

1. Jane is an excellent volunteer befriender who asks you if she can attend the upcoming free I.T. course as she has just got a computer and wants to be able to email her granddaughter. You know there are a couple of spaces on the course and feel sorry for her as her granddaughter now lives quite some distance away. You agree that if there is still an empty space on the day she can attend.
2. Darshna is on JSA and comes in one morning a week to process data. You pay her petrol and agree to also pay her parking fee. When going through her claim you notice the parking receipts are for all day rather than just the morning, she explains that she goes to college in the afternoon and cannot really afford the parking. She is a brilliant volunteer and you don't want to upset her so you let it go.
3. Your organisation has a community card with a local builders merchant that gives a small discount for use on your DIY project. David, the DIY/Handyman volunteer has asked if he can use the card to purchase materials for his own personal use. You realise that he could have just used the card without asking anyway and appreciate his honesty so agree just this once.
4. Helena is the volunteer manager of the charity shop. She feels that as a way of saying thank you the other volunteers in the shop they could get first choice of the better donated articles at a reduced price. You are always keen to show you appreciate volunteers so agree providing the goods are for themselves and not friends and family.
5. You manage five volunteer advocates within the organisation providing advocacy to people with learning difficulties. They let you know when they are available, usually for a month ahead, and you book them clients. You would like to streamline the process and so have asked them to guarantee you at least four hours on a specific day, so that you will have cover every day of the week and can book appointments for some time ahead. A couple of the volunteers are not keen as they feel it will put too much pressure on them but have reluctantly agreed for a trial period. You want this stipulation written into any future volunteer agreement as you feel it will create a more efficient work process.
6. You have six volunteers who run a lunch club for the elderly. Sarah, one of the volunteers, usually leaves her daughter with a friend on her volunteering day, but the friend has now got a job so cannot look after the child. Sarah asks if you could reimburse her for child care costs but you tell her you cannot as this would be seen as a 'consideration' and may imply that she had a contract, besides you decide that the organisation could not possibly afford the costs. Sarah decides she cannot afford to continue.

## Volunteer Situation Sheet: Feedback

1. **Wrong.** This would be allowing Jane to access training that is not relevant to her role and could be seen as a '**consideration**'. You could research other local free I.T. courses that Jane could attend.
2. **Wrong.** This would be paying Darshna expenses not incurred in her volunteering and could be viewed as a '**consideration**'. Explain that this could alter her volunteer status and may jeopardise her entitlement to benefit. Pay Darshna the cost of half day parking and mark her ticket accordingly. Find out if there is any free parking locally that she could access in the afternoon.
3. **Wrong.** Yes David could have used the card without permission but once you know and allow it this amounts to a '**consideration**'. It also is taking advantage of the builders who have given this discount facility. Explain to David that this would not be fair to other volunteers and would affect his status as a volunteer.
4. **Wrong.** Again this would be viewed as a '**consideration**', apart from the fact that it is unfair to other volunteers within the organisation and to the donors who rightly expect the charity to get the top price for the goods they donate.
5. **Wrong.** You are putting an '**obligation**' on the volunteers to commit to specific days and times and this could be construed as creating a contract. If you have this written into an agreement the volunteers could quite rightly claim they have a contract.
6. **Wrong.** Payment towards or for child care costs is a legitimate expense and you could reimburse this without jeopardising Sarah's volunteer status. With regard to the costs - to refuse this request out of hand is not being very inclusive. You could ask your supervisor if there is any way you could at least contribute to the child care costs or look for funding that might provide this.
7. **Wrong.** This will build into a situation and needs addressing. **Check.** Were paid staff fully involved and in agreement with the decision to involve volunteers and do they welcome volunteers? You need to bring this up at a team meeting or in staff supervision. Staff need to be aware of the difference between them and volunteers and that legally volunteers should not be under any obligation to undertake work and that consideration should be given to volunteers who cannot commit on a regular basis.