

POLICY & PROCEDURES DOCUMENT

POLICY TITLE: **REFERENCES / STATEMENTS OF ATTENDANCE**

POLICY NUMBER: 5.7

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Association recognise that for many volunteers, the opportunity to participate in voluntary activity creates an avenue for gaining experience for the paid workforce and other purposes, and accordingly all volunteers have the right to a report of their progress.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

1. Clear guidelines exist for the development of reference documents and processes for volunteers working in the Volunteer Association

PROCEDURES (To implement Policy)

1. All official references, whether written or by telephone shall only be given by paid staff of the Operations Team
2. Requests for *written references* need to be made to the Executive Officer or the Area Volunteer Manager by the volunteer. The volunteer should ensure that adequate notice is given to the EO or Area Manager to properly prepare a suitable reference.
3. The Executive Officer or Area Manager will arrange for a written reference to be made, which will be signed by the author. The reference should include comments about the volunteers starting date, their work performance, their strengths and weaknesses. The author shall be aware not to write any discriminating or misleading remarks in a letter of reference.
4. It is recommended that in cases where Managers need to write references of a sensitive nature, that they seek the opinion of the Executive Officer or other senior staff as to the appropriateness of the wording, prior to sending the reference.
5. The attached proforma for written references should be used, where possible, as a guide to writing references in a politically correct manner
6. Written references of this kind will only be issued after a volunteer has contributed 3 months of ongoing service.
7. Where a volunteer requests a written reference prior to completing 3 months of service, a statement of attendance only will be given. The statement of attendance will simply confirm that the person has been a volunteer and list both their start and finish (if relevant) dates. The attached 'Statement of Attendance' proforma may be used

REFERENCES / STATEMENTS OF ATTENDANCE Cont...

8. Requests from volunteers for paid staff to be listed as *phone referees* should be made under the following conditions;
 - 8.1 - The same 3 month trial period as in point 5 applies to this type of reference request.
 - 8.2 - Paid staff are to be asked *prior* to the volunteer listing their name as a telephone referee

9. Volunteers and paid staff are to understand that any references given are to be done so honestly and not fabricated to the advantage of the volunteer. Prospective employers place great emphasis on the report of other agencies & failure to give an accurate report may reflect badly upon the Volunteer Association and may result in legal action.

10. Where a positive report cannot be made about a volunteer's performance or where there is a need to be critical of areas of the volunteer's work, the person being asked to act as a referee should discuss this with the volunteer prior to issuing a reference. The volunteer should be asked if they wish to proceed with the issue of a reference

11. Students undertaking approved field placements are able to have reports filled out at the satisfactory conclusion of their placement - even if the period is less than 3 months.

12. In situations where volunteers are requesting other volunteers to act as referees, or where paid staff (other than the EO, DVS or DoVBS) are being asked to act as a referee for other paid staff, these requests shall firstly require the approval of either the EO, DoVBS or the DVS.

Policy passed by Board of Governance on: May 21st 1997

Last Updated: April 2011

**Proforma
1**

WRITTEN VOLUNTEER REFERENCE

Proforma 1 makes suggestions about the wording of a reference for a volunteer you are very positive about. **Proforma 2** offers suggestions about wording where there are issues that need to be highlighted

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: Mr Joe BLOGGS

Mr Joe Bloggs has been a volunteer with the Lyell McEwin Regional Volunteer Association since February 6th 1998.

Specifically, Mr Bloggs worked as part of our Administration team where his role included;

- Front of house office work
- Answering telephone enquiries from potential volunteers and hospital staff
- Processing mail outs to our volunteer workforce
- Maintaining an inventory of our most commonly used stock items
- Typing minutes and other documents on my behalf

In my dealings with Mr Bloggs, I have at all times found him to be a reliable and friendly member of our team. He has shown a great ability to be punctual, has good customer service skills and is able to work in isolation. He has clearly demonstrated an ability to use his initiative within the workplace.

I have no hesitation in recommending Mr Bloggs as a suitable candidate for any position he may apply for.

I am happy to be contacted further about this letter if further information is required.

Kind regards

Your name and title

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**Proforma
2**

RE: Mr Joe BLOGGS

Mr Joe Bloggs has been a volunteer with the Lyell McEwin Regional Volunteer Association since February 6th 1998.

Specifically, Mr Bloggs worked as part of our Administration team where his role included;

- Front of house office work
- Answering telephone enquiries from potential volunteers and hospital staff
- Processing mail outs to our volunteer workforce
- Maintaining an inventory of our most commonly used stock items
- Typing minutes and other documents on my behalf

In my dealings with Mr Bloggs, I have found him to be a friendly and committed member of our team. He has demonstrated good customer service skills and is able to work in isolation. He has clearly demonstrated an ability to use his initiative within the workplace. I have however on two occasions, had to speak to Joe about being more punctual, as he had been late on several occasions. Joe has responded well to this feedback and we have noticed a significant change in him attending on time.

I am happy to be contacted further about this letter if further information is required.

Kind regards

Your name and title

**Proforma
3**

STATEMENT OF ATTENDANCE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: Mr Joe BLOGGS

I wish to confirm that Mr Joe Bloggs was been a volunteer with the Lyell McEwin Regional Volunteer Association between February 6th 2002 and March 30th 2002.

Specifically, Mr Bloggs worked as part of our Administration team where his role included;

- Front of house office work
- Answering telephone enquiries from potential volunteers and hospital staff
- Processing mail outs to our volunteer workforce
- Maintaining an inventory of our most commonly used stock items
- Typing minutes and other documents on my behalf

Kind regards

Your name and title