

Gifts & Hospitality Policy

This policy was approved by Trustees as follows –

Board/Committee: Finance Committee

Date: 25 August 2017

Frequency of review: Every 2 year(s)

Next review date: July 2019

ELT Owner: Director of Finance & Resources

Author: Governance Manager

Summary of changes at last review:

- Changed approval from Director of Operations to approval from Governance Manager.

Gifts and Hospitality Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. All employees and trustees are expected to maintain a high standard of conduct with regards to the acceptance of gifts or hospitality of any kind from suppliers or any other person or organisation with which E-ACT has a working relationship. It is important to ensure that no employee or board member acts in any way that is inconsistent with E-ACT's aims, ethos or integrity by accepting a gift or hospitality in circumstances where it could influence, or be seen to influence, that employee's- or board member's actions or decisions.
- 1.2. It is recognised that attendance at receptions, lunches and dinners or other social events form a necessary part of some employee's or board member's roles. This policy is not intended to stop such employees from receiving hospitality of this nature, so long as it is declared in E-ACT's gifts and hospitality register and the timing of the hospitality is not inappropriate.
- 1.3. The general principle of receiving gifts or hospitality should be one of transparency and disclosure and the receipt of gifts and hospitality should always be unsolicited. Any breach of the policy could be regarded as misconduct, leading to disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal.
- 1.4. A register is held to record any gifts or hospitality for employees and trustees. The register will be reviewed annually by E-ACT's Audit & Risk Committee.

2. Gifts

- 2.1. Gifts (defined as items given without the expectation of receiving anything in return) should not be accepted where they may appear to be disproportionately generous or could reasonably be construed as an inducement to affect a business decision.

Disclosure of Gifts

- 2.2. A gift will be considered trivial if by virtue of its nature or branding it has no material commercial value, that is to say, no unrelated third party would reasonably be expected to purchase the item for a sum in excess of £25. Gifts of this kind are acceptable provided the donor is aware that these can only be accepted on the basis that the gift will either be shared amongst all staff (at that site, or within that team) or used for Fundraising purposes (e.g. in a raffle). All gifts received of this nature must be declared within E-ACT's gifts and hospitality register, using the form attached in Appendix A of this policy.
- 2.3. Acceptance of unsolicited promotional gifts, ie items such as stationery or pens that bear the logo or company name of another organisation, provided that these have no significant value, are acceptable.
- 2.4. Gifts of alcohol will **not** be considered to be trivial in **any** circumstances.
- 2.5. Under **no circumstances** must staff accept personal gifts of cash, even below the £25 limit.
- 2.6. Any gifts falling outside the definition of trivial should not be accepted by an individual. There may be occasions when to refuse a gift may cause offence. In these circumstances

prior approval must be sought from the Governance Manager, by completing and submitting Appendix B. A decision will be communicated to the recipient within 5 working days.

- 2.7. Any employee who has received two gifts from any external organisation within a single financial year should not accept any further gifts during that financial year from the same organisation.
- 2.8. Any gifts offered, whether accepted or not, should be notified to the Governance Manager.
- 2.9. The National Governance Team will then enter on to the relevant gifts and hospitality register. This requirement is to protect Employees and Consultants by providing a record of which organisations or individuals are offering gifts to E-ACT and where the gift has gone.

Gifts – summary

Type of Gift	Rule	Required Action
Trivial Gift (up to £25)	Acceptable if occasional	Complete notification form in Appendix A. Submit to Governance Manager for entering on G&H Register.
Non-trivial (over £25)	Cannot be accepted by an individual. Decline or if this is inadvisable or impossible, complete and submit form in Appendix B to Governance Manager to provide prior approval.	Seek prior approval from Governance Manager by submitting the Gifts & Hospitality form on appendix B. Await authorisation prior to acceptance. Governance Manager will inform you of the decision within 5 working days and will enter on G&H Register.

3. Hospitality

- 3.1. Specific areas that are generally **excluded** from the E-ACT interpretation of corporate hospitality are listed as follows:
- 3.2. Business and travel expenses properly incurred by employees whilst attending events or occasions sponsored or supported by E-ACT (E-ACT Employees should refer to their Terms and Conditions of Employment in relation to reimbursement of employees costs);
- 3.3. Normal business lunches and meals, although under certain circumstances special rules apply (further clarification is detailed in this Section);
- 3.4. Hospitality provided to Employees and Consultants who are permitted by E-ACT to attend externally organised courses, conferences, seminars and workshops which are paid for by E-ACT, providing that in all cases such hospitality is open to: all delegates or attendees as part of the attendance fee; or in the case of very large events is open to a fair representation of attendees. See Appendix 1 for examples;
- 3.5. Gifts or incentives provided by recognised business 'frequent traveller' loyalty schemes and awarded during travel paid for by E-ACT; and

- 3.6. Vouchers or financial compensation awarded due to delays during travel paid for by E-ACT.
- 3.7. As a general rule E-ACT interprets corporate hospitality as covering all other invitations and activities falling outside the exceptions above.

Receipt of Hospitality – Disclosure

- 3.8. Any acceptance or declinations of any form of hospitality should be properly documented in E-ACT's Gifts and Hospitality register, using the form in **Appendix A**.

Invitations to lunch or dinner

- 3.9. Invitations to lunch or dinner from an external organisation should only be accepted where the primary reason for accepting an invitation is to discuss matters relevant to E-ACT, either with representatives of the hosting organisation, or with representatives of other organisations that may have interests or activities in common with E-ACT and where the venue and hospitality are not in themselves an inducement to accept the invitation or the purpose of the invitation. Acceptance of invitations to lunch and dinner should be properly documented in E-ACT's Gifts and Hospitality register.

Invitations to Conferences, Seminars and Trade Shows

- 3.10. It is recognised that participation in certain events such as supplier or relevant industry or charity conferences, party conferences, seminars and trade shows can be of particular value where they support the establishment of relationships with strategic partners to E-ACT or enhance E-ACT's knowledge or understanding of a particular area. For such events, the hospitality element should be incidental to the event and relevant information is expected to be gained through attendance. For these events, should an invitation to a major sporting or cultural event be included, reference should be made to the section below on invitations of a social kind. Any acceptance of invitations should be properly documented in E-ACT's Gifts and Hospitality register.

Invitations of a Social Kind

- 3.11. Invitations of a social kind (e.g. sporting and cultural events) should be declined except for when it is in E-ACT's interest to attend and the business justification can be clearly demonstrated. Acceptance for invitations with an estimated value of over £50 per person must be approved in advance by completing Appendix B and awaiting approval from the Governance Manager in advance. All invitations must be properly documented in E-ACT's Gifts and Hospitality register.

Travel or Overnight Accommodation

- 3.12. Hospitality that includes travel or overnight accommodation must not be accepted. The only exceptions to this rule may be when an employee or board member are speaking at a conference and travel and accommodation is provided by the organisers, or for personal safety reasons, for example to avoid travelling late at night. Where overnight accommodation is required, prior written approval is required by completing Appendix B and awaiting approval from the Governance Manager in advance. Any acceptance of travel or overnight accommodation should be properly documented in E-ACT's Gifts and Hospitality register.

- 3.13. **Hospitality - summary**

Type of Hospitality	Rule	Required Action
Invitation to lunch or dinner	Only accepted when the venue and hospitality are not in themselves an inducement to accept the invitation.	Record by Completing Appendix A
Invitation to Conferences, Seminars or Trade Shows	Where relevant information is to be gained through the event and hospitality element is incidental	Record by Completing Appendix A
Social invitations	Decline, unless there is a business justification.	Record by Completing Appendix A. For all invitations over a value of £50 complete appendix B and await approval.
Overnight accommodation	Decline, unless time pressures or personal safety concerns require it.	Record by Completing Appendix A. For exceptional circumstances complete appendix B and await approval.

4. Appropriate timings

- 4.1. E-ACT employees and board members should be aware of the importance of not accepting gifts or hospitality from organisations or individuals at inappropriate times. It is inappropriate to accept gifts or hospitality either immediately prior to, or during, a procurement process or tender. Similarly, it is inappropriate to accept gifts or hospitality from organisations or individuals where the acceptance of such gifts or hospitality may cause E-ACT's independence and political impartiality to be questioned.

5. Repeated invitations of a social kind

- 5.1. Repeated invitations are deemed to be inappropriate, and any employee or board member who has accepted hospitality of a social kind (e.g. sporting and cultural events) from an external organisation should not accept any further invitations of a similar type from the same organisation within the following twelve months.

6. Notification and reporting

- 6.1. The Governance Manager shall keep a register of gifts and hospitality for E-ACT employees and Trustees and shall ensure that the register is updated at least annually.
- 6.2. E-ACT's Gifts & Hospitality register shall be published on E-ACT's intranet, for full view amongst all E-ACT staff and volunteers.

- 6.3. The Board will annually review the register of Trustee, employee and governor gifts and hospitality received, and the way in which this is managed.
- 6.4. The Governance Team will annually circulate the register of Trustee and employee gifts and hospitality received.

7. Policy review

- 7.1. This policy shall be reviewed every two years by the Audit & Risk Committee.

Appendix A: Record of Gift & Hospitality Form (within approved limits)

Any E-ACT employee or board member who receives a gift or hospitality from any existing or potential supplier or external work related contact must disclose the fact of the gift or hospitality, its nature and the identity of the sender by registering the gift or hospitality on E-ACT's gifts and hospitality register, they should also inform their line manager on receipt of such a gift or hospitality.

Please fill in the details below and return the completed form to governance.team@e-act.org.uk (copying your line manager)

Name of recipient:	
Name of ultimate recipient if gift is passed onto someone else:	
Date of Event or Gift Offered:	
Who made the offer (state name and organisation):	
Brief description of offer:	
Details of current\potential contract with the individual\firm offering the gift\hospitality:	
Estimated\actual value of offer £:	
Action taken (accepted, accepted and shared amongst colleagues, declined or returned):	

I certify that I have read the E-ACT Gift & Hospitality Policy and that to the best of my knowledge, I have complied with them.

Signature of recipient:	
Date of declaration:	
Signature of Line Manager:	

Appendix B: Gift & Hospitality Form – Prior Approval Required

Any E-ACT employee or board member who receives a gift or hospitality from any existing or potential supplier or external work related contact must disclose the fact of the gift or hospitality, its nature and the identity of the sender by registering the gift or hospitality on E-ACT's gifts and hospitality register, they should also inform their line manager on receipt of such a gift or hospitality.

This form should be completed where prior approval is required from the Governance Manager. Please see overleaf for the thresholds for Gifts and hospitality offered.

Please fill in the details below and return the completed form to governance.team@e-act.org.uk (copying your line manager)

PART ONE – SEEKING APPROVAL

Name of recipient:	
Name of ultimate recipient if gift is passed onto someone else:	
Date of Event or Gift Offered:	
Who made the offer (state name and organisation):	
Brief description of offer:	
Details of current\potential contract with the individual\firm offering the gift\hospitality:	
Estimated\actual value of offer £:	

I certify that I have read the E-ACT Gift & Hospitality Policy and that to the best of my knowledge, I have complied with them.

Signature of recipient:	
Date of declaration:	
Authorisation signature of Governance Manager:	
Date of Signature:	

Agreed action to be taken (accepted, accepted and shared amongst colleagues, declined or returned):	
--	--

The decision will be communicated to the gifts and hospitality recipient within 5 working days of submission of Appendix B.