Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards Procedure

Section 1 - Overview

(1) These Procedures are made under the Graduation Rule and provide a framework for the eligibility and approval of an Aegrotat Award or Posthumous Award by the University.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) These Procedures apply to:

a. all Students enrolled in a UNE course at the time of their illness, injury or death; and
b. UNE Representatives who administer, approve applications and/or confer an aegrotat or posthumous award.

Section 3 - Procedures

Eligibility

Coursework Awards

(3) The granting of an Aegrotat or Posthumous Award for a coursework award may be considered in cases where the Student was enrolled in the course at the time of a permanent incapacitating injury or illness, or death and:

a. the Student has met all requirements of the Course in which they were enrolled or has met all requirements for an exit pathway award as identified in the rules of the Course in which they were enrolled - under these conditions conferral of the award will be automatic and no request from the Student's family or friends is necessary; or
b. the Student has died or suffered a permanent, incapacitating illness or injury that will prevent the completion of their course; and
    i. the Student has not more than one trimester of full-time study or equivalent to complete to satisfy the requirements for graduation; and/or
    ii. the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Innovation) or the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer confirms that the Student would successfully have completed all requirements of the course for graduation if not for their illness, injury or death.

Higher Degree Research Awards

(4) The granting of an Aegrotat or Posthumous Award for a higher degree research award may be considered in cases where the Student was enrolled in the Course at the time of permanent incapacitating injury or illness or death and:

a. the Student has met all requirements of the Course in which they were enrolled or has met all requirements for an exit pathway award as identified in the rules of the Course in which they were enrolled - under these conditions conferral of the award will be automatic and no request from the Student's family or friends is necessary; or

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b. at the time of injury, illness or death:
    i. the Student, as determined by the Principal Supervisor and Head of School, had completed research and work such as draft chapters, published work, papers prepared for publication, laboratory work, progress reports or other tangible evidence that indicate that had the injury, illness or death not intervened the Student would have satisfied all requirements for the awarding of the degree; and
    ii. a preliminary assessment of the Student's submitted work has been carried out and the quality of the work has been judged by the Principal Supervisor and another assessor, (who is external to the University and has not been associated with the supervision of the Student), to be of the required standard. It is imperative that both assessors reach unanimous agreement before proceeding to the examination stage; and
    iii. the joint recommendation is forwarded by the Principal Supervisor to Research Services confirming that in their expert judgement the condition as specified in clause 4bi has been met; and
    iv. the submitted work will then be sent to examiners (three examiners for doctoral degrees and two for research masters' degrees) who are appointed by the under the respective degree rules; and
    v. the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research or the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer confirms that the Student would successfully have completed all requirements of the course for graduation if not for their illness, injury or death.

Consent of Next of Kin

(5) Posthumous Awards should only be made with the knowledge and consent of the next of kin and/or immediate family members.

Approval of Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards

General

(6) The entire process must be handled with utmost sensitivity and discretion by all parties involved and at no time should the Student, or close relatives or friends of the deceased or injured or ill Student be given undue expectations of the eventual outcome. To avoid this possibility the number of different staff contacting the Student and/or family must be kept to a minimum. The Student and/or family must be consulted as to the outcome prior to any action being undertaken by the University.

Coursework Awards

(7) An application can be submitted to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Innovation) by the Student or their immediate family, or executor of the Student's estate, or Course Coordinator or the relevant Dean (or nominee).

(8) Student Experience will undertake a progression check of the course in which the Student was enrolled in order to determine if the Student is eligible or may be considered as eligible for conferral of an aegrotat or posthumous award under clause 3.

(9) Where a Student is deemed eligible under clause 3a, the Executive Principal Student Experience will advise the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Innovation) the Student has met the course requirements and is eligible for conferral of an aegrotat or posthumous award.

(10) Where a Student may be eligible under clause 3b, the Executive Principal Student Experience will inform the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Innovation) or the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer of the Student's potential eligibility. In deciding whether the Student would clearly have met the requirements of the Course were it not for their injury, illness or death, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Innovation) or Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer will consider (in consultation with the Course Coordinator) whether the Student:

a. was enrolled in the units required for completion of the Course and had completed a sufficient proportion of each of those units to allow a judgment to be made about their performance and progress in those units; and/or
b. would have been expected to have satisfactorily completed the Course requirements to justify the award.

Higher Degree Research Awards

(11) An application/request can be made by the Student or their immediate family or executor of the Student's estate, or Principal Supervisor or the relevant Dean (or nominee) to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research.

(12) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research will consider if the Student is eligible or may be considered as eligible under clause 4.

(13) If the Student may be eligible under clause 4b the following process of approval will apply:

a. when the submitted work is sent out for examination, examiners will be informed of the Student's situation and copies of all relevant information, including guidelines for examination, provided. Examiners' recommendations must include a clear 'yes' or 'no' response as to whether there is sufficient evidence to indicate had the Student lived or not suffered an injury or illness they would have completed the degree and would have satisfied the requirements for the awarding of the degree;
b. the Principal Supervisor may be requested to submit additional supporting documentation to aid examiners' understanding of the Student's contribution to the research;
c. where the examining Committee determines that all relevant and necessary conditions have been met, a recommendation will be sent to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research or the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer that the award be conferred as an Aegrotat or Posthumous Award.

Conferring of Awards

(14) Where the granting of an Aegrotat or Posthumous Award has been approved the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Innovation) or Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research or Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer (whichever is applicable) will write to the Student or the Student’s next of kin (or executor of estate) and, depending on the circumstances, ask whether they wish:

a. the degree to be awarded In Absentia;
b. the degree to be awarded at a graduation ceremony at which the Student or a selected person represents the Student, or
c. a representative of the University presents the testamur to the family on a private occasion that is mutually convenient.

(15) In exercising the authority to approve the conferral of an award the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research or Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Innovation) must do so in accordance with the Graduation Rule.

Time limit for the Conferral of Posthumous and Aegrotat Awards.

(16) Wherever possible, and Aegrotat Award or a PosthumPosthumous Award should be conferred within two years of the injury, illness or death of a Student and preferably during the ceremony at which the Student might otherwise have been expected to graduate.

Records Management

(17) Electronic records relating to any actions or decisions made under these Procedures must be recorded in accordance with the University Records Management Rule.

Authority and Compliance

(18) The Procedure Administrator, the Director Governance and University Secretary, pursuant to the University's Graduation Rule makes these procedures.

(19) UNE Representatives and Students must observe these Procedures in relation to University matters.

(20) These Procedures operate as and from the Effective Date.

(21) Previous Procedures relating to aegrotat and posthumous Awards are replaced and have no further operation from the Effective Date of this new Procedure.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	18th September 2018
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Approval Authority	Chief Legal and Governance Officer
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"UNE Representative" - Means a University employee (casual, fixed term and permanent), contractor, agent, appointee, UNE Council member, adjunct, visiting academic and any other person engaged by the University to undertake some activity for or on behalf of the University. It includes corporations and other bodies falling into one or more of these categories.

"In Absentia" - Is when an award is conferred on a student without their presence at a Graduation Ceremony.

"Student" - Is an admitted student or an enrolled student, at the relevant time: 1. an admitted student is a student who has been admitted to a UNE course of study and who is entitled to enrol in a unit of study or who has completed all of the units in the UNE course of study; 2. an enrolled student is a student who is enrolled in a unit of study at UNE.

"Aegrotat Award" - Is an award of a University course awarded without classification (such as 'with Credit' or 'with First Class Honours') as a result of a Student being unable to complete their course by reason of a permanent, incapacitating illness or injury.

"Course" - Course means a syllabus, a curriculum, a training package, units of study, or structured workplace learning, the successful completion of which leads to the conferral of an award on the student by the University (including but not limited to a regulated qualification under the Australian Qualifications Framework).

"Effective Date" - means the Rule/Policy takes effect on the day on which it is published, or such later day as may be specified in the policy document.

"Posthumous Award" - May be conferred upon a Student who has died before completing the requirements for their award or who has completed the requirements for their award and died before they are able to graduate.

"Principal Supervisor" - Means the UNE staff member or adjunct or honorary staff member who has principal responsibility for the research candidature of a HDR Student.

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