Policy on the Naming of University Buildings and Facilities

Introduction

1. The purpose of this policy is to describe the principles that the University will follow to name or rename buildings and facilities. The naming of buildings should facilitate the orientation and movement around the campus. The naming of buildings is associated with three scenarios;

   - To honour individuals for particular achievement;
   - To recognise significant benefaction;
   - As part of a commercial contract or agreement.

   The policy will outline, in each of the above scenarios, the line of responsibility for the final decision of naming a building or facility.

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;

   - 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;
   - Any potential embarrassment arising from name changes.

3. The principle of naming buildings has implications for:

   - The naming of facilities within buildings;
   - The naming of events;
   - 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 stewardships of their gifts;
   - Local authorities and the emergency services.

4. In the same way that the physical appearance of the campus and the behaviour of its staff and students can add to or detract from the institutional brand, so too can the naming of buildings, facilities and events.

5. In general, the naming of buildings or facilities should not be discipline specific due to the fluid nature of occupancy. However, in circumstances where a facility is discipline
specific e.g. a specialist laboratory, a name which reflects the current discipline and use may be appropriate.

6. In the light of these issues, the following policy on the naming of buildings is proposed.

**Policy**

7. Building names should enhance the brand of the University, ensuring that names are consonant with the mission, values and goals of the University. Nominations that might enhance the University’s profile in reference to diversity via our building names would be particularly welcome.

8. Building names must have clarity and simplicity, aiding orientation and movements around all University sites.

9. Names used for existent structures such as buildings or facilities, on campus or in surrounding areas, should not be reused.

10. Consideration should be given to the most appropriate naming convention e.g. ‘house’, ‘hall’ or ‘building’.

11. Care should be taken when using names for buildings which are also associated with major events, to avoid confusion.

12. 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, and internal policies such as the philanthropic policy.

13. Building names should not cause offence to the University community or external stakeholders.

**Guidance for honorary naming of buildings or facilities**

14. Names of current staff, students or lay-members of the University should not be used to name buildings. Names of recent or past staff, students or lay-members may occasionally be used for exceptional service, for example, if associated with major change within the University or academic achievement of the highest excellence. In either case, the name would merit special recognition for outstanding achievement and distinction in a field or activity consonant with the mission of the University. It would normally be expected that such achievement would have clear recognition outside the University, for example, by the award of a Nobel Prize or recognition of an equivalent status. Such names should not be used whilst the individual remains an active member of the University.
15. Names of people from outside the University can be used as buildings names. Ideally there would be an association with the city of Bristol or the University but this is not a requirement. The name would merit special recognition for outstanding achievement and distinction in a field or activity consonant with the mission of the University. It would normally be expected that such achievement would have clear recognition outside the University, for example, by the award of a Nobel Prize or recognition of an equivalent status.

Guidance for philanthropic naming of buildings or facilities

16. Buildings named in recognition of a major benefaction linked to that building should normally be made only when either 50% or more of the fundraising target, or 50% or more of the cost, of the building or facility has been met by the donor. Facilities within the building may be more appropriate for lower-level benefactions representing 50% of the present market value of the facility. 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. The specific duration of the name should be in accordance with the stipulations of the University Stewardship Policy.

Guidance for commercial naming of buildings or facilities

17. Buildings should, in general, not be named after specific disciplines. However, in the case of commercial partnerships or agreements it may be appropriate. These require a thorough degree of due diligence to avoid any appearance of commercial influence or conflict of interest.

Approval process

18. The University may initiate an open call for suggestions or an individual/group may submit suggestions. Proposals for naming of buildings and facilities should be submitted to the University Planning and Resources Committee (UPARC) for consideration, after seeking endorsement as stipulated below.

19. Naming proposals that fall within the policy guidelines may be agreed/declined summarily by the Chair of UPARC, following any necessary consultation, where the buildings or facilities are deemed to be relatively low-profile.

20. Naming proposals that are deemed to impact on the University identity more widely will be reviewed by the Chair of UPARC to ensure that they fall within the policy guidelines and then submitted to UPARC for consideration. The Chair of UPARC shall consider any objections raised and decide whether the proposal should go to Senate for final approval. Ultimate responsibility for approving proposals brought forward under this policy lies with Senate.

21. The naming of a building or a facility is in the gift of the University and entirely at its discretion. All building and facility names will be reviewed by the University every five years. The University reserves the right to terminate the naming rights at any time, if for any reason it considers the association with the name to be damaging to its
reputation or if the donor or commercial partner is in breach of the agreement. Termination of naming rights shall be managed by UPARC and reported to Senate.

22. In each eventuality it will be the responsibility on the Public and Ceremonial Events Office to ensure that Estates have been consulted. **NB. For all building names a statutory process whereby the University has to seek approval from the local council must be followed, this process is completed by Estates.**

**Honorary naming**

23. Naming opportunities which aim to recognise outstanding achievement or service should be submitted in writing on the relevant Pro forma to the Public and Ceremonial Events Office for information and guidance. Those proposals that fall within the policy guidelines will then be forwarded to the Chair of UPARC for consideration.

**Philanthropic naming**

24. Naming opportunities which aim to recognise philanthropic donations should be submitted in writing on the relevant Pro forma to the Campaigns and Alumni Relations Office for information and guidance. Those proposals that fall within the policy guidelines will then be forwarded to the Public and Ceremonial Events Office for report and then on to the Chair of UPARC for consideration.

**Commercial naming**

25. Naming opportunities which aim to recognise a corporate donor should be submitted in writing on the relevant Pro forma to consult with the contracts team in Research Enterprise and Development for information and expertise. Those proposals that fall within the policy guidelines will then be forwarded to the Public and Ceremonial Events Office for report and then on to the Chair of UPARC for consideration.