

Honorary Degree Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy specifies the requirements for the nomination, approval and conferral of an Honorary Degree by the University Council (Council).

Scope

(2) The Council has resolved that any person it has approved may be admitted, *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).

(3) 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 [Distinguished Professor Policy](#);
- c. Emeritus Professor – refer to [Professor Emerita Emeritus Policy](#); and
- d. Higher Doctoral Degrees – refer to the [Higher Doctoral Degree Rule](#).

Section 2 - Policy

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

Eligibility

(5) The 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 Council; and
- d. former members of the 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 Procedures set out in Section 3 of this Policy.

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

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

Conferral

(10) A recipient of an Honorary Degree will have their award conferred at a graduation ceremony of the University, or other ceremony/event, or otherwise, as determined by the Chancellor or the Vice-Chancellor.

(11) An Honorary Degree may be approved and conferred posthumously at the discretion of the Council. A relative or associate may receive the award on behalf of the recipient.

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

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

(13) Where a recipient indicates their willingness to accept an Honorary Degree but 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.

(14) Where a recipient declines the Honorary Degree or fails to respond to the offer within three months, the Council resolution in so far as it approved the conferral of the Honorary Degree will be deemed to be rescinded (refer to Procedures section).

Responsibilities

(15) A recipient of an Honorary Degree will not, by means of any action, association or inaction, bring the University (including the Council) into disrepute. The Council may rescind the award of an Honorary Degree where the recipient has brought the University into disrepute.

Titles

(16) Persons who are conferred with an Honorary Degree are entitled to use the post-nominals for that degree as prescribed in clause 2.

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

Confidentiality

(18) All proceedings and documentation relating to a nomination for an Honorary Degree will be confidential.

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

Register of Honorary Degrees

(20) The Graduations Unit will maintain a register of Honorary Degrees that details Honorary Degrees:

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

Section 3 - Procedures

Nomination

(21) A staff member must discuss a proposed nomination for an Honorary Degree with their relevant Executive Group member prior to submitting a formal nomination.

(22) If supported, a formal nomination will be submitted to the Executive Group member for discussion at an Executive Group meeting.

(23) The nomination will be drafted in the format provided in [Attachment A - Honorary Award Nomination Form](#) and include:

- a. the nominee's title, full name, post-nominals (if any), address and contact details;
- b. the name of the award for which the person is being nominated; and
- c. a citation template detailing the nominee's achievements and contributions in relation to a particular field or discipline, and/or to the University and society in general. If the nomination is approved and subsequently accepted, this citation will be read at the conferral ceremony.

(24) The Executive Group will review a nomination for an Honorary Degree and determine whether to endorse the nomination for submission to the Honorary Awards Committee.

(25) An endorsed nomination will be sent to the Council Secretary for submission to the Honorary Awards Committee.

(26) A proposal from an Honorary Awards Committee member will be submitted directly to the Honorary Awards Committee for consideration.

Determination

(27) The Honorary Awards Committee will review nominations in accordance with its Terms of Reference and the provisions of this Policy.

(28) In making assessments of Honorary Award nominations, the Committee will refer to clause 4 which outlines that Honorary Degrees are awarded:

- a. in recognition of exceptional achievement or contribution in relation to a particular field or discipline; and/or
- b. in recognition of exceptional achievement or contribution in relation to the University and society.

(29) For each nomination, the Honorary Awards Committee will make one of the following determinations:

- a. decline the nomination;
- b. refer the nomination back to the Vice-Chancellor;
- c. recommend the nomination to the Council for approval with no amendments; or

d. recommend the nomination to the Council for approval, subject to any required amendments.

(30) The Council Secretary will include the nominations recommended by the Honorary Awards Committee in the agenda and papers of the next meeting of the Council.

(31) The Council will review nominations and the recommendations of the Honorary Awards Committee in accordance with the provisions of this Policy.

(32) For each nomination, the Council will make one of the following determinations:

- a. decline the nomination;
- b. refer the nomination back to the Honorary Awards Committee or the Vice-Chancellor; or
- c. approve the nomination and authorise the Vice-Chancellor to provide a written offer of an Honorary Degree to the award recipient.

(33) The Council Secretary will communicate the Council's decision to the Office of the Vice-Chancellor to prepare and send a letter of offer to the recipient. A copy of this correspondence will be provided to the Council Secretary and the Manager, Orientation and Graduations.

Accepted or Declined Honorary Degree

(34) The recipient's acceptance of the Honorary Degree will be communicated to the Council Secretary and the Manager, Orientation and Graduations by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor.

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

- a. the Vice-Chancellor will report the recipient'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 the Committee and the Council; and
- c. the Council resolution previously passed to approve the conferral of the Honorary Degree will be deemed to be rescinded.

(36) If a recipient fails to respond within three (3) months to the offer of an Honorary Degree:

- 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 the Committee and the Council; and
- c. the Council resolution previously passed to approve the conferral of the Honorary Degree will be deemed to be rescinded.

Conferral

(37) Upon receipt of the recipient's acceptance of the Honorary Degree, the Manager, Orientation and Graduations, will confer with key stakeholders (i.e. Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor) and contact the recipient to:

- a. propose the date, time, and location of the conferral ceremony;
- b. invite the recipient to give the Occasional Address;
- c. request the recipient to confirm their acceptance of the proposed arrangements;
- d. advise the Council Secretary, Office of the Vice-Chancellor, Office of Advancement and the nominator of the time and date of the conferral ceremony; and
- e. arrange for nominator and other key parties to attend the conferral ceremony.

(38) The Manager, Orientation and Graduations will load the Honorary Degree into the [Academic Management Information System \(AMIS\)](#) and will confer with the Director, Communications to prepare the Citation.

(39) Conferred Honorary Degrees will also be recorded in the Advancement Database.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(40) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(41) 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") and is an academic degree for which a university has waived the usual academic requirements, such as study and the passing of examinations.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	21st June 2024
Review Date	20th June 2027
Approval Authority	University Council
Approval Date	20th June 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	S. Bruce Dowton Vice-Chancellor
Responsible Officer	Sophie Buck Director, Governance Services
Enquiries Contact	Sophie Buck Director, Governance Services