

Rules for volunteers

Express FM wants to include many types of people and many kinds of programmes. To ensure things run smoothly, we have a few simple rules that need to be followed. All members of our team are asked to sign-up to them when they join.

1. In And Around Express FM

1.1 Respect

Everyone shares a duty to create a positive working atmosphere at Express FM. We don't allow anyone to cause offence or distress to colleagues, through harmful words or violence.

1.2 Shows (see also section 2 'On the Air')

Shows will be allocated by Express FM staff. Each schedule will run for a period of approximately 13 weeks after which the schedule will come up for review.

1.3 Use of IT facilities

The computers should be treated with care. You mustn't eat or drink whilst using them. The University of Portsmouth and Highbury College provide the Internet facilities and so users should also adhere to their rules of use. The purpose of the computing facilities is primarily for Express FM related use and such work always takes priority over any other activity.

1.4 Studio Use

Studios not on the air can often be booked for training/production/practice/pre-recording of features etc. See a member of Express FM staff for availability.

1.5 Drugs

You must never turn up at Express FM under the influence of drink or drugs. All of Express FM's studios and offices are strictly non-smoking.

1.6 Studio Manager

You should follow the duty Studio Manager's instructions. The presence of any guests (other than those scheduled to appear on air) is subject to his/her permission.

2. On The Air

Public broadcasting is a privilege, and we always respect our listeners and our special access into their homes, cars and workplaces.

2.1 Behaviour on the Air

When on air you literally become the voice of Express FM so don't say anything that goes against what Express FM aims to achieve. For example, you must not:

1. Use bad language.
2. Display any political bias.
3. Discriminate (by race/gender/disability or other).
4. Break the law (contempt of court/libel).
5. Bad-mouth other organisations (especially other radio stations).

Also, you are not generally allowed to receive any money, goods or services in exchange for 'plugging' anything on air. Small exceptions may be made to this rule (a copy of a local band's CD for instance); please mention such items to a member of staff.

2.2 Attendance

You must not think that because you have a weekly slot that you can never miss your show but you must understand also that by taking on a show you make a commitment to us.

If, for whatever reason, you cannot do your show all we ask is that you provide us with plenty of time to make alternative arrangements. For example, if it's your 40th birthday let us know beforehand, we won't mind!

Simply not turning up for a show is unacceptable.

Of course there will always be exceptional circumstances and we understand this.

You must also turn up at the agreed time for any on-air commitment. Being late could mean not being able to gain access to the studio. If there's a problem and you are going to be late, you must phone the studio to alert us as soon as possible.

2.3 Behaviour in the Studios

In order to protect equipment food and drink will not be allowed in the studios other than in designated areas.

Likewise, use your head; rough and tumble and ball games are not suitable for radio studios!

3. Representing Express FM

3.1 Promotion

All team members share the responsibility to tell everyone in the Portsmouth area about the radio station. You should explain your role and our mission in a positive light. We're not perfect but we stress our achievements in public, not the things that go wrong!

3.2 Engagements

You will probably need to make promises to outsiders about Express FM – an interview slot on your weekly show, for example. We always try to keep our promises; find a system for remembering what you've promised, and if things go wrong, apologise fully and promptly.

3.3 Authority

There are some things that can only be promised by Express FM staff members. These include future programme schedule commitments, spending any money and ordering any goods/services. Volunteers should refer all such issues to a member of staff.

3.4 You are not generally allowed to accept any money, goods or services by using your connection with Express FM. There may be exceptions (such as requests to review gigs), but these situations need to be checked first with a member of staff.

As a volunteer you are one of our most valuable assets, we look forward to working with you.

Volunteer Disciplinary Procedure

1. In respect of a minor breach of conduct a formal verbal warning will be given.
2. A more serious breach of conduct/discipline or a repetition of a series of minor breaches of discipline (including but not limited to smoking or drinking alcohol on the premises, being disrespectful to others, swearing on air, or being late for your show) will result in a written warning which, where appropriate, will be a final written warning indicating that you will either be temporarily excluded from the station, or your \ show time may be moved.
3. The most serious breaches of conduct (including but not limited to the use of violent or threatening behaviour, the consumption of illegal drugs on the station's premises, being on station premises under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, theft of property from the station's premises, sexual harassment and acts of dishonesty or serious breaches of confidentiality) will be regarded as gross misconduct and are likely to result in dismissal without previous warning.
4. In all cases, before any disciplinary action is taken, you will be interviewed by a staff member and be informed of any allegations made against you. You will be given an opportunity to state your case and may be accompanied by a colleague of your choice. If the complaint is upheld you will be informed of the disciplinary action to be taken.

You may appeal against any step in the disciplinary process by writing to the Station Director.