

## **Appendix 9: Policies on the Acceptance of Gifts, Hospitality and Benefits by Members of the Support Staff and on Lost, Left or Abandoned Property**

### **1. Policy on Acceptance of Gifts, Hospitality and Benefits**

In order to protect both Staff and the reputation of the College from accusations of bribery or corruption, Support Staff<sup>1</sup> are not permitted, directly or indirectly, to accept any gift<sup>2</sup>, hospitality, reward or other benefit from any source (including organizations, students, other employees and members of the public) with whom he/she has been brought into contact or maintains contact only by reason of the duties for which he/she is employed by the College.

The only exceptions are:

- a) Occasional gifts which are regarded as trivial, that is where the nominal value, received by any one person is under £15, as would be estimated by an unrelated third party eg diaries, single bottles of wine etc.

Any gifts which have an estimated value above £15 may be accepted by an individual but only on behalf of the College, provided approval has first been obtained from the relevant line manager and the gift is notified to the Treasury Administrator and surrendered to the Personnel Officer. Such gifts will be the property of the College and normally raffled at the Staff Christmas Party.

- b) Occasional conventional hospitality eg annual dinner of a body with which Staff have day-to-day contact, or working lunches in the course of working visits, where the frequency and total cost of hospitality is reasonable and would not be construed by an impartial observer as affecting the employee's judgement regarding the work for which they are employed. This may also include a member of staff attending, in an official capacity, a social event organised by another body for promotional or influential purpose. Modest hospitality, such as the occasional business lunch, is an accepted courtesy of a business relationship but the frequency and scale of hospitality accepted should not be significantly greater than the College would be likely to provide in return.

Hospitality offered outside the guidelines indicated by a College supplier or potential supplier, and any hospitality where an unrelated third party would estimate the value to exceed £50, should be declined with a polite explanation that the College's rules do not allow its acceptance.

**Any gifts or hospitality offered (whether accepted or not and including 'trivial' gifts) should be notified to the line manager and Treasury Administrator and recorded in the register kept by the Treasury Administrator.**

Staff responsible for the purchase of supplies, equipment or services must take particular care to ensure that there can be no criticism that unequal treatment has been given to suppliers involved in tendering processes through the acceptance of gifts or other benefits.

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<sup>1</sup> All Support Staff, excluding Fellows with administrative roles. Where Support Staff are covered by both the Conflict of Interest and Acceptance of Gifts, Hospitality and Benefits Policies and there is a difference between them, the latter Policy shall apply.

<sup>2</sup> Defined as: items given without the expectation of receiving anything in return.

Staff should always bear in mind the need not to behave so that the impression might be given or interpreted by any member of the public, student or organisation with whom/which they deal that they may be influenced by any gift, benefit or behaviour to show favour or disfavour to any person or organisation in respect of the work for which they are employed.

**When it is not easy to decide between what is and is not acceptable in terms of gifts or hospitality, the offer should be declined or advice sought from the Treasurer, Domestic Bursar or Personnel Officer.**

As part of its everyday work, there will be circumstances where it is appropriate for an individual to **provide** gifts or hospitality on behalf of the College. Where this is deemed necessary, prior approval should be obtained from the relevant line manager.

## **2. Policy on Lost, Left or Abandoned Property**

This Policy covers all goods whether they may belong to a member of staff, student or visitor (including conference delegates) and all types of goods including disposable items, equipment or food. It also covers goods which have been "left" at the college by students or other guests.

The College has the right to deal with any property that appears after a reasonable time to have been left here as unwanted. Under no circumstances are any goods to be removed from site. **All lost or abandoned items from any public places, meeting rooms, bedrooms, cupboards or the College grounds should be taken immediately to the Porters' Lodge. Such items may not be removed from site without the prior, clear authorisation in the form of a signed note from the Treasurer, Domestic Bursar, or Personnel Officer.**

If there are any queries concerning this Policy, please contact the Treasurer, Domestic Bursar or Personnel Officer.

### **Lost, Left or Abandoned Property - Procedure**

*Items found anywhere within Lady Margaret Hall must be taken and reported to the Lodge.*

*A triplicate record will then be made in the Lost and Found book. The entry will record the date found, who it was found by, the location of the find, and a brief description of item(s). They will be then put into the lost property box or alongside that box. This box is kept within the Lodge. Items of value i.e. wallets, money, mobile phones or cameras etc. will be placed in the safe. Wallets will be examined and if the owner is traceable every effort will be made to do so.*

*If the owner claims the item(s) they must be able to verify their ownership somehow and they will be asked to sign that they have received the item(s).*

*All property will remain in the Lodge for a period of SIX WEEKS. After that, valuables will be handed to the local police. All other lost property will be donated to charity.*

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**Staff members who are found not to have acted in accordance with the above Policies will face disciplinary action, which could be on the grounds of gross misconduct in serious cases.**

**Approved by College Officers 10 December 2010**