic volunteer to continue with the organisation, and the organisation to continue to benefit from their knowledge.
- Re-vitalise either or both volunteers, perhaps by giving them an opportunity to take a break. This is particularly relevant for very enthusiastic volunteers, who can sometimes over-commit themselves and suffer from burn out, or who are performing a very demanding role, or who have had a significant change to personal circumstances such as a bereavement, birth of a child or house move.
- Release with dignity if there is no alternative but make this a very positive exit with the volunteer leaving, feeling that they have been appreciated. Asking a volunteer to leave can be extremely difficult, but sometimes it is the best decision for both parties.

5.6 A volunteer has the right to withdraw their grievance complaint at any stage. They also have the right to end their volunteering when they wish.

5.7 The outcome of the review will be confirmed in writing. The decision of the Chair Elect/Chair of the HR Panel person will be final .

6. Confidentiality

- 6.1** The confidentiality of all parties in any of the above scenarios is of paramount importance. Notes of meetings exploring issues of unsatisfactory performance and grievance should be signed and dated by both parties.

Date: 17 January 2025 (To be reviewed in 2 years)

Discrimination/Harassment Complaint Policy and Procedure

A) INTRODUCTION

- 1) Harassment or victimisation on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation is unacceptable.
- 2) Discrimination and harassment can take many forms but, whatever form they take, they are always serious and totally unacceptable.

B) POLICY

The RSCDS deplores all forms of discrimination and harassment and seeks to ensure that the environment is sympathetic to all of our volunteers.

C) COMPLAINING ABOUT DISCRIMINATION/PERSONAL HARASSMENT

1) Informal complaint

If you are the victim of minor discrimination/harassment you should make it clear to the discriminator/harasser, on an informal basis, that their behaviour is unwelcome and ask the harasser to stop. If you feel unable to do this verbally then you should hand a written request to the discriminator/harasser.

2) Formal complaint

Where the informal approach fails, or if the discrimination/harassment is more serious, you should bring the matter to the attention of the Chair or COO as a formal written complaint.

The person dealing with the complaint will carry out a thorough investigation. Those involved in the investigation will be expected to act in confidence and any breach of confidence will be treated as a serious matter.

On conclusion of the investigation, which will normally be within ten working days of the meeting with you, the decision of the investigator, detailing the findings, will be sent in writing to you.

D) GENERAL NOTES

- 1) If the decision is that the allegation is well founded, the discriminator/harasser will be subject to appropriate action.
- 2) If you bring a complaint of discrimination/harassment you will not be victimised for having brought the complaint. However, if it is concluded that the complaint is both untrue and has been brought with malicious intent, it will result in us refusing any further voluntary assistance from you.

RSCDS Volunteer Code of Conduct Agreement

The purpose of this code is to provide a clear framework within which Trustees, Committee members and other volunteers in positions of responsibility within the RSCDS conduct themselves. They have a duty to:

1. Accept the responsibilities of their position, and to act in the best interests of the RSCDS, ahead of any other professional or personal interest. They should at all times consider what is best for the RSCDS, and should avoid bringing it into disrepute.
2. Be familiar with the Society's objects and activities as expressed in the Articles of Association, and act in accordance with their terms and any relevant legislation.
3. Have an up-to-date knowledge of the RSCDS, its values and principles, and its business plan.
4. Manage conflicts of interest effectively. Declare any and all relevant interests on appointment and during meetings.
5. Respect confidentiality, and work considerately and respectfully with all, respecting diversity, different roles and opinions, and avoid giving offence.
6. Prepare fully for, and attend meetings and complete tasks as far as possible.. Actively engage in discussion and debate at meetings, listening carefully, challenging sensitively, and avoiding conflict. Act collectively at meetings and accept a majority decision.

Please sign and date that you have read, understood and agree to the above RSCDS Code of Conduct:

Signature:

Print Name:

Position in the RSCDS:

Date:

On completion, please return to: info@rscds.org