

Naming Policy

Version 2.1
March 2025



Prepared by: Stephen Jones	Page 1 of 8	Date of Approval: 08/01/2024	Approved By: UExB
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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The University of Leicester recognises the importance of naming its buildings, rooms and spaces, research centres, facilities, public spaces, academic posts, scholarships, awards, prizes, bursaries, endowments and other areas of work and activities (“entities”).
- 1.2. The principal motivation to consider a naming opportunity is that the University wishes to recognise an exceptional or significant contribution to the institution by an individual, group or organisation. This contribution may be through philanthropy, exceptional leadership, outstanding academic contribution, excellence in a particular field (“honorific”), and non-philanthropic financial contributions (“commercial partnerships and sponsorship”).
- 1.3. The University is committed to ensuring that naming opportunities are used to recognise and celebrate the contributions and achievements of individuals, groups and organisations that represent a wide and diverse sets of backgrounds. These should be complimentary to the University’s [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) strategy](#).
- 1.4. A naming opportunity can be an occasion for engaging with staff, students, and communities to enhance the relationship the University has with the city and the contribution we make to the vibrancy and diversity of Leicester.
- 1.5. All proposals for naming must follow the guidance set out in the [procedures](#) which compliment this policy.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to enable the University to make clear, consistent and transparent decisions regarding the consideration and approval of naming opportunities. These guidelines **MUST** be observed by all University staff.
- 2.2. This policy seeks to preserve maximum flexibility in the naming process so that naming opportunities and rights can be decided on a case-by-case basis.

3. General principles

- 3.1. The following general principles are to be used as a starting point to guide considerations with respect to naming:
 1. Names should reflect the values, principles and integrity of the University, being consistent with the University’s mission and goals outlined in its strategy: [‘Citizens of Change: Our Second Century’](#). Whilst naming opportunities may not resonate with all parts of the University community, diversity of views and freedom of expression must be balanced with upholding the University’s core values.
 2. Names must not endanger or detract from the core values or integrity of the University or cause widespread offence to the University community or external stakeholders.
 3. Naming must not create a conflict of interest (or the appearance of a conflict of interest) or confer special privileges.
 4. Naming will recognise and celebrate the diversity of thought, belief and background in

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our university community and in the city and region.

5. The University can at any time review and reconsider previous decisions taken in good faith relating to naming.
6. Naming opportunities may be offered for a fixed period where appropriate. Decisions on duration should be made on a case-by-case basis. The associated procedures document provides further guidance for naming opportunities linked to financial contributions.
7. Previous decisions should not be seen as a precedent for the 'automatic' recognition of individuals, groups or organisations making a similar contribution; each decision will be made on a case-by-case basis.
8. Where a naming opportunity arises, consideration should be given as to whether it presents an opportunity for philanthropic recognition, honorific recognition, or commercial partnership/sponsorship.
9. Due diligence must be performed by the relevant department outlined in the procedures for **all** naming opportunities.
10. All naming opportunities for physical locations will be subject to a consultation with the Estates Division regarding placemaking and wayfinding.
11. In cases of naming of physical entities (buildings, rooms and spaces, research centres, facilities, public spaces etc.), the naming of physical spaces should, in general not be occupant or discipline specific. This is due to the potential fluidity of occupancy of the space. In circumstances where a facility is discipline specific, like a specialist laboratory (e.g. Mayer IgA Nephropathy Laboratory) a name which reflects the current discipline and use may be appropriate.
12. In cases of honorific naming:
 - a. Names of current staff, students or lay-members of the University should not ordinarily be used to name buildings. Names of recent or former staff, students or lay-members may occasionally be used for exceptional service, or where the name would merit special recognition for outstanding achievement and distinction in a field or activity consonant with the mission of the University.
 - b. Naming may be considered for other individuals not previously connected with the University where the name would merit special recognition for outstanding achievement and distinction in a field or activity consonant with the mission of the University.
13. In cases of naming arising from a financial contribution:
 - a. All naming associated with philanthropic donations must be consistent with the Core Principles of the [Gift Acceptance - Due Diligence](#) policy.
 - b. Bequests from wills ("legacies") that include directions to name a University entity are subject to the naming policy. Naming recognition for legacy pledges and bequests should not occur before the gift is received.
 - c. Guideline financial values for naming entities linked to a financial contribution will be followed, as outlined in Appendix 1 of the procedures.

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- d. Where naming is associated with a financial contribution to the University, a written agreement should always be used to document the naming, as well as the agreed period of recognition, unless the terms of the gift are set out in another written agreement.
 - e. Where naming is associated with a corporation, the University must be careful to avoid instances of real or perceived endorsement, “co-branding” or conflict of interest. Approvals for naming of this nature may be referred to University Executive Board, irrespective of the suggested *decision maker* in section 4.3
14. Other Naming Opportunities
- a. Naming opportunities which fall outside the category definitions described above are still bound by this policy and are to be managed on a case-by-case basis.

4. Advice, Coordination and Approvals

4.1. **Advice prior to formal nomination** – the offices/groups responsible for providing advice prior to submission of a formal nomination:

- **Philanthropic naming (including legacies) or ‘Other’ opportunities:** The Advancement Office is responsible for providing advice on naming opportunities arising from philanthropic gifts or other categories falling outside specific definitions in this policy.
- **Honorific naming (in lifetime and posthumous):** The ‘Naming Working Group’, chaired by the Chair of the EDI Committee (or designate) is responsible for providing advice on honorific naming.
- **Commercial and Sponsorship:** The Research and Enterprise Division (RED) is responsible for providing advice on naming opportunities arising from commercial partnerships and sponsorship.

4.2. **Coordinators** – the department / office responsible for the completion and submission of the nomination for consideration by the decision makers.

- **Philanthropic (including legacies) and honorific** naming proposals are coordinated by the Advancement Office.
- **Commercial and sponsorship** naming proposals are coordinated by RED.

4.3. **Decision Makers** – These bodies are responsible for the approval of nominations. Decisions made by committee are made through a majority vote.

- **University Executive Board are responsible for:**
 - Buildings (including rooms)
 - Facilities (including rooms)
 - Centres, Institutes and Units (including rooms)
 - Significant Public Spaces
 - Posts (Chair / Professorship)
 - Existing or new activity (non-academic e.g. events, lecture series etc))
 - Scholarships and bursaries (not school specific) ≥£100,000
 - Prizes and awards (not school specific) ≥£100,000

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- **Head of College is responsible for:**
 - Posts (Other)
 - Existing and new academic activities (e.g. lectures)
- **Head of School is responsible for:**
 - Scholarships and bursaries (school based)
 - Prizes and awards (school based)
- **Director of ADVANCEMENT is responsible for:**
 - Scholarships and bursaries (not school specific) <£100,000
 - Prizes and awards (not school specific) <£100,000

The ultimate authority for naming approval rests with the University Council, even where decision-making has been delegated to members of staff. The roles and responsibilities of Council and Authorised Decision Makers can be found in Appendix 1 of the [Gift Acceptance – Due Diligence Policy](#).

5. Renaming (including the termination or modification of naming)

5.1. There may be occasions where there is a case to be made to rename a University entity, including revoking or modifying naming rights previously conferred.

5.2. The case for renaming will be assessed against the University's [values and principles](#) and Renaming Considerations outlined in Appendix 2 of the procedures:

- Renaming on account of a change in values of the University towards the person/organisation associated with the naming, should be an exceptional event. The presumption against renaming is at its strongest when an entity has been named in honour of a major contribution to the University.

Decisions to retain a name or to rename come with obligations of non- erasure, contextualization, and process. When a name is altered, there are obligations on the University to ensure that the removal does not have the effect of erasure. The University could utilise a change as an opportunity for education, addressing the history in a deliberate and visible manner.

- The University follows a formal process to consider whether to alter a named entity due to changing values, outlined in section 7 of the procedures. Examples of renaming, external to the University, include the renaming of 'Gladstone Hall' at the University of Liverpool to 'Dorothy Kuya Hall'. This followed a student vote due to William Gladstone's links to the slave trade. This process should incorporate stakeholder input and scholarly expertise.

5.3. There are other occasions where naming of a University entity may be terminated. Reasons for these terminations could include:

- Cessation of a named activity (e.g. scholarship, prize, academic post, lecture)
- Removal of a named physical asset (building, room, public space)

In these circumstances it might be appropriate that the associated naming be terminated, however there may be occasions when alternative locations or activities could be identified to

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allow continuation of the naming association with the University. These should be considered on a case-by-case basis e.g. Mary Gee Houses were sold by the University, with the Mary Gee name transferred to a new accommodation block at Freeman's).

6. Appeals Process

Should there be disagreement with a decision to name a University entity, a review of the procedures followed will be undertaken by the Director of Advancement to confirm that the Authorised Decision Maker has followed the procedures as laid out in this policy and associated procedures. The matter will then be presented to the University Council for a final decision. There will be no further right of appeal beyond the decision made by the University Council.

7. Further information

This policy should be read in conjunction with the associated procedures. For further advice please email naming@leicester.ac.uk (managed by the Advancement office).

8. Review of the Naming Policy

This policy and associated procedures shall be reviewed by the University Executive Board at intervals of no longer than three years. The next scheduled review will be due by January 2027, but the Policy and associated procedures may be reviewed in the interim in the event of changes to legislation and to ensure its continued effectiveness.

Version History

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