

Honorary Degrees and Emeritus procedure

1. Scope

- 1.1 This procedure applies to all non-academic honorary titles, awards, fellowships and degrees overseen by Senate and Council.
- 1.2 This procedure does not apply to the posts of Chancellor and Pro Chancellor, in which case Council Ordinances [12](#) and [13](#) apply.
- 1.3 This procedure does not apply to the appointment of an Emeritus Professor/Reader where ongoing access to University facilities is required, in which case the [Honorary and Visiting Academic Appointments Policy and Procedure](#) applies.

2. Degrees and awards

- 2.1 Article 4.1 of the University's [Royal Charter](#) confers the following power:

“to award degrees and other academic or honorary awards and to revoke such awards.”

- 2.2 Council Ordinance 16 confirms:

- 2.2.1 the honorary degrees that may be awarded by Council on the recommendation of Governance and Nominations Committee and the eligibility criteria;
- 2.2.2 the eligibility criteria for the award of honorary fellowships by Council on the recommendation of Governance and Nominations Committee;
- 2.2.3 the eligibility criteria for nominations for the Vice-Chancellor's Award (staff) and for the Vice-Chancellor's Award (student), in each case to be approved by Senate.

3. Emeritus Professorships/Readerships

- 3.1 Senate has power to confer the title of Emeritus Professor/Reader subject to the eligibility criteria set out in Council Ordinance 16.

4. Nominations

- 4.1 Nominations should fulfil the eligibility criteria set out in Council Ordinance 16.
- 4.2 The University does not award honorary degrees to current members of staff or serving politicians.
- 4.3 An honorary fellowship or degree will not normally be conferred on a person who has already been awarded an honorary fellowship or degree or who has previously declined to accept an award from the University.
- 4.4 An honorary degree or fellowship will not, save in exceptional circumstances, be conferred in absentia.
- 4.5 Where Council has formally resolved to confer an honorary degree or fellowship on a person, and the death of that person occurs before the conferment takes place, the award will be deemed to have been conferred on the day preceding the date of death.

- 4.6 The nominations procedure is managed by Governance and Secretariat. Nominations are invited for consideration at least once per year, via a standard form.
- 4.7 Governance and Secretariat undertakes due diligence on all nominations for honorary degrees and fellowships that are shortlisted.
- 4.8 The Vice-Chancellor and President will convene an internal panel to consider nominations and make recommendations for awards. The panel may reject nominations which are considered not to meet the criteria and may require nominations to be revised and re-submitted. Recommendations for awards will be presented to the Governance and Nominations Committee for approval. Council will receive a summary of the approved nominees.
- 4.9 Academic Services will shortlist nominations for the Vice-Chancellor's Award (staff) and (student) and make recommendations to Senate for approval.

5. Revocation of honorary and emeritus awards

- 5.1 Council Ordinance 16 confirms that Council has the power to revoke an honorary degree or fellowship in circumstances where it considers the recipient to be likely to bring the University into disrepute.
- 5.2 Council may also revoke the title of Emeritus Professor where it considers the recipient to be likely to bring the University into disrepute.
- 5.3 The Governance and Nominations Committee will consider the revocation of an honorary or emeritus award based on information presented to that is considered likely to bring the University into disrepute. Such information may include, but is not limited to:-
 - 5.3.1 information that has emerged since the conferment of the award that calls into question the rationale for conferring the award;
 - 5.3.2 concerns relating to behaviour by the recipient that constitute an abuse of the rights and privileges associated with the award;
 - 5.3.3 behaviour that is contrary to the University's mission and values or that undermines its charitable objects;
 - 5.3.4 anything that risks significant damage to the reputation of the University, its staff, students or any of its other stakeholders.
- 5.4 Consistent with the University's commitment to free speech and academic freedom, an ideological difference following the exercise of the right to freedom of expression within the law is not of itself grounds for revocation of an honorary or emeritus award.
- 5.5 Requests to consider the revocation of an honorary or emeritus award may be submitted by any member of staff, student or alumni of the University in writing to the University Secretary and General Counsel. In order to deter vexatious requests, anonymous submissions will not be accepted but the identity of the person submitting the request will be protected as far as possible. Requests must provide substantive grounds for review supported by appropriate evidence.
- 5.6 The University Secretary and General Counsel will assess whether an adequate request for a review has been made and, if necessary, conduct further investigation for referral to the Governance and Nominations Committee.

5.7 The Governance and Nominations Committee will review the request and any accompanying information provided by the University Secretary and General Counsel and make a recommendation to Council to uphold or revoke the award. Council may request additional information prior to deciding to uphold or revoke the award.

5.8 The decision of Council is final and there is no right of appeal.

6. Confidentiality

6.1 Until the conferment of an award, or the revocation of an award, has been confirmed publicly by the University, all stages of the procedure must be kept strictly confidential and not disclosed any further internally than is absolutely necessary for the successful implementation of this procedure.