

# Guidelines

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**Title:** THE BRIBERY ACT

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**Ref:** HR/ER

**Last updated:** 20/04/2013

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## **What the Bribery Act 2010 means for the University**

The University of Southampton is committed to honesty and transparency in all its business dealings. The University has a zero-tolerance policy towards bribery and any form of fraud or dishonesty in its transactions. The University's Anti-corruption, fraud & bribery policy is available on the HR website.

## **What does the Bribery Act say?**

The Bribery Act 2010 came into force on 1 July 2011. Under the Act it is an offence to offer or make a bribe to or to request or accept a bribe. It will also be an offence to offer a bribe to a foreign public official wherever that takes place.

'Bribery' is a financial or other advantage offered as an inducement to another to persuade them to carry out their functions improperly. The Act covers private as well as public transactions and covers all areas of the University's operations such as recruitment of staff, admission of students, research contracts, procurement and all financial operations.

## **How could bribery arise in a University context?**

Here are some examples of actions that would amount to a criminal offence under the Bribery Act:

A parent offers the University a donation to induce us to offer his or her child a place to study with lower grades than would usually be required.

One of our agents working abroad pays a cash sum to a foreign public official to ensure that the University receives the permissions it needs to commence an operation there. Although the act would be by the Agent, the University would be liable.

A prospective supplier offers the son or daughter of a member of staff a summer job at the outset of a tendering process in the hope that the supplier will be viewed favourably during the procurement process.

A company offers a member of University staff some fee-paid private consultancy in return for supporting their involvement in a research proposal that gives them access to free intellectual property.

## **What do I need to be aware of?**

- Ensure that you follow the University's financial regulations in relation to any corporate hospitality that is offered to you.
- Due diligence in relation to people or organisations that you are interested in collaborating with or doing business with is vital.
- Be open and transparent about any dealings you have with external organisations and seek advice if you have any concerns at all about a deal that is being put forward.
- The welfare of our staff on University business is paramount and, if you are placed under duress to make a payment or offer a benefit, especially when travelling abroad, you must act in such a way so as not to compromise your personal safety. However if such a situation occurs report it to your Dean or Head of Professional Service as soon as you return so that the University can review its operations in the locality concerned or with the supplier concerned.

- If you have any concerns about any transaction that you have been involved in across the University, you can raise concerns initially through your line management. If you are worried about doing this, you can speak in confidence to Human Resources or ultimately you can raise your concern through the Whistleblowing Procedure.