



Posthumous Awards procedure

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) This Procedure is effective from 30 July 2021.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This Procedure sets out the process for posthumous conferral of Deakin University academic awards for higher education and research students.

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This Procedure applies to higher education students and research candidates who have been prevented from completing their studies or have completed their studies but not yet graduated from a Deakin University award course at the time of their death.

Section 4 - Policy

(4) This Procedure is pursuant to the [Higher Education Courses policy](#).

Section 5 - Procedure

(5) A request for a posthumous award may be initiated by:

- a. the representatives/family of the deceased student;
- b. the Academic Unit responsible for the award in which the student was enrolled.

(6) In the interests of courtesy and sensitivity a posthumous award should only be made with the knowledge and consent of the next of kin and/or immediate family members. At all times interactions with the family must be undertaken sensitively and with discretion, avoiding the possibility of giving the family unreasonable or incorrect expectations as to the eventual outcome.

(7) The number of University staff contacting the family must be kept to a minimum and such contact should be coordinated through the Principal Officer of the Faculty or Institute responsible for the award in which the student was enrolled (the 'Principal Officer') or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation for Higher Degree by Research candidates.

(8) The Principal Officer for coursework awards or Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation for research awards will be responsible for undertaking necessary consultations and managing all stages of the process relating to the awarding of a posthumous award.

Eligibility for Coursework Award

(9) The Principal Officer of the Faculty or Institute in which the student was enrolled, after necessary consultations with relevant staff, may recommend a posthumous coursework award under the following conditions:

- a. the student had met all requirements for the course in which they were enrolled but the award had not been conferred;
- b. the student was within one study period of completion of an award of 2 years (full-time equivalent) duration or more;
- c. the Head of Academic Unit responsible for the course in which the student was enrolled is of the view that the student would likely have completed all requirements of the award were it not for their death; or
- d. the student had met all requirements for an exit pathway award as identified in the rules of the course in which they were enrolled.

(10) Under exceptional circumstances, the Academic Board may vary the conditions for a posthumous award on a case by case basis.

Eligibility for Higher Degree by Research Award

(11) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation may recommend a posthumous Higher Degree by Research (HDR) award under the following conditions:

- a. the candidate has met all requirements for the award in which they were enrolled but the award had not been conferred; or
- b. the candidate was sufficiently advanced in their research to have completed the literature review and data collection (or equivalent) components, and have drafted more than 50% of their thesis; and
- c. two assessors (only one of whom may have been the supervisor or associate supervisor) have reviewed the available work and formed the view that the research requirement has been met substantially; then
- d. the thesis or other written work should be submitted for examination, subsequent to which there must be expressed the unanimous view of the examiners that there exists a reasonable expectation that the candidate would have satisfactorily completed the requirements of the award.

(12) In assessing a candidate's eligibility the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation may request that the supervisor provide an outline of the research project to facilitate the examiners' understanding of the candidate's research contribution.

Recommendation

(13) Where the relevant requirements are met, the Principal Officer or Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation will make a recommendation to Academic Board that an award be conferred posthumously.

(14) Academic Board will review the recommendation and, if in agreement, resolve that an award be made posthumously.

(15) The University will posthumously confer an award to the student.

Outcome

(16) The Principal Officer of the Faculty or Institute or Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation will arrange appropriate notification of the outcome of the request for a posthumous award to the representative of the deceased student.

(17) The award may be conferred as a posthumous award at a graduation ceremony where the award is presented to a family member or representative of the deceased student, or in absentia. The Principal Officer of the Faculty or Institute, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation, or nominee, will liaise with the Executive Director, Student Services, or nominee, regarding the method of conferral as appropriate.

(18) Wherever possible, posthumous awards should be conferred within three years of the death of the student.

(19) The death of the student will be recorded in the student management system, with reference that the award was granted posthumously, if applicable.

Roles and Responsibilities

(20) Responsibilities:

| Responsibility | Role/Decision/Action |
|---|---|
| Principal Officer of the Faculty or Institute | Assess eligibility for posthumous awards for coursework students. Make recommendations to Academic Board on the granting of a posthumous coursework award. Oversee the progress of posthumous award requests. Arrange appropriate notification of the outcome of the request for a posthumous award to the representative of the deceased student. |
| Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation | Assess eligibility for posthumous award for higher degree by research students. Make recommendations to Academic Board on the granting of a posthumous research award. Oversee the progress of posthumous award requests. Arrange appropriate notification of the outcome of the request for a posthumous award to the representative of the deceased student. |
| Academic Board | Approve posthumous academic awards. |
| Executive Director, Student Services (or nominee) | Arrange for the conferral of the award as appropriate. Record the posthumous conferral of the award in the student management system. |

Section 6 - Definitions

(21) There are no definitions arising under this Procedure.

Status and Details

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Status | Current |
| Effective Date | 30th July 2021 |
| Review Date | 30th July 2026 |
| Approval Authority | Academic Board |
| Approval Date | 28th July 2021 |
| Expiry Date | To Be Advised |
| Responsible Executive | Judy Currey Chair, Academic Board |
| Implementation Officer | Judy Currey Chair, Academic Board |
| Enquiries Contact | Academic Governance and Standards +61 3 924 68408 |