

UNIVERSITY OF YORK

Policy on declaring interests, managing conflicts of interest, and gifts and hospitality

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Do members of the departmental Advisory Board need to complete a declaration of interests?**

Yes: they should be asked to declare any interests which potentially have a bearing on their work for the University. The Policy applies to all those employed by or appointed to act on behalf of the University, and this includes external examiners, assessors and advisors.

- **If I'm presenting at a conference, do I need to declare my travel and accommodation expenses?**

This is a bit of a grey area. Some exchanges of this nature are very much part of the 'fee' for doing the work, whereas in other cases the scale of hospitality offered could be deemed a bit of a perk (especially if you and the conference organiser have an existing relationship). You and your line manager will need to use your judgement regarding whether or not it would be sensible to declare, with reference to the key aims set out in the preamble to the Policy, i.e.

1. To promote transparency in the conduct of the University's business;
2. To prevent the misuse of authority and mitigate potential bias in judgement and decision making;
3. To ensure that the necessary audit trails are in place to protect the good standing of the University and of the individuals associated with it.

- **Do I need to declare books which I've been given in return for writing a review?**

If the value is over £40, then yes, you are required to do so – although you might want to make a declaration regardless of value for the sake of transparency. And yes, you can keep the books!

- **Do paid honoraria count as gifts?**

No. These are handled under the [Policy on Work with Outside Bodies by Members of University Staff](#). However, you should declare the relationship as part of your annual declaration of interests.

- **Can we make a donation to charity instead of paying a speaker a fee, at their request?**

No, this is not permitted: see the University's [Guidance on the payment of Donations from the University to Other Charities](#). However, once the payment has been made to the speaker, they are free to donate it to charity themselves.

- **Can we request a donation to charity instead of a fee where a member of staff is the speaker?**

Your first port of call will be the [Policy on Work with Outside Bodies by Members of University Staff](#).

If the contract is made on a private basis between the individual member of staff and the body where the talk was given, and the University is not involved, then the member of staff is free to request a donation to charity on their own behalf.

If the Department is involved in the contractual arrangement, then the fee must be paid into the employee's bank account and taxed in line with HMRC rules. Employees can make charitable donations through the GAYE system, but only up to their net pay.

Please refer any further queries to alice.wakely@york.ac.uk

Governance & Assurance Office
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