

Policy on Naming Buildings and Events

1. Background

1.1 The naming of buildings is associated with a number of issues:

- first and foremost to facilitate orientation and movement around the campus – “way-finding”;
- to recognise significant benefaction; or
- to honour individuals for particular achievement.

Many buildings are named after geographical areas in line with the Colleges (e.g. Bowland, Pendle) but, in the past, buildings have been named after distinguished individuals with connections to the University (e.g. Whewell, Charles Carter) or the region (e.g. George Fox) and others have been named to reflect the departments, institutes etc. they contain (e.g. Lancaster Environment Centre (LEC), Graduate College). One has been named after a discipline (Engineering). The lack of names on many buildings, and the variation in names and presentation, makes it confusing for visitors, staff and students to find their destinations.

1.2 Naming or changing the name of a building is something that should be considered thoroughly, and not based on a strong sentiment that may fade over time, due to:

- the cost of signage and associated literature;
- the confusion arising from the need to re-orientate staff, students and visitors;
- the relatively small number of naming opportunities available;
- the effects of any naming on our reputation, both positively and negatively.

1.3 Giving a person’s or company’s name to a building is a very concrete way of recognising their association with the University, and philanthropic or other contribution to the institution. It should be undertaken with care and after appropriate due diligence. The principles below enable the University to maximise philanthropic giving and link to the (already existing) Ethical Giving Policy and any subsequent updates, which gives a structured framework for recognition and stewardship.

1.4 The University will need to reserve the right to remove or change the names of buildings, if the rationale is clear. This could be due to departmental moves, or if a name became undesirable. A decision about the desirability of a name would not be taken lightly, and the grounds for removing or changing it would need to be substantial.

1.5 The principle of naming buildings can also apply to:

- the naming of rooms and facilities within buildings, such as The Lecture Theatre;
- the naming of events, such as public lectures;
- the naming of academic posts;

- the naming of Scholarships, Bursaries and Prizes;
- the expectations that donors may have in terms of recognition of their gifts (where clarity in advance is of the utmost importance);
- the management of donors, and stewardship of their gifts.

2. Principles

- Building names must have clarity and simplicity, aiding orientation and movement around the campus.
- Names used for existing structures such as buildings or facilities, on campus or in surrounding areas, should not be re-used.
- Care should be taken when using names for buildings which are also associated with major events, to avoid confusion.
- Building names should enhance the University's brand, ensuring that names are compatible with the aims, values and goals of the University.
- Building names should not cause offence to the University community or external stakeholders.
- In future, buildings with predominantly academic use will be named after the academic activity/ies undertaken within them. If/when departments or Colleges move, naming needs to be taken into account in the move plan.
- Other buildings will be named by reference to the College in which they are situated.
- Buildings will not normally be named after individuals (or companies, trusts, etc.) unless they have either made a significant donation to the named building or made such a contribution to the University that naming a building after them would be fitting. It is anticipated that the latter option would be used exceptionally, and in a situation where the contribution would have clear recognition outside the University.
- The naming of a building must comply with any legal agreements entered into by the University, for example with funding bodies or planning authorities, or written agreements reached with benefactors.
- Buildings named in recognition of a major benefaction linked to that building should normally be made only when 50% or more of the cost of the building has been met by the donor. Facilities within the building may be more appropriate for lower-level benefactions. It may very occasionally be appropriate to name a building in recognition of extraordinary contributions made by long-standing benefactors to the University, where no gift has been made towards the cost of the specific building in question.

- Naming shall be in the gift of the University and entirely at its discretion. In each case, the period of time for which the name will remain in place before a review takes place will be addressed. It will be standard practice to name buildings after individuals or companies etc. for a fixed period.

3. Process

- 3.1 The Vice-Chancellor shall have the authority to name buildings/space/Chairs events etc. unless the naming involves a substantial donation, in which case the request will be considered by Council, in line with the Ethical Giving Policy.
- 3.2 Normally the Capital Planning Group would apply the above principles as part of a planned approach to naming building, as consistency of approach should facilitate way-finding on campus.
- 3.3 For other naming opportunities, the process will start with a suggestion for a name that may originate from a Department, a Faculty, a College, the Capital Project Executive or the Director of Development and Alumni Relations. In all cases an individual member of staff should act as “sponsor” for the proposal. This would normally be a Dean, College Principal or member of the senior management team and initially be considered by the Capital Planning Group.
- 3.4 The part of the Estate or the post or event to be named and the proposed name should be clearly identified; the sponsor should also indicate whether the proposal entails a donor providing funding for the building or refurbishment.
- 3.5 There should be a clear explanation for why the space/building etc. should be named and for how long; this should be formally recorded.
- 3.6 If the building/space is to be named as a result of a donation, details will have to be provided of:
 - the donor;
 - the proportion of the total project costs offered by the donor;
 - the extent to which the funding is dependent on the offer of naming rights;
 - the status and appropriateness of the name;
 - the current status of negotiations with the donor.
- 3.7 If the proposal is to use an individual’s name (not attached to any funding proposal), the sponsor should also provide details of any living relatives with whom the proposal should first be discussed. It is not appropriate to discuss the proposal with such relatives until in principle approval has been given.
- 3.8 The sponsor should also consider and report on any significant controversy surrounding the name which might disadvantage the University, and also on any positive benefits which naming the space might confer.
- 3.9 The sponsor should also state the proposed length of time that the name would remain in place (normally no more than ten years).

- 3.10 The sponsor shall be responsible for consulting with the departments/college using the space or building, the Director of Marketing and Engagement, the Director of Facilities, and the Director of Development and Alumni Relations.
- 3.11 Having consulted, the sponsor should submit the proposal to the Capital Planning Group for consideration in the context of the broader approach to wayfinding and naming for subsequent recommendation to UMAG. If UMAG gives in principle agreement to the proposal, consultation should be undertaken by the sponsor with any living relatives (see 3.7 above) excepting any proposals which require further approval.
- 3.12 Any proposals which require further approval will be submitted to Council via UMAG.
- 3.13 No name of any space/building (if named after an individual or organisation) should be removed or altered without a check having first been carried out that any timescale agreed for the usage of the current name has expired.
- 3.14 The Council reserves the right to review and amend the names of any buildings/space which it has approved if subsequently information comes to light which means that the use of the name could bring the University into disrepute.

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