

Guidelines for the acceptance of donations to the University¹

The collegiate University, aware of its position within, and responsibility to, the wider community in which it operates, has drawn up the following guidelines regarding the acceptance of donations. The guidelines comprise a set of specific criteria against which the acceptance or otherwise of potential donation will be assessed, together with more general principles and practices to be observed. The guidelines may be of assistance and interest to those within the collegiate University and to potential and existing benefactors.

Specific criteria to be applied

1. All potential gifts will be assessed against the following criteria:
 - (a) is there sufficient credible evidence that a proposed donation would originate from an activity that is illegal or unethical?
 - (b) is there sufficient credible evidence that a proposed donation, or any of its terms, would:
 - (i) impinge on academic freedom or limit freedom of enquiry?
 - (ii) require or promote activity that is illegal or unethical, or which has other serious adverse consequences?
 - (iii) create conflicts of interest for the collegiate University and/or the individual beneficiaries of the donation?
 - (iv) do serious harm to the reputation of the collegiate University?
 - (v) seriously harm the collegiate University's relationship with other benefactors, partners, staff, students, or other stakeholders?
2. Where a donor has a 'tarnished' reputation, the University will consider gifts from that donor if the behaviour which led to the donor's reputation being tarnished has clearly ceased.

Donations that will not generally be accepted

3. Donations will not generally be accepted if:
 - (a) an intermediary negotiates a benefaction on behalf of the donor who asks for complete anonymity. The identity of the donor must at least be known to, and acceptable to, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Development and External Relations). Donor-Advised Funds may very occasionally be an exception but only where the sponsor is a well-known reputable institution who confirms to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Development and External Affairs) in writing that the donor is known to the institution well enough for it, as part of the written confirmation, to confirm that no ethical questions, of the type set out above, arise in relation to the donor; and/or
 - (b) the potential donor is actively involved in the tobacco industry².

Reconsidering donations already accepted

4. Where a gift has been accepted, if information comes to light about the donor or the gift:
 - (a) which might have made the gift unacceptable under these guidelines; and
 - (b) the University could not reasonably have known at the time
 acceptance of the gift will be reconsidered by the Committee.

¹ As agreed by the Committee to Review Donations on 23 June 2009

² Following the definition used in the "Cancer Research UK Code of Practice on Tobacco Industry Funding to Universities", the tobacco industry "includes funds from a company or group of companies engaged in the manufacture of tobacco goods; funds in the name of a tobacco brand whether or not the brand name is used solely for tobacco goods; and funds from a body set up by the tobacco industry or by one or more companies engaged in the manufacture of tobacco goods. The following do not constitute tobacco industry funding for the purposes of this code: legacies from tobacco industry investments (provided these are sold on immediately); and funding from a trust or foundation no longer having any connection with the tobacco industry even though it may bear a name that (for historical reasons) has tobacco industry associations".

Subsequent gifts

5. Although every potential donation will be assessed under these guidelines, irrespective of any previous consideration of the donor, there will be an assumption that, where a gift from a donor has previously been approved, any subsequent gift will also be approved unless in the interim there has been a change in circumstance that might affect the University's decision as to whether to accept the subsequent gift.