

**Newcastle University**

**Ethical Policy for the Acceptance of Philanthropic Donations: Major Gifts**

**Introduction**

With the growth of philanthropic giving to UK Higher Education, both in terms of total giving and the number of donors who give, the fundraising process must follow best practice. Following the Etherington Review (2015), there is a recommended framework to adhere to and as an institution, we apply due diligence to determine the credibility of sources of gifts. It is important to demonstrate the value of private giving in support of education, but at the same time ensure that there is transparency around whom we accept gifts from and for what purpose.

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) describes philanthropy as “a voluntary exchange in which values and aspirations of donors are matched with the values and aspirations of those they benefit”.

When accepting philanthropic donations, universities need to consider carefully whom they accept gifts from, and for what purpose, whether this is the fundraising professionals who work on behalf of the University, University colleagues or volunteers.

Ethical decision making is a deliberate and conscientious effort to make judgements that reflect the university’s mission, values and long-term goals. Ethical decisions are made with the public trust and institutional integrity in mind. A major gift is defined as one for £10,000 or more.

**Guidelines: Authorisation of the acceptance of philanthropic donations**

<b>Total donation</b>	<b>Authorisation by</b>
Less than £10,000	Designated staff in NU Advancement (Tracey Readshaw) and Finance and Planning (Joanna Mason)
£10,000 - £100,000	Deputy Vice-Chancellor following review by NU Advancement
£100,001 - £500,000	Ethics Committee (research or teaching bequests) Executive Board (other bequests)
>£500,000	Council

**Principles**

When accepting a major gift consideration should be given to the following issues.

- Has the donor acted illegally in the acquisition of funds?
- Would acceptance damage or limit the operation of the University in fulfilling its stated objectives?
- Would acceptance harm relationships with other partners, funders or stakeholders?
- Would it create a significant conflict of interest?
- Would it damage the University’s reputation?
- Would acceptance lead to unmanageable conditions applied by the donor? Newcastle University does not accept anonymous donations above £100. Newcastle University will, however, respect a donor’s wish for privacy should they wish their details not to be publicised.
- The gift will be applied for the purpose for which it was given, unless explicit consent is given by the donor or in the case of bequests, the executors.
- Gifts of £10,000 or over must have a signed Gift Agreement or equivalent. The following statement will be included in all Gift Agreements:

***Statement of Academic Freedom:*** *It is a legal and moral requirement that philanthropic gifts do not afford the donor any expectation of benefit from the donation.*

Where further background information is needed in relation to the source of a potential gift, NU Advancement will use its research facility to undertake this work and then make recommendations to the authorising person/s. Where there is concern, there will be discussion with the potential beneficiary of the gift prior to any decision to decline a gift.

NU Advancement will maintain a record of all major gifts accepted and declined.

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