



Rationale

In accepting gifts, School Council members and staff of Fitzroy High School must always act fairly and objectively and maintain public trust by being honest, open and transparent.

Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for School Council members and employees of the school in relation to the acceptance of gifts. The following Guidelines apply to all School Council members, all employees and casual staff engaged by the school. It includes gifts given to a council member or employee's immediate family if the donor can be linked to the undertaking of duties.

Guidelines

The Guidelines do not apply to gifts received in a private context. It is acknowledged that gifts are often an important element in schools interactions with other parties.

There are limited circumstances in which gifts may be accepted on an individual basis by School Council members or school staff.

Gifts should never be accepted in connection with a tender process or a decision over which a councillor, employee or the Department could be perceived to have influence, for example recruitment, the use of school facilities.

Gifts to public officials should be only of a nominal value as to do otherwise could be perceived as an attempt to improperly influence them.

What is a Gift?

A gift may take a wide range of different forms. It is not feasible to list all of the possible types of gifts and benefits. However, some examples of gifts could be: bottles of wine, manufacturers' samples or personal items; promotional materials, including clothing, books or compact discs; works of art; memorabilia; cash or shares; etc. In general, a gift is an item of value provided for no, or greatly reduced cost.

These Guidelines apply to gifts that are given with the *intention* that they be kept by the recipient as an individual (or group of individuals) rather than the school or Department.

When can gifts be accepted?

Council members and employees must exercise particular care in accepting gifts if:

- the donor person, company or organisation is involved in purchasing or procurement, in a tender process with the school or the donor person or organisation is the subject of, or affected by, a decision within the school's discretionary power or significant influence; the person, company or organisation is in a contractual relationship with DEECD; or
- 2 Gifts of any kind have been offered from the same donor more than once in the last year.

Gifts of seemingly excessive value should not be accepted unless failure to accept the gift is likely to cause embarrassment or insult. The gift will be the property of the school. Gifts over the value of \$100 will be recorded on the Gifts Register.

Gifts of any value must never be accepted if:

- The donor or reasonable observer would perceive that acceptance would create an obligation to the donor, particularly if the value of the gift is disproportionate to the circumstances in which it is offered.
- The gift is likely to influence a council member or employee in the course of their duties or where acceptance could cause a conflict of interest
- The organisation's primary purpose is to lobby Ministers, Members of Parliament or agencies
- The gift is an offer of money or anything readily convertible into money (e.g. shares).
- The gift results in additional cost to the school or Department.

If an individual believes they have been offered a bribe (i.e. anything given in order to persuade a person to act improperly) they must refuse it, explain why it is not appropriate, and immediately report the matter to the Principal or Regional Director.

Other benefits

School councillors and employees may accept benefits, such as invitations to official functions or events of reasonable value, as long as they are related to the business of the school and provided that they do not involve a conflict of interest or create a perception that the recipient will be unduly influenced by accepting the benefit.

Recording the acceptance and/or keeping of a gift

Acceptance of token gifts or reasonable hospitality does not need to be formally registered but the recipient must advise and obtain approval from the Principal.

Acceptance of a gift worth more than \$100 must be formally registered on the school's Gifts Register, administered by the Principal. This includes gifts accepted on behalf of or passed onto a third party.

The Register is monitored and reviewed by the Principal and School Council.

Accepting, registering and keeping "Official Gifts"

Official gifts, namely gifts intended for the school or the Department rather than the individual recipient(s), remain the property of the school and/or department.

Individual recipients may keep school official gifts (i.e. with a value of less than \$100) subject to the approval of the Principal.

Gifts worth \$100 or more must be surrendered to the school. Recipients may purchase a gift worth more than \$100 from the school with the School Council's approval, provided that no other public entity (e.g. Museums Victoria) has expressed interest in retaining the gift.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed by school council regularly.

School Council approved: 18 August 2011

Review date: August 2013