



# Gifts and Hospitality Policy

[GEN009]

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# Gifts and Hospitality Policy [GEN009]

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## 1. Context

The University's staff and representatives must act, and be seen to act, at all times in a manner that is fair, impartial and without favouritism or bias. All University staff members and representatives are responsible for flagging and declaring potential conflicts of interest.

This policy must be read alongside related Council policies and rules, and in particular the policy regarding conflicts of interest. The Conflict of Interest policy requires staff to declare any interest - financial, fiduciary, personal, or other - in situations where a person is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity. This declaration must be made at least annually with updates during the year as required. Current policies or procedures that prohibit the acceptance of gifts will apply irrespective of this policy.

## 2. Objective

The objective of this policy is to:

- promote transparency in the conduct of the University's business;
- prevent the misuse of authority, and to mitigate potential bias in judgment and decision making;
- ensure that the necessary audit trails are in place to protect the good standing of the University, and of the individuals associated with it.

## 3. Applicable to

All UCT staff, student organisations and Joint Medical Staff.

All UCT representatives, including honorary staff and members of UCT committees.

## 4. Definitions

Term	Description
Gift	A gift is anything of value and includes stationery and equipment; food and beverages; corporate gifts; financial gifts (such as gratuities, favours, discounts, loyalty rewards, cash, gift cards, loans); services or use of a donor's time; training; attendance prizes; materials; equipment; promotional items; transportation and travel.
Hospitality	Hospitality includes offers of food and refreshment; invitations to events; entertainment; recreation; travel or accommodation by reason of, or in connection with, University activity.
Honorarium	For the purposes of this policy, an honorarium is a payment for services. This method of payment is usually made to a guest speaker or lecturer as a "thank you" and gesture of goodwill and appreciation.

## 5. Scope

This policy covers all gifts, honoraria and acts of hospitality, and any other item having monetary value for which fair market value is not paid by the recipient regardless of whether or not a business relationship exists between UCT and the person or firm. This includes gifts, honoraria and/or acts of hospitality offered to an individual's family members where there is an actual or reasonably inferred connection to University activity or business.

The following are **exceptions** and outside of the scope of this policy:

- Major and/or corporate gifts to the University as an institution, which are managed through formal structures.
- Gifts and acts of hospitality supplied by the University and its staff, students and alumni.
- Advertising matter of little value on which the name of the advertiser is indelibly imprinted, such as pens, diaries or calendars. Note that discretion needs to be applied where these are positions of influence and decision-making.

## 6. Policy

The following are guiding principles in the acceptance or declining of gifts and acts of hospitality.

- As a general guide, gifts and acts of hospitality should not be accepted.
- The soliciting of sponsorships from suppliers is also seen as a perceived threat to UCT's continued goodwill towards a supplier and must therefore not be pursued.
- Generally, if it does not feel right, irrespective of value, then it should be declined.
- Staff members in positions of influence (e.g. procurement, vendor management, admissions, fees, leadership roles) should err on the side of caution to avoid supporting any impression that gifts or acts of hospitality could be influence any of their current or future decisions.
- Gifts and acts of hospitality may only be accepted by University staff or representatives when -
  - the offer has been made for a proper purpose;
  - acceptance is consistent with the purposes of the University;
  - it is appropriate and its value reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances;
  - acceptance accords with all applicable University policies and governmental legislation.
- If a gift is accepted, the staff member must report the gift as per the requirements outlined in section 7.
- Gifts and acts of hospitality should always be offered and provided openly, without any degree of secrecy attached.
- Acts of hospitality paid for or provided by an individual or company with whom UCT conducts or may conduct business may be accepted if all of the following conditions are met:
  - the purpose of the meal is for UCT business or in the interest of building relationships;
  - the acceptance of the meal will not create the appearance of a conflict of interest; and
  - requirements for approval and reporting must be followed.
- Novelty or advertising items may be accepted when the items have no appreciable value and are widely distributed by the donor to other firms.

Examples include inexpensive calendars, pens, cups and other promotional items containing the distributing company's name or logo, that are typically distributed for advertising purposes.

## 7. Reporting and Record-keeping

Subject to the exception set out in (c) below, a formal record must be kept of gifts and acts of hospitality received where:

- a) Any single gift or act of hospitality is accepted by an individual or group with a value exceeding (or estimated to exceed) **R1 000** in total, or
- b) Any series of gifts or act of hospitality not otherwise recorded is accepted by an individual or group from the same third party and the cumulative total value exceed (or estimated to exceed) R1 000 in any rolling 12-month period.

**Exception** – the following is *not* required to be recorded

- c) any charitable donation received, which should be referred to the Development and Alumni Department.

Reporting to be made to the Line manager or Committee Chair, with details of date, the nature of the gift or acts of hospitality, estimated value and name of gifter.

Where a staff or UCT committee member or representative is unsure of whether to report a gift or offer of a gift, they are encouraged to over-disclose, and seek guidance on how to respond to the offer of a gift.

## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

The individual is required to

- seek approval or guidance from their Line manager or Committee Chair prior to accepting or declining any gift or offer, and
- report on the acceptance of a gift or act of hospitality.

Reporting must be in writing and include details of date, the nature of the gift or acts of hospitality, estimated value and name of the gifter.

The Line manager / Committee Chairs' role is to

- provide guidance and consistency with respect to the acceptance or declining of gifts or acts of hospitality, and

- keep a record of gifts or acts of hospitality accepted which is available for review as required.

## 9. Consequence Management

There will be consequence management, as per the applicable HR policy, in cases where a gift or act of hospitality has been accepted or redirected and not declared.

Where there is no employment relationship, this will be dealt with in accordance with the nature of the University association.

## 10. Related Policies and Guidelines

- Conflict of Interests
- Fraud and corruption prevention [[GEN005](#)]
- Gift vouchers [[PAY008](#)]
- Staff functions and gifts [[PAY009](#)]
- UCT Conditions of Service
- Whistle-blowing hotline

## 11. Implementation responsibility

The Line manager/Head of Department must ensure all policies and procedures are communicated to and implemented by the responsible individual(s), including research staff. The Faculty/PASS Finance manager must ensure reasonable controls exist to support the implementation of policies, and where non-compliance is identified, that this is escalated and followed up accordingly.

## 12. Contact

Queries can be directed to [Conflictofinterest@uct.ac.za](mailto:Conflictofinterest@uct.ac.za)

## Attachment A: Examples of Gifts and acts of Hospitality

Nature of the gift	Comment	Accepted / Decline
A representative of the supplier dropped off a mouse pad and diary.	Provided the item is estimated at less than R1 000.	✓
A supplier is running a competition for the most orders, with the prize being an iPad.	This will influence purchasing decisions, leading to personal reward.	✗
Where personal loyalty rewards influence UCT decisions when spending UCT monies.	This is a personal benefit based on spend which is influenced by personal gain.	✗
As a thanks for agreeing to review a potential student's entrance requirements.	Any gifts related to academic admission into UCT must be declined.	✗
As general thanks, the Fees department received a box of chocolates from a funder whom they had assisted with a difficult enquiry.	Gift received generally as a thanks with no link to student admission, with no real or perceived influence (i.e. less than R1 000).	✓
One UCT department sends a thanks in the form of a hamper to another UCT department for good service.	All gifts (from UCT funds) should be spent in terms of the Staff gifts and functions policy.	✗
As part of relationship building, a box package (including entertainment) for a cricket test is offered by a Banking client.	Tickets must be declined due to the perceived lack of independence in future decisions.	✗
Travel and expenses covered by third party for attendance at conference, workshop, or networking event.	Hospitality must be declined due to the perceived lack of independence in future decisions.	✗