



## **GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY POLICY**

### **PURPOSE**

This policy sets out guidance around the receiving of gifts, hospitality and discounts for all who work at UoNSU. The purpose is to clarify the principles and processes in place to avoid staff being manipulated or placed under an obligation.

### **POLICY**

#### **Introduction**

UoNSU is both a charity and a democratic organisation. As such everyone who works here – staff and contractors – must take care about placing themselves and the Union in a position where there may be a perception of obligation, favouritism or a conflict of interest. We are concerned to protect people from being placed in difficult situations around gifts or hospitality, to support people in behaving ethically in their work and to maintain our positive reputation as an organisation.

#### **Context**

There may be times when staff are offered or sent gifts in connection with their work at UoNSU. These could include:

- Free gifts or offers of money, goods or services
- The opportunity to get goods or services at a discount or on terms which aren't available to the general public
- The offer of food, drink, accommodation or entertainment.

This guidance is intended to support you in making the right decision if you are offered any money, gifts, or discounts in the course of your work. It's not possible to cover every situation which could arise, so please use your judgment on what is appropriate in the situation, being mindful that accepting something could put you in a difficult position. If you have any doubts or concerns on what might be appropriate and how it might appear, or you're not sure what to accept and what to decline, you should speak to your line manager. If necessary, line managers can seek guidance from the Director of Finance and Resources.

Whilst this policy covers everyone, we recognise that some people are more likely to be offered gifts or hospitality because of the nature of their role. This includes Officers, the SLG and those in Business Development. Staff in these areas need to be particularly mindful of this guidance to protect both themselves and the Union from any perception of obligation, poor judgment or conflict of interest.

## Principles

The general principles of ethical behaviour in relation to gifts, hospitality etc. are:

- You must never ask for or invite gifts, hospitality or discounts.
- You should not accept gifts, hospitality or services from anyone where it would place you, or could appear to place you, under an obligation.
- Don't do anything that would lead to a conflict between your personal interests and your work duties, or where it could appear to do so.
- Wherever possible you should pay for your own meals and claim the appropriate expenses, as set out in our Expenses Policy.
- Money must never be accepted.

Behaviour that brings UoNSU's reputation into disrepute, a serious breach of confidence or a serious breach of UoNSU policies and procedures may be considered as gross misconduct and subsequently investigated under the Disciplinary Policy.

## Guidance on Accepting Gifts and Hospitality

The following may be accepted:

### Gifts

- Gifts such as branded stationery or other gifts with a value judged to be under £10, e.g. bottle of wine, box of chocolates or biscuits etc. These may be small gifts given as a 'thank you' for help or support, for example.
- Note that the value of £10 stated above is intended to be a guide and you should use your judgement. For example, a gift with a value of £15-20 given to a team is of less significance than when the same is offered to an individual. If you are unsure you should speak to your manager.
- Where gifts with a value above £10 are offered, the gift should be declared to the Director of Finance and Resources using the form referenced below, whether accepted or not.

### Hospitality

- Any meals or refreshments which are a part of the work and directly connected to Union business can be accepted. This must be reasonable and modest however, such as refreshments at a meeting or a working lunch. A practical test of what is reasonable is whether UoNSU could or would provide a similar level of hospitality.
- You may accept invitations to social functions offered as part of normal working life and connected to UoNSU business. This could include award ceremonies, corporate boxes at sporting events or gala dinners for example. If you attend functions in your role outside of normal working hours, you should be mindful that the rules and guidance apply then too. We ask you to use the same level of judgment and caution in these situations, to protect yourself.

## **Register of Gifts**

The Union maintains a record of gifts and hospitality accepted. This is to protect both individual staff members and the Union. If you do accept a gift with a value judged to be above £10, please declare it by completing the register form (available on the HR page of the <http://uonsu-forms.co.uk/> as a downloadable form) and return it to the Director of Finance and Resources.

It is your responsibility to declare any gifts or hospitality you receive. You should do this as soon as is reasonably practical after you receive them, and within 1 month.

The Gifts and Hospitality Register will be reviewed as required by the Director of Finance and Resources.

**END**