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LSBU

# Gifts and Hospitality Policy

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**This Procedure is available in accessible formats on request from governance team. Please contact: [governance@lsbu.ac.uk](mailto:governance@lsbu.ac.uk)**

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# Gifts and Hospitality Policy

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Under the LSBU value of integrity, we all have an interest in making sure that LSBU is recognised as an ethical, trustworthy and principled organisation. Employees (which includes all LSBU workers) will achieve this by observing the highest levels of ethics and integrity in conducting university business.
- 1.2 The Bribery Act 2010, in force since 1<sup>st</sup> July 2011, does not prevent bona fide, reasonable and proportionate business hospitality or promotional gifts. However, when hospitality or gifts go beyond what is proportionate or reasonable then they become bribes. A criminal offence may be committed by employees offering or accepting the gift or hospitality. Therefore, this policy should be read in conjunction with LSBU's Anti-Bribery policy.
- 1.3 This policy provides guidance on what gifts or hospitality it is appropriate for employees to offer or accept when dealing with suppliers and stakeholders of the university.
- 1.4 This policy is not intended to restrict the ordinary course of business of the university. Employees may continue to accept **reasonable** business hospitality, travel and associated accommodation. Examples include: participation in an academic conference, validation and review activities and external examining and moderation.
- 1.5 Employees involved in **any stage** of a tender or quote process must not accept any gifts or hospitality from candidate firms (or their connected parties) during a competitive procurement exercise or once the tender planning process has commenced.
- 1.6 Employees should use their common sense in deciding what is reasonable to accept or offer.
- 1.7 In deciding what to do, each employee should ask themselves the following questions:
  - 1.7.1 Would you be embarrassed if anyone found out about your accepting the gift or hospitality?
  - 1.7.2 Could your receiving the gift or hospitality be deemed as having the potential to influence your decisions or behaviour in any way?
  - 1.7.3 Would you be prepared to pay for the hospitality you are receiving from your own pocket?
- 1.8 The timing of an offer and the context in which it is made are relevant factors.

For example, a gift offered to a lecturer during examination or assessment period is viewed differently from one made after results are published. Employees should seek prior authorisation by their line manager where there is even the slightest concern about whether to offer or accept a gift or hospitality.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1. This policy applies to all employees and officers of LSBU, and to temporary workers, consultants, contractors, agents and subsidiaries acting for, or on behalf of, LSBU ("associated persons") within the UK and overseas. Every employee and associated person acting for, or on behalf of, LSBU is responsible for maintaining the highest standards of business conduct.
- 2.2. Any breach of this policy will be regarded as misconduct and is likely to constitute a serious disciplinary, contractual and criminal matter for the individual concerned, potentially leading to summary dismissal, and criminal proceedings if bribery is suspected.

## **3. Responsibility**

- 3.1. The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Framework) has the overall responsibility for this procedure but has delegated the day-to-day responsibilities for its operation (including the maintenance of the gifts and hospitality register) to the Company Secretary for the LSBU Group.
- 3.2. This procedure will be reviewed from time to time (and at least every two years) by the Governance team and the Group Solicitor to ensure that its provisions continue to meet our legal obligations and reflect best practice.

## **4. Gifts**

- 4.1. Employees must not accept any cash or cash equivalent (such as gift certificates or vouchers).
- 4.2. Where possible gifts (for you or your immediate family) exceeding a value of £50 should not be accepted. The refusal/return should be entered on the online register (see below).
- 4.3. If it is considered that refusal would offend, the gift should be passed to the Company Secretary for the LSBU Group, which will donate the gift to charity or similar (e.g. student hardship funds). You should enter this action on the online register.
- 4.4. Employees may offer gifts to their external contacts, normally this should be from the range of LSBU-branded merchandise. Where not deemed appropriate the value of the gift should be maintained below £50 and listed on the online register.

## **5. Hospitality**

- 5.1. Employees may accept **modest** hospitality as a courtesy of a business relationship. They should not allow a position to be reached where their acceptance may be deemed to have influenced their decision-making.
- 5.2. LSBU recognises that it may be necessary for LSBU employees to occasionally provide appropriate hospitality to business contacts from external organisations as part of developing good business relations.
- 5.3. When entertaining external guests at LSBU, employees should normally use LSBU's internal catering.
- 5.4. Employees should refer to the LSBU Travel, Subsistence and Expenses procedures (section 18) which sets out limits for non-staff entertaining.

## **6. Online gifts and hospitality register**

- 6.1. LSBU employees must complete the online gifts and hospitality register where referred to in this policy. The register may be accessed via the anti-bribery page on the staff gateway. Entries in the register will be reviewed and authorised by line managers. Approving managers are reminded of their delegated responsibility for ensuring adherence to the policy. By approving, managers confirm that the policy has been adhered to and that the level of gifts or hospitality accepted or provided is reasonable and necessary for LSBU's business.

## **7. Sources of advice**

- 7.1. In the first instance, employees should discuss any queries with their line manager.
- 7.2. Further advice or guidance then may be sought from:
  - 7.2.1. Head of Procurement ([Procurement@lsbu.ac.uk](mailto:Procurement@lsbu.ac.uk)); or
  - 7.2.2. Group Solicitor ([GovLegal@lsbu.ac.uk](mailto:GovLegal@lsbu.ac.uk)).

who may refer the matter to the Company Secretary for LSBU Group, whose decision will be final.