

# The Ure Museum of Greek Archaeology Volunteer Policy

Date reviewed: 01/10/2020

## **Introduction to UMASCS**

University Museums and Special Collections Services (UMASCS) is responsible for the direction of the Museum of English Rural Life and the University's Special Collections and for the strategic development of the University's other museums and related collections including The Ure Museum of Greek Archaeology, the Typography Collection, the Cole Museum of Zoology and the University Herbarium. Volunteers contribute to the activity of all of these University museums and collections (called hereafter 'museums') and are essential to their development and the day to day operations.

## **Why involve volunteers?**

Volunteers play an important role in work of The Ure Museum of Greek Archaeology. They are welcomed by staff and participate in various areas including collection care, archives, education and digital projects. We also offer volunteering opportunities that provide work experience and can be in support of different areas of museum work. These opportunities are normally delivered in partnership with targeted schools and higher education institutions, youth or community organisations. Public participation in the work of the museum is welcomed.

## **Explanation of the volunteer policy**

Our volunteer policy describes how UMASCS involves volunteers within the organisation. It also defines how The Ure Museum recruits and manages volunteers. The purpose of the volunteer policy is to enable UMASCS and more specifically The Ure Museum to acknowledge the value of volunteers, and achieve clear, workable principles within which volunteers and their supervisors can operate.

UMASCS and The Ure Museum view volunteer involvement not as a replacement or alternative to paid staff, but as a way of expanding and enriching our activity and services. We also view volunteering as a way for the museum to involve and extend opportunities for people and communities to make contributions that help inform and shape how we operate, develop our programmes and engage audiences.

## **What is a volunteer?**

A volunteer is someone who gives their time willingly to an organisation. A volunteer is not a replacement for a member of staff; their role is always distinctive to paid staff. We do not enter into binding contracts or personal agreements with volunteers.

## **Recruitment Process**

UMASCS, including the Ure Museum aim to recruit volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds, representative to the local community.

We advertise volunteer opportunities, on our website- [collections.reading.ac.uk/ure-museum/](https://collections.reading.ac.uk/ure-museum/). New volunteer opportunities are also promoted to existing volunteers via email.

The Ure Museum offers four main types of volunteering and individual projects within these are advertised as they arise, There is a standard application form to complete, with the opportunity to highlight areas of particular interest.

Each potential volunteer will be required to complete an application form before they are invited to an informal interview with a member of The Ure Museum staff. Application forms are used to ensure the recruitment process is fair and consistent.

We require two references from every potential volunteer, prior to their start.

If a volunteering opportunity includes work that involves close and unsupervised contact with vulnerable adults and children– known as Regulated Activity – the potential volunteer will be required to complete a DBS check, at no cost to the volunteer.

## **Induction and Training**

A member of The Ure Museum staff will run an induction for every new volunteer, they will cover:

- Health and Safety
- Fire procedures
- A tour of the museum, highlighting all facilities.
- Procedure for signing in and out of the museum
- The number of hours and timing of activity to be undertaken
- The assignment of a supervisor for the role
- Where appropriate the allocation of a buddy or mentor to support the new volunteer

Relevant training is provided for every volunteer entering their new role. Training is also provided throughout to enhance a volunteer's performance and provide them with more opportunities within the organisation.

## **Data Protection**

Records are kept for all volunteers working for UMASCS. These records include contact details, in case of emergency contact information, a record of the projects worked on, training undertaken and the hours volunteered on a project.

Volunteers' personal data is held securely at The Ure Museum (in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-protected computer database) and will not be shared with third parties, in line with the University of Reading's Data Protection and GDPR guidelines.

Data collection and processing is in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation 2016, and the Data Protection Act 2018, and in line with our Privacy Policy which is available to view on our website: <https://merl.reading.ac.uk/about-us/merl-privacy-policy/>

Volunteers' data is also used collectively for management reports. Personal information on individual volunteers is not shared with any external bodies or other departments outside of the University Museums and Special Collections Service without prior permission.

### **Volunteer Roles**

Every Volunteer Role is created to help develop and enhance The Ure Musuem's projects and operations. Each role is carefully planned between Ure Musuem staff . The purpose of the role description is to provide the volunteer with all the necessary information about their tasks and for staff to understand the volunteer's role. Roles for regular volunteers can be adapted to suit the needs of the individual.

We have a robust risk management process at UMASCS which encompasses activities that may be undertaken by volunteers. Risk assessments are shared with volunteers if they are relevant to the role they are undertaking.

We have a commitment to assess every new Volunteer Role for significant hazards.

### **Support and supervision**

Volunteers will be provided with regular support during their time at The Ure Musuem. Day to day support and supervisions is undertaken by The Ure Musuem staff but the UMASCS Volunteer Coordinator can provides additional support if needed. The UMASCS Volunteer Coordinator is Shelia Fisher [sheila.fisher@reading.ac.uk](mailto:sheila.fisher@reading.ac.uk).

Whilst carrying out their role on site, the volunteer's first contact for support is their assigned supervisor.

### **Monitoring**

Ure Musuem staff will undertake an annual review with every volunteer to discuss their role and answer any questions they may have. The annual review is there to ensure the volunteer is able to undertake tasks properly and able to contribute to the overall success of The Ure Museum. If there are any issues arising out of the review, extra training and support may be offered. It is possible that an individual volunteer may be unwilling or unable to improve with extra support in which case, The Ure Museum will suggest that the volunteer arrangement is terminated.

### **Problem Solving**

The Ure Museum aims to deal with every problem that arises, as quickly and fairly as possible. If a volunteer has a grievance that involves another volunteer or a member of staff, we advise they speak to their supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator.

We have set procedures in place for problem solving. These can be seen in the Volunteer Handbook or provided by the Volunteer Coordinator on request.

### **Expenses**

We do not normally pay expenses for travel to and from UMASCS locations because of funding constraints. We do provide travel expenses to attend special events off site. On site tea, coffee and

biscuits are provided free for all volunteers. Under exceptional circumstances to enable volunteers to participate in specific projects and activity funding may also be available to meet volunteer expenses.

### **Insurance**

All volunteers are covered by the University of Reading insurance cover. The insurance certificate is displayed in the Ure Museum Office and a copy can be provided by The Ure Museum staff on request.

### **Equal opportunities**

We welcome volunteers from all parts of the community, regardless of sex, marital status, age, sexual orientation, ethnic or faith background. Some parts of UMASCS are housed in historic buildings that might not be accessible to some people with disabilities and some tasks may be arduous. UMASCS and The Ure Museum will therefore recruit volunteers who are best able to meet the requirements of specific volunteering roles, whilst we seek to accommodate individual volunteer needs to the best of our ability. Volunteer applicants should be at least eighteen years old, unless volunteering is part of an agreed programme with an organisation that UMASCS and The Ure Museum recognises as a partner.

### **Health and Safety**

Volunteers receive Health and Safety training relevant to their role. We as an organisation recognise that Health and Safety is the responsibility of everyone. Our Health and Safety Policy is provided on induction and available at request from The Ure Museum Staff.

### **Reviewing Policy**

The volunteer policy is reviewed annually, to ensure it is in keeping with current changes within the organisation and voluntary sector.

**Separate policies below will be provided at initial induction, they can also be found in the museum office.**

- **Volunteer Data Protection Policy**
- **Volunteer Ex-offenders Policy**
- **Volunteer Health and Safety Policy**

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