

Protection & Preservation of Academic Integrity

GIFTS FROM STUDENTS



University Staff are expected to be committed to exemplary standards of professional conduct and academic integrity of students. Staff are advised of their obligations in various University publications, including:

- [Fraud Control Policy & Plan](#)
- [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#)
- [Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures](#)

Incidences of students offering inappropriate gifts or incentives (financial and otherwise) to staff in the hope of receiving favourable assessment outcomes are unacceptable. The University has **zero tolerance** of this type of activity.

The provision of significant-value goods or services by a student to a staff member who is involved in their teaching or assessment falls under the definition of fraud adopted by the University in the Fraud Control Policy:

"Dishonestly obtaining or attempting to obtain a benefit or advantage for any person or dishonestly causing or attempting to cause a detriment to the University of Adelaide or its Controlled Entities"

Which gifts are appropriate?

- Gifts of gratitude - offered in appreciation of performing specific tasks or for exemplary performance of duties, such as at the end of semester or on the submission of a thesis
- Chocolates
- Flowers
- a bottle of wine

Which gifts are **NOT** appropriate?

- Gifts of influence - intended to influence the conduct or judgement of a person in a position of trust
- Money accompanying an exam script
- Any gift accompanying any form of application – such as for admission to a program or for any kind of special consideration
- Expensive gifts

If you are offered a gift by a student, ask yourself. . .

- What is the value of the gift?
- What is the motivation of the student offering it?
- Does the student have anything tangible to gain from the gift?
- How would others perceive the gift?
- Would accepting the gift raise suspicions about an improper relationship between me and the student?
- Would accepting the gift raise suspicions about my decision-making process or professional judgement?
- Should I accept the gift but share it with colleagues?
- Should I return the gift?
- Should I donate the gift to a charity?
- Could the gift be construed as a bribe or compromising on academic integrity?

Use your professional judgement

Consequences for the staff member

- Embarrassment
- Disciplinary action
- Internal or external inquiry
- Loss of employment
- In extreme cases - criminal prosecution for bribery under the *Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 (SA)* which provides a penalty of up to 7 years imprisonment

Cultural differences

Students of the University come from a wide range of linguistic, religious and cultural backgrounds. Some students will be unfamiliar with acceptable Australian gift-giving etiquette in professional relationships, which will be very different from those in their own cultures. For example, in Asian countries, gift giving is common in a business setting.

If you receive an inappropriate gift...

If you think you have been offered a bribe:

- Think about whether it is simply a cultural misunderstanding about gift giving:- don't jump to conclusions of bribery .
- Refuse to accept the gift or arrange for it to be returned
- Talk to the student about the University's [Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures](#)
- Report the incident to your Head of School, who will advise the Executive Dean and the General Counsel (Refer to section 5 of the Fraud Control Policy.)

Reports may be referred to the University's student disciplinary procedures for action.

If you receive an inappropriate gift...

If you think it is a misunderstanding:

- explain to the student about gift giving and bribery: - how their actions might be seen as an attempt to influence the judgement of the lecturer
- see if the student is experiencing anxiety, stress or academic difficulty and the gift was an act of desperation

For more information, contact:

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