

Conferring Posthumous Awards Policy (Coursework)

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Contacts	policy@imc.edu.au		
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2023.02	Academic Board	27 February 2023	27 February 2023

1. PURPOSE

The Institute recognises that under certain circumstances it may be appropriate to award a degree, diploma or other award to a student who dies while studying at the Institute. In conferring the award, the Institute acknowledges the expectation that the student would have met course requirements if not for their death.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles relating to the conferral of posthumous awards and to provide detail regarding the procedures involved in application and approval processes.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- all administrative and academic staff;
- the immediate family and close friends of the family of a student who was enrolled at the Institute at the time of their death; and
- the executor of the deceased student's estate.

3. DEFINITIONS

Award is a degree, diploma or other award which may be granted and conferred by the Institute.

Conferral is the act of granting an award to a student after completion of course requirements.

In absentia refers to the conferral of a degree without the student or student representative being present at the award ceremony.

Testamur is a certificate certified by the Institute that is conferred to a student.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Eligibility

- Students, both undergraduate and postgraduate (Coursework), who were enrolled in the Institute courses at the time of their death may be eligible for posthumous awards.
- Where a student had met all requirements of the award at the time of their death, conferral of the award should be automatic and no application is necessary.

- Where a student died before completing the final stages of their course, a formal application must be made and considered according to the principles and processes outlined below.

4.2 Principles

The Institute will only consider and decide whether or not to confer an award posthumously if a formal application is submitted.

In general, the required criteria for a posthumous award are:

- the student must have completed more than 66% of the total requirements of the course in which he or she was enrolled at the time of his or her death; and
- after consultation with academic staff, the Academic Board is able to confirm beyond doubt, that the student, on the basis of past performance, would have satisfied course requirements if they had been able to complete their course.

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

Any application will be considered on a case by case basis.

The Institute will notify the student's parents or other eligible parties as specified in the Policy if the Institute is aware:

- a student had, at the time of death, successfully completed the total credit points required for the Award but the Award had not been conferred; or
- if the student had, at the time of death, successfully completed a minimum of 66% of the total credit points required for the Award and would have likely successfully completed the course of study had death not occurred.

All situations throughout the entire application process will be handled with utmost sensitivity and discretion and at no time should the deceased student's family and loved ones be given undue expectations of the eventual outcome.

4.3 Applications

Applications for conferral of a posthumous award may be made by:

- the executor of the student estate;
- student's family, including spouse or partner; or
- close friend on behalf of the family.

The following details should be included in the application:

- full name of the student;
- date of birth;
- student number;
- name of the award; and
- contact details of next-of-kin.

Applications must be made in writing and addressed to the Chair of the Academic Board.

4.4 Consideration of Applications

The relevant Dean must complete a review of the deceased student's eligibility for the conferral of the award, taking into account exceptional circumstances, and make a recommendation to the Academic Board.

Applications will be considered by the Academic Board, in consultation with the Dean and relevant academic staff.

The Academic Board will make a recommendation to the Institute's Council. The Academic Board's recommendation should include a clear 'yes' or 'no' response as to whether there is sufficient evidence to indicate a reasonable expectation that the student, if they had lived, would have satisfied course requirements. The recommendation should include the rationale for the decision, including whether or not general criteria have been met and all relevant evidence. Council has the responsibility and authority for making the final decision regarding the conferral of a posthumous award.

Following the decision, the human resources manager will communicate the decision to the student's family as soon as practicable. Relevant graduation procedures will be followed, as applicable. The testamur will have the name of the award as well as the word 'posthumous'. Refer to *AP027 Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy and Procedure* for general information regarding graduation.

4.5 Conferring Awards

In conferring an award, the wishes of the next of kin will dictate whether:

- The award is conferred in absentia;
- The award is conferred at a formal graduation ceremony at which a nominated person represents the deceased student; or
- A representative of the Institute presents the testamur to the family on a private occasion that is mutually convenient.

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

6. Related documents

- Student Progression, Exclusion and Graduation Policy and Procedure*

7. Version Control

Historical Version	Approved by	Approval Date
2013.12	Academic Board	20 December 2013
2019:12	Academic Board	4 December 2019