

Posthumous Awards Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) To establish equitable guidelines for the posthumous granting of an award in the event of the death of an enrolled student of La Trobe University.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) Applies to:

- a. all campuses;
- b. all programs and courses;
- c. all enrolled students.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(3) La Trobe University will posthumously grant an award in the event of the death of an enrolled student who has

- a. completed all of the required work that would entitle the granting of a research or coursework award;
- b. successfully completed more than 80% of the total requirements of a coursework award in which s/he was enrolled (an aegrotat pass); or
- c. completed sufficient research, supported by verifiable evidence, to give a reasonable expectation that s/he would have successfully completed an award by research (an aegrotat pass).

(4) This Policy applies subject to the satisfaction of the conditions detailed in the Posthumous Awards Procedures.

Section 4 - Procedure

Preamble

(5) These Procedures are to be used in the event of the death of a student who has:

- a. completed all of the required work that would entitle the granting of a research or coursework award;
- b. successfully completed more than 80% of the total requirements of a coursework award in which s/he was enrolled (an aegrotat pass); or
- c. completed sufficient research, supported by verifiable evidence, to give a reasonable expectation that s/he would have successfully completed an award by research (an aegrotat pass).

General

(6) Communication with the deceased student's representatives/family must be conducted with a high degree of discretion and sensitivity and must avoid giving an unreasonable expectation of the final outcome of the application

for the award of a posthumous degree.

(7) In all cases the wishes of the family must be respected.

Part A - Application for Conferral of Award

(8) An application for conferral of a posthumous award may be initiated by:

- a. the representatives/family of the deceased student; or
- b. the college responsible for the course in which the student was enrolled.

(9) A "Conferral of Award" form should then be completed, by:

- a. the representatives/family of the deceased student; or
- b. the relevant Head of School (requires authorisation from the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the relevant College).

Part B - Review of Eligibility

(10) The relevant college must complete a review of the deceased student's eligibility for the conferral of the award.

Eligibility for Coursework Award

(11) A coursework award may be granted posthumously subject to the following two conditions being fulfilled:

- a. the student must have been enrolled in the relevant course of study at the time of his or her death; AND
- b. must have completed either
 - i. all of the work for the granting of that course award; OR
 - ii. more than 80% of the total requirements of the course in which he or she was enrolled, and the College is of the opinion that he or she would have completed satisfactorily the requirements for the award.

Eligibility for Research Award

(12) A research award may be granted posthumously subject to the following four conditions being fulfilled:

- a. the student must have been enrolled in the relevant course of study at the time of his or her death; AND
- b. research requirement: sufficient papers, reviews, laboratory work or other verifiable evidence must have been completed by the deceased student to indicate that, had the student lived, there exists a reasonable expectation that the student would have completed satisfactorily the requirements for the award; AND
- c. preliminary review: Two assessors (only one of whom may have been the supervisor or associate supervisor) review the available work and form the unanimous view that the research requirement has been met substantially; AND
- d. examination of the thesis: 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 student would have completed satisfactorily the requirements of the award.

(13) In the case of research awards, the deceased student's supervisor may be invited to provide supplementary and/or explanatory material to assist in the understanding of the examiners of the research work conducted by the deceased student. In this event, the supervisor should append a statement to the written work, stating the work undertaken by the supervisor on behalf of the deceased student.

Part C - Recommendation of College

(14) After successfully completing the review, if the conditions have been met, the College must recommend that the award be conferred.

After the College recommendation, the responsibility for managing the remainder of the process of granting the award moves from the College to the Student Services and Administration Division.

For Coursework Award

(15) The relevant College makes recommendation to the Academic Board for approval.

For Research Award

(16) The relevant College makes recommendation for the granting of the posthumous award to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (via the Graduate Board of Research) for submission to the Academic Board for approval.

Part D - Recording of the Award

(17) The death of the student will be entered on the Student Information System, and reference will be made that the award was granted posthumously, if applicable.

Part E - Conferral of the Award

(18) Following approval by Academic Board, the award may be listed for conferral as a posthumous award in one of three ways:

- a. a graduation ceremony;
- b. a small college ceremony;
- c. in absentia.

(19) The decision regarding the method to be used is wholly the responsibility of the representatives/family of the deceased student.

Conferral at a Graduation Ceremony

(20) The deceased's name will appear in the attending section of the graduation program followed by the word Posthumous.

(21) The presenter of the award will be briefed on the details of the posthumous award.

(22) The representatives/family of the deceased student will be met at the venue foyer and escorted to their seats in the front VIP row. A staff member from Student Services and Administration will be seated next to the representatives and/or family to provide such support as necessary, including escorting them from the venue if they experience strong emotional or other reactions.

(23) When the deceased student's name is called, the Chancellor OR Deputy Chancellor OR a senior University representative will descend the appropriate stairs, if any, and present the testamur to the Executor or Administrator or nominated representative or family member of the deceased student.

(24) Appropriate calligraphy will be arranged for the testamur.

(25) Appropriate parking should be arranged for the representatives/family members of the deceased student.

(26) All arrangements must be confirmed with the representatives/family members of the deceased student.

(27) The relevant College or School will be invited to provide a member of staff at the ceremony, to be seated with the representatives/family members of the deceased student.

Conferral at a Small College Ceremony

(28) Representatives/family members of the deceased student(s) together with senior members of the University and Council will be invited to a small ceremony.

(29) At the function, when the guests are assembled, the Chancellor OR Deputy Chancellor will outline the reasons for the gathering and call upon the College Pro Vice-Chancellor OR Chair of the Academic Board to read the citation for the award. The Chancellor OR Deputy Chancellor will then present the testamur to the Executor or Administrator OR nominated representative/family member of the deceased student.

(30) More than one award may be presented at this ceremony.

(31) Following the conclusion of the ceremony, refreshments will be served.

Conferral in Absentia

(32) The deceased's name will appear in the in absentia section of the graduation program followed by the word Posthumous.

(33) The award will be forwarded by mail to the deceased student's representatives or family.

Part F - Forwarding of an Award by Mail

(34) The testamur will be forwarded to the Executor or Administrator or nominated representative by:

- a. certified mail if an Australian student or
- b. registered mail if an international student

Part G - Testamur as Part of Estate

(35) The testamur is considered to form part of the deceased student's estate and is in the charge of the Executor or Administrator or nominated representative.

Section 5 - Definitions

(36) Nil.

Section 6 - Stakeholders

Responsibility for implementation – College Pro Vice-Chancellors; and Heads of School.

Responsibility for monitoring implementation and compliance – Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic); and Academic Board.

Status and Details

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