

# Conferring and Issuing Awards Policy and Procedure

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<b>Related Documents</b>	Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure Advanced Standing Policy and Procedure Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Records Management Policy and Procedure AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy AQF Qualifications Register Policy
<b>HESF (Threshold Standards) 2021</b>	1.5.1; 1.5.3; 1.5.4; 1.5.5; 1.5.6; 1.5.7; 1.5.10

## 1. Purpose

This Policy and Procedure seeks to define the rules for the conferring and issuing of Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) awards once a student has completed a course of study with the Australian Institute of Higher Education Pty Ltd ('the Institute').

## 2. Principles

The Institute is committed to ensuring the accuracy and authenticity of all Institute issued documents that record details of students' academic information, in the interests of the Institute, its students and graduates.

## 3. Context

The Institute protects the integrity of its AQF awards by ensuring that the conferral of awards is consistent with the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy.

## 4. Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to all students at the Institute and relevant staff.

## 5. Definitions

See the *AIH Glossary of Terms* for definitions.

## 6. Policy Details

### 6.1 Eligibility to Graduate

A student is eligible to graduate and receive a qualification testamur if:

- they meet all course requirements
- they have no outstanding fees
- there are no current suspension, exclusion or expulsion penalty on the student's record, and
- they have not already graduated from that award.

Students who have outstanding fees, or are under disciplinary action or penalty, are not eligible to graduate until their debts are cleared or the disciplinary action is resolved or penalty served.

Students who are enrolled in a higher qualification but have completed the requirements of a nested award within that qualification are not eligible for the award of the nested qualification unless they withdraw from the course in which they are enrolled. Following the withdrawal, the student will be eligible to graduate with the highest nested qualification for which they have completed all course requirements.

If a student who has completed a nested qualification and has been issued a testamur wishes to proceed with the highest nested qualification, the student must first return the testamur for the nested qualification before the highest nested qualification testamur can be issued.

## **6.2 Provision of Documentation**

Students will have access to an interim academic transcript at the end of each study period stating their grades for each unit of study for which they are enrolled, provided all relevant fees are paid.

A testamur, official academic transcript and completion letter will be issued at the end of the course to all students who have successfully completed the requirements for the award in which they are enrolled once the award is conferred.

A testamur, official academic transcript and completion letter are provided free of charge. A fee will apply for any additional requests for a testamur and final academic transcript.

The Institute will maintain a Register of all testamurs issued to students with appropriate information allowing issued Certification documentation to be traceable and verifiable.

## **6.3 Conferring of Awards**

All results will be reviewed by the Registrar to ensure the student has met all course requirements. Upon review, the Registrar and Principal Executive Officer (PEO) will confirm the graduands list, which can then be referred to the Academic Board.

The Academic Board will confirm and recommend the graduands list for approval to the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors will provide final approval of the graduands before a testamur or final academic transcript can be issued.

## 6.4 Coursework Posthumous Awards

In the event that an enrolled student dies prior to graduation, the Institute may award the accredited qualification, an honorary qualification, or a certificate of attainment posthumously according to the following circumstances:

- The student fulfilled all requirements for the qualification (including Advanced Standing), but passed away prior to graduation. In this case, the qualification can be awarded posthumously.
- The student completed a minimum of 70% of the unit credit points required for the qualification they were enrolled in (including Advanced Standing). In this case, an honorary qualification can be awarded posthumously.
- The student did not fulfil all requirements for the qualification in which they were enrolled, but do satisfy the requirements for an existing accredited nested qualification, such as a Diploma or Associate Degree. In this case, and in accordance with the Advanced Standing Policy and Procedure, a nested qualification can be awarded posthumously.
- If the student had not met any of the criteria stated above, a certificate of attainment can be awarded posthumously.

Applications for a posthumous award may be initiated by the family representatives of the deceased student, or the Institution. The PEO will review each case to assure that the student has met the above requirements and present a recommendation to the Chair of the Academic Board (refer to section 7.4.1 and 7.4.2).

## 6.5 Format and Required Information on the Documentation

All Institution certification documents will comply with regulatory requirements and associated standards, including but not limited to the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy and the Higher Education Standards Framework 2021 Standard 1.5 (Qualifications and Certification).

Certification documentation will be printed on official stationery, appropriate to the document type.

The testamur will have a foiled silver Institution logo as a measure to prevent the forging of the document. Each testamur will have a unique identification number.

## 6.6 Revoking an award

The Institute reserves the right to revoke any award conferred if:

- An administrative error has resulted in the conferral of an award for which the student was not eligible
- A penalty of revoking an award has been applied to a student under the **Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure**.

## 6.7 Retention of Records

The Institute will retain sufficient student records in accordance with the Records Management Policy and Procedure.

# 7. Actions and Responsibilities

### 7.1 Available Documentation

A student who is enrolled in an AQF qualification and has successfully completed all the requirements for the qualification is entitled to receive the following certification documentation upon award of the qualification:

- A Testamur
- Australian Higher Education Graduate Statement (AHEGS)
- An Academic Transcript
- An official completion letter

A student who has successfully completed part of the requirements of an AQF qualification in which they were enrolled but have subsequently withdrawn are entitled to receive:

- An Interim Transcript

### 7.2 Issuing of Interim Transcripts

Students wishing to obtain an Interim Transcript will need to pay a fee and complete a Request for Official Documents form. The form should be returned to Student Services. Official documents may take up to five (5) business days to be produced. Students can collect the Interim Transcript from Student Services.

Students who have an outstanding debt to the Institute shall not be permitted to receive Interim Transcripts until such debts have been paid.

### 7.3 Identifying, Conferring and Issuing Awards

The following process will be followed for the identifying, conferring and issuing of awards. No Testamur or final Academic Transcript will be issued until this process has concluded:

- Following results release, the Registrar or a delegated nominee will prepare a list of eligible graduands.
- The Registrar will check each graduand's suitability for the award and prepare a final list of eligible graduands. The Registrar will then sign-off on the document and provide to the PEO.
- The PEO will conduct a final check of the graduands before signing off on the eligible graduands list.
- The eligible graduands list will be presented at the next scheduled Academic Board and upon approval, the Chair of the Academic Board will sign-off on the eligible graduands list and recommend the list to the Board of Directors for final approval.
- The Board of Directors will approve the list and the Chair of the Board of Directors will sign-off on the eligible graduands list officially conferring the awards.
- The Registrar will provide the approved list of graduands to the Head of Student Experience to create the Testamur and final Academic Transcript.
- The Registrar or a delegated nominee will maintain a **Qualification Register** of all Testamurs issued.
- Official documents will not be issued until up to 6 weeks after final results are released and have been approved by all parties.
- Students will be advised of their eligibility to graduate by way of a graduation invitation. Students will be given an opportunity to nominate whether they will attend a graduation ceremony or graduate in absentia by signing and returning the appropriate form.

## 7.4 Coursework Awards

### 7.4.1 Application for Conferral of Award and eligibility

Applications for a posthumous award may be initiated by the representatives/family of the deceased student; or the Institution. Applications are to be submitted by the PEO for approval by the Chair of the Academic Board.

Applications may be raised to the Chair of the Academic Board if they meet one of the following criteria:

- a. The student successfully completed all the required units required of the coursework award they were enrolled, but had not yet graduated.
- b. The student successfully completed a minimum of **70% of the units** required for the coursework award they were enrolled including Advanced Standing.
- c. In the case of a degree with nested qualifications, if the student successfully completed all units required for the nested award, such as a Diploma or Associate Degree.
- d. In the case that a student had not met any of the criteria in a) – c), the PEO may recommend an honorary degree be awarded.

### 7.4.2 Approval process and collection of a Posthumous Award

After successfully approved and conferred by the Chair of the Academic Board, the Head of Student Experience will manage the student records and awards. The records will indicate that the award was conferred posthumously. The Head of Student Experience will ensure the decision as to the timing and method of collection of the Award will be at the sole discretion of the family. The options include:

- In absentia where the testamur is posted direct to the family or made available for collection from Student Services; or
- At a graduation ceremony with a family member representing the deceased student.

### 7.4.3 Presentation of Awards

Awards may be issued:

- At a graduation ceremony.
- In person outside a formal graduation ceremony.
- By personal proxy with written permission from the student and personal identification displayed upon collection.
- In absentia by mail at the request of the student in writing upon receipt of a postage fee.
- Testamurs and Australian Higher Qualification Graduate Statement will not usually be issued to students until after the graduation ceremony at which the award would otherwise have been presented unless approved by the Registrar or PEO.

### 7.4.4 Re-issuing a Testamur

The Institute will reissue a Testamur in the following circumstances:

- When a request is made in writing to Student Services.
- When a replacement fee is paid.
- When the original is returned if possible (in the case of a lost or destroyed award, this condition will not apply).

- Upon receipt of a statutory declaration if a Testamur has been lost or destroyed.

The Head of Student Experience will validate the re-issuing of an award by verifying the original issue of the award in the Qualification Register. The re-issued award will also be entered in the Qualification Register.

#### **7.4.5 Qualification Register**

In keeping with the principles of best practice and the requirements of the AQF Qualifications Register Policy, the Institute maintains a Qualification Register.

The Qualification Register will include the following for each qualification:

- Student's full name.
- Date of issue
- The award
- The date the award was approved by the Board of Directors (conferral date)

The Qualification Register will be kept and maintained by the Registrar or a delegate nominee.

#### **7.4.6 Award Amendments**

All official documents will be issued in the legal name of the student at the time of conferral.

If a graduate provides evidence after issuance of the official final documents that their legal name was different to that provided at the date of conferral, the graduate may request that the official final documents be re-issued in the correct name. A fee will be charged for the re-issuance.

The original official documents are to be returned to the Institute.

## **8 Legislation**

This Policy and Procedure seeks to comply with the Australian Qualifications Framework and the Higher Education Standards Framework 2021 Standard 1.5 (Qualifications and Certification):

1. Qualifications, other than higher doctoral or honorary qualifications, are awarded only if a course of study leads to the award of that qualification and all of the requirements of the course of study have been fulfilled.
2. When an Australian higher education qualification is offered, the course of study leading to the qualification is either self-accredited under authority to self-accredit or accredited by TEQSA and the learning outcomes for the qualification are consistent with the level classification for that qualification in the Australian Qualifications Framework.
3. Awardees of qualifications are issued with authorised certification documentation including a testamur, and either a record of results or an Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (graduation statement) that state correctly:
  - a. the name of the registered higher education provider issuing the documentation
  - 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 higher education provider to issue the documentation, and

- e. if the qualification is recognised in the Australian Qualifications Framework, the testamur and/or the graduation statement is certified with either the logo of the Australian Qualifications Framework or the words, 'This qualification is recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework'.
4. All certification documentation issued by the higher education provider is:
  - a. unambiguously issued by the registered higher education provider
  - b. readily distinguishable from other certification documents issued by the higher education provider
  - c. protected against fraudulent issue
  - d. traceable and authenticable
  - e. designed to prevent unauthorised reproduction, and
  - f. replaceable by the higher education provider through an authorised and verifiable process.
5. Testamurs state correctly, in addition to the requirements for all certification documentation:
  - a. the full title of the qualification awarded, including the field or discipline of study
  - b. any subsidiary component of the qualification (such as integrated honours, an area of specialisation or a major study), and
  - c. if any parts of the course of study or assessment leading to the qualification were conducted in a language other than English, except for the use of another language to develop proficiency in that language.
6. Records of results state correctly, in addition to the requirements for all certification documentation:
  - a. the full name of all courses and units of study undertaken and when they were undertaken and completed
  - b. credit granted through recognition of prior learning
  - c. the weighting of units within courses of study
  - d. the grades and/or marks awarded for each unit of study 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, and
  - g. any parts of a course or units of study or assessment that were conducted in a language other than English, except for the use of another language to develop proficiency in that language.
7. Students who complete one or more units of study that do not lead to the award of a qualification have access to an authorised record of results for the units undertaken.

## **9** **Version Control**

This Policy and Procedure has been endorsed by the Australia Institute of Higher Education Board of Directors as at July 2024 and is reviewed every 3 years. The Policy and Procedure is published and available on the Australian Institute of Higher Education website <http://www.aih.nsw.edu.au/> under 'Policies and Procedures'.

<b>Change and Version Control</b>				
<b>Version</b>	<b>Authored by</b>	<b>Brief Description of the changes</b>	<b>Date Approved:</b>	<b>Effective Date:</b>
2016-2	Registrar	Updated template.	6 July 2016	6 August 2016
2017-1	Ms. McCoy	Revised and edited content.	1 March 2017	6 March 2017
2019.1	Registrar	Added Posthumous Awards	3 July 2019	4 July 2019
2019-2	Principal	Updated titles from Executive Dean to Principal and Registrar to Head of Academic Support and Student Services.	20 November 2019	21 November 2019
2021.1	Registrar	Policy review. Titles and minor grammatically changes	17 February 2021	18 February 2021
2022.1	Registrar	Updated Higher Education Standards Framework [Threshold Standard] 2021	16 June 2022	17 June 2022
2023.1	Registrar	Approving authority amended to be only Board of Directors	22 June 2023	29 June 2023
2024.1	Registrar	Combined Policy and Procedure documents; updated Responsible Officer; minor grammatical updates and title changes.	30 July 2024	31 July 2024