South Lanarkshire College
East Kilbride

FREE ISSUES / DONATED GOODS POLICY

Version Number: 1.0

Document Information

Procedure Published/Created:	3 May 2022
Reviewed Date:	9 May 2022
Owner:	Head of Finance
Approved by:	Audit & Risk Committee
Equality Impact Assessment:	
Next Review Date:	May 2025

Version History

Version Number	Date	Author	Rationale
1.0	Creation	K McAllister	

Quick Links

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We are committed to the FREDIE principles of Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement.

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Table of Contents

1. Purpose **4**

2. Policy **4**

3. Scope **5**

4. Responsibility **5**

5. Principle **5**

6. Procedure and Guidance **6**

6.1 General Rules 6

6.2 Free Issues or Donated Goods Received 6

6.3 Free Issues Given 7

Appendix 1 ..... **8**

Appendix 2 ..... **9**

Register of free or donated goods and services **9**

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to set out rules and guidance for all staff (which should be taken for the purposes of this policy to include members of the Board of Management) to ensure that the College can demonstrate that no undue influence has been applied by an individual or external organisation in the decision-making processes within the College and, as such, is allied to the Policy on Gifts and Hospitality. Free issues will include goods or services received by the College from suppliers, even if they only benefit the students or the learning experience. Examples of this are goods or services donated by suppliers or employers as part of a contract that has been negotiated or tendered and which may be deemed to be of community benefit. Free issues must not be given or received in return for services provided or to obtain or retain business but shall be handled openly and unconditionally as a gesture of esteem and goodwill only.

2. Policy

All staff covered by this policy should be aware that this is an area where perception is as equally important as fact. In circumstances where free issues are accepted with selfless motives and solely in the interests of the College, if an internal or external observer could put an adverse construction on free issue this is what is likely to happen. In accepting any gift or hospitality, therefore, the individual and, if applicable, his or her line manager, must exercise judgement about how acceptance might be perceived, recognising that, what at first sight might appear to be reasonable, may nevertheless become the subject of unreasonable comment or criticism by internal or external parties. The judgement made therefore requires to include an assessment as to whether the benefits gained by the College through the acceptance of a free issues or donation might be outweighed by adverse third party criticism, even when that criticism is not reasonable.

3. Scope

This policy applies to members of the Board of Management, all employees and officers of the College, including agency workers.

This policy and the accompanying procedures cover all offers of free issues whether declined or accepted and provide guidelines on acceptance and disclosure.

4. Responsibility

The Board of Management is responsible for the maintenance of this policy and related procedures through the Audit and Risk Committee.

5. Principle

The College permits free issues or donated goods that are:

- for enhancing the student experience; or
- for the purpose of establishing or maintaining good business relationships;

provided that it is:

- arranged in good faith and transparently; and
- not offered, promised or accepted to secure an advantage for the College or any of its employees, Board members or associated persons or to influence the impartiality of the recipient.

The College does aim to incorporate provision for the inclusion of **community benefits** in all its tender opportunities and these will be recorded and monitored as a separate and parallel exercise by College Supply Chain Manager.

6. Procedure and Guidance

6.1 General Rules

- Those covered by the Policy shall not use their authority or office for personal gain and shall seek to uphold and enhance the standing of the College by maintaining an unimpeachable standard of honesty, impartiality and integrity in all their business relationships.
- Those covered by the Policy have a personal responsibility to ensure that an audit trail exists for all free issues, whether given to or by the College offers of gifts or hospitality. The notification of a free issue must be recorded in the central Free Issues Log.
- Those covered by the Policy may choose, in the interests of transparency, to declare any offer of free issue or donation below £50.
- Where there is any doubt as to the value of a free issue or donation then the offer should be disclosed to the Head of Finance.
- The Head of Finance will arrange for the maintenance of a Free Issue Log and have this available centrally and shall make this available for inspection as required.
- Budget holders are responsible for the maintenance of the Free Issues Log for their area.
- Any person covered by the Policy who becomes aware of a breach of the Free Issues Policy must report this immediately to their line manager and a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). If the breach concerns a member of the SLT it should be brought to the attention of the Principal. Should the beach involve the Principal the matter should be brought to the attention of the Chair and Clerk of the Board of Management.
- Staff and Board members also have access to the Senior Independent Member of the Board of Management.
- Any breach may require appropriate action to be taken against a third party and where an offer is accepted, a proven breach of this Policy will lead to disciplinary action in relation to the employee involved and may constitute gross misconduct.

6.2 Free Issues or Donated Goods Received

- It is accepted practice in the sector that suppliers or employers make their products or services available to aid in the learning and teaching process. This benefits the student learning experience, particularly where these products / equipment are state of the art, or the service represents the most up to date procedures.
- Any gifts offered (whether accepted or not) which are not of a trivial nature, should be notified to the Head of Finance using the form in Appendix 1.

- Any appropriate free issues must be entered onto the College asset register and should be treated the same as if it had been purchased with College funds.
- It should be established whether any equipment is the property of the College or of the organisation or individual who supplied it.
- It will be the receiving department's responsibility to ensure that any item of equipment is safe for use using the same procedure as would be the case with an item purchased by the College.
- Any equipment must be covered by the College's insurance policy and included in any annual audit or declaration.
- It is the responsibility of the receiving department to retain written documentation which explains the details of the donation to the College.

6.3 Free Issues Given

- Any free issues over the value of £50 must be recorded in the Free Issues Log and the recording in the Log is the responsibility of the head of that area.
- Free issues should only be given to students with the express written permission of the department head.
- Where the free issue is a piece of equipment, it is the department's duty to ensure that the equipment has been subject to appropriate Health & Safety procedures and is safe for use.
- Any free issue above the value of £50 must be signed for by the recipient and the person giving the item to the recipient. The receipt should be given to the Finance Department who will maintain a file of these.

Appendix 1

Form to record free issues where over the value of £50

Name of Employee	
Job Title & Department	
Description of free issue	
Date	
Was this a free issue received or given?	
Name & Address of Third Party	
Relationship to the College (e.g. supplier, employer, student, member of staff)	
Estimated Value	
If the item was received, is it a "Community Benefit" received as a result of a tender being won by the giver?	
Approver's Name and Signature	
Employee's Signature	
Date of Notification	
Head of Finance Signature of Notification	

Appendix 2

Register of free or donated goods and services

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