

C4: Procedure for awarding posthumous degrees

Academic year 2022/23

Flowchart: Award of posthumous undergraduate and postgraduate taught degrees

Step 1

- The Head of School/Department submits a formal request to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty to award a posthumous degree to the student in question.

Step 2

- The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty reviews the request with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic and the Academic Registrar.

Step 3

- Once a decision is made, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean recommends for approval the outcomes of the discussions to the Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE).

Step 4

- The Chair of SPACE confirms whether the recommendation for the conferment of a posthumous award has been approved to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean. If Chair's action is taken, the Chair ensures that the outcome is noted at the next SPACE meeting.

Step 5

- The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean communicates the outcome of the process to relevant parties for action.

Award of posthumous degrees

1. In the event of a student death, the University will investigate whether a posthumous qualification may be awarded. It will be for the student's next of kin to decide whether to claim such an award. Academic Schools/Departments should not enter into any communications with bereaved families about the possibilities relating to posthumous awards but should refer the matter to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty.
2. The following procedures relate to the award of a posthumous degree in the event of the death of a student prior to the completion of their degree.
3. Any enquiries concerning these procedures should be directed to the Academic Registrar.
4. The information contained within these guidelines should be referred to alongside [Regulations for taught programmes and Regulations for research degrees](#).
5. The final decision to recommend the posthumous award to the Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE) will be made by the relevant Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic, supported by the Academic Registrar. The recommendation for the posthumous award may be conferred by the Chair's action and subsequently reported to SPACE. Posthumous degree awards are unclassified/ungraded.

Procedure

6. The Head of School/Department in which the deceased student was registered should make a formal request that the award of a posthumous degree be made to the student in question.
7. The following details should be provided in writing to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of the Faculty who will liaise with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic and the Academic Registrar in reaching a final decision:
 - a. The name of the deceased student
 - b. The year of registration of the student
 - c. The name of the degree programme on which the student was registered
 - d. The stage of the programme of study reached by the student at the time of death
 - e. The date of death
 - f. Any examination or assessment marks obtained by the student prior to death
 - g. The level or number of credits obtained by the student prior to death
 - h. Details of any outstanding academic requirements according to the University's degree regulations
8. The following guidelines apply to the consideration of the award of a posthumous degree. In cases where there are outstanding academic requirements:
 - a. The outstanding requirements of the degree can be waived.
 - b. Approval can be given by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic to take any further action necessary to complete the outstanding requirements and permit the award of the qualification (for example, typing up of draft assignments).
 - c. A lower award than that for which the deceased student was registered can be recommended, if this would be the most appropriate option.
 - d. In cases where the deceased student owes fees to the University, the Faculty can decide to disregard and clear the debt.
9. Posthumous degrees will be awarded in the name of the deceased student and may be announced at the next relevant graduation ceremony, if the next of kin wishes. If a family chooses not to claim a posthumous award immediately, the offer will be held open for five years, after which the student's record will be closed.