

Gifts, Hospitality, Awards and Benefits Policy

Author/Owner	Mr P Wilkinson, Chief Finance Officer
Version	7
Approved By	Finance and Operations Committee
Date Policy Reviewed	July 2026
Next Review Date	September 2027
Academy to implement without Amendment, using appendix when required	

Summary of Changes from Previous Version

Version	Date	Author	Summary of Updates
V5	August 2024	P Wilkinson	Policy updated in line with Trust branding. Updated references of Finance Officer to Chief Finance Officer. Section 4.1 updated appreciation gifts to the value of £20 for non-employees. Section 4.2, updated to include value up to £50 for staff token gifts and rewards. Added section 4.5
V6	August 2025	P Wilkinson	No changes
V7	July 2026	S Foster	Rename policy to Gifts, Hospitality, Awards & Benefits Policy in line with the Academy Trust Handbook 2026. Amendment of the wording Prevention of Fraud and Bribery Act 2010, should read Bribery Act 2010.

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1. Background

- 1.1 Exceed Learning Partnership is committed to the highest level of integrity, and accountability in all its business dealings. All staff, Directors and Governors are expected to maintain high standards of propriety and professionalism in all their dealings, ensuring they are free from any conflict of interest through their business in the name of the academy or Trust.
- 1.2 In order to protect all individuals associated with the Trust, and the reputation of the Trust and its academies, from accusations of bribery or corruption, staff, Directors, and Governors must take extreme care that none of their dealings, directly or indirectly, could be deemed as a reward or benefit, in line with the Bribery Act 2010. This Act makes it a criminal offence to:
 - offer, promise or give a bribe
 - request, agree to or accept a bribe (by an organisation)
 - fail to prevent bribery by those acting on its behalf (associated persons) to obtain or retain business or a business advantage for the organisation
- 1.3 Under this Act, a bribe is 'a financial or other advantage' offered, promised or given to induce a person to perform a relevant function or activity improperly, or reward them for doing so.
- 1.4 The Trust and each Academy will hold a Gifts and Hospitality Register. All gifts/hospitality received over the value of £50 must be recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality Register.

2. Definition

- 2.1 A Gift is any item or service, award, prize or any other benefit which is received free of charge, or personally offered at a discounted rate or on terms not available to the general public or which might be seen to compromise the personal judgment or integrity of the recipient.
- 2.2 Hospitality is the offer of food, drink, accommodation or entertainment or the opportunity to attend any cultural or sporting event not available to the general public.

3. Dealing with Gifts and Hospitality

- 3.1 The Trust expects staff, Directors and Governors to exercise the utmost discretion in giving and accepting gifts and hospitality when on Trust or Academy business. Particular care should be taken about a gift from a person or organisation that has, or is hoping to have, a contract with our organisation. In any case of doubt, advice should be sought from the Business Manager or Trust Directors.
- 3.2 Staff, Directors and Governors must not make use of their official position to further their private interests or those of others.
- 3.3 Staff, Directors and Governors must not accept gifts, hospitality or benefits of any kind from a third party where it might be perceived that their personal integrity is being compromised, or that the Trust/Academy might be placed under an obligation.

- 3.4 Gifts of low intrinsic value such as promotional calendars or diaries, small tokens of gratitude, can be accepted. If there is any doubt as to whether the acceptance of such an item is appropriate, individuals should decline the gift or refer the matter to the Trust DCEO/ Academy Business Manager or Trust Directors.
- 3.5 It is common for appreciative parents and pupils to register their thanks for the work of staff in the form of a small personal gift. If these are valued at less than £50 these are perfectly acceptable without reference to senior members of staff. These will not need to be recorded in the register. Where gifts valued over £50 are accepted, these should be recorded in the register.
- 3.6 Where a more valuable gift, benefit or service is offered which is to the good of the Academy, rather than an individual, it must be referred to the Business Manager, or if, in the case of the Business Manager, to the Chief Finance Officer for approval within their discretion; if acceptable, then these terms must be recorded in the register.
- 3.7 Hospitality such as working lunches, coffees etc. are perfectly acceptable where it is appropriate to offer or receive these in support of good relationships with visiting staff or business colleagues. Modest hospitality, provided it is reasonable in the circumstances, should be similar to the scale of hospitality which the Trust as an employer would be likely to offer. These would not be added to the register. Hospitality received above this level should be recorded in the register.
- 3.8 If a member of staff, Director or Governor is offered a gift or hospitality whilst involved in the procurement of goods and services, tenders for work or when liaising with anyone conducting business with the academy (other than light refreshments) it is their responsibility to discuss this with the Business Manager or in the case of the Trust the DCEO or Chair of Directors immediately.
- 3.9 If not accepting a gift would be regarded as causing offence (such as a sudden and unexpected gift or one where refusal could cause cultural offence) the item should be accepted. The matter should then be brought to the attention of the Chief Finance Officer as soon as possible, who may decide to return the gift, or may donate it to the Academy raffle/fair or a charitable cause.
- 3.10 Examples of gifts or hospitality that should not be accepted are; cash or monetary gifts, gifts or hospitality offers to a member of your family, gifts or hospitality from a potential supplier or tenderer in the immediate period before tenders are invited or during the tender process, staff or Director or Governor attendance at sporting and cultural events at the invitation of suppliers, potential suppliers or consultants. (Where it is considered that there is a benefit to the Trust or one of its academies in a member of staff, Director or Governor attending a sponsored event, the attendance must be formally approved and registered by the Chief Finance Officer).
- 3.11 Where a gift is received on behalf of the Academy, the gift remains the property of the Academy. Where a gift is received on behalf of the Trust, the gift remains the property of the Trust. The gift may be required for departmental display or it may, with the Principal's/

CEO's approval, remain in the care of the recipient. Unless otherwise agreed, the gift should be returned to the department on or before the recipient's last working day.

- 3.12 Gifts are sometimes offered by suppliers with the purchase of items. All such special offer gifts are the property of the Academy/Trust and must be used accordingly.

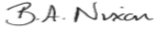
4. Giving Gifts and Hospitality

- 4.1 The Trust and its academies will not normally give gifts to other individuals or organisations, however appreciation gifts to the value of £20 per person per term for non-employees (not cash, cheques or vouchers) may be given from pupils within academies; the Governors will approve this termly. All gifts will be clearly visible in the reconciliation statement presented to the Full Governing Board.
- 4.2 The Trust / Academies may provide staff with token gifts to reward efforts beyond their duties, e.g. significant contributions. These gifts will be non-monetary, non-alcoholic and cost up to the value of £50. If gifts are given, staff must ensure that the decision is fully documented in the Gift and Hospitality Register and has regard to the propriety and regularity of the use of public funds. This does not apply to the award of gifts, prizes etc. related to the achievement of pupils e.g. attainment or merit awards.
- 4.3 The purchase of alcohol using Academy funds (and therefore public monies) goes against the primary purpose of the Academy and is prohibited by the Academies Accounts Direction. Therefore, any expenditure on alcohol is not permitted at all, including any expenditure from unrestricted funds. Any expenditure on alcohol would constitute a breach of regularity and propriety.
- 4.4 Where hospitality is provided by the Trust or its academies this should be approved in advance by the DCEO. In approving hospitality, the CFO/Business Manager should ensure it is not in breach of the UK Bribery Act 2010 and also that the costs are appropriate for a publicly-funded organisation. Hospitality such as working lunches, coffees etc. and modest hospitality in the form of meals etc. are perfectly acceptable where it is appropriate to offer or receive these in support of good relationships with visiting staff or business colleagues (but not for their family or friends). These would not be added to the register. Hospitality provided above this level should be recorded in the register.
- 4.5 This policy will not prohibit normal and appropriate gifts and hospitality being given if the following requirements are met:
- It is not given with the intention of:
 - Influencing a third party to obtain or retain business or a business advantage.
 - Rewarding the provision or retention of business or a business advantage.
 - It is not given in exchange for favours or benefits.
 - It is given in the school's name, not in the individual's name.
 - It complies with local law.
 - It does not include cash or a cash equivalent, e.g. vouchers or gift certificates.
 - It is appropriate in the circumstances, e.g. the giving of small gifts at Christmas.
 - The type and value of the gift or hospitality is reasonable based on the reason it is offered.
 - It is given openly, not secretly.

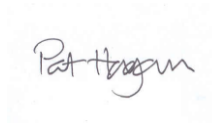
5. Non-Compliance

- 5.1 In the case where it is believed a member of staff, Director, or Governor has not declared a gift or hospitality then a formal investigation will be instigated by the Trust Executive. If misconduct is indicated, this may take the form of disciplinary procedures in the case of employees.

Policy Agreed: April 2018 and reviewed July 2026

Signed CEO 

Signed: Chair of Directors



Policy to be reviewed: Sept 2027



Appendix A – Declaration of a Gift or Hospitality

DECLARATION OF A GIFT OR HOSPITALITY

Name:	Position:
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☐

I have been offered a gift / hospitality which I have declined.

☐

I have been offered a gift / hospitality which I have accepted.

Date and time of offer:	Place where offered:
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Name of organisation / person making the offer and their relationship with the academy	Nature of interest / gift / hospitality	Estimated value if applicable

Reason for accepting / declining gift / hospitality:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____ Date: _____
(Principal / Academy Business Manager)

On completion, please return this form to the Academy Business Manager who will keep this and record in the Register in date order.

Entered in Register	Date:	Reference:
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Appendix B – Gifts and Hospitality Register Template

Date	Recipient	Nature of Gift or Hospitality	Donor	Estimated Value	Accepted or Declined	Comments