

Here are some points that you need to consider. You should have included all of these in your reflective activity.

- You realise that you made a mistake. You have now made the right decision to be honest with your supervisor and to return the gift.
- In discovering you accepted a high value gift from a person who uses your service, your supervisor might wonder whether you have accepted other gifts in the past. By not mentioning it earlier, then denying it to your colleague when asked, it could look as though you have something to hide.
- Your colleagues may suspect you have been giving some people who use services more favourable treatment in return for gifts.
- You should read your employer's policy on accepting gifts. It is your responsibility to know your employer's policies and to act on them. Policies on accepting gifts are there to protect both staff and people who use services.
- Your earlier lack of honesty towards your colleague could damage the effectiveness of the team. You should communicate more openly with your colleagues in future. The SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers says that the effectiveness of a team is built on trust, respect and open communication.
- Your decision making shows that you should look again at the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers, which says that you must be honest and trustworthy. The Code also says that you must comply with your employer's policies on accepting gifts.
- You should have a better awareness of professional boundaries and how to maintain these. These boundaries are in place to protect residents and to protect you. Becoming more of a friend to a resident makes it difficult for you to continue to have a professional relationship.
- By accepting the gift and not declaring it, you are not meeting the standards expected of a social service worker. You must speak to your supervisor about what has happened. Your supervisor will help you to put things right.

When Mrs McTaggart offered to buy you the earrings the best thing to do would have been to politely explain that you cannot accept gifts.