


DOCUMENT TYPE	D	
ADMINISTRATIVE	5	
PEOPLE AND CULTURE	3	
CONDUCT AND COMPLIANCE	1	
NUMBER	002	
		Policy Database Document Reference Number 531002D

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS, BENEFITS AND HOSPITALITY PROCEDURE


Parent Policy Title	Staff Conduct and Compliance Policy														
Associated Documents	<p>La Trobe University Collective Agreement 2009 ('Collective Agreement'). La Trobe University References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct; • Conflicts of Interest Procedures; • Grievance Resolution Procedures; • Misconduct Procedures; and • Acceptance of Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Notification Form. 														
Preamble	In the course of their work at La Trobe University ('University'), staff may be offered gifts, benefits or hospitality. These Procedures protect staff and the University from real or perceived undue influence and possible criticism.														
General	These Procedures apply to all staff.														
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1. Principles	<p>Accepting any gift, benefit or hospitality, regardless of monetary value, may imply a relationship which interferes with staff's objectivity or independence. Staff should not compromise their integrity and impartiality or create a conflict of interest or perception of conflict of interest by accepting gifts, benefits or hospitality.</p> <p>The University recommends that staff politely decline all gifts. However, the University recognises that situations may arise where it is not possible to decline the offer of such gifts without affording offence.</p> <p>In such circumstances the University considers it reasonable for employees to accept one-off offerings of such gifts where the gift is of estimated value A\$200 or less and provided the acceptance does not breach of any section of these Procedures.</p> <p>If a gift or benefit is a token or memento, staff may keep it without seeking approval to do so.</p>														

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2. Recording items valued at A\$200 or more	<p>An appropriate person such as a supervisor must verify the estimated fair market value of a gift, benefit or hospitality. Items exceeding A\$200 in value from the same gift giver or have a cumulative value exceeding A\$200 must be recorded on the University's gifts register.</p> <p>Deliberately undervaluing a gift, benefit or hospitality to avoid reporting it or to fraudulently keep it may constitute misconduct.</p>
3. University's gifts register	<p>To record gifts, benefits and hospitality on the University's gift register, staff must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete a Acceptance of Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Notification Form; and • scan and submit the form to the Office of the Vice-Chancellor within two weeks of the gifts, benefits or hospitality being accepted.
4. Considerations	<p>Regardless of the value of the gift, staff should consider the following when deciding if it is appropriate to accept the gift, benefit or hospitality?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the gift, benefit or hospitality one of money or readily exchanged for money? • Is it offered to encourage favourable treatment in the staff member's official capacity? • Could the gift, benefit or hospitality be seen by other people to influence staff behaviour as a University employee? • Will the staff member or the University be making important decisions regarding the gift giver in the near future? • Has the staff member received other gift, benefit or hospitality from this person/organisation lately?
5. Commercial Agreements	<p>Generally, where there is a commercial relationship between the University and another organisation, acceptance of any unofficial gift, benefit or hospitality would be deemed inappropriate.</p> <p>An inappropriate gift, benefit or hospitality would include any item that might provide or be perceived as providing incentive for an employee to seek the services of a particular company, whether by way of free supply of that company's goods and services or alternate benefits.</p> <p>Under these circumstances the intended recipient should politely refuse the gift, benefit or hospitality explaining that it is against University Policy for them to accept and report the offer to their supervisor.</p>
6. Seeking guidance	<p>If staff are unsure about their obligations under these Procedures, they should seek clarification from their supervisor. In addition, all staff and affiliates can obtain guidance from the Executive Director, People and Culture.</p>
Status	<p>Revised procedure approved by Planning and Resources Committee, 14 November 2011, Minute 42.10. Prior approval: Planning and Resources</p>

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	Committee, 10/135, 5 November 2010. The implementation of the latest version of this policy supersedes all previous versions of this policy.
Approval Body	Vice-Chancellor on the recommendation of the Planning and Resources Committee
Initiating Body	Executive Director, People and Culture.
Definitions	<p>Benefits: Something which is believed to be of value to the receiver, such as a service. Examples may include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tickets to major sporting events or other entertainment; • corporate hospitality at a corporate facility or sporting venue; • preferential treatment, such as queue jumping; • access to confidential or sensitive information; • discounted products for personal use; • frequent use of facilities such as a gymnasium or holiday home; • free or discounted travel, Frequent Flyer points and free training sessions; and/or • free or subsidised lavish meals or hospitality etc. <p>Gifts: Made to individuals in the course of a business relationship. Some examples may include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • money ; • products; • alcohol; • tickets; and/or • clothes etc. <p>Hospitality: Friendly reception and treatment of guests. It is hospitable to offer light refreshments in the course of a business meeting or as part of a conference program. Hospitality can range from offers of light refreshment at a business meeting to restaurant meals and sponsored travel and accommodation.</p> <p>Token/Nominal Value: Token gifts and benefits of a nominal value usually do not create a sense of obligation on the receiver and are unlikely to influence, or appear to influence, in the exercise of their official duties. Examples may include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gifts of single bottles of reasonably priced alcohol to staff at end of year functions, public occasions or in recognition of work done (such as providing a lecture/training session/address) • free or subsidised meals, of a modest nature, and/or beverages provided infrequently (and/or reciprocally) that have been arranged primarily for, or in connection with, the discussion of official business • free meals, of a modest nature, and/or beverages provided to staff who formally represent the University at work related events such as training, education sessions, workshops etc.

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