

Managing Challenging Volunteer Situations

This policy is intended to give guidance on what is acceptable, it explains how GCAS will respond to a challenging situation in order to protect everyone. It's part of making sure that volunteers are treated fairly and helps make sure that all parties are treated with respect. All complaints will be dealt with openly, fairly and quickly to protect our volunteers, trustees and partner organisation.

The problem-solving process will be covered with volunteers as part of the induction process along with any other relevant policies. Volunteers will be made aware of the potential action that could be taken if there is a breach of these policies.

Three areas where a managing challenging volunteer situation process can be applied:

- Capability: a volunteer's ability to undertake the role
- Performance: how well a volunteer is performing the role
- Conduct: behaviour when taking part in volunteering.

Informal and formal approaches

Dealing with issues with volunteers does not automatically mean that a formal process (excluding cases of gross misconduct) should begin. Any matter pertaining to disclosure shall be dealt with through Disclosure Scotland. Police Scotland and social services will be contacted with any matters pertaining to the Child / Adult Protection Policy. When a formal process has started, there are still alternatives to asking someone to stop volunteering.

Informal process

- Informal procedures aim to resolve behaviour or performance that gives cause for concern as soon as possible.

- When issues arise a trustee / trustees will meet with the volunteer as soon as possible to ask what their view on the situation is. This is to establish the facts surrounding the issue and agree with the volunteer what they are expected to do in order to address this. The timeframe for improvements and for any follow up meetings will be in 15 days unless agreed with the volunteer.
- Constructive feedback or the raising of issues with a volunteer will be conducted by a trustee / trustees at the first available opportunity after a matter of concern, incident or complaint occurs.
- If, after the agreed time, informal procedures do not bring a positive change, the trustee / trustees will initiate the formal process.

Formal process

- If it is not possible to resolve issues using informal procedures then a more formal process will be used to manage the situation.
- In the event that the issue, concern or complaint is more serious, for example gross misconduct, then the formal process will be initiated without consideration of the informal process.
- Initial complaints will be dealt with by an appointed trustee. If the matter is not resolved at this stage, then the volunteer and trustee can refer the matter to the Chairperson of the board of trustees. The chairperson of the board of trustees shall have the final decision as regards to the dismissal of a volunteer.
- Volunteers have the option of having a friend along to any meetings as part of this process.
- Any decisions, that are jointly agreed between the trustee and the volunteer, on how to resolve the situation (more on alternatives below) should be written down and communicated to the volunteer either in writing or via email.
- If a volunteer must leave as a result of these proceedings, they will be informed as soon as possible, during a face to face meeting if practical, and followed up in writing. The relevant trustees and volunteers should be made aware of the situation.
- In extreme circumstances, a volunteer may be asked to leave with, or without, notice. This is the most serious action that can be taken and is reserved for cases of gross misconduct.

Alternative to dismissal

It is the intention of GCAS to manage all areas of the organisation its work, its staff, volunteers, and trustees in line with its Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy. There are options instead of asking a volunteer to leave.

- Regular meetings will take place with the volunteer to support them to understand their role, their responsibilities, and the relevant policies. A trustee will be appointed by the chairperson of the board of trustees to conduct these meetings.
- The trustee and the volunteer can agree that the volunteer will be re-assigned to a new role, perhaps better suited to their skills and motivations. This will allow an enthusiastic volunteer to continue with the organisation, and the organisation to continue to benefit from their knowledge and skills.
- The trustee and the volunteer can agree that the volunteer will be given 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, who are performing a very demanding role, or who have had a significant change to personal circumstances such as a change of job, house move, family demands or health issues.
- Depending on the circumstances, the trustee and the volunteer can agree that the volunteer will be referred to a different organisation.
- The trustee and the volunteer can agree that the volunteer will Retire/release with dignity if there is no alternative. This will be managed as a positive exit with the volunteer leaving, feeling that they have been appreciated.

Signed

Date

Signed

The signed, dated and date for review copy can be seen within the Policy and Procedure Folder.

This Folder is managed by Mary Greig, Musical Director and all staff, trustees and volunteers can access this at any time.

Signed

Date

Signed

Date

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Date

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required.

Date of implementation: September 2017. Review date: September 2018

Signed *Mary Craig*
Date 5/9/17

Signed *Mary Craig*
Date 11/9/18

Signed *Mary Craig*
Date 18/9/19

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