



Policy on the acceptance of donations

Homerton College is an independent charitable body, and is accountable for the receipt and expenditure of funds for its charitable purposes. The College is very grateful indeed to its many donors.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to the College on the considerations determining acceptability of donations, and to assist discussions with donors.

Framework of considerations

In recommending acceptance of any donation, the College will assess the following considerations:

- a. Are the purposes of the donation compatible with the purpose of the College as defined in its Statutes?
- b. Do the purposes of the donation fall within the College's mission and strategic plan?
- c. What additional costs or burdens, if any, would acceptance of the donation create for the College?
- d. Is there published evidence that the proposed donation arises in whole or in part from activity that:
 - i. evaded taxation,
 - ii. violated international conventions that bear on human rights,
 - iii. limited freedom of inquiry,
 - iv. suppressed or falsified academic research, or
 - v. actively or recklessly hindered global efforts to transition to a zero-carbon world?

In the case of unproven allegations of criminality against a potential donor, no account shall be taken of mere rumour, but care will be exercised in accepting any donation, or continuing negotiations towards a possible donation, where there is a risk of significant damage to the College or University's reputation.

- e. Is there evidence that the proposed donation, or any of its terms, will: (i) require action that is illegal, (ii) limit freedom of inquiry, (iii) suppress or falsify academic research, or (iv) create unacceptable conflicts of interest for the College or the University of Cambridge?
- f. Is there evidence that acceptance of the proposed donation or compliance with any of its terms will damage the College or the University of Cambridge's reputation, including deterring other donors?

Donations from prospective or current students, or their family members

The College shall apply the following additional criteria where the donation is from a prospective or current student (or immediate family member of a prospective or current student):

- a. No donation, no matter the size, will affect the admission or academic record of any current or future student; and neither will it have a bearing on any dispute between any current or future student and the College.
- b. The College will not accept a donation from an individual or his/her immediate family, either when the College is aware that the individual is actively contemplating applying to Homerton, during the application process, or once a conditional offer has been made to that individual.
- c. Although pledges of future donations are not legally binding in the UK, the College will not accept such a pledge in any of the above circumstances.
- d. The College will not accept a donation from a student or his/her immediate family of more than £10,000 before the student has been approved for his or her qualification at the end of the course.
- e. The College may accept a non-legally binding pledge of a future donation whilst a student is at Homerton, but it will be explained clearly in writing to the donor that the College cannot take account of the pledge in any dealings with the student, and that as the pledge is non-legally binding, the pledge may be withdrawn at any time.
- f. Notwithstanding the above, if the student is a family member of an alumnus/alumna and that alumnus/alumna had previously been giving regular amounts to the College of £10,000 or less per annum, it would be inappropriate to refuse to continue to accept those donations.

Authority

College Statute 34 gives the Governing Body (i.e. the entire Fellowship of the College) the power “to accept endowments for any purposes in furtherance of the interests of the College”. This refers to large, unspendable capital sums which yield interest, and are restricted under trust law. Governing Body delegates the authority to accept all other donations to the College Council. Council is also constituted as the Board of Trustees of the College, and is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the College complies with charity law.

Where proposed donations are uncontroversial and support the core purposes of the College, the College Council authorises the Director of External Relations and Development to accept donations on behalf of the College. Any proposed donations which in her or his professional opinion are unstraightforward, or which exceed a value of £100,000 in any one year from one donor, will be referred to the Development Committee for advice, and ultimately to the College Council for decision, save that the Council may in any instance decline delegated authority and refer the decision to Governing Body.

Due diligence

The Director of External Relations and Development will ensure that authoritative decisions on the acceptance of donations are taken in the light of sufficient evidence. Prospective donors are referred to the Homerton College Development Office’s Data Protection Statement (www.homerton.cam.ac.uk/dataprotection) which sets out how the College handles and uses personal data.

Status of this policy

This policy on the acceptance of donations was agreed by the College Council on 27 April 2017 and amended on 22 May 2022.

