Higher Degree by Research Aegrotat or Posthumous Awards Policy

Responsible Officer  Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
Approved by  Vice-Chancellor
Approved and commenced  August, 2016
Review by  August, 2019

Relevant Legislation, Ordinance, Rule and/or Governance Level Principle

| Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 |
| Higher Education Support Act 2003 |
| Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011 |
| Ordinance 8 – Student Complaints |
| Ordinance 9 - Student Discipline |
| Ordinance 18 – Intellectual Property |
| Rule 3 Admission and Student Progress |
| Rule 4 Rules of Graduate Research |
| GLP 12 Academic Standards |
| GLP 13 Quality Management Framework |

Responsible Organisational Unit  Division of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)

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1 Objective

The objective of this Policy is to establish a framework to support the conferral of Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards in Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Programs.

2 Scope

This Policy applies to all HDR candidates undertaking a Higher Degree by Research at the University of Tasmania (the University) at the time of their illness, injury or death.

3 Policy Provisions

3.1 Eligibility for an Aegrotat or Posthumous Award

The University may award a candidate a Higher Degree by Research before the completion of the requirements of that Higher Degree in exceptional circumstances:

- an Aegrotat Award may be conferred upon a candidate who has sustained an incapacitating injury or illness that precludes completion of the Higher Degree by Research Program, or
- a Posthumous Award may be conferred upon a candidate who has died before the completion of the HDR Program.

Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards may be conferred in these circumstances provided that:

- the candidate was enrolled in the HDR Program at the time of the injury, illness or death
- the candidate had successfully completed the Confirmation of Candidature process
- the candidate had undertaken sufficient research work (such as study design, data collection and preliminary analysis, literature reviews and draft chapters, or other assessable evidence) to indicate that the candidate would have successfully completed the HDR Program had the injury, illness or death not occurred, and
- a written request for the award is made to the Dean of Graduate Research by the Primary Supervisor with either the consent of the candidate (if applicable) or the family of the Candidate. The request must include details of the work completed and the current status of the thesis.

The conferral of an Aegrotat or Posthumous Award will not normally be considered where the candidate has been enrolled for less than 60% of the Maximum Degree Period.
3.2 Preliminary assessment

A preliminary assessment of the completed work will be conducted in order to determine if the work is of the required standard for the proposed award (Masters Research, PhD or Professional Doctorate). In the case of a PhD or Professional Doctorate, the outcome of this assessment may involve a proposal to submit the work for examination as a Masters by Research. In such cases the candidate or their family will be consulted.

The preliminary assessment will normally be conducted by the Primary Supervisor and one other assessor who may be external to the University, has not been associated with the supervision of the candidate and is free from conflict of interest, as described in the Conflict of Interest in the Appointment of Examiners Guidelines. The assessors must reach unanimous agreement before the Candidate’s work can be progressed to the formal examination stage.

The Dean of Graduate Research may, on advice from assessors, request the Primary Supervisor to insert supplementary and/or explanatory material to facilitate the examiners’ understanding of the candidate’s contribution to the research, or to facilitate the production of the thesis or body of work in preparation for examination. Where the Primary Supervisor undertakes work on the candidate’s behalf, a statement must be appended to the thesis to indicate the details of this work.

3.3 Examination of Thesis

The Primary Supervisor is responsible for submitting the thesis in accordance with the Higher Degree by Research Thesis Preparation, Submission and Examination Policy and Procedure.

The examination of the thesis will occur as detailed in the Higher Degree by Research Thesis Preparation, Submission and Examination Policy and Procedure, except the following conditions will apply:

- the examiners will be informed of the situation of the candidate and copies of all relevant information will be provided, and

- the examiners must provide unequivocal advice as to whether the evidence exists to indicate that, if the incapacity or death of the candidate had not intervened, the Candidate would have satisfied the requirements for the award of the Higher Degree.

In the case of Doctoral Candidates, the examiners may recommend that the appropriate degree of Master be awarded where it is deemed that the candidate would not have satisfied the requirements for the Doctoral Degree.

Where the Dean of Graduate Research determines that, based on all evidence and recommendations provided, the necessary conditions have been met; the Dean of Graduate Research will recommend to the Academic Senate that the Aegrotat or Posthumous Award for the Higher Degree be awarded.
3.4 Conferral of an Aegrotat or Posthumous Award

Where the granting of an Aegrotat or Posthumous Award has been approved by the Academic Senate, the candidate (if applicable) or family of the candidate should be contacted by the Graduate Research Office to determine the procedure for conferring the award. The wishes of the Candidate (if applicable) or the family of the candidate will dictate whether:

- the degree is awarded in the absence of the candidate (if applicable) or the family of the candidate
- the degree is awarded at a graduation ceremony to the candidate (if applicable) or to a family member on behalf of the candidate, or
- the degree is presented to the family by a representative of the University at a private occasion that is mutually convenient.

4 Dissemination of Research

Where the degree is awarded, the research material may be developed and disseminated by the Supervisor(s) with appropriate attribution and intellectual property rights to the student and the supervisors in accordance with the University’s Intellectual Property Ordinance and Authorship of Research Policy and Procedure in effect at the time of the Candidate’s death, injury or illness.

5 Responsibilities

5.1 The Dean of Graduate Research is responsible for:

- ensuring high quality administrative processes and appropriate candidate support are provided and monitored;
- ensuring candidates receive a high standard of supervision;
- the strategy and associated policies for the retention and successful completion of HDR candidates; and
- ensuring that the University maintains appropriate standards in relation to candidature matters (including admission, appropriate infrastructure, supervision and examination).

6 Definitions and Acronyms

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<tr>
<th>Term/Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aegrotat Award</td>
<td>An award conferred upon a Candidate who has sustained an incapacitating injury or illness that precludes completion of the Higher Degree by Research Program.</td>
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Confirmation of Candidature
Confirmation by the Dean of Graduate Research that candidature may progress.

Dean of Graduate Research
The Dean of Graduate Research is the person who has responsibility for:
- establishing the academic framework for research training at the University, and
- for working with Faculties and Institutes to ensure the University maintains appropriate standards for research training at the University (including admission, appropriate infrastructure, supervision and examination).

HDR
Higher Degree by Research

Maximum Degree Period
The maximum period within which a thesis must be submitted.

Posthumous Award
An award conferred upon a candidate who has died before the completion of the HDR Program.

Primary Supervisor
The supervisor who is primarily responsible for ensuring that all administrative and regulatory requirements prescribed for candidates are met.

Thesis
Using one or more media, a substantial and intellectually coherent product or product(s) such as a thesis, dissertation and artefacts, or exegesis and portfolio of creative works and/or performance, for submission to external examination against international standards.

7 Supporting Documentation

- Rule 4: Rules of Graduate Research
- Higher Degree by Research Candidature Policy
- Higher Degree by Research Thesis Preparation, Submission and Examination Policy
- Higher Degree by Research Thesis Preparation, Submission and Examination Procedure
- Higher Degree by Research Alternative Examination Format Procedure
- Higher Degree by Research Thesis Preparation Guidelines
- Conflict of Interest in the Appointment of Examiners Guidelines
- Authorship of Research Policy
- Authorship of Research Procedure

8 Versioning

| Current Version | Version 1 – Higher Degree by Research Aegrotat or Posthumous Awards Policy; approved August, 2016. |