

**Proposed UCL policy on Naming or Renaming of University Buildings and Spaces**

**Summary:**

*Proposed UCL policy on Naming or Renaming of University Buildings and Spaces*

**Prior Consideration:**

*The proposal was considered by Academic Board on the 24 October 2018.*

**Action required of Council**

*Council is invite to approve the proposal.*

**Author:**

*Professor Geraint Rees, Dean of the Faculty of Life Sciences*

**FOR DISCUSSION - - Proposed UCL policy on Naming or Renaming of University Buildings and Spaces**

**Version 5.0 September 2018**

**Background**

1. This document describes the principles and process that UCL will follow to name or to rename, alter or remove the name of buildings or spaces.
2. UCL will usually name buildings or spaces in four contexts:
  - a. To facilitate orientation and movement around the campus
  - b. To honour individuals for exceptional achievement, and/or inspire people using the building or space
  - c. To recognize significant benefaction
  - d. As part of a commercial contract or agreement
3. UCL will usually rename, alter or remove the name of buildings or spaces in four contexts
  - a. When the building or space is demolished or significantly redeveloped
  - b. When a commercial contract or agreement associated with the name of a building or space comes to an end
  - c. When new information arises that sheds a different light on the original reasons for naming a building or space
  - d. In response to major changes in social or cultural contexts that might no longer support a historical decision to name a building or space
4. Usually the naming of buildings or spaces 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 or use may be appropriate.

5. Naming a building or space is a significant undertaking and should be considered thoroughly. This has implications for the naming of facilities within buildings, events, expectations of donors, people using the space and for others. The naming of buildings or spaces can add to or detract the institutional brand and potentially have significant and long-lasting consequences.
6. As the decision to name a building or a space will usually have been considered thoroughly, removal or alteration of a name should therefore be considered even more thoroughly because of the potential impacts on UCL's academic community, alumni and the broader public. Removing or altering the name of a building or space can potentially have significant and long-lasting consequences.
7. There is a presumption of continuity in naming a building or space. Any decision to alter or remove a name is therefore likely to be an unusual event and requires appropriate justification. This presumption does not in itself decide any such case, but it takes into account the moral complexity often associated with the lives of those who make major impressions on the world, and embodies good reasons for giving continuity substantial weight.
8. This policy applies to buildings and large public spaces (interior or exterior). For smaller spaces within an existing building (such as seminar rooms) the process indicated below is not mandatory but should be considered if there are any concerns about the appropriateness or acceptability of choosing, removing or altering a particular name. The principles outlined below should be applied in all cases.

#### **Principles for choosing a name**

9. Names of buildings or spaces should resonate with the mission, values and goals of UCL. Building or space names should enhance the brand and values of UCL and in particular UCL's longstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion. Building or space names should not be chosen that could seriously damage the reputation of UCL or harm our relationship with other key stakeholders.
10. Names of current staff (honorary, emeritus and substantive), students or other members of the University should only be used to name buildings or spaces in exceptional circumstances; for example, if associated with major change within the University or achievement at the highest level that resonates with the values and mission of the University. It would normally be expected that such achievement would be clearly recognized outside the University; for example, by the award of a Nobel prize or equivalent recognition.
11. Building naming in recognition of a major philanthropic gift may be considered but it will normally be expected that the donor's gift represents a substantial proportion of the construction cost of the building or relevant fundraising appeal target. It may be occasionally appropriate to name a building in recognition of extraordinary philanthropic contributions made by long-standing benefactors to UCL.
12. For naming associated with philanthropic donations, the UCL Policy for the Acceptance of Gifts and Donations should be followed. This will necessarily include due diligence. The specific duration of the naming rights should be agreed at the time of the naming and form part of the Gift Agreement.

13. Naming in recognition of major commercial gift-giving or partnership may be considered, and the principles guiding recognition of major philanthropic gifts should similarly apply. There must be appropriate consideration of any commercial influence, conflict of interest or appearance thereof.
14. Naming should give due consideration not only to the particular name, building or space but also to the broader context and balance (taking into account UCL's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion as well as any other relevant issues) of existing space and building names across the entire estate.

#### **Principles for removing or amending a name**

15. The name of a building or space may be removed or amended when the principal legacy of the namesake is fundamentally at odds with the mission of UCL. This requires careful and holistic evaluation of the contributions, activities and / or ideologies for which a namesake is remembered, which may extend beyond commonly-held current perceptions. Consideration of this principle will usually require study and scholarly judgement on how the principal legacies of a namesake should be understood.
16. Consideration should be given as to whether the principal legacy of a namesake was significantly contested in the time and place in which the namesake lived. This usefully distinguishes between those who actively promoted or dedicated their lives to upholding some practice contrary to UCL's values from those whose relationship to such a practice was unexceptional. This principle will usually require study and scholarly judgement on the historical period in question.
17. Consideration should be given to the original naming event itself, and whether UCL itself actively honoured a namesake for reasons that are fundamentally at odds with the mission and values of UCL. The reasons for the decision at the time should be studied, and if key facts about the namesake were unavailable or actively concealed then this should be taken into account. Consideration of this principle may require historical research.
18. Whether a name is retained or removed, UCL has obligations to consider whether to contextualize this decision and communicate historical information. Consideration should be given to such an approach, including (for example) provision of museum-like exhibits, plaques, signs or other steps.
19. Removing or altering a name should also give due consideration not only to the particular name, building or space but also to the broader context and balance (taking into account UCL's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion as well as any other relevant issues) of existing space and building names across the entire estate. This principle should not in itself decide the issue of whether to remove or alter a name but should be taken into account.
20. The decision to rename or alter the name of a building or space should take account of all of the principles listed here, considering the relative weight to be attached to each as appropriate to the context.
21. The process by which a decision is made to remove, retain or alter the name of a building or space should be transparent with the considerations in respect of each of the principles here being publicly reported. When a decision is potentially controversial, the process of reaching a decision will usually involve a broader consultation with the UCL academic community.

### **Process for choosing a name**

22. UCL may initiate an open call for proposals or an individual or group may submit a proposal. All proposals, whatever their origin, shall follow a common format and will be submitted to a Building Naming Group (or equivalently constituted group) for consideration under the principles outlined above.
23. The Building Naming (or equivalent) Group shall meet as required and be constituted of a range of individuals representing the diversity of the UCL community. Its recommendations will be made to the UCL President and Provost and its decisions will be reported annually to UCL Council.
24. In considering proposals, the Building Naming Group (or its equivalent) will give due consideration to the naming principles outlined above. Where necessary, the Building Naming Group will ensure that statutory processes for UCL seeking approval from the local council or other authorities are completed by UCL Estates.
25. Where naming opportunities that aim to recognize a commercial partner are concerned, the Building Naming Group will consult with UCL Innovation & Enterprise. Where naming opportunities that seek to recognize a philanthropic donor are concerned, the Building Naming Group will consult with the office of the Vice Provost (Development). The Building Naming Group will also give due consideration to the needs of strategic partners where buildings or spaces are jointly owned or operated.
26. The Building Naming (or equivalent) Group shall make recommendations to the President and Provost who shall either accept (or reject) such recommendations or where appropriate refer to UCL Council for the final decision.

### **Process for removing or altering a name**

27. An individual or group may submit a proposal. All proposals, whatever their origin, shall follow a common format and will be submitted to the Building Naming Group (or equivalently constituted group) for consideration under the principles outlined above. This common format will include, where appropriate, a clearly argued evidence-based case that explicitly addresses each of the principles outlined above.
28. In considering proposals, the Building Naming (or equivalent) Group will give due consideration to each of the renaming principles outlined above. For simple cases, the Group shall make recommendations directly, but for complex or sensitive cases it will usually set up a panel to review the case and report to the Group.
29. Such a panel will typically be constituted with appropriate expertise to address the principles above. It may seek additional information include scholarly and UCL community input. The panel will seek broader outreach and engagement with the UCL community as part of a transparent process that will be conducted in a timely manner. In its deliberations, the panel should consider the proposal against each of the principles described above.
30. The panel will report its conclusions to the Building Naming Group, including a recommendation on whether a name should be retained or removed and consideration of

appropriate contextualization of any decision through the development of plaques, museum-like exhibits and similar.

31. Where altering or removing names associated with a commercial partner are concerned, the Building Naming Group (or delegated panel) will consult with UCL Innovation & Enterprise. Where altering or removing names associated with a philanthropic donor are concerned, the Building Naming Group (or delegated panel) will consult with the office of the Vice Provost (Development). The Building Naming Group will also give due consideration to the needs of strategic partners where buildings or spaces are jointly owned or operated.
32. The Building Naming (or equivalent) Group shall make recommendations to the President and Provost who shall either accept (or reject) such recommendations or where appropriate refer to UCL Council for the final decision. The Provost will normally consult Academic Board in any cases where it is deemed necessary to seek Council approval of a specific recommendation.

## **Building Naming Group**

### Draft Terms of Reference and Membership

#### Terms of Reference

1. To advise and make recommendations to the Provost on the appropriate naming or renaming of university buildings and spaces, giving due regard to the principles enunciated in the Naming or Renaming of University Buildings and Spaces policy.
2. To convene as appropriate short-life working groups that provide advice and engage the broader UCL community when considering complex or sensitive renaming cases
3. To liaise with the Office of the Vice Provost (Development) or Office of the Vice Provost (Enterprise) as appropriate concerning philanthropic or commercial involvement in the naming or renaming of university buildings and spaces.
4. To ensure that due consideration is given to the needs of strategic partners where the naming or renaming of buildings or spaces that are jointly owned or operated are considered.
5. To ensure that any statutory processes necessary for naming or renaming, such as UCL seeking approval from the local council or other authorities, are completed by UCL Estates.
6. To ensure that a register is kept cataloguing those buildings and spaces that have been named or renamed at UCL and their relevant details

#### Proposed initial Membership

Academic staff representative(s)

Office of the Vice Provost (Development)

Senior Management Team representative(s)

Student representative(s)

UCL Culture

UCL Equalities and Diversity

Relevant E&D representatives

to include disability, LGBTQ+, gender, race

Provost's Gender envoy

Provost's Race envoy

Schools

one representative from each School

UCL Estates

UCL Communications