

# C4: Procedure for awarding aegrotat and posthumous degrees

Academic year 2023/24

## Flowchart 1. Award of an Aegrotat degree

### Step 1

- Where due to an illness or other exceptional circumstance a student is prevented from sitting the whole or part of their assessments in the year in which the programme would normally be completed may provide their consent for the award of an Aegrotat degree

### Step 2

- The Programme Leader submits a formal request to the Chair of Board of Examiners (taught degrees) or APESC (research degrees) to award an Aegrotat degree to the student.

### Step 3

- The decision to recommend to Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE) the award of an Aegrotat degree is made by the relevant Board of Examiners or APESC, having received a report on the student's circumstances from the Chair of the Board of Examiners/APESC

### Step 4

- The Chair of SPACE confirms whether the recommendation for the conferment of an Aegrotat degree has been approved to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty or their nominee. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty or their nominee communicates the outcome of the process to relevant parties to arrange a degree ceremony event.

### Step 5

- A student who chooses not to accept the award of an Aegrotat degree may complete their assessments at the next University-appointed assessment period, or in the following academic year. A student who continues to be unable to complete the assessments may then choose to accept the award of an Aegrotat degree.

## Flowchart 2: Award of a posthumous degree

### 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 of Faculty 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 of Faculty. 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 of Faculty communicates the outcome of the process to relevant parties for action.

## **Award of an Aegrotat degree**

1. In a situation when a student is prevented by illness or other exceptional circumstance from sitting the whole or part of their assessments in the year in which the programme would normally be completed, the student or their next of kin / trusted contact may provide consent to be considered for the award of an Aegrotat degree.
2. The following procedural steps (as described in paragraphs 8-14 below) relate to the award of an Aegrotat degree prior to the completion by the student of their intended degree.
3. Any enquiries concerning this Procedure should be directed to the Academic Registrar.
4. The information contained within this Procedure should be referred to alongside the [Regulations for taught programmes and Regulations for research degrees](#).
5. The final decision to recommend the Aegrotat degree to the Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE) will be made as follows:
  - taught degrees - by the relevant Board of Examiners
  - research degrees – by the Admission, Progression and Examination Subcommittee (APESC).
6. The recommendation for the Aegrotat degree may be conferred by the SPACE Chair's action and subsequently reported to SPACE.
7. Aegrotat degree awards are unclassified/ungraded. If course accreditation issues arise, consideration will be given to other award titles that could be used.

## **Procedure**

8. In the event that a student's illness or other exceptional circumstances prevent them from completing all or part of their assessments in the year in which their programme would normally be completed, the student or their next of kin/trusted contact should advise the University of these circumstances. For example, by contacting the Centre for Wellbeing, Academic Hive etc., or by notifying the University during the Support to Study or Fitness to Practise processes.
9. With the student's or their next of kin/trusted contact's consent, this information will be passed on to the Academic Registrar who will write to the student or their next of kin/trusted contact to explain all available options, including, where appropriate, the award of an Aegrotat degree. The Academic Registrar will consult with the relevant Programme Leader during this process.
10. Where the student or their next of kin/trusted contact provide their consent, the Programme Leader submits a formal request to the Chair of the Board of Examiners / APESC to award an Aegrotat degree to the student in question.
11. A recommendation to award an Aegrotat degree is made to the Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE) by the relevant Board of Examiners or APESC, having received a report on the student's circumstances from the Chair of the Board of Examiners or APESC. The Chair of SPACE confirms whether the recommendation for the conferment of an Aegrotat degree has been approved to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty or their nominee.
12. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty or their nominee communicates the outcome of the process to all relevant parties to arrange a degree ceremony event. The event may be held either at the University or, where practicable, at any other specific location. The alternative location should be discussed and agreed by all relevant parties.
13. The student may decide not to accept the award of an Aegrotat degree. In this case, the student may complete their outstanding assessments at the next University-appointed assessment period, or in the following academic year. Exceptionally, subject to the approval by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty or their nominee, the student may be given an opportunity to take their outstanding assessments as soon as feasible.

14. A student who continues to be unable to complete the assessments on a subsequent occasion(s) may then choose to accept the award of an Aegrotat degree. The degree ceremony event will be arranged as described in paragraph 12 above.

### **Award of a posthumous degree**

15. 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 / trusted contact 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 Academic Registrar.
16. 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.
17. Any enquiries concerning these procedures should be directed to the Academic Registrar.
18. The information contained within these guidelines should be referred to alongside the [Regulations for taught programmes](#) and [Regulations for research degrees](#).
19. 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 of Faculty 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**

20. In the event of a student death, the Academic Registrar will write to the student's next of kin/trusted contact to explain the University's student records and awards processes. All available options, including, where appropriate, the award of a posthumous degree will be outlined. The Academic Registrar will consult with the relevant Programme Leader during this process.
21. The School/Department in which the deceased student was registered should provide the following details (in writing) to the Academic Registrar. Where appropriate, the Academic Registrar will then liaise with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean of Faculty or their nominee in order to reach a final decision in relation to the award of a posthumous degree:
  - 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
22. 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 tuition and/or student fees to the University, the Faculty can decide to disregard and clear the debt.

23. 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/trusted contact wishes. If a next of kin / trusted contact 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.