

# PROCEDURE FOR AWARDING AEGROTAT AND POSTHUMOUS DEGREES

Version No.	Description	Author	Approval	Effective Date
1.0	Procedure for awarding aegrotat and posthumous degrees	Education Enhancement	Senate (September 2019)	January 2020

Version 1.0

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## INTRODUCTION

1. This Procedure is for use in cases where students have passed away (Posthumous) and/or an illness or other factor prevents them from completing their studies (Aegrotat), as set out in the 3.3.11 and 3.3.12 of the University of Strathclyde [Ordinances](#).
2. An **aegrotat award** is an award, without classification, that may be made if a candidate is prevented from completing their studies and/or assessments by illness, death, or other cause accepted by the Senate. The Senate may award an aegrotat degree where there is sufficient evidence that the candidate would have satisfied the standard required for the award, had they been able to continue their studies. It is important to note that an aegrotat award can be made posthumously (see paragraph 3b. below).
3. A **posthumous award** may be considered where a student has died and has either:
  - a. completed the programme of study, including the required assessments, and has satisfied the requirements for the award;
  - b. or has not completed the programme of study but could be eligible for an aegrotat award.
4. The following sets out the process for the approval and award of posthumous and aegrotat awards.

## POSTHUMOUS AWARDS THAT ARE NOT AEGROTAT AWARDS

5. Posthumous awards that are not aegrotat awards will be made in the following circumstances:
  - a. Where a student has completed and passed all elements of assessment for a programme of study (undergraduate and postgraduate taught students); or
  - b. Where a student has submitted a research thesis, undertaken and passed a viva examination prior to their death, and made any required corrections to the thesis other than those categorised as minor (research degree students).
6. In the case of undergraduate and postgraduate taught students, is important to note that activity relating to the approval of posthumous awards that are not aegrotat awards, is not included within Examination Board business. Therefore, names of students within this category will not appear in Examination Board paperwork.
7. On receipt of a notification of a student death, and in the circumstances described in paragraphs 5a and 5b, the Student Business Team will contact the Department to discuss the posthumous award.
8. For undergraduate and postgraduate taught students, Student Business will request that action be taken by the Chair of the Board of Examiners to approve the posthumous award. Departments will be asked to complete Section 2 of the Posthumous Awards Form set out in [Appendix A](#) (Student Business will have already completed section 1) and return this to Student Business for processing.
9. For research degree students, Departments will ensure that any corrections (other than those categorised as minor) have been completed and that the Vice-Dean (Academic) therefore approves the posthumous award.
10. Departments will be asked to complete Section 2 of the Posthumous Awards Form set out in [Appendix A](#) (Student Business will have already completed Section 1 of this Form) and return this to Student Business for processing.
11. Once Student Business receives confirmation that a posthumous award has been approved, The Head of Admissions and Student Lifecycle Services (or nominee) will normally liaise with the student's next of kin, however in some cases it may be more appropriate for this communication to be managed by a Senior Officer of the University.
12. The Head of Admissions and Student Lifecycle Services (or nominee) will offer the student's next of kin the opportunity to attend a graduation ceremony at the University and for a member of the family, or another appropriate individual, to receive the award on behalf of the student. If the preference of the

next of kin is not to attend a graduation ceremony of the University, the certificate of award shall be posted to the next of kin. They will discuss with the student's next of kin whether the student's name is to be listed in a graduation programme and in any other associated publications such as newspapers.

## AEGROTAT AWARDS

13. In order to be considered for an aegrotat award, (posthumously or otherwise), a student must:
  - a. be unlikely to return to complete their studies at a later date; and
  - b. have completed a significant body of work. This is necessary to demonstrate that a student would have met the appropriate standard for the award had they not been prevented from completing their studies. For this reason, aegrotat awards will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
14. Requests for aegrotat awards will be given careful consideration on behalf of Senate through a review by Senate Business Committee, which will consider each request on a case by case basis. Normally this will be done within the Senate cycle, however cases can exceptionally be considered out of cycle under Convener's Action, provided compelling reason is provided.
15. In considering the authorisation of an award under these circumstances, Senate Business Committee reviews evidence before making a recommendation to Senate, including:
  - a. the personal circumstances of the candidate; and
  - b. where work has been submitted for assessment, the extent to which the candidate has satisfied the examiners; and
  - c. any recommendation from the relevant Vice-Dean (Academic) on whether the candidate, had they not been so prevented, would have satisfied the examiners in the assessment of their work.
16. Where such an award is considered by Senate due to the death of the candidate, a posthumous aegrotat award is only made on the explicit request of the next of kin of the candidate<sup>1</sup>.
17. Where such an award is considered by Senate due to any other reason, including illness, the award is only made on the explicit request of the candidate, or by their next of kin if evidence is presented to suggest that the candidate cannot reasonably submit such a request. If an award is made, the candidate will not be permitted to be considered for the same award on any future occasion.
18. Aegrotat awards do not confer eligibility for professional registration nor exemption from meeting the conditions of professional qualifications that might otherwise be granted upon completion of the candidate's programme of study.
19. An aegrotat award may be conferred at a graduation ceremony, and where possible the student will be invited to participate in the appropriate graduation. In cases where an award is to be made posthumously, The Head of Admissions and Student Lifecycle Services (or nominee) will liaise with the next of kin to confirm conferment arrangements, as set out in paragraph 12 above.
20. The two sections below (*Taught Programme Aegrotat Awards* and *Research Degree Programme Aegrotat Awards*) set out the process for making a request to Senate for the award of an aegrotat degree (posthumously or not), for [taught programmes](#) (undergraduate and postgraduate taught) and for [research degree programmes](#). It should be noted that all students are reminded of the requirement to submit Personal Circumstances in respect to any medical illness that affects their studies, and in line with the [University's Personal Circumstances and Academic Appeals Procedure](#).

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<sup>1</sup> In exceptional circumstances, such a request may be made by an appropriate person who is not the next of kin, e.g. an employer, friend or executor.

## **Taught Programme Aegrotat Awards**

21. In cases where an aegrotat award has been requested by a student or their next of kin, the Faculty is responsible for undertaking an initial assessment to consider whether there is a sufficient quantity of material to make this proposal to the Examination Board (for taught programmes).
22. The Faculty should then contact the Senate Office for an initial discussion to determine whether the proposed aegrotat award might be allowed under Ordinance 3.1.12 and this Procedure, subject to Senate approval.
23. Following advice from the Senate Office and if progressing the proposal, the Faculty should review the student's transcript to consider whether a proposal can be made for the award of the original programme of study. Where the Faculty wishes to make a proposal for the award of the original programme of study, a robust, evidence-based case is produced for consideration by the Examination Board, detailing why the award of the original programme of study should be made. It is important that consideration is given to whether there is a strong enough case to support the award of an aegrotat degree. In cases where uncertainty is present and students have accumulated credit for an alternative exit award, serious thought should be given to whether it would be more appropriate to award the exit qualification.
24. The aegrotat case must be submitted to the Examination Board in the Aegrotat Awards Form set out in [Appendix B](#) below. As stated in paragraph 14 above, in cases where expediency is required, the Examination Board can consider cases remotely before submitting the proposal to Senate for approval with the support of the Vice-Dean (Academic).
25. When considering aegrotat awards, Examination Boards should come to an agreement on each candidate presented to it for consideration, and retain records of any deliberations. All decisions of the Examination Board to confer awards are accompanied by the signatures of the Chair of the Examination Board.
26. Examination Boards choose either to recommend to Senate to:
  - a. award an aegrotat degree without a classification, as specified in Ordinance 3.3.12; or
  - b. agree not to make the award; or
  - c. in cases where there is potential for a student to return their studies in the future, defer a decision on the outcome of requiring the student to undertake further work to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes of the programme.
27. In exceptional circumstances, should the Examination Board fail to agree on a recommended outcome for an individual candidate, it may submit a report to the Vice-Dean (Academic). The report provides a summary of the reasons for being unable to agree on an outcome and a recommendation agreed by the majority of the examiners. On receipt of a report, the Vice-Dean (Academic) consults with at least two other members of the academic staff of the Faculty who are not members of the Examination Board and either accepts the recommendation of the majority of the examiners, or otherwise refers the case to a newly constituted Examination Board.
28. Once the outcome of the Examination Board is known, and has the support of the Vice Dean (Academic), a proposal is submitted to the Senate Office by the Faculty for approval.
29. Should the Senate, (following review by the Senate Business Committee), decide not to make a discretionary aegrotat award, there are no grounds for appeal.
30. Where an aegrotat award is made, it will be made clear on all documentation that the degree has been awarded as an aegrotat award.

## **Research Degree Programme Aegrotat Awards**

31. In cases where an aegrotat award has been requested by a student or their next of kin, the Faculty is responsible for undertaking an initial assessment to consider whether there is a sufficient quantity of material to make this proposal to the internal and external examiners.
32. The Faculty should then contact the Senate Office for an initial discussion to determine whether the proposed aegrotat award might be allowed under Ordinance 3.1.11 and this Policy & Procedure, subject to Senate approval.
33. It should be noted that where a thesis has not been formally submitted for examination, aegrotat awards are only made in exceptional cases, based on robust evidence, (provided by the Faculty), demonstrating that the student was close to submitting a well-developed thesis of the appropriate quality.
34. If a decision is made to pursue an aegrotat award, the Faculty should consider the student's progress towards a full thesis, which will include evaluating draft thesis chapters, any peer reviewed publications or conference speaking engagements, progress reports, data collection by the student and any other related documentation which was to have been incorporated within the thesis. Additionally, the supervisory team are permitted to supply additional information e.g. examples of work undertaken and training attended.
35. In cases where a thesis has not been examined, the evidence outlined in paragraph 31 should be presented to the internal and external examiners for assessment, (see the [Policy & Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Study](#) for details of examining requirements), without a viva examination. In place of the viva, the Examiners will be permitted to request additional information and/or ask questions of the supervisory team, before making a recommendation on the submitted work. Once this assessment process has concluded, a recommendation should be made and submitted to the Senate Office, with support of the Vice-Dean (Academic).
36. In cases where a student has already formally submitted a thesis, was examined orally and was required to undertake significant or major corrections, the PGR examiners should make a recommendation to Senate, with the support of the Vice-Dean (Academic). The PGR examiners may make a recommendation for the award of an aegrotat research degree if it is considered that a student's ongoing ill-health would preclude them from making the final submission of the thesis, undertaking the viva, making minor modifications to the thesis or resubmitting the thesis, or, if the student has reached the maximum period of registration and would be unable to complete the degree owing to serious ill-health.
37. After following the various processes set out in paragraphs 32, 33 and 34 above, Examiners may make one of the following recommendations to Senate:
  - d. Posthumous or aegrotat award of the research degree;
  - e. Posthumous or aegrotat award of MPhil;
  - f. Posthumous or aegrotat exit award of e.g. MPhil, MRes, MA, PGCert;
  - g. No award.
38. All recommendations to Senate must be submitted to the Senate Office on the Aegrotat Awards Form in [Appendix B](#), and must be accompanied by appropriate supporting evidence, including medical evidence. All signatures required in the Form (with the exception of Senate Convenor) must be collected before submission to the Senate Office. Any request for an aegrotat award to be made should be submitted within 10 working days of the notification of the Examiners' decision.
39. Where an aegrotat award is made, it will be made clear on all documentation that the degree has been awarded as an aegrotat award and an explanatory note will be added to the thesis specifying that the nature of the award means that, as a result, some errors might exist in the thesis.

## Appendix A

### Posthumous Award Form

This pro-forma is to be completed where Examiners or an Examination Board wish to recommend a Posthumous award. (Please refer to the guidance in the Procedure for Aegrotat & Posthumous Awards for further information).

*To be completed by Student Business*

1. Student Details	
Student Name	
Student Registration Number	
Programme of Study	<i>MSc in Computational Science</i>
Mode of Study	<i>Part-Time</i>
Year of Study (i.e. 1 <sup>st</sup> year, 2 <sup>nd</sup> year etc)	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> year</i>
Date of Death (or notification of death)	

*To be completed by the Department*

2. Degree Award Details	
Proposed Qualification to be Awarded (Programme Title, Degree/Diploma / Certificate)	<i>Postgraduate Diploma in Computational Science</i>
Date of Next Scheduled Board of Examiners (for taught programmes) or date of Examiners meeting (for research programmes)	DD/MM/YYYY

3. Next of Kin Details	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	

#### Authorisation

Signed..... Date.....

*(Chair of Examination Board (taught programmes) or Convenor of Examiners (research programmes))*

**Please return completed form with all signatures to the relevant contact in Student Business**

<https://www.strath.ac.uk/studentlifecycle/contactus/>

## Appendix B

### Aegrotat Awards Form

This pro-forma is to be completed where Examiners or an Examination Board wish to recommend an Aegrotat award. (Please refer to the guidance in the Policy & Procedure for Aegrotat & Posthumous Awards for further information).

1. Is the aegrotat award proposed to be conferred posthumously (please highlight yes or no)?	
Yes	Please complete all sections of this form other than section 5
No	Please complete all sections of this form

2. Student Details	
Student Name	
Student Registration Number	
Programme of Study	<i>MSc in Computational Science</i>
Mode of Study	<i>Part-Time</i>
Year of Study (i.e. 1 <sup>st</sup> year, 2 <sup>nd</sup> year etc)	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> year</i>

3. Degree Award Details	
Proposed Qualification to be Awarded (Programme Title, Degree/Diploma / Certificate)	<i>Postgraduate Diploma in Computational Science</i>
Date of Next Scheduled Board of Examiners (for taught programmes) or date of Examiners meeting (for research programmes)	<i>DD/MM/YYYY</i>

4. Next of Kin Details
<b>Name:</b>
<b>Address:</b>

5. Outline why an aegrotat award is being sought (only to be completed in cases where the award will not be made posthumously)
<i>Please outline why it is that the student will not be able to complete their studies at the University in the future.</i>

## 6. Supporting Case

*Please provide a robust case as to why an aegrotat award should be considered. You should append supporting materials to this form, such as transcripts, supporting statements from Programme Directors and/or supervisors, any minutes from Board of Examiners meetings, any Examiners reports (in the case of research students), information on any civic activities undertaken by the student during their studies to the benefit of the community, other students or the University (volunteering, acting as module reps etc), evidence of publication or conference presentations (particularly in the case of research students). All of this evidence must be presented to support the Faculty's assertion that the student would have successfully passed their programme of study had they been able to continue.*

### **Authorisation**

Signed..... Date.....

*(Chair of Examination Board (taught programmes) or Convenor of Examiners (research programmes)*

Signed..... Date.....

*(Vice Dean Academic, Faculty)*

Signed:..... Date.....

*(Convener, Senate)*

**Please return completed form with all signatures, other than Senate Convener, to the Senate Office  
[educationenhancement-quality@strath.ac.uk](mailto:educationenhancement-quality@strath.ac.uk)**