

# Confirmation and Revocation of Awards Approved Procedures

Academic Quality and Development  
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UNIVERSITY OF  
**WINCHESTER**

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<b>Summary/Description:</b>	
This document defines the procedures for confirming awards, issuing original and replacement award certificates, providing transcripts and access to the Higher Education Achievement Record as well as the process for revoking an award, in the rare cases that this should prove necessary to safeguard the reputation of the University, as well as individuals and organisations associated with it.	

## SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This list summarises the changes since 2016/17. The date confirms when the changes were implemented.

Implementation date	Changes Approved by Senate
1 September 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Updates to terminology: Exam Board changed to Progression and Award Board</li><li>2. The removal of a statement in section 7 about the University considering requests on an individual basis.</li><li>3. Update to roles: Ombudsman changed to Director of Complaints</li></ol>
17 January 2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Clarification that there would be one HEAR for all programmes undertaken by a student (Section 3)</li><li>2. Inclusion of reference to GPA (Section 4)</li></ol>

# CONFIRMATION AND REVOCATION OF AWARDS – APPROVED PROCEDURES

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## **1. Confirmation of awards to students**

Senate grants awards to students registered on its programmes in accordance with the Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes and Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes. This authority is exercised by the Progression and Award Boards (for Taught Programmes) and the Research Degrees Quality Committee (for Postgraduate Research Programmes) through regulations and procedures approved by Senate.

Graduates of undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes shall normally be informed by email of their final award within 10 working days of the Progression and Award Board (sent by Registry). The email shall include:

- a) a formal letter, electronically signed by the Academic Registrar, confirming the details of their award;
- b) link to the Grad Intel website which provides access to their Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) or (for graduates of Collaborative Partners) a copy of their intermediate transcript;
- c) an explanation of terminology, details of the academic appeals procedure and who to contact for advice, if required;
- d) details of graduation, if they are eligible to attend.

Graduates of Postgraduate Research Programmes, where the award is determined via a viva voce, shall normally be informed by email of their final award within 5 working days of the viva voce (sent by the RKE Centre). The email shall include:

- a) a formal letter, electronically signed by the Director of Postgraduate Students, confirming the result of the viva voce;
- b) details about corrections to the Thesis, if required, hard-binding instructions for the Thesis;
- c) details of the academic appeals procedure and who to contact for advice, if required.

Graduates from the University of Winchester or a Collaborative Partner, who require a hard copy of the award letter and/or accompanying documentation, should contact Registry or the RKE Centre, who shall supply a hard copy on request.

Details of the arrangements for Graduation Ceremonies shall be sent in accordance with the University's Terms and Condition or Collaborative Partner's Terms and Conditions/Agreement with the University, as appropriate.

## **2. Issue of Award Certificates**

Graduates of taught programmes, whose awards are confirmed at the Progression and Award Boards held between April and August, shall normally receive their Award Certificate at one of the University's Graduation Ceremonies or, if they are unable or ineligible to attend, within 10 working days of the Graduation Ceremonies.

All other graduates, including those for postgraduate research programmes, shall normally receive their Award Certificate within eight weeks of the confirmation of their award (or ten weeks if this period includes the Christmas vacation).

## **3. Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)**

While registered on an undergraduate or taught postgraduate programme at the University of Winchester, students receive a Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR). This is updated during their studies with details of their programme and academic results (module marks and confirmation of the final award and classification, where appropriate) and related achievements (prizes awarded and information about extra-curricular activity associated with and verified by the University, including volunteering).

Students registered with Collaborative Partners receive the European Diploma Supplement in place of the HEAR.

#### **4. Transcripts: Intermediate and Final**

An Academic Transcript is an official record of the study undertaken at the University of Winchester or one of its Collaborative Partners.

Students may request an intermediate transcript from their Faculty or Registry at any time during their studies.

Final transcripts, including details of the final award, form part of the HEAR but may also be provided separately.

Both intermediate and final transcripts include:

- a) title of programme and pathway, where appropriate;
- b) titles of modules and their codes, e.g. EL1001, by semester and year including any current enrolment;
- c) all module grades and marks;
- d) cumulative GPA score <sup>1</sup>
- e) the credit value in CATS for each successfully completed module, e.g. 20 CATS credits;
- f) the language of study, if not English;
- g) the location of study

In addition, the Final Transcript shall be:

- h) printed on University stationery with the University logo.

#### **5. Date of Award**

The date of award for taught programmes shall be the date on which the Progression and Award Board confirms the award.

For awards confirmed by Chair's action within six weeks of the Board, the date of award shall be recorded as the date of the Progression and Award Board.

For awards confirmed by Chair's action six weeks or more after the Board, the date of award shall be the date on which the Chair confirms the award to Registry.

The date of award for postgraduate research programmes shall be the date on which the Chair of RDQC confirms the award through the award letter.

#### **6. Joint Awards**

Procedures for awards made jointly with another institution shall respect the above principles, the University of Winchester Academic Regulations, where applicable, and shall be detailed in the formal agreement between the two institutions.

#### **7. Changes to or Replacement of an Award Certificate, HEAR or Final Transcript**

In order to preserve the integrity of the University's certificates, changes shall not normally be permitted to personal details that arise after graduation. Students shall be reminded that they must verify that personal details are correct during the last semester prior to their expected award to ensure no mistakes are made.

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<sup>1</sup> GPA scores will apply to undergraduate students starting or repeating level 4 modules from September 2017 onwards.

Graduates who require a replacement Award Certificate, HEAR or Final Transcript, because the original has an error or the original has been lost or damaged, shall contact Registry, who shall confirm details of the procedures and any cost involved.

A replacement certificate shall not normally be issued in a new name except in one of the following circumstances:

- a) Graduates who have changed their gender and name;
- b) Graduates, who have changed their name post-award where the retention of the original name is detrimental to the student's wellbeing.

In both cases above, the graduate shall submit a request in writing to the Academic Registrar together with the original certificate, legal proof of a change of name and, where appropriate change of gender.<sup>2</sup>

Where the Academic Registrar agrees to issue a replacement certificate in a new name, the original certificate shall be retained and destroyed. If the Academic Registrar declines a request submitted under b) above, the original certificate shall be returned to the graduate, together with an explanation for the Academic Registrar's decision.

If the graduate wishes to appeal against the Academic Registrar's decision not to issue a certificate, they shall address their concerns in writing to the Director of Academic Quality and Development, whose decision shall be final.

## **8. Revocation of Awards**

The University may, on the recommendation of the Academic Registrar, revoke an award and all privileges connected therewith if it shall be discovered at any time and proved to the satisfaction of the University that either:

- a) there was an administrative error or irregularity in making the award under regulations and procedures approved by Senate; or
- b) verified information has come to light, which was unavailable at the time the award was confirmed by the Progression and Award Board or Research Degrees Quality Committee, and which would have led to a different decision under regulations and procedures approved by Senate; or
- c) evidence of academic misconduct, sufficiently serious to merit revocation, has been investigated and confirmed in accordance with the *Academic Misconduct Policy*.

## **9. Procedure for investigating a case for revoking an award**

9.1 Where a report or evidence comes to light indicating that there may be a case for revoking an award, the matter will be passed to the Academic Registrar for further investigation.

- a) In cases relating to 8a) and/or 8b) above, the Academic Registrar shall normally delegate the investigation to the Director of Academic Quality and Development, who shall conclude by making a recommendation to the Academic Registrar as to whether the award should be revoked or not;
- b) In cases relating to academic misconduct, the Academic Registrar shall normally delegate the investigation to an Academic Conduct Officer (ACO) within the relevant Faculty, in accordance with the *Academic Misconduct Policy*, with the exception that the ACO or Panel shall conclude by making a recommendation to the Academic Registrar as to whether the award should be revoked or not.

9.2 The award holder shall have an opportunity to respond via the procedures set out in the *Academic Misconduct Policy* for 9.1 b) above. In cases where the issue relates to an administrative procedure or irregularity, as in 9.1 a) above, the Director of Academic Quality and Development shall inform the

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<sup>2</sup> Graduates are advised to use Registered Post or an equivalent secure form of delivery

award-holder, via an email to the awardee's Unimail account and by letter to the home address recorded on the student's record, and invite them to respond, if desired, within 15 working days. If a response is received from the award holder this shall be submitted with the evidence to the Academic Registrar.

- 9.3 Once the Academic Conduct Officer or Panel or the Director of Academic Quality and Development has reported back to the Academic Registrar, the Academic Registrar shall normally submit the evidence and the recommendation together with the award-holder's response, where received, to the next meeting of Senate under 'Restricted' business.
- 9.4 Senate shall consider, but not be bound by, the recommendation submitted under 9.1 above. Senate shall not delegate its power of revocation to any individual or committee. In the event that Senate concludes that the award should be revoked, the Academic Registrar shall notify the award holder of the decision of Senate, in writing, in a Completion of Procedures letter.
- 9.5 In the event that Senate concludes there is no case to answer, all records of the allegation and any subsequent investigation shall be destroyed and the Academic Registrar shall confirm to the award holder that this has been done.
- 9.6 Where an award is revoked, the Academic Registrar will write to the award holder to confirm that the award has been revoked, the reasons for the decision and will request that the Award Certificate is returned to the University within 10 working days. The letter will confirm that it is a Completion of Procedures letter and will confirm the actions open to the award holder as described below (paragraphs 9.8 - 9 and section 10).
- 9.7 Registry shall immediately amend the University's Student Records System and the HEAR (where appropriate).
- 9.8 There is no right of appeal within the University against the determination of Senate including any decision of Senate to revoke a qualification. However, an aggrieved person may pursue a complaint about process via the Director of Complaints, in accordance with the University's *Complaints Policy*.
- 9.9 This completes the University's internal process and the Director of Complaints' response shall include the Completion of Procedures letter that the post holder will need if they are to seek a review of the outcome by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (see 10 below).

## **10. Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)**

- 10.1 The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education is an independent body established by Government to review student complaints (including former students). Information about the OIA and the procedure for submitting complaints can be obtained from the Director of Complaints or from the OIA website: [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)
- 10.2 A student who is dissatisfied with the University's internal processes or its conduct has the right to submit an application to the OIA, an independent review body, that their dissatisfaction be reviewed independently of the University.
- 10.3 This right may only be exercised once the internal processes have been exhausted, as outlined in Section 9.8 - 9.9 above.