

Naming Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Northumbria University recognises the importance of naming opportunities for its assets, which include building, outdoor and interior areas, features and objects, academic and other posts, research activity and research centres, library collections, scholarships, bursaries and prizes, and other projects and initiatives, for example, a lecture series, sport team or concert.
- 1.2 Although naming such parts of an institution is common practice among higher education institutions, the purpose and uses of naming opportunities vary. For example, naming can be used to recognise those who have made an exceptional contribution to the University, in support of its mission. This could be through years of service, philanthropy in support of the University's strategic objectives, or through other exceptional contributions to the University or to the broader regional, national, or international community. It can also provide an opportunity to strengthen and promote a strategic partnership with an organisation, foundation or individual, recognising a mutual commitment to a vision or cause, which often goes beyond a significant single financial contribution. Naming also provides functionality to a university's estate.
- 1.3 For donors, naming offers the opportunity to honour an individual or family, take a leadership role in a university's fundraising campaign and further connect them to a purpose or cause. Naming encourages donors to make the largest gifts they will make to an institution, while also providing the institution with a mechanism to recognise multiple donors at various levels of giving. The value of a naming opportunity to a business or foundation is often based on the marketing and public relations impact the partnership will generate, rather than the size of the financial contribution.
- 1.4 Northumbria University has previously named assets, which include parts of its estate, research activity, as well as prizes and scholarships dedicated to supporting students. Examples include:
- Glenamara House, Lipman Building, Claude Gibb Hall, Wynn Jones Building;
 - The Lady Grosvenor Research Studentship (for PhD in Generational Trauma, Social Sciences);
 - named prizes, including The Woon Foundation Art & Sculpture Prize, The Michael Long Prize and The John Connelly Award; and
 - named scholarships, including the Laidlaw Foundation Scholarship.
- 1.5 Naming is of considerable significance to the University because the name bestowed can reflect how the University perceives itself, its mission, and its values through association with an individual, group or organisation. The range of naming opportunities is limited and therefore valuable to the University and its reputation.

2. Scope of the Policy

- 2.1 This Policy sets out the University's naming guidelines to ensure that the naming and re-naming of any Northumbria University asset supports the institution's mission and strategic objectives. Moreover, that naming actions do not detract from the University's values, dignity, integrity, or reputation, or confer special privileges, create a conflict of interest, or give the appearance of a conflict of interest.

2.2 Northumbria University assets include parts of the estate, academic units, posts and associated activity, funds to support research or study, collections or equipment and other projects and initiatives, for example, a lecture series, sport team or concert.

2.3 In addition to this *Naming Policy*, the University's *Policy & Guidelines for the Acceptance & Refusal of Donations* provides additional guidance in relation to ethical and reputational risks associated with philanthropic giving.

2.4 Those named or proposing a naming opportunity should be made aware of this Policy and the University's *Policy & Guidelines for the Acceptance & Refusal of Donations*.

3. Principles for Naming

3.1 To ensure the University's integrity, when naming a Northumbria University asset, the following principles should be adhered to.

3.2 The University will not name assets, which:

3.2.1 do not advance its mission or support the University Strategy.

3.2.2 restrict impartial, independent research, scholarship, and teaching.

3.2.3 conflict with the values or reputation of Northumbria University or expose it to undue adverse publicity or reputational risk.

3.2.4 require unacceptable expenditure or additional financial and/or administrative University resources not supported by the gift.

3.2.5 inhibit the University from seeking support from other donors or stakeholders.

3.2.6 require the University to provide special consideration for admission to the University, or other special advantage.

3.2.7 require the University to deviate from its normal hiring, promotion and contracting procedures.

3.2.8 are not compatible with charity law, as set out by the Charity Commission, and other relevant law, including tax law and VAT law, as set out by HM Revenue and Customs.

3.3 The process and procedures for naming a university asset will follow and be subject to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Any request for information about naming will be referred to the University's Data Protection Officer/Records & Information Manager (Legal Services).

3.4 The value of each naming opportunity will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, cognisant of market opportunity and institutional requirement, as well as the actual cost of the asset. Where the naming opportunity arises from a philanthropic gift or other financial contribution, consideration should be given to the thresholds set out in Appendix 1, which provide guidelines, based on an annual assessment of higher education giving data, on the suggested financial contribution associated with a naming opportunity.

3.5 Where the naming opportunity arises from a philanthropic gift or other financial contribution, the contribution does not have to be directly used for the particular asset being named. For example, an individual donor or partner organisation, may give a financial contribution over a period for various purposes and be honoured by the naming of an asset.

3.6 Naming opportunities should not come with rights to make or influence decisions. Donors' attempts to retain control of how a gift is used may negate the tax effectiveness of their gift. Donors' recommendations on design and décor, filling named chairs, determining scholarship recipients etc., may be accommodated by including them or their representative on an appropriate group or committee.

- 3.7 Naming associated with a financial contribution will only take place after a substantial proportion of the donation/sponsorship has been received, with the remainder released as per an agreed schedule.
- 3.8 Where naming is related to a gift, the naming should only be applied for the agreed duration of the gift. The terms of an endowment may be 'in perpetuity' or for a specified time. Since 'in perpetuity' cannot be guaranteed, specified periods of time for naming linked to endowments are recommended. In the case of Legacy Gifts, it should be the normal expectation that recognition of the gift through naming should not occur until the gift is received, unless the individual would qualify for a naming opportunity on other grounds.
- 3.9 Buildings will be named for a defined and limited time to be determined when the naming decision is made. Alterations will be made to university generic and central signage, brochures, campus maps and campus wide signage to reflect the new name of the building.
- 3.10 When a naming proposal involves the use of a deceased person's name, final approval will normally be contingent on deceased person's next of kin.

4. Process for Naming

- 4.1 In line with its responsibilities for the effective management, control and use of the University's assets and resources, the University's Board of Governors is ultimately responsible for accepting, or declining, a proposal to name a university asset.
- 4.2 Proposals for naming of a university asset may derive from any part of the University or from Northumbria Students' Union. It is expected that University colleagues will have discussed the proposal with their Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Service Director, or other relevant member of the University's Senior Management Group in advance of proposing a naming opportunity.
- 4.3 All proposals should be detailed on the *Proforma to Propose the Naming of a University Asset* (attached as Appendix 2) and sent to the Head of University Advancement, prior to any negotiations taking place. The Head of University Advancement will liaise with appropriate University colleagues to provide advice on naming opportunities and any ethical and /or reputational risk considerations that may arise, following the Due Diligence exercise set out in the *Policy & Guidelines for the Acceptance & Refusal of Donations*.
- 4.4 All proposals for naming will then be made to the Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive. Once outline approval has been given by the Vice-Chancellor to progress negotiations, the Head of University Advancement, working with appropriate University colleagues, will produce a formal Naming Proposal for consideration.
- 4.5 If the asset is to be named for five years or less or is associated with a donation of less than £100,000, the decision to approve, reject or amend the naming proposal will be delegated to the Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive. In terms of named scholarships and prizes, which correspond to this threshold, the decision to approve, reject or amend the naming proposal will be delegated to the Director of Strategic Planning.
- 4.6 If the asset is to be named for more than five years or is associated with a donation of more than £100,000, the decision to approve, reject or amend the naming proposal will be delegated to the Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive in consultation with the University Executive and as appropriate, the Chair of the University's Board of Governors.
- 4.7 The Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive will determine whether the naming should be accepted or declined under sections 4.5 or 4.6 above or be or referred to the Board of Governors for its consideration.

Once a [Naming Proposal](#) is agreed, the Head of Advancement will work with appropriate colleagues to prepare the necessary documentation to progress the naming, which will state the conditions upon which the University would accept the naming and basis upon which an asset may be re-named, or a naming may be revoked. Where a naming is linked to a philanthropic donation, the donation must adhere to the University's Policy & Guidelines for the Acceptance & Refusal of Donations. In this circumstance the Naming Proposal will be supported by a Philanthropic Gift Agreement, in addition to any other relevant documents which are needed to formalise the naming.

The Naming Proposal, Philanthropic Gift Agreement, and any other relevant documents, which are needed to formalise the naming, will be held with Legal Services. The Advancement Office will also hold a copy of these documents and will ensure the donation is recorded and stewarded in line with the agreement.

4.8 Where physical signage is required as part of the naming it will conform to the style used in the building where it is located and adhering to the University's brand guidelines.

4.9 All naming proposals will be dealt with in strict confidence, until the naming is publicly announced by the University.

4.10 The Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive will report to the Board of Governors on names that have been approved in the Vice-Chancellor's Report.

5. Re-naming & Revocation of Naming

5.1 The University reserves the right to re-name or revoke a naming.

5.2 Any naming will normally be for the useful life of a Northumbria University asset. When an asset is proposed for re-naming, reasonable efforts will be made to inform all appropriate parties in advance. If they are deceased, reasonable efforts will be made to inform the next generation of family members in advance of the re-naming.

5.3 Where re-naming occurs, the University will consider if it is appropriate to indicate that the asset was formerly known by another name.

5.4 Circumstances where the University reserves the right to re-name an asset include:

5.4.1 Where an asset is named for a limited period. For example, in the case of buildings, which will be named for a defined and limited time to be determined when the naming decision is made.

5.4.2 If an asset must be replaced, substantially altered in its form, nature, or use, or if a building or area is demolished or is no longer to be used for the University's benefit, or if the function of the building changes to the extent that the purpose of the naming is no longer relevant.

5.4.3 Where a named asset is linked to a particular activity, for example a research programme, and that activity no longer meets the University's strategic objectives.

5.4.4 In the event of the individual or organisation, or if relevant the organisation with which the individual/organisation is associated, being involved in, or associated with activities that conflict with the University's values or, which could potentially adversely affect or be prejudicial to the reputation of the University.

5.4.5 In the event where the naming of the asset is linked to a philanthropic donation or sponsorship and the funding and/or other terms specified in the agreed schedule of the gift or financial agreement is not provided in a timely manner

5.4.6 A decision to re-name or revoke a naming will be made following the same thresholds and procedures as set out in 4.5 and 4.6 above and a recommendation will be made to the University Nominations Committee for its consideration.

6. Further Information & Guidance

6.1 For further information and guidance please contact the Advancement Office.

Appendix 1: Financial Contribution Guidelines

1. The value of each naming opportunity will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, cognisant of market opportunity and institutional requirement, as well as the actual cost of the asset. Where the naming opportunity arises from a philanthropic donation or other financial contribution, consideration should be given to the thresholds set out below, which provide guidelines, based on an annual assessment of higher education giving data, on the suggested financial contribution associated with a naming opportunity. These thresholds are guidelines and are not intended to be applied rigidly. Moreover, the categories listed below do not attempt to cover every possible naming opportunity.
 - 1.1 **Buildings** - 30%-50% of the total cost of a new building, or the replacement cost of an existing building. This may be for a whole building, or pro-rata, for part of the whole building such as a laboratory, floor, or wing. More than one naming opportunity might present itself in one project, for example, the whole building as well as a room in the building. Donor gift agreements should give an indication of the duration of recognition, allowing for any future changes to the building.
 - 1.2 **Other Facilities** - 30%-40% of the refurbishment and/or equipment costs. Facilities include, laboratories, seminar rooms or other types of rooms located within a building, part of the whole building and open-air facilities such as gardens.
 - 1.3 **Academic & Other Posts** - An academic post may provide a fixed-term naming opportunity if 50% of the annual costs of the post are donated. Naming would last for the duration of the funding available. A larger fund may be set up to support a post for a longer time, in which case the duration of naming would be extended.
 - 1.4 **Centres of Excellence** - A Centre of Excellence may provide a naming opportunity if 30%-40% of the amount needed to endow the on-going operational costs of the centre, or 50% of the annual cost, is donated.
 - 1.5 **Scholarships & Prizes** - A scholarship or bursary may provide a naming opportunity if £2,000 or more is donated to support one undergraduate student in a single academic year, ideally for at least three years, or £2,000 or more is donated to support one postgraduate student in a single academic year. A prize may provide a naming opportunity if £250 is donated annually, ideally for at least three years.
 - 1.6 **Other Activities** - For example, a lecture series, sport team or a concert may provide a naming opportunity if 50% of the costs of the activity are donated.

Appendix 2: Proforma to Propose the Naming of a University Asset

Title and Name of Proposer:		Faculty/Service:	
Contact telephone number:		Contact email address:	
Please provide a description of the asset that is being proposed to be named (e.g. a building, room, position, scholarship, collection etc.):			
Please state the proposed full name as it should appear on the asset:			
Please explain whom or what the asset is being named after and if appropriate, full details on this individual or organisation, including their connection to the University:			
Please provide a statement outlining why this name is appropriate to be associated with the University and this asset in particular:			
Please advise if this is this a new activity/asset, the re-naming of an existing activity/asset or the naming of a previously un-named activity/asset:			
If this asset is already named or was previously named, please provide the full details of the previous naming and why a new naming is appropriate:			
Please advise when this naming should commence and what period of time should the naming last (i.e. in perpetuity, or for a fixed period of time):			
Please state how the name should be recognised, e.g. as a plaque on a door, listed on a website or in a job title:			
If relevant, please give details of the amount of financial support – and it's type e.g. philanthropic, sponsorship etc.- provided to the University for the naming of the asset, and whether there will be any ongoing financial or other support required:			
Please state if there are any concerns or conditions attached to the name, the activity or potential restrictions on other naming proposals:			

If relevant, please advise if this proposal is supported by your Faculty or Service Executive Team:

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