



# **Football Club United of Manchester Volunteer Handbook**

## **Welcome to Football Club United of Manchester**

Welcome to Football Club United of Manchester (FCUM) and thank you for considering giving up some of your spare time to volunteer with us. Volunteers and members are at the heart of FCUM. The club could not exist without volunteers.

This handbook contains lots of information to help you decide whether you want to become a volunteer and, if you do, to make the most of your time with FCUM. It is designed to tell you about FCUM and our work, as well as answers questions and give guidance to staff and volunteers alike.

A volunteer for FCUM is someone who is registered with the organisation and gives their time, free of charge. FCUM greatly values the enormous contribution made by our volunteers. As a supporter-owned club built on cooperation, community and collective effort, volunteers play a central role in the running of matchdays and club activities.

## **Contents of the Volunteer Handbook**

### **1. Introduction to FCUM**

- 1.1 Contact details
- 1.2 History and Club Manifesto

### **2. Becoming a Volunteer**

- 2.1 Application Process
- 2.2 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks
- 2.3 Volunteers Rights and Responsibilities
- 2.4 Our Commitment to Volunteers
- 2.5 Training for Volunteers

### **3. Volunteer Policies and Procedures (Overview)**

- 3.1 Volunteer Agreement
- 3.2 Volunteer Ground Entry Policy
- 3.3 Health and Safety
- 3.4 Equality and Diversity
- 3.5 Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk
- 3.6 Data Protection

- 3.7 Acceptable Use of Information Technology
- 3.8 Problem Solving Procedure
- 3.9 Volunteer Complaints Procedure
- 3.10 Volunteer Expenses

## 1. Introduction to FCUM of Manchester

### 1.1 Contact details

**Main Office:** Broadhurst Park, 310 Lightbowne Road, Moston, Manchester, M40 0FJ

**Email:** [office@fc-utd.uk](mailto:office@fc-utd.uk)

**Telephone:** 0161 769 2005

**Website:** [www.fc-utd.co.uk](http://www.fc-utd.co.uk)

**General Manager and Club Secretary:** Frances Fielding ([frances.fielding@fc-utd.net](mailto:frances.fielding@fc-utd.net))

**Volunteer Co-Ordinator:** Les Croft ([les.croft@fc-utd.uk](mailto:les.croft@fc-utd.uk))

**Club Welfare Officer:** Chris Boulderstone ([chris.boulderstone@fc-utd.uk](mailto:chris.boulderstone@fc-utd.uk))

#### **Board Leads:**

Nick Boom: Chair ([nick.boom@fc-utd.net](mailto:nick.boom@fc-utd.net))

Warren Heppolette (Finance and Risk Committee and Equality and Diversity Lead) ([warren.heppolette@fc-utd.uk](mailto:warren.heppolette@fc-utd.uk))

Paul Hurst (Commercial Committee and Communications Committee) ([paul.hurst@fc-utd.uk](mailto:paul.hurst@fc-utd.uk))

Simon Preston (Football Committee) ([simon.preston@fc-utd.uk](mailto:simon.preston@fc-utd.uk))

### 1.2 History and Club Manifesto

FCUM is a community football club owned and democratically run by its members. Its corporate structure is a Community Benefit Society and membership is open to all, with everyone an equal co-owner, holding one voting share in the club.

The club was founded in 2005 and is a semi-professional football club, currently playing in the Northern Premier League. The club regularly attracts crowds of more than 1800 - several times the league average - and boasts many on and off the field achievements including three consecutive promotions and a number of trophies. The club has a women's team and youth teams. The club also hosts a football academy to bring through young players combined with a good education experience.

It is unique at its level of English football in having its obligations to its fan communities and local communities written into its Club Objects which are part of the Club's constitution.

FCUM seeks to change the way that football clubs are owned and run, putting supporters at the heart of everything. It aims to show, by example, how this can work in practice by creating a sustainable, successful, fan-owned, democratic football club that creates real and lasting benefits to its members and local communities.

The seven core principles of how the club operates are set out below:

1. The Board will be democratically elected by its members.
2. Decisions taken by the membership will be decided on a one member, one vote basis.
3. The club will develop strong links with the local community and strive to be accessible to all, discriminating against none.
4. The club will endeavour to make admission prices as affordable as possible, to as wide a constituency as possible.
5. The club will encourage young, local participation - playing and supporting - whenever possible.
6. The Board will strive wherever possible to avoid outright commercialism.
7. The club will remain a non-profit organisation.

## **2. Becoming a Volunteer**

An FCUM volunteer is a person who demonstrates an understanding of the club's ethics and ethos by their actions, in giving their time to the club each season. You do not have to be a member of FCUM to become a volunteer. However, there are a number of benefits to being a member, including access to club reports and documents, and being able to attend and vote at our Annual General Meetings.

There are many ways to volunteer at FCUM such as supporting match day activities, participating in our committees, or helping out in the office.

### **2.1 Application Process**

We regularly welcome volunteers who are willing to contribute their time, skills and experience to support FCUM and its activities. We recognise that volunteers bring a wide range of abilities, backgrounds and life experiences, and we aim to provide flexible opportunities that reflect their interests, strengths and availability while supporting the needs of the club.

All volunteers must complete a Volunteer Agreement and have an induction with their key contact before they can start volunteering at FCUM.

### **2.2 DBS Checks**

If a volunteer role involves working with children, young people, or vulnerable adults then FCUM will carry out an enhanced DBS check of each volunteer. Having a criminal record does not automatically prevent a person from volunteering. A person's criminal record would be examined on an individual basis. All enquiries will be dealt with in the strictest confidence. Certain volunteer roles may be eligible for criminal record checks under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order and relevant DBS legislation. If you have concerns please contact either the General Manager or the Club Welfare Officer. If the Disclosure reveals information that we were not previously aware of, we will discuss the matter with you before making a final decision. If you require further information about your rights in relation to Disclosure applications, and our responsibilities to you, please ask us for a copy of the Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Conduct or download this from the Bureau's website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>.

As an organisation committed to equality and diversity, we recognise the contribution that all people can make as volunteers and so we welcome enquiries

of interest from everyone. We recognise too that many potential volunteers may have criminal records and are reluctant to apply for voluntary work where this would involve the disclosure of their record. We understand that people worry they will not be treated fairly because of them. We work on the assumption that people apply for voluntary work in order to help others, to meet new people, to develop new skills, to make a difference, etc, have no ulterior motive in seeking such work. With this in mind, we will where possible provide opportunities for people, and do so in ways that will not put you or anyone who uses the services of the Club at risk.

## **2.3 Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities**

Volunteers are a valuable resource to FCUM, its staff and its service users. Volunteers have the right to be given meaningful roles, the right to effective supervision and to recognition for work done. In return, volunteers will agree to fulfil their role to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to FCUM's values, goals and procedures as defined by the Club co-owners and board.

## **2.4 Our Commitment to Volunteers**

We, FCUM, will do our best to:

- Introduce you to how the organisation works and your contribution to it
- Provide training relevant to your volunteering role
- Give you the opportunity to provide feedback on all aspects of your volunteering and get feedback from us
- Respect your skills and individual wishes and do our best to meet them.
- Consult with you and keep you informed of possible changes
- Insure you against injury you may suffer, or cause due to negligence
- Provide a safe workplace
- Apply our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Apply our problem solving procedure or complaints procedure if there is any problem
- Give you current information regarding volunteering at FCUM through regular meetings and communications

**Volunteers will not take the place of paid employees or professionals at FCUM.**

Volunteers complement and support the work of paid staff and will not be used to replace paid positions.

The volunteer will:

- Volunteer reliably to the best of their ability
- Give as much warning as possible whenever they cannot work when expected or if unable to continue volunteering
- Follow FCUM's policies and guidelines, including Health & Safety, Equality and Diversity and Confidentiality
- Inform their key contact, if they have any difficulty with their volunteering
- Be respectful to fellow volunteers, staff and Club members
- Follow the policy guidelines if you they are volunteering on a match day

## **2.5 Induction and Training for Volunteers**

We will ensure you have all the information you need when you start volunteering. We will work with you to identify any training needs that may have. FCUM is committed to supporting its volunteers who may have protected characteristics. If this is the case, you may wish to discuss any issues with your key contact at the club including any reasonable adjustments you may have, which are related to your volunteer role. Where possible, we will provide training in-house, at FCUM but occasionally we may send volunteers to external courses or employ an external trainer.

## **3. Volunteer Policies and Procedures (Overview)**

The next section provides a summary of some of FCUM's relevant policies and procedures. At the FCUM office there is a folder that contains full versions of all FCUM's policies, which volunteers will be shown during their induction and can request access at any time.

If you are unclear about any of the policies and procedures, or if you have any questions, please tell your key contact who will be identified in your volunteer agreement or a member of staff.

### **3.1 FCUM Volunteer Agreement**

All volunteers will be asked to complete and sign a Volunteer Agreement before they begin volunteering with FCUM. The Volunteer Agreement sets out the mutual expectations between the Club and its volunteers and helps ensure that everyone has a positive and rewarding volunteering experience.

The Volunteer Agreement is valid for one season and must be renewed at the start of each new season if you wish to continue volunteering with the Club.

Volunteers will be given a copy of their signed agreement and a copy will be retained by FCUM.

The agreement will include details of your key contact at FCUM, relevant policies and procedures, and any reasonable adjustments that may be required to support you in your volunteering.

### **3.2 Volunteer Ground Entry Policy**

To ensure both safety and fairness, all volunteers are required to follow the club's entry procedures when attending matchdays. Essential match day roles do not require you to pay for a ticket. The process includes signing in on arrival and, where applicable, having a Season Ticket scanned, presenting a Ten Match Ticket voucher, showing proof of advance purchase, or paying upon entry. You will receive an identity badge and wrist band which must be worn at all times whilst in the stadium

### **3.3 Health & Safety**

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Club has certain obligations to its employees and volunteers. FCUM will ensure a safe environment for volunteers as follows:

- Assess the risks in the workplace
- Maintain written and accessible health and safety procedures
- Ensure that the workplace satisfies health, safety and welfare requirements for ventilation, temperature, lighting and staff facilities
- Ensure safe and clear access to and from the building, including fire exits
- Regularly check the premises room by room for structural defects, worn fixtures and fittings or electrical equipment, and take the necessary remedial action
- Making volunteers aware of fire safety procedures and emergency evacuation arrangements
- Ensuring that volunteers know how to report accidents, incidents and near misses.
- Providing volunteers with appropriate information, instruction and guidance to help them volunteer safely.
- Working with contractors, suppliers and other organisations to minimise risks to anyone using FCUM premises and facilities.

FCUM's health and safety policy includes guidelines regarding safe working practices and the creation of a safe working environment. Persons covered by the policy (staff, volunteers and other people who visit FCUM premises, such as beneficiaries or clients) are asked to adhere to these guidelines.

Employees and Volunteers will also be made aware of their responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act and will:

- Take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of others around them
- Co-operate with FCUM on matters of health and safety
- Use work equipment correctly
- Provide guidance to users and visitors of FCUM premises and act responsibly to ensure their health and safety
- Report any accidents, or near misses, to staff member

### **3.4 Equality and Diversity**

FCUM is responsible for setting standards and values to apply throughout the club at every level. Football belongs to and should be enjoyed by everyone, equally. Equality of opportunity at FCUM means that in all our activities we will not discriminate or in any way treat anyone less favourably. Our commitment is to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (protected characteristics). FCUM is committed to supporting its volunteers who may have protected characteristics, If this is the case, you may wish to discuss any issues with your key contact at the club including any reasonable adjustments you may require.

FCUM will not tolerate sexual or racially based harassment or other discriminatory behaviour from or to its volunteers, whether physical or verbal and will work to ensure that such behaviour is met with appropriate action in whatever context it occurs.

FCUM is committed to the development of the programme of ongoing training and awareness raising events and activities in order to promote the eradication of discrimination within its own organisation and in the wider context, within football as a whole. As such we have signed an Equality Charter with Kick it Out.

### **3.5 Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk**

The club acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child/young person/adult at risk whilst employed, volunteering, playing or spectating at FCUM and to ensure that they are safe from all physical, sexual and emotional harm and from neglect and bullying.

All children/young people/adults at risk, regardless of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion, and/or sexual orientation (defined as Protected Characteristics within the Equality Act 2010) have the right to equal protection from harm or abuse.

Everyone connected with the club will be expected to read these guidelines and understand their responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of children/young people and adults at risk, and to take steps to ensure allegations or suspicions of abuse are taken seriously.

## **Reporting Safeguarding Concerns**

### **NO ACTION IS NOT AN OPTION**

- All suspicions, allegations or witnessing of abuse or harm to a child, young person or adult at risk must be reported immediately. It may be nothing or it could mean that you prevent further harm to someone.
- Never give an assurance of confidentiality. Assure the complainant that concerns will only be reported to the people whose job it is to protect them. Do not investigate the concern yourself. However, if you are given details, make notes so that you are able to share them with the appropriate person. Whilst doing this, only ask open ended questions.
- In the first instance, report to FCUM's welfare officer. If they are not available, report to a board member. They will then work with the appropriate agencies so necessary action can be taken.
- Where immediate action to prevent harm is needed, and the Welfare office or board member is not available, you may need to contact the police, the NSPCC (0808 800 500, text 88858) or call an ambulance.
- If you witness harm to a child/young person/adult at risk that requires action, call an ambulance and tell them this is a safeguarding concern involving a child, young person or adult at risk. Let the club Welfare Officer know what action you have taken and they will then refer to the necessary agencies and the FA.

## **FCUM Responsibilities**

- To ensure and maintain a safeguarding culture within the club to respect all and maintain a safe environment where people feel comfortable to share concerns
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse of any kind will be dealt with in a timely manner
- FCUM will work closely with other agencies to ensure safeguarding is paramount within the club
- Staff, coaches, board members and essential volunteers will undertake a safeguarding workshop (this can be done online)
- Ensure the safeguarding policy is published on the club website and is easily accessible to all

### **3.6 Data Protection Policy**

FCUM will only hold your personal information in line with the following Data Protection Principles:

- Data will be processed fairly and lawfully and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject
- Data will only be obtained for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes
- Data requested will be adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which it is processed
- Data will be kept accurately and, where necessary, kept up to date; every reasonable step will be taken to ensure that personal data that is inaccurate is erased or rectified without delay
- Data will be kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the data is being processed
- Data will be processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.

Personal information of volunteers will not be released to any third party for promotional or marketing purposes. In unusual circumstances personal information may be released to third parties, eg in case of a medical emergency, or as part of a criminal investigation.

Individuals can request to see information FCUM holds about them. FCUM will respond to requests in accordance with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 requirements.

### **3.7 Acceptable Use of IT Policy**

The aim of FCUM's Acceptable Use of Computer and Internet Policy is to govern the use of the company's technology and Internet service by staff, volunteers, beneficiaries and visitors.

Volunteers are permitted to use the computers only under the supervision of staff who are responsible for ensuring that these users adhere to this policy and do not access inappropriate materials. Volunteers who need to use a computer as part of their role will be provided with an email address.

Access rights will be determined by the Club.

It is prohibited to install additional applications without the express permission of the Network Administrator who will decide if the requested software is suitable for installation on the FCUM computer system.

It is prohibited to connect a personal device to a USB port without specific permission from a senior member of staff. This includes mp3 players, digital cameras, pen drives, mobile phones and any other portable device.

FCUM staff and volunteers are expected to be aware of copyright law in terms of the use of resources and materials made available on the Internet and must ensure these laws are adhered to when using the Internet service at FCUM.

FCUM staff and volunteers are expected to be aware of what constitutes inappropriate material and should not access or circulate material of this nature using the Internet service at FCUM.

### **3.8 Problem Solving Procedure**

FCUM greatly values the contribution made by its volunteers. Most issues can be resolved through open communication and mutual understanding. This procedure is intended to provide a fair and consistent approach where concerns arise and to support volunteers in continuing their involvement with the Club wherever possible.

A concern may relate to a volunteer's conduct, attendance, reliability, communication or any other matter that affects their ability to contribute positively to FCUM.

### **Informal Resolution**

Where a concern arises, the volunteer's key contact or team leader will discuss the matter with them informally at the earliest opportunity. The purpose of this discussion is to understand any difficulties, clarify expectations and agree any support or changes that may help resolve the issue.

This may include:

- Providing additional guidance, training or support
- Agreeing reasonable adjustments where appropriate
- Reviewing the volunteer's activities or responsibilities.
- Moving the volunteer to a different area of volunteering where suitable opportunities exist
- Agreeing a reasonable period of time to review progress

Most concerns are expected to be resolved through this informal approach.

### **Formal Review**

Where a serious concern arises, or where an issue cannot be resolved through informal discussion, the matter may be referred to the General Manager or another appropriate person appointed by the Club.

The volunteer will be informed of the concern and given an opportunity to discuss the matter and provide their perspective. The volunteer may be accompanied to any formal meeting by another volunteer, Club member or colleague if they wish. Following the review, the Club will decide what action, if any, is appropriate. This may include:

- Agreeing further support or guidance
- Agreeing specific expectations for future volunteering
- Moving the volunteer to a different volunteering opportunity where appropriate
- Suspending volunteering activities for a specified period
- Ending the volunteering arrangement

Any decision will be communicated clearly to the volunteer together with the reasons for that decision.

### **Immediate Action**

In exceptional circumstances, where there are concerns relating to safety, safeguarding, serious misconduct or potential reputational damage to the Club, FCUM may temporarily suspend a volunteer from volunteering activities or access to Club premises while the matter is reviewed.

## **Appeals**

A volunteer who wishes to appeal a decision made under this procedure should submit their reasons in writing to a member of the Board within seven days of being notified of the decision.

The appeal will be considered by a Board member who has not been directly involved in the matter wherever possible. The outcome of the appeal will be final.

## **3.9 Complaints Procedure**

FCUM values the involvement of volunteers and aims to ensure that volunteering is a positive and rewarding experience. We welcome feedback and suggestions on how volunteering with the Club can be improved. However, if you feel that an issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you have the right to make a complaint.

The purpose of this procedure is to explain how FCUM will handle complaints raised by volunteers.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by a volunteer about any aspect of their volunteering experience at FCUM.

Complaints can be made in the following ways:

- by letter
- by phone
- in person
- by email
- by someone acting on your behalf

All complaints will be:

- acknowledged promptly
- treated fairly and respectfully
- responded to as thoroughly as reasonably possible

Our Complaints Procedure has three stages:

### **STAGE 1: INFORMAL RESOLUTION**

In the first instance, you should raise your concern with your Volunteer Team Leader or key contact. Most issues can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion.

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, you will be asked whether you would like to progress the issue as a formal complaint.

## **STAGE 2: FORMAL COMPLAINT**

If you wish to proceed, you will need to put your complaint in writing addressed to the General Manager. Your complaint will be acknowledged in writing or by phone within 3 working days and we will aim to resolve the complaint within 10 working days. If this target of 10 days cannot be met, you will be informed of the delay, the reason for the delay, and the new target for responding. If the complaint involves the General Manager, you may address it directly to a member of the Board.

## **STAGE 3: REVIEW BY THE BOARD**

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you may request a review by the Board.

The Board will consider the complaint and provide a final response. Their decision will be final.

### **3.10 Volunteer Expenses Policy**

FCUM recognises the essential role played by volunteers in all aspects of club activities. As part of our commitment to being inclusive we do not expect people who volunteer to be out of pocket.

Expenses will be reimbursed only when they are approved in advance by the General Manager (or appointed person) in accordance with this volunteer expenses procedure. The following expenses can be claimed:

1. Bus/ tram/ train tickets to cover out of pocket transport costs. FCUM reserves the right to reimburse up to the value of the cheapest method of public transport.
2. Where public transport cannot be used car mileage allowance is £0.45 per mile.
3. Car parking fees incurred in the course of volunteering will be refunded but where possible volunteers are expected to identify free or low cost parking.
5. Taxi fares will be met only where the use of public transport is not practical or a volunteer has mobility difficulties.

6. The cost of unavoidable overnight stays in bed and breakfast/hotels will be reimbursed where such a stay is needed, for example to attend training. Expenses for overnight stays must be agreed beforehand with the designated staff.

7. Volunteers can claim reimbursement of money spent on stationery, postage and phone calls undertaken on behalf of the organisation. Any such spending must be approved in advance by designated staff.

8. Receipts must be provided for all expenditure including car-parking tickets and tickets. The appropriate expenses form must be completed and signed and given to designated staff for countersignature. Submissions should be made no later than six months from the expenditure. It will then be passed on to Finance for processing.

9. If you feel that this policy is being breached you should report your concerns in line with FCUM of Manchester's grievance and/or complaints procedure.

## **Review Process for the Handbook**

We hope all volunteers have found this handbook useful. We will review the handbook every three years. We may review before that if there are legislative changes or if members vote on issues that might affect volunteers. Any feedback from volunteers or members about the contents (or what you think should be added) would be welcome at any time.

<b>Policy: Volunteer Handbook</b>		<b>Date</b>
<u>Approved By:</u>	<u>Club Board</u>	<b>June 2026</b>
<u>Review Date:</u>		<b>June 2029</b>
<u>Policy Owner:</u>	<u>General Manager</u> <u>Finance and Risk Committee</u>	<b>June 2026</b>