



# Policy on naming of university buildings and physical space

**Approving Body:** Council

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**Next review date:** February 2024

# Policy on naming of university buildings and physical space

## 1. Background

The naming of university buildings and physical space provides meaningful opportunities for the recognition of outstanding contributions to the work and/or reputation of Aberystwyth University (AU). It is a means of enhancing the University's reputation and reputational factors will be key in the constitution and operation of this policy. The policy governs the naming opportunities at AU. The Council may recognise these exceptional contributions, normally as follows:

- to recognise the achievements and contribution of distinguished individuals who have a connection with the University, the local area or Wales more widely; and
- to recognise major benefactors of AU, including individuals, corporations and foundations.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the AU community who seek to honour an individual or entity by naming any of the following:

- Buildings (new and existing) or substantial elements of buildings (wings, floors);
- Rooms and spaces within existing and new buildings; and
- Walkways and outside spaces.

## 3. General naming policy

1. Ultimate ratification of any naming request rests with the Council, subject to the Approval Procedure (point 4, below).
2. The Council reserves the right for good cause to revoke a naming decision, for example, if it constitutes a significant and continuing risk to AU's reputation or if the previously agreed philanthropic donations associated with the naming are reduced (see point 3.4).
3. When a naming is for a limited period of time, AU reserves the right to rename the building or physical space on the expiration of the agreed period of time.
4. Where permanent named recognition has been offered, it will normally be honoured in perpetuity, subject to point 3.2.
5. Naming of buildings, or rooms and spaces within buildings, used for a specific academic purpose or subject shall not impede AU from altering its academic and research priorities.
6. Recommendations for the naming of a building, or substantial element of a building should demonstrate either:
  - A sense of support amongst AU staff and students for the naming in recognition of the individual's outstanding contribution to the work of AU, the local area or Wales more widely; or
  - A significant financial (or in-kind) contribution towards the capital or continuing operating cost of the building or space in question by an individual, corporation or foundation. Normally, 'significant' will be interpreted as being at least 30% of the

full capital or operating cost, but is ultimately at the discretion of the Council. In cases where a naming is associated with a donation, AU donation policy guidance will be applied in relation to the donation process and procedure.

7. Naming recognition to honour a member of the AU community or outstanding scholars outside the university shall not normally be conferred until at least two years following the individual's retirement or death, unless exceptional circumstances exist (such as the awarding of a Nobel prize or similar world-wide recognition).

#### 4. Approval Procedure

1. All members of the AU staff and student community may make a naming recommendation by sending a brief (300 word) note on the rationale for their recommendation to the Space Planning Manager (Dr Tim Macy, [tmm@aber.ac.uk](mailto:tmm@aber.ac.uk)) who will seek initial approval from the Naming Advisory Group (comprising the Space Planning Manager; Director of Marketing & Communications; Director of DARO, relevant Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor and/or Executive-level Director, a representative from the Centre of Welsh Language Services, Students' Union and UMCA presidents or representatives). This group will meet as and when required.
2. Should the proposed naming be a response to a donation, due diligence and biographical checks concerning the individual will be followed as outlined in the [Donations Acceptance Policy](#).  
In the case of a proposal to name a building or space after a distinguished individual who is not a major benefactor, the Naming Advisory Group, Executive and ultimately Council, will need to be assured that a risk assessment has been completed and sources identified that rule out connections to third parties with the potential to bring the University into disrepute. This assessment should accompany the 300-word rationale and should be verified by the Director of DARO following a similar procedure to that outlined in the Donations Acceptance Policy.
3. In considering nominations, the Naming Advisory Group will give due consideration to the current overall profile of named buildings and spaces within the University with a view to ensuring equality and diversity of representation and distribution of names. Once the Naming Advisory Group makes an initial, single recommendation, it shall be submitted to the University Executive for review.
4. The University Executive, once satisfied the naming opportunity conforms to this policy and that the recommendation warrants support, will either:
  - forward the recommendation to Council for final approval, in the case of buildings, substantial elements of buildings, or large-scale developments; or
  - formally approve the recommendation, in all other cases.
5. Should Council, AU or the Naming Advisory Group fail to approve the recommendation, it will be returned to the Space Planning Manager who will inform the individual making the recommendation of its return.

#### 5. Other Requests for the naming of buildings or university space

*The procedure naming or re-naming a building or space which does not involve a named individual is appended to this policy*

6. Naming signage

1. Plaques or other signs recognising named buildings or physical spaces shall be of a generally uniform design and consistent with AU's branding policy/guidelines. The Naming Advisory Group, through the Space Planning Manager should be consulted on all named space recognition signage.
2. External corporate logos and/or wordmarks will not normally be permitted on AU recognition signage, though this may be waived on a case-by-case basis for charitable bodies.

## Procedure for naming or re-naming of university buildings and physical space

### Other Requests for the naming of buildings or university space

1. This procedure [LINK TO FORMAL BUILDING NAMING POLICY HERE] should be followed to consider requests for the general naming or re-naming of a building or space. This would apply in instances where the function of a space could usefully be described by changing the name. In such cases the same procedure will apply with a risk assessment having been completed of any potential connotations or issues arising from the proposed name.
2. The University Executive receives a recommendation from the Naming Advisory Group. Once satisfied the naming opportunity conforms to this policy and that the recommendation warrants support, the Executive will formally approve the recommendation.
3. Should the University Executive or the Naming Advisory Group fail to approve the recommendation, it will be returned to the Space Planning Manager who will inform the individual making the recommendation of its return.
4. Naming signage
  1. Plaques or other signs recognising named buildings or physical spaces shall be of a generally uniform design and consistent with AU's branding policy/guidelines. The Naming Advisory Group, through the Space Planning Manager should be consulted on all named space recognition signage.
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