

# 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 may 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) Where the above criteria have not been met, cases will be considered in exceptional circumstances and on a case by case basis.

## Section 4 - Procedures

(5) 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.

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

### Part A - Application for Conferral of Award

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

- a. the representatives/family of the deceased student; or
- b. the School responsible for the coursework degree in which the student was enrolled; or
- c. the School responsible for the Higher Degree by Research in which the candidate was enrolled.

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

- a. the representatives/family of the deceased student; or
- b. the relevant Dean (requires authorisation from the Provost).

## **Part B - Review of Eligibility**

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

### **Eligibility for Coursework Award**

(10) 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 their 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 they were enrolled, and the School is of the opinion that they would have completed satisfactorily the requirements for the award.

### **Eligibility for Research Award**

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

- a. the student must have been admitted to, or on leave from the relevant course of study at the time of their 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 a supervisor or member of the progress committee) 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.

(12) In the case of research awards, the deceased student's supervisor/s 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/s should append a statement to the written work, stating the work undertaken by the supervisor/s on behalf of the deceased student.

## **Part C - Recommendation and Approval Process**

### **For Coursework Award**

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

(14) After the School recommendation, the responsibility for managing the remainder of the process of granting the award moves from the School to the Student Administration Division

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

## **For Research Award**

(16) After successfully completing the review, if the conditions have been met, the relevant School makes their recommendation for the granting of the posthumous award to the Board of Graduate Research, in keeping with degree requirements.

(17) After the recommendation, the responsibility for managing the remainder of the process of granting the award is the responsibility of the Graduate Research School.

(18) The Board of Graduate Research makes recommendation to Academic Board for approval.

## **Part D - Conferral of the Award**

(19) 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 bespoke ceremony
- c. in absentia

(20) 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**

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

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

(23) 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 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.

(24) 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.

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

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

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

(28) The relevant School, and Recruitment & International Operations when appropriate, 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 Bespoke Ceremony**

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

### **For Coursework Award**

(30) At the function, when the guests are assembled, the Chancellor or Deputy Chancellor will outline the reasons for the gathering and call upon the Provost, Dean or Chair of 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.

### **For Research Award**

(31) At the function, when the guests are assembled, the Chancellor or Deputy Chancellor will outline the reasons for the gathering and call upon the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Industry Engagement) or Chair, Board of Graduate Research or Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate and Global Research) 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.

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

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

### **Conferral in Absentia**

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

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

## **Part E - Forwarding of an Award by Mail**

(36) 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 F - Testamur as Part of Estate**

(37) 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**

(38) Nil.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	29th June 2018
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<b>Approval Date</b>	13th June 2018
<b>Expiry Date</b>	To Be Advised
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