Qualifications Issuance Policy

Section 1 - Key Information

Policy Type and Approval Body	Administrative - Vice-Chancellor
Accountable Executive – Policy	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Responsible Manager – Policy	Director, Academic Services
Review Date	12 November 2029

Section 2 - Purpose

(1) This Policy sets out the principles and procedures that ensure graduates receive accurate and authentic academic certification, and that La Trobe University complies with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESF 21), the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy and, where applicable, vocational education and training requirements.

Section 3 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to:

a. students who have completed all or part of the requirements for a La Trobe University award, including single subjects, undergraduate certificates, professional certificates, and nested, double and joint qualifications;
b. Vocational Education and Training (VET) students who have met all or part of the requirements for a qualification that is listed on La Trobe's Registered Training Organisation (RTO) Scope of Registration;
c. tertiary preparation courses.

(3) Provisions for the certification of short courses are outlined in the Short Courses Policy.

Section 4 - Key Decisions

Key decisions/Responsibilities	Role
Oversight of the preparation of academic transcripts, AHEGS and testamurs	Director, Academic Services
Decision to waive a restriction on the issuance of certification to a student who has a debt to the University	Director, Academic Services
Approval of aegrotat and posthumous coursework and research awards	Academic Board

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Section 5 - Policy Statement

(4) The University issues qualifications and related academic certification in accordance with approved course requirements, University statutes and regulations, the Australian Qualifications Framework, the HESF 2021, and applicable vocational education and training requirements.

(5) A qualification is conferred only where the student has satisfied the approved requirements for that qualification, except where this Policy provides for an aegrotat or posthumous award. An award that has been validly conferred must not be conferred again, unless the original conferral is revoked or amended in accordance with University regulations.

(6) The University distinguishes clearly between AQF qualifications, non-AQF awards, honorary awards, professional certificates and other forms of academic certification so that students, graduates, employers, regulators and other relying parties can understand the status and purpose of each document issued.

(7) Academic certification issued by the University must be accurate, authentic, secure, traceable and capable of verification. Certification must not be issued, reissued or replaced except through authorised University processes.

(8) Academic transcripts, Australian Higher Education Graduation Statements (AHEGS), testamurs and other certification documents are prepared and issued under delegated authority and must record student achievement consistently with the University's approved records.

(9) The University provides academic certification that reflects the student's level of attainment, including completion of an award, completion of part of an award, recognition of prior learning, or other certified achievement where permitted by this Policy and related procedures.

(10) The University maintains authoritative records of the qualifications it is authorised to issue and the qualifications conferred or otherwise issued to students and graduates.

(11) The University may confer an aegrotat award or a posthumous award only in accordance with the criteria and approval processes set out in this Policy, and with appropriate academic evidence, discretion and sensitivity.

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - General Requirements for all Certification

(12) All academic certification issued by the University must be prepared in a format that complies with the HESF 21 and the AQF Issuance Policy, where applicable, and must contain the following:

a. the name of the University;
b. the full name of the person to whom the documentation applies;
c. the date of issue;
d. the name and office of the person authorised by the University to issue the documentation.

(13) Where a La Trobe qualification is recognised in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF),the AHEGS is certified with either the AQF logo or the words 'This qualification is recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework'. Testamurs for awards of the University do not include any reference to the AQF.

(14) Honorary degrees and professional certificates are non-AQF awards of the University. Accordingly there is no reference to the AQF on any certification issued for these awards. Testamurs for honorary degrees clearly identify the honorary nature of the qualification with the words 'honoris causa'.

(15) All certification documentation issued by the University is:

a. unambiguously issued by the University;
b. readily distinguishable from other certification documents issued by the University, such as for short courses;
c. protected against fraudulent issue with the use of a marker such as the University's seal, corporate identifier, or unique watermark;
d. traceable and authenticable;
e. designed to prevent unauthorised reproduction;
f. replaceable by the University through an authorised and verifiable process.

(16) Where certification has been issued incorrectly, obtained improperly, or affected by a later amendment or revocation of conferral, the University may correct, replace, cancel or revoke access to the relevant certification through an authorised and verifiable process.

(17) The University provides a means for authorised staff to verify the authenticity and status of academic certification issued under this Policy, subject to privacy, student identifier and records management requirements. Academic certification will not include the Unique Student Identifier (USI) to ensure there is no disclosure as per the Student Identifiers Act 2014.

(18) All requirements for the qualification or subject must be successfully completed and assessed as Passed prior to the issue of certification.

(19) Academic certification is not issued to a student with an outstanding debt to the University unless the Director, Academic Serviceswaives the restriction on compassionate grounds. In deciding whether to grant a waiver, the Director, Academic Services may consider the student's circumstances, the nature of the certification requested, and any relevant operational or legal requirements.

(20) All final academic certification for awards conferred from 2018 onwards is issued as complimentary digital certification via an online platform, within 60 calendar days of the student's course status being set to passed, except for the Certificate IV for which hard copy certification is issued. Students whose awards were conferred before 2018 may apply for and purchase digital versions of their certification.

(21) A scheduled fee to cover the costs of printing, replacing or re-issuing academic certification is set annually by Academic Services and approved by University Council. The fee is published on the Fees pages of the University website. Replacement or re-issued certification is provided through an authorised and verifiable process.

Part B - Specific Requirements for Certification Types

Testamurs

(22) One testamur is awarded for a single qualification. See the table in Part C for the testamur requirements for complex qualification structures.

Detailed Testamur Requirements

Testamur Component	Requirement
Naming Protocol	The name appearing on the testamur is the same full name which is recorded in the student information system and is written in English, in the order of given names followed by the family name, with no abbreviations or titles. Changes may be made in certain circumstances, for example to represent titles or differing cultural naming norms or punctuation, via a request to Academic Services.

Testamur Component	Requirement
Award Title	**Coursework Awards Where There is a Field or Discipline of Study** The award title contains the full title of the qualification awarded, including the field or discipline of study, as outlined in the Award Nomenclature Policy. Where a course contains a major or specialisation that is not represented in the award title (as outlined in the Award Nomenclature Policy) the testamur will include the words: 1. With a Major in (name of major), or 2. With a Specialisation in (name of specialisation). While existing awards are being taught out the following words appear on the testamur: 1. Majoring in (name of major), or 2. Majoring in (name of major), and in (name of major). **Graduate Research Degree Awards** Award titles for graduate research degrees are as outlined in the Award Nomenclature Policy.
Subsidiary Components (if applicable)	Any subsidiary component of the qualification (such as integrated honours, an area of specialisation or a major study) is represented including the specialisation or major(s) undertaken within each component in the instance where the award is a double, dual or combined degree.
Languages Other Than English (if applicable)	Where any part of the course or assessment is conducted in a language other than English the language of instruction or assessment is recorded on the testamur, as follows: (Language of instruction – [language])

Testamurs for Vocational Education and Training (VET)

(23) In accordance with the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) (2010) Condition of Registration, VET testamurs must:

a. meet the requirements of the AQF;
b. identify the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) by its national provider number from the Training.gov.au website;
c. include the Nationally Recognised Training (NRT) logo in accordance with the current conditions of use.

(24) Further details regarding the standards that apply to the certification of VET qualifications are outlined in the ASQA Standards.

Distribution of Testamurs

(25) Academic Services is responsible for:

a. the printing of a testamur for presentation upon graduation;
b. the re-issue or replacement of a testamur upon request by a student.

(26) Testamurs are only presented where:

a. students graduate at an approved ceremony;
b. students do not attend a graduation ceremony and receive their award in absentia;
c. an aegrotat or posthumous award is to be presented (subject to the terms of this Policy);
d. honorary degrees are conferred (and accompanied by the approved citation).

(27) A testamur may be presented in absentia where a graduand has chosen to graduate in absentia or has not responded to a graduation invitation. When a graduand has not responded to a graduation invitation, the testamur is printed and mailed to the nominated address upon request.

(28) The presentation of testamurs or facsimiles for appreciation, service, merit or other recognition is not permitted.

Replacement of Testamurs

(29) Requests for testamurs in a different name should be submitted to Academic Services with certified evidence of the new name. Students who have transitioned genders are eligible for a replacement testamur at no cost. In all cases the original testamur will need to be returned to the University and securely destroyed. Students may not hold multiple testamurs for the same award in different names.

(30) Academic Services may request and require the return of a hardcopy testamur and revoke digital access where:

a. a testamur has been obtained improperly through fraud or dishonesty;
b. a replacement testamur is required due to:
    i. a legal name change; or
    ii. where the original testamur was presented erroneously or contained incorrect details, i.e. University error.

(31) Records of testamurs will be kept by Academic Services for graduands receiving testamurs at a graduation ceremony, in absentia, and any re-issued or replacement testamurs. Each replacement, re-issued or cancelled testamur is recorded in the University's academic certification records, including the reason for the replacement, re-issue or cancellation and the date on which the action occurred.

Academic Transcripts

(32) An academic transcript details, in addition to the requirements for all certification documentation, a student's entire enrolment record at the University including:

a. the full name of all courses and subjects enrolled in and when they were undertaken and completed, including:
    i. completed or enrolled majors and minors;
    ii. any failed subjects, incomplete subjects and subjects withdrawn from after the last 'withdrawal without fail date';
    iii. all incomplete courses in which the student has been, or is currently enrolled.
b. a full record of credit granted through recognition of prior learning or previous formal study;
c. the weighting of subjects within courses of study;
d. the grades and/or marks awarded for each subject undertaken and, if applicable, for the course overall;
e. where grades are issued, an explanation of the grading system used;
f. where a course of study includes a significant particular focus of study such as honours, an area of specialisation or a major study, a definition of that component of significant focus;
g. any parts of a course or subjects or assessment that were conducted in a language other than English, except for the use of another language to develop proficiency in that language;
h. the University student identification number;
i. academic awards conferred and/or awards completed and yet to be conferred;
j. award of the University Medal and other commendations where relevant;
k. for graduate research degrees, the transcript will also include:
    i. key candidature dates including the commencement date, thesis submission date and periods of leave of absence;
    ii. study rate (full-time or part-time);
    iii. thesis topic;
    iv. field(s) of research;

v. progress committee members and supervisors.

(33) See Part A of this Policy for issue of certification at award completion. Where students require a transcript prior to completion, digital or hard copy transcripts may be purchased.

Australian Higher Education Graduation Statements

(34) The AHEGS is available for students who have completed any course after 1 November 2012, excluding professional certificates, the Certificate IV and honorary doctorates. The AHEGS issued by the University complies with the Australian Government Guidelines for the Presentation of Australian Higher Education Graduation Statements and includes the following compulsory items:

a. the AHEGS logo;
b. the Australian Government statement on the AHEGS;
c. certification by the Director, Academic Services;
d. family name, given name(s) and student number;
e. name and summary details of the award;
f. a brief description of the institution including provider category, date of founding, and legislation of establishment;
g. course details and a key to grading.

(35) New and amended standard AHEGS content is approved through the University's course approval processes (see Course and Subject Management Procedure – Approvals and the Graduate Research Course Management Policy).

(36) See Part A in this Policy for standard issue of certification at award completion. Students may purchase hard copy AHEGS for a prescribed fee at the time of course completion.

(37) AHEGS may contain professional recognition or accreditation statements. Such statements are approved as part of normal course approval processes outlined in the Course and Subject Management Procedure - Approvals.

Part C - Certification for Complex Qualification Structures

Qualification Type	Certification
Nested Qualifications	A separate AHEGS and testamur will be awarded for each Higher Education qualification at AQF level 5 and above that a student has successfully met all the requirements for and chosen to exit with. If a student enrols initially in a nested Diploma course, and upon completion enrols into and completes the related Bachelor course, that student would receive testamurs and AHEGS for both awards. This also applies where a student enrols initially in a non-AQF course (e.g., the Professional Certificate) and following completion enrols into and completes an AQF award such as the Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma.
Double or Combined Qualifications	A student who completes the requirements for a double or a combined qualification where both qualifications are approved as stand-alone La Trobe University awards will receive two testamurs and AHEGS: one for each qualification. Where a double qualification includes an award that has not been approved in its own right as a stand-alone award, a single testamur naming the double degree will be awarded.
Joint Qualifications	The two options are: 1. one double-badged testamur may be awarded in a manner specified in any formal agreement with a partner organisation.In these cases, the signatory and seal on the testamur must only be from either La Trobe or the third party. The party whose signatory and seal are included in the testamur ('the issuing organisation') must be specified in the agreement. 2. two single-badged testamurs may be awarded for the same qualification in a manner specified in any formal agreement with a partner organisation when the student completes requirements of both organisations. Each testamur states that the award is conferred jointly with the other institution.

Dual Qualifications	Where these are awarded under a formal agreement with other institutions, each institution may award a standard testamur and graduation statement (where it is relevant for that jurisdiction) for their component of the dual award.

Part D - Qualifications Register

(38) In accordance with the AQF Qualifications Register Policy, Academic Services maintains an auditable register that contains sufficient information for all award courses to identify:

a. the holder of the qualification;
b. AQF qualification by its full title;
c. date of issue/award/conferral.

(39) The Register also contains such records for the issuance of non-AQF awards.

Part E - Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards

(40) Academic Board may grant the following awards under the appropriate conditions:

a. an aegrotat award where a student, at the time of the request, is:
    i. permanently incapacitated by serious illness, injury or disability and, as a result, is unable to complete the remaining requirements for the award;
    ii. currently enrolled or on leave.
b. a posthumous award where a student dies before conferral of an award.

(41) Both aegrotat and posthumous awards require sufficient academic evidence that the student had completed the requirements for the award or had made substantial progress and would otherwise have been expected to complete the award satisfactorily. An aegrotat or posthumous award is not available solely because a student is permanently incapacitated or has died.

General Requirements

Matter	Aegrotat Award	Posthumous Award
Trigger	The student is living but permanently incapacitated by serious illness, injury or disability and cannot complete the remaining requirements.	The student has died before conferral, whether or not all requirements had been completed before death.
Academic basis	Requires evidence that the student had completed the requirements or had made substantial progress and would likely have completed the award satisfactorily but for the permanent incapacity.	May be based on completed requirements, or on sufficient academic evidence that the student would likely have completed the award satisfactorily but for their death.
Presentation	Presented to the student or, where appropriate, their authorised representative.	Presented to the executor, administrator or nominated representative, either at a ceremony or in absentia.

Specific Requirements

(42) The University may grant an aegrotat or posthumous award where a student was admitted to, or on leave from the relevant course of study at the time of their permanent incapacity or death, and the student had either completed all work required for the award or met one of the alternative academic criteria below:

a. successfully completed more than 80% of the total requirements of a coursework award in which they were

enrolled, or the total requirements of the relevant nested qualification where one exists; or

b. completed sufficient papers, reviews, laboratory work or other verifiable evidence to indicate that, had the student lived, there was a reasonable expectation that the student would have successfully completed an award by research.

(43) Where the above criteria have not been met, Academic Board may consider an application only in exceptional circumstances, on a case-by-case basis, and where sufficient academic evidence supports the recommendation.

(44) Academic Board approves the criteria for aegrotat and posthumous awards.

(45) In all cases the wishes of the student or the student's representatives or family must be respected, and communication conducted with a high degree of discretion and sensitivity. Care must be taken to avoid giving an unreasonable expectation of the final outcome of an application for the award of an aegrotat or posthumous degree.

(46) Applications for the conferral of an aegrotat or posthumous award may be initiated by:

a. the student or the representatives or family of the student; or
b. the school responsible for the course in which the candidate is or was enrolled.

Privacy

(47) Academic Services must establish and maintain an internal process for aegrotat award applications that protects students' sensitive medical information and restricts access to such information to staff who need it to verify eligibility or administer the application. Under this process, Academic Services must liaise discreetly with the relevant academic staff and, for graduate research applications, the Graduate Research School before a recommendation is submitted to Academic Board. Academic Board must only be provided with confirmation that the permanent incapacity requirement has been verified and with the academic evidence necessary to determine whether the applicable academic criteria are met.

Coursework Awards

(48) The relevant school must complete a review of the student's eligibility for the conferral of a coursework aegrotat or posthumous award. If the applicable conditions are met, the school must submit a recommendation approved by the Dean.

(49) Following receipt of the school's Dean-approved recommendation, Academic Services manages the remaining administrative steps and submits the recommendation to Academic Board for decision.

Graduate Research Awards

(50) Once the application for a graduate research award is initiated, the aegrotat or posthumous award process is managed by the Graduate Research School (GRS).

(51) The following steps must be undertaken to determine the graduate research candidate's (the candidate) eligibility for the conferral of a graduate research award:

a. preliminary review: two assessors (only one of whom may have been a supervisor) perform a review of available work and must form the unanimous view that the candidate has produced a sufficient body of research for an examination to take place;
b. submission of material for examination: the candidate, the candidate's nominated representative, or the candidate's supervisor(s) will provide the GRS with the material for examination, including:
    i. the thesis or other written work prepared by the candidate;

ii. any other relevant research artefacts for practice-based degrees;
iii. supplementary and/or explanatory material prepared by the candidate, the candidate's nominated representative, or the supervisor(s) to assist in the understanding of the examiners of the research work conducted by the candidate;
iv. a statement detailing any work undertaken by the supervisor(s) on behalf of the candidate.

c. examination: the appointment of examiners and conduct of the examination will be guided by the provisions of the Graduate Research Examinations Policy, with the examiners assessing whether there exists a reasonable expectation that the candidate would in other circumstances have satisfactorily completed the requirements of the degree;
d. recommendation of award: the Director of Graduate Research from the candidate's school reviews the examiner reports and if all requirements have been met, makes the recommendation for the aegrotat or posthumous award to the Board of Graduate Research, who will then make the recommendation to Academic Board.

Conferral of Awards

(52) Following conferral by Academic Board, the decision regarding the method to be used for presentation of the award is wholly the responsibility of the student or the representatives or family of the student. The award may be presented:

a. at a graduation ceremony; or
b. in absentia.

(53) Academic Services is responsible for confirming all arrangements for the conferral of the award with the student or the representatives or family members of the student.

(54) Where the award is to be presented at a graduation ceremony a member of staff will be invited (from the relevant school, Recruitment & International Operations or other relevant area), to be seated with the student or the representatives or family members of the student.

(55) Where the award is conferred in absentia, the testamur will be forwarded to the student or the Executor, the Administrator or nominated representative by registered mail.

Section 7 - Definitions

(56) For the purpose of this policy and procedure:

a. academic transcript: An official record of studies at La Trobe University and contains all course attempts, subjects undertaken and any advanced standing/credit that has been granted. The academic transcript reflects enrolment at La Trobe at the time it is printed or accessed via the online platform and is available at any time during the completion of a course or subject. Final Transcripts are issued on completion of an individual course. See also 'statement of attainment'.
b. aegrotat award: an award conferred where a student is permanently incapacitated by serious illness, injury or disability and cannot complete the remaining requirements for the award, but there is sufficient academic evidence that the student had completed the requirements or would otherwise have completed the award satisfactorily.
c. Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (AHEGS): a static document that describes a Higher Education qualification in an easily understandable way and includes descriptions of the nature, level, context and status of the studies and is only issued upon the completion of that course.
d. combined qualifications: a combination of two La Trobe University qualifications of different AQF levels (e.g.

Bachelor/Master).

e. conferral: the act of granting an award to a student by authority of the Academic Board after completion of their course requirements.
f. double qualification: where two La Trobe University qualifications of the same AQF level (eg Bachelor/Bachelor) are completed concurrently, and in less than the minimum time required to complete each qualification separately. Also known as double degrees, these are considered one course of study.
g. dual qualification: where two qualifications of the same type (eg Bachelor/Bachelor) are completed at La Trobe University and another higher education provider (most commonly an overseas provider as a form of transnational education) and in less than the minimum time required to complete each qualification separately.
h. honorary degree: an academic degree for which the University has waived the usual requirements that does not form part of the AQF Framework, nor carry a formal qualification. It is a way of honouring a distinguished individual's contribution to a specific field, or to society in general.
i. joint qualification: where a single qualification is undertaken with more than one institution under a formal arrangement between the institutions. Variants are 'cotutelle' or 'multi-badged'.
j. nested qualification: where two or more courses of different levels are combined in a way where sub-qualification categories are fully articulated within the higher qualification categories.
k. posthumous award: an award conferred after the death of a student, where the student had completed the requirements for the award or where the University determines there is sufficient academic evidence that the student would otherwise have completed the award satisfactorily but for their death.
l. professional certificate: a non-AQF award of the University consisting of 30 credit points that may consist of subjects from an AQF award of the University and/or microcredentials.
m. qualification: A degree, diploma or course that comprises approved studies at La Trobe as prescribed by the Academic Board.
n. Record of Results: a hard-copy certification document issued to Certificate IV students that records completion of relevant VET requirements.
o. single subject: a subject of an award course of the University in which a student enrols independently of a direct enrolment in the course and which may be used to apply for credit towards an award.
p. skills set: a group of units of competency from an endorsed Training Package that meets a licensing or regulatory requirement or a defined industry or professional need.
q. statement of attainment: a form of academic transcript that confirms that an accredited short course or a group of units/modules/subjects from an AQF qualification that form a skills set have been completed. See also 'academic transcript', 'skills set'. Statements of attainment are issued only to students undertaking VET courses.
r. tertiary preparation course: a course designed to prepare a student for admission to, or successful participation in, tertiary study and that may result in certification recognised under this Policy.
s. testamur: an official document issued on graduation that includes the full title of the qualification awarded along with any subsidiary components, majors not represented in the award title and any specialisations. In the case of VET courses, this document may be called a 'certificate'.
t. transcript: see 'academic transcript'.
u. withdrawn without fail date: the date after the relevant Census Date within a teaching period after which a withdrawal from a subject incurs a Withdrawn Late (counted as fail) grade (KN), see Assessment Procedure - Grades and Administrative Codes.

Section 8 - Authority and Associated Information

(57) This Policy is made under the La Trobe University Act 2009.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	17th November 2026
Review Date	12th November 2029
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	12th November 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Manager - Policy	Lisa Constantine Director, Academic Services
Enquiries Contact	Student Administration

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