

Political Donations Policy

Section 1 - Preamble, Purpose and Scope

Preamble

(1) Southern Cross University operates within three legal jurisdictions with respect to the governance of political donations (New South Wales, Queensland and Commonwealth). This Policy therefore draws on the guidance around political donations in each jurisdiction, in order to provide a clear basis for SCU members to advance the University's interests in good faith and in a transparent manner consistent with relevant legal obligations.

Purpose

(2) The purpose of this Policy is to govern the use of Southern Cross University (SCU) funds in relation to political parties and entities.

Scope

(3) This Policy applies to all staff and Council members' use of SCU funds. It does not apply to staff or Council members when attending politically hosted or aligned events in a private and/or self-funded capacity.

Section 2 - Definitions

(4) Nil.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(5) As a public institution, Southern Cross University (SCU) strictly prohibits:

- a. the gifting of University funds to any political party, associated entity or candidate;
- b. the use of SCU funds to bid at any political fundraising auction, regardless of the value of the good or service to be potentially obtained via the auction; and
- c. the provision of "in-kind" gifts (providing SCU services or resources for less than the normal commercial rate), to a political party, an associated entity or a candidate in a federal, state or local council election.

(6) SCU prohibits paid attendance at politically aligned events (i.e. fundraisers) except in the following limited circumstances:

- a. the value of the services to be received by the attendee at the event will be equal to or exceed the amount paid; and/or
- b. the benefit or commercial value to SCU of attending will be equal to or exceed the amount paid ; and
- c. the attending staff member has obtained prior approval from their line Executive (with the exception that Council Members, Vice Chancellor and Executive do not need to obtain such approval); and
- d. the details of the proposed attendance is documented and filed using the [Political Event Declaration Form](#)

(including Council Members, Vice Chancellor and Executive).

(7) In the case of (6)a or (6)b, the higher the cost of admission per person, the stronger the assumption will be that paid attendance is not an appropriate use of SCU funds. For this purpose, the monetary amount in the Queensland Electoral Act 1992 that does not fall within the definition of a "gift" for the purposes of that legislation (currently \$200 or less - section 201A (4) (a)) is a useful guide for considering whether the paid attendance at the event is an appropriate use of SCU funds and therefore able to be approved pursuant to this Policy.

Record-keeping

(8) Governance Services will retain [Political Event Declaration Forms](#) submitted via authorisations@scu.edu.au in accordance with the Records Management Policy.

Policy Review

(9) This Policy will be reviewed annually.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(10) Nil.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	21st June 2016
Review Date	21st February 2017
Approval Authority	University Council
Approval Date	21st June 2016
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Ben Roche Vice President (Engagement) +61 2 66203150
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