Building Naming Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Context

(1) Naming recognition is a significant honour, and the University of Newcastle (University) must ensure that naming opportunities are granted only in exceptional circumstances.

(2) This Policy establishes the provisions for naming rights at the University. In accordance with S17 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989 and the Governance Rule, Council have delegated authority to approve naming rights to the Vice-Chancellor where the naming rights are assessed as less than high risk. Council reserves the authority to approve naming rights that are high risk or greater, and to revoke any naming rights.

(3) This policy should be read and understood in conjunction with University Equity Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Section 2 - Scope

(4) This policy applies to the naming rights of:

a. University buildings;
b. parts of University buildings; and
c. large elements of campus infrastructure, such as sporting ovals.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(5) Names worthy of recognition in this regard may be drawn from a range of areas, including:

a. geographic features and original natural systems of the University site;
b. historic and cultural references associated with the previous landowners such as the original Indigenous communities and subsequent colonial settlers;
c. remarkable events or moments that have marked the development of the University;
d. unique features that may be associated with a particular asset or site; and
e. people and organisations that have given highly distinguished service to the University and/or provided extraordinary support to the University.

(6) The University may acknowledge appropriate Indigenous recognition in the naming of buildings, parts of buildings, landscaping, and thoroughfare features. The appropriate local Elders and Leaders, must be engaged in a genuine way in the decision-making and approval process relating to Indigenous names, signage, and art.

(7) The University may make available any of its property for naming as part of its own commemorative activities.

(8) Any member of staff of the University may propose naming rights. Each proposal requires sponsorship by a member of the Executive Leadership Team.

(9) The approved name must:

a. be informed by an assessment of the associated risks and be determined in accordance with the University's framework for ethical decision making;
b. not pose an unacceptable risk to the University;
c. be consistent with the University's mission, values, and strategic direction;
d. not reflect the function /programs that are hosted in that building;
e. not impose or imply conditions that would limit or appear to limit the University's ability to undertake its functions fully and impartially; and
f. be consistent with other relevant University policies.

(10) The duration of the recognition – whether in perpetuity or for a defined period – will be determined by the University in consultation with relevant stakeholders including but not limited to the person or organisation being honoured or their trustee/executor (where relevant) and based on the actual cost of provision and maintenance of the area being named. The minimum naming period is five years.

(11) Factors to be considered when determining the duration of recognition include, but are not limited to:

a. the overall value and duration of the service or support provided; and
b. the building or infrastructure to which the naming shall apply.

(12) The Nominations and Governance Committee is to be notified of any decision to demolish a named building or a named part of a building to enable consideration of how that name may be able to be preserved, if deemed appropriate to do so.

(13) The University reserves the right to withdraw naming at any time and at its own discretion. This may include, but is not limited to, circumstances where the name of an individual or organisation who has been granted naming rights comes into disrepute in the University or in the general community. Withdrawal of naming rights will be subject to the the Vice-Chancellor making recommendation to Council that the use of the name be discontinued and, if applicable, the relevant contractual clause is invoked.

(14) When a named building is proposed for renaming, reasonable efforts will be made to inform the original honouree in advance. If the honouree is deceased, reasonable efforts will be made to inform family members in advance of renaming.

(15) To have due regard to the relocation of campus activities over the life of a building the building name should not represent the building occupant's function or discipline/s. In addition, this policy does not relate to the allocation and management of building coding or identifiers which are operational matters.

(16) Decisions relating to naming rights are entirely at the discretion of the University.

Recognition of individuals or organisations through naming rights

(17) The University will seek to ensure that individuals or organisations proposed to be honoured are acceptable to the University, and the purposes for the recognition, the historical actions and conduct of the individual or organisation being recognised are consistent with the University's mission, values, and strategic direction.

(18) Naming may be conferred on individuals or organisations for the following reasons or combination thereof:

a. contribution or exceptional service to the University;
b. support to the University;
c. historical or cultural recognition;
d. diversity;

e. contribution or service to a profession or academic discipline; and/or
f. contribution or service to the community.

(19) Naming rights for individuals or organisations must:

a. be only granted to persons or organisations of good character as determined by the Vice-Chancellor in consultation with the Executive Leadership Team; and
b. not be for an entity responsible for the supply of products or services that conflict with the University's missions, values, and strategic direction.

(20) Building naming rights granted in recognition of former employees of the University, must only be granted to those employees who have finished their employment with the University and who are unlikely to be re-employed by the University at any time in the future. The person may have an ongoing association with the University in the form of an emeritus professorship or adjunct appointment, but not be in receipt of any kind of remuneration.

(21) Consistent with the Staff Code of Conduct and the Disclosure of Interest Policy no University employee should receive a private, personal benefit as part of or, in association with, any naming proposal. For clarity, naming recognition is not considered a benefit to any supporter, and has no impact on the tax deductibility of any financial support.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	10th July 2025
Review Date	6th March 2028
Approval Authority	University Council
Approval Date	4th July 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Alex Zelinsky Vice-Chancellor alex.zelinsky@newcastle.edu.au
Enquiries Contact	Legal and Governance Services

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Risk" - Effect of uncertainty on objectives. Note: An effect is a deviation from the expected, whether it is positive and/or negative.

"Asset" - Any tangible or intangible item (or group of items) that the University owns or has a legal or other right to control and exploit to obtain financial or other economic benefits.

"Campus" - means any place or premises owned or controlled by the University, but may also specifically refer to a designated operating location such as the Callaghan Campus.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

This document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of the individual reading this document to always refer to the Policy Library for the latest version.