Policy statement: gift acceptance

1. Ultimate responsibility for the acceptance – or otherwise – of gifts to the University rests with the Council of the University. Operational responsibility is however delegated to the Gift Acceptance Committee (GAC) and the Director of Development as indicated below.

2. All actual or potential gifts to the University must be notified to the Head of Campaigns in the Alumni and Development Office at the earliest opportunity. In any event, members of staff must not solicit a gift – or accept an unsolicited gift – with a value of £75,000 or more (cumulative over a five-year period in the case of a sequence of gifts) without the agreement of the GAC or the Director of Development in accordance with this policy. (The Head of Campaigns will serve as a point of contact for both.)

3. Gifts shall be rejected which are judged not to be consistent with the University’s strategy and values. For example, a gift shall be rejected if it is not wholly consistent with the precepts of impartial, independent research, scholarship and learning. Similarly, no gift shall be accepted from a tobacco company.

4. Donations shall be solicited or accepted only after due diligence, including as appropriate consideration of any strategic, financial, legal, ethical and reputational issues. In particular, for any single gift or proposed gift with a value of £75,000 or more, and for any series of gifts or proposed series of gifts with a value of £75,000 or more over a five-year period, a systematic assessment will be made to confirm:

   (a) that the ultimate source of funds is clear;
   (b) that the gift is not inconsistent with the University’s strategy and values and its charitable status;
   (c) that the gift will give rise to no material conflicts of interest;
   (d) that there are no financial legal, ethical or reputational obstacles to acceptance of the gift; and
   (e) that the gift is consistent with all other aspects of this policy.

   Judgements will be based so far as possible on firm evidence; a clear distinction will be drawn between confirmed fact or legal finding on the one hand, and, on the other, rumour or speculation.

5. In the case of charitable trusts and foundations the decision to accept or reject the gift will be made after successful solicitation.

6. Records shall be kept to confirm the decisions made by the GAC and the decision-making process. Records may be destroyed after seven years of a gift being made.

7. The extent of enquiries made under 4 above will be proportionate to the value of the gift, within the following framework:

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All gift thresholds are exclusive of Gift Aid or any matched funding that might be applicable.
(a) the solicitation or acceptance of gifts with a value of £75,000 or more (or a series of gifts with a value of £75,000 or more over five years) shall require the approval of the Director of Development;

(b) the solicitation or acceptance of gifts with a value of £150,000 or more (or a series of gifts with a value of £150,000 or more over five years) shall require the approval of the GAC, which may consult the full Council as it considers necessary;

(c) all gifts of real property, and donations which take the form of non-publicly traded securities, shall require the approval of the GAC and;

(d) other gifts may be referred at the discretion of the Director of Development to the GAC for approval.

(e) Anonymous gifts (where the donor is unknown) above £75,000 shall be accepted only in consultation with HEFCE.

8. Due diligence will be refreshed every five years where an ongoing donor relationship exists and any changes of note will be reported to the GAC. Where a subsequent gift takes a donor over the £150,000 gift threshold the case will be updated and presented to the Committee.

9. The University will provide a gift agreement for all gifts over £75,000 detailing how the gift will be used and the agreed payment schedule.

10. Where appropriate, donors will be offered opportunities for continuing engagement with the activities they have funded. Donors will not however receive any preferential treatment in respect of the University’s academic activities or business affairs. In particular, no donation shall lead to any departure from standard policies and procedures in respect of the recruitment and admission of students, the appointment or promotion of staff, procurement or governance and management (including the governance and management of any activity or facility funded by a donation).

11. If subsequent events (including the availability of new information) so require, the University may, at the discretion of the GAC, review and reconsider previous decisions to solicit or accept particular donations. The response to such circumstances shall be transparent and proportionate.

Policy statement: naming

12. Subject to paragraphs 13-15 below, facilities, posts and activities funded by a donation may be named after the donor if the donation covers the full cost of the facility, post or activity in question.

13. The naming of any facilities (including buildings, rooms and equipment), posts or activities funded by gifts over £150,000 will be subject to the approval of the GAC, which may consult Council at its discretion.

14. A donor’s support may also be recognised by naming a space or facility which is not directly related to a donor’s gift provided:

(a) that the naming opportunity is commensurate in value and prominence with the support being recognised;

(b) that, when calculating the value of support, other named gifts are not taken into account;

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(c) that the offering of such naming opportunities is agreed by the GAC, regardless of the value of the support.

15. All named gifts over £150,000 will be reported to the Council.

16. Deviations to the principle at 12 above may be agreed by the GAC but in no circumstances may the Committee set aside the provisions of 13-15 above.

17. The decision to name a facility, post or activity may be revoked, if circumstances so warrant, through the process indicated at 11 above.

**Constitution of the Gift Acceptance Committee**

**Terms of reference**

1. To ensure that the University operates effective, systematic and proportionate systems for research into donations offered to – or potentially to be solicited by – the University.

2. For each case brought to the Committee in accordance with the Gift Acceptance Policy:
   (a) to consider any strategic, financial, legal, ethical and reputational issues associated with the gift or proposed gift; and
   (b) to determine whether the gift in question may be accepted or, as the case may be, the proposed gift solicited or whether it should be referred to the full Council for decision.

**Membership**

The Pro-Chancellor (in the Chair)
Three lay members of the Council (currently, Mrs Caroline Johnstone and Mr Geoff Potter, Mr Quentin Woodley)
The Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Student Education
A member of the University Senate (currently Chris Megone)

**In attendance**

The Vice-Chancellor
The Finance Director
The University Secretary
The Director of Development
The Head of Campaigns