

CMG

20 January 2010

Proposals for the Naming of Chairs after Eminent Individuals

CMG requested a proposed approach to the naming of chairs after appropriately eminent individuals who have worked in the relevant academic discipline at Edinburgh, including previous incumbents. There exists a separate policy statement on the naming of chairs after donors, which is not addressed further here.

It is suggested that the practice of naming chairs after such individuals should be approached on the following basis:

1. The individual should be of such eminence in the relevant academic discipline that their name will be readily recognised by those now working in it;
2. Once named, the expectation would be that the designation would endure indefinitely and not be subject to change merely on the wish of any present or future incumbent
3. It should not be expected that all, or indeed perhaps the majority, of chairs will be named. There needs to be good reason to do so, beyond the wish of any particular incumbent.
4. A proposal to name a chair should normally come forward at the time it is being created or, if an existing chair, filled. A very strong case would be required should chairs be named during the incumbency of an individual.
5. Unless the passage of time has rendered this irrelevant, any proposal should have the support of the individual's family.

A decision to name a chair requires a Court Resolution, which would be put to CMG in draft for comment. The covering paper should include a brief explanation of the reason for naming the chair and for the chosen designation.

MDC
December 2009