

Purpose and Scope

To provide a framework for eligibility and approval of posthumous awards.

The granting of a posthumous award is to acknowledge a student's significant achievement within their course of study prior to their death.

Such awards illustrate the significant role the University plays in the lives of those who work and study within it, providing a high level of goodwill in the community and affirming the University's values.

This policy applies to all staff and students.

Objectives

- To recognise the academic achievements of a deceased student.
- To create a framework for consistent decision making in the assessment and in the event of an award.

Policy

1. Application

- 1.1. The relevant Head of School nominates a School member to be the Advocate. The Advocate is an academic staff member appointed by the Dean Academic Operations or nominee following the death of a student in the Head of School. The Advocate will be responsible for the completion of all necessary actions under the posthumous awards policy and procedures.
- 1.2. The Advocate initiates and monitors the case for a posthumous award.
- 1.3. The Advocate submits the case for posthumous award to the Head of School or Dean of graduate Studies for consideration in accordance with the *Posthumous Awards Procedure*.

2. Eligibility

- 2.1. The award of posthumous qualifications is considered on a case-by-case basis. The conferral of a posthumous award is not automatic and decisions should be managed with due sensitivity and cognisance of the best interests of the various parties involved.

- 2.2. Coursework degrees, certificates and diplomas:
 - 2.2.1. At the time of death the student must have satisfactorily completed at least two-thirds of their course at Murdoch and the University must be satisfied that the standard of the student's performance was such that they would have completed the award.
- 2.3. Honours degrees
 - 2.3.1. At the time of death the student must have satisfactorily completed at least two-thirds of their course at Murdoch and the University must be satisfied that the standard of the student's performance was such that they would have completed the award.
 - 2.3.2. In the case where the Honours degree is awarded solely on the basis of a research thesis, the Head of School must be satisfied, after consultation with the supervisor(s), that the candidate has completed at least two-thirds of the requisite research work.
- 2.4. Graduate research degrees
 - 2.4.1. The Dean of Graduate Research may recommend to Academic Council that it make a posthumous award of a Graduate Research Degree to a candidate, who was enrolled in the relevant degree program prior to their death, subject to the enrolment of the candidate in the relevant degree program within the 12 month period immediately prior to his or her death.
 - 2.4.2. This decision by the Dean of Graduate Research to recommend an award to Academic Council is based on a formal assessment of available research materials (e.g. draft thesis chapters, journal papers, draft manuscripts) by independent assessors (who meet the same criteria as examiners), with their reports guiding the Research Degrees and Scholarships Committee, and the Dean of Graduate Research, in making a recommendation to Academic Council.
 - 2.4.3. The formal assessment should follow current Graduate Research Degree examination procedures as closely as possible, with assessors asked to report against the usual criteria for award of the relevant degree.
 - 2.4.4. The Dean of Graduate Research should consult with the candidate's supervisor or supervisors in relation to the recommendation of an award.
- 2.5. Where a deceased student has completed close to two-thirds of the degree and other exceptional circumstances apply, a special case may be put forward by the Advocate.
- 2.6. Where a deceased student is deemed not to be eligible for a degree award or other circumstances dictate the inappropriateness of such an award, an alternative form of recognition or memorial may be proposed by the Advocate.

3. Approval

3.1. Coursework degrees, certificates, and diplomas

3.1.1. The Head of School recommends the posthumous award to Academic Council for approval.

3.2. Honours degrees

3.2.1. The Head of School recommends the posthumous award to Academic Council for approval.

3.3. Graduate research degrees

3.3.1. Approval is in accordance with the requirements of section 2.4 of this policy.

Governance

Approval Authority	Academic Council
Owner	President Academic Council
Legislation mandating compliance	
Category	Primarily academic
Related University Legislation and Policy Documents	Posthumous Awards Procedure
Date effective	08/08/2023
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