Employee Responsibility
Declaring gifts, benefits and bribes

As an employee, you may be offered a gift or benefit as an act of gratitude. There are some circumstances when to refuse a gift would be perceived as rude, insulting or hurtful.

You are expected to exercise sound judgment when deciding whether to accept a gift or benefit. It is important that the acceptance of a gift does not influence or is not seen to influence your decision-making.

You must never ask for money, gifts or benefits and you must never accept any offer of money, gifts or benefits. To do so may amount to bribery, which is a crime.

**Bribery** is soliciting, receiving or offering any undue reward to or by a person to influence the way that a person acts. A reward can encompass anything of value and is not limited to money or tangible goods. The provision of services may amount to a reward.

If you are offered a bribe (i.e. anything given in order to persuade you to act improperly), you must refuse it, explain why it is not appropriate, and immediately report the matter to a senior line manager. Any attempt to bribe an employee or the acceptance of a bribe by an employee, is an act of corrupt conduct and must be reported to the Employee Performance and Conduct Directorate.

Accepting gifts and other benefits has the potential to compromise your position by creating a sense of obligation and undermining your impartiality. It may also affect the reputation of the Department and its officers. You must not create the impression that any person or organisation is influencing the Department or the decisions of any of its employees.

Always consider the value and purpose of a gift or benefit before making any decision about accepting it. A gift that is more than nominal value ($50) must not become personal property. You should either politely refuse it or advise the contributor that you will accept it on behalf of your school or workplace.

When such a gift is accepted, you must advise your manager or Principal. They will determine how it should be treated and make a record of its receipt. Depending on the nature and value of the gift, it may be appropriate to record
the gift in the asset register as a donation or other such record established for that purpose.

Sometimes employees might, in the course of their work, win a prize of significant monetary value e.g. a computer, from another organisation. Prizes are usually considered the property of The Department. If you win a prize you must advise your principal or manager who will determine how the prize should be treated and recorded.

Examples

It would be **acceptable** to receive gifts in the following situations:

- if, after giving a presentation at a meeting or seminar, you are presented with a small gift as thanks for your time and effort
- when parents or students arrive with a small gift for a teacher at the end of the school year
- a parent gives $1000 dollars to the Principal, specifically requesting that the money be donated to the school library for the purchase of audio-books because her son has poor vision.

It would **not be acceptable** to receive gifts or benefits in the following situations:

- a company wanting to do business with the Department offers an employee two tickets to the VIP box at the football final
- a parent gives the school $1000 dollars for sporting equipment on condition that her son is chosen for the cricket team
- at the end of Term 2, a parent gives a teacher an envelope containing $150 and says "I hope this will help you enjoy your holiday. Have a dinner on me."
- a parent gives a teacher an obviously expensive gift e.g. an item of jewellery.