Honorary Degree Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) To specify the requirements for the nomination, approval and conferral of an Honorary Degree by the University Council.

Background

(2) Honorary Degrees are awarded in recognition of exceptional achievement or contribution in relation to a particular field or discipline, and / or to the University and society. Honorary awards are identified by the inclusion of 'Hon' in the post-nominals.

Scope

(3) The University Council has resolved that it may admit any person approved by the Council, Honoris Causa, to the following:

a. Doctor of Business (Hon.DBus);
b. Doctor of Economics (Hon.DEc);
c. Doctor of Science (Hon.DSc);
d. Doctor of Letters (Hon.DLitt);
e. Doctor of Laws (Hon.LLD); and
f. Doctor of the University (Hon.DUniv).

(4) This Policy does not apply to the nomination, approval and conferral of the titles and awards:

a. Honorary Fellowship – refer to Honorary Academic Titles Policy;
b. Distinguished Professor – refer to Award of Distinguished Professor Policy;
c. Emeritus Professor – refer to Professor Emerita Emeritus Policy; and
d. Higher Doctoral Degrees – refer to the Higher Doctoral Degree Rules.

Section 2 - Policy

Eligibility

(5) The University Council will determine eligibility for an Honorary Degree following review and recommendation by the Honorary Awards Committee.

(6) The following are ineligible for nomination:

a. current staff, including staff retained after retirement or resignation in a capacity as consultant, project manager, adviser, adjunct or in any other form of paid association with the University;
b. former members of staff who ceased employment less than 12 months previously;

c. current members of the University Council; and
d. former members of the University Council who ceased membership less than 12 months previously.

Nomination

(7) A nomination for an Honorary Degree may be made by a staff member or group of staff. Any nomination must be made in accordance with the Honorary Degree Procedure.

(8) All proposals from University staff members will need to be submitted to their Executive Group member. The Executive Group member will submit the proposal to the Executive Group for consideration, before final submission to the Honorary Awards Committee.

(9) All proposals from Honorary Awards Committee members will be submitted directly to the Honorary Awards Committee for consideration.

(10) The University Council will receive and consider a nomination for an Honorary Degree only on the recommendation of the Honorary Awards Committee.

(11) The University Council is not required to award an Honorary Degree in any one year.

Conferral

(12) An Honorary Degree will be conferred in perpetuity.

(13) An Honorary Degree may be approved and conferred posthumously at the discretion of the University Council.

(14) Where a recipient indicates their willingness to accept an Honorary Degree, but:

a. dies before the conferral ceremony, an Honorary Degree can be conferred posthumously; or
b. is temporarily or permanently incapacitated before the conferral ceremony, a relative or associate may receive the award on behalf of the recipient, at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor.

(15) Where an Honorary Degree is conferred posthumously, a relative or associate may receive the award on behalf of the recipient, at the absolute discretion of the University Council.

(16) Only recipients who are temporarily or permanently incapacitated can have their Honorary Degree awarded in absentia.

(17) If a recipient declines the offer of an Honorary Degree:

a. the Vice-Chancellor will report the nominee's response to the Council Secretary;
b. the Council Secretary will enter the changed status of the declined award into the minutes of the next Honorary Awards Committee for notice by that Committee and the University Council; and
c. the University Council resolution previously passed to approve the conferral of the Honorary Degree will be deemed to be rescinded.

(18) If a recipient fails to respond within three (3) months to the offer of an honorary award:

a. the Vice-Chancellor will report the lack of a response to the Chair of the Honorary Awards Committee;
b. the Council Secretary will enter the changed status of award where no response has been received into the minutes of the next Honorary Awards Committee for notice by that Committee and the University Council; and
c. the University Council resolution previously passed to approve the conferral of the Honorary Degree will be deemed to be rescinded.

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(19) A recipient of an Honorary Degree will have their award conferred at a graduation ceremony of the University, or other ceremony or public event as determined by the University Council.

(20) Conferral of an Honorary Degree will be evidenced by both:

a. a testamur in a form approved by the University Council and executed under the Common Seal of the University; and
b. a citation in a form approved by the University Council.

Responsibilities

(21) A recipient of an honorary degree will not, by means of any action, association or inaction, bring the University or the University Council into disrepute.

Titles

(22) Persons who are conferred with an Honorary Degree are entitled to use the post-nominals for that degree as prescribed above.

(23) Recipients of Honorary Degrees are not entitled to use the titles ‘Doctor’ or ‘Dr’ before their names outside the University.

Confidentiality

(24) All proceedings and documentation relating to a nomination for an honorary award will be confidential.

(25) A person who is the subject of a nomination for an honorary award is not to be consulted or contacted prior to the decision of the University Council being made final. Any exception will require prior approval by the University Council.

Register of Honorary Degrees

(26) The Graduations Unit will maintain a Register of Honorary Degrees that details Honorary Degrees:

a. conferred (including posthumously);
b. awarded but declined; and
c. revoked (the cause or reason for the revocation will not be recorded).

Compliance and Breaches

(27) The University may commence applicable disciplinary procedures if a person to whom this Policy applies breaches this Policy (or any of its related procedures).

Section 3 - Procedures

(28) Refer to the Honorary Degree Procedure.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(29) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(30) The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

a. Honorary Degree means a degree honoris causa (Latin: "for the sake of the honor"). It is an academic degree for which a university has waived the usual academic requirements, such as study and the passing of examinations. The degree is conferred as a way of honouring a distinguished person's contributions to a specific field, or to society in general.

Status and Details

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Responsible Executive	S. Bruce Dowton Vice-Chancellor
Responsible Officer	Sophie Buck Director, Governance Services
Enquiries Contact	Sophie Buck Director, Governance Services

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