

Role Descriptions – A guide to this essential document

An extract from the [Active Volunteer Management Toolkit](#) – Finding and looking after the people who are key to the survival of your organisation (Centre, Club, School)

Why have a description for a role?

A role description is important for volunteers because it allows them to know exactly what will be expected of them and how they will be supported. They can then make an informed decision.

How to create a role description

When developing role descriptions, make sure the role is achievable. If necessary, split it or offer the opportunity to job-share. Often people are happy to volunteer, but perhaps don't want to make a long-term commitment. Consider breaking down positions to cater for short-term volunteering opportunities or one-off activities. Remember, flexibility is key.

Sometimes roles might not actually be appropriate for a volunteer and where an organisation has paid staff perhaps responsibility should fall to them. Volunteer Auckland have developed some handy tips around this: <https://volunteeringauckland.org.nz/files/guidelines-v2.pdf>

What should a role description include? (This may vary depending on the nature of the role)

- Role/title
- Key purpose
- Main point of contact/who the position reports to
- Connection points – ie key people communication will be required with
- Key responsibilities
- Desired knowledge and skills/experience required/whether training will be available
- Time Commitment – hourly/weekly
- Term of the role – there are no mandatory requirements which determine for how long a volunteer role should be filled. Some things to consider:
 - Type of role
 - Procedural requirements: if the position needs to be voted in at an AGM then an annual term may be appropriate
 - Preferences: shorter term roles are often more appealing
 - Role rotation: balance loss of experience with introducing fresh skills and knowledge. You shouldn't allow post-holders to automatically role over for another term. This is why succession planning is important.

Follow this process

1. List all the roles in your organisation that need a role description
2. Determine how the roles might be structured:
 - a. Could they be broken down (micro-volunteering)?
 - b. Can they be completed by virtual volunteers?
 - c. Can they be split and shared by more than one person?
3. Write a role description for the key roles which exist in your organisation. Several common volunteer roles are outlined below with links to example role descriptions. If a description for your role doesn't exist, use the templates to help develop one for the specific role.
4. Ensure that you tailor the role description to your requirements and include any relevant information which is important for the position or your organisation.

Example Role Descriptions

[President/Chairperson](#)

[Secretary](#)

[Treasurer](#)

[Health and Safety Coordinator](#)

[Fundraising and Sponsorship Coordinator](#)

Committee Member

Competition and Events Manager/Coordinator

[Volunteer Manager/Coordinator](#)

[Coach](#)

Coach Developer

Manager

Umpire

Bench Official

Timekeeper/Scorer

Medical Support

Fundraising Officer

Canteen/Bar Staff

Child Protection Officers

Junior Convenor

Maintenance