

Program Completion and Conferral Policy

1. Purpose

- (a) UNSW College offers academic programs leading to both:
 - i. higher education awards within the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF); and
 - ii. awards that are not AQF awards but are those of UNSW College, such as the award for completion of a Foundation Studies program.
- (b) This Policy details the principles that underpin UNSW College's approach to completion and conferral of both categories of award.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- (a) students enrolled in an academic award program;
- (b) graduates of an academic award program;
- (c) staff involved in the administrative processes pertaining to the completion and conferral of awards; and
- (d) members of decision-making bodies.

3. Policy statement

- (a) The Academic Board approves the structure of programs, the standard requirements for their completion, including maximum time for completion, and the titles of the awards resulting from completion of particular programs of study.
- (b) The Academic Board, may, in special circumstances, vary the standard requirements for completion, provided that the variation does not subvert the academic integrity of the program.
- (c) Clear and comprehensive information regarding the structure of programs and the requirements for their completion will be available on the College website and in other publications accessible to students and prospective students.
- (d) Information regarding the structure of programs and the requirements for completion will be current and consistent across all locations where it is published and linked to a specific source of truth.
- (e) The College will have effective administrative systems that track students' program progression, that enable effective intervention where students make program choices that adversely impact completion, and that enable the accurate



determination that a student has met the requirements for the completion of their program.

- (f) Students who have met the requirements for the completion of their program, who have complied with all College Policies and Procedures applicable to students, and who have paid all fees due to UNSW College, are entitled to have the award relevant to that program conferred upon them.
- (g) The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring quality controls are in place for the legitimate issuing of College qualifications.
- (h) The Board of Directors authorises the Chair of Academic Board, on its behalf, to approve the course completions and graduand lists confirming that a student has completed the requirements of the award, in accordance with this policy and its related procedures.
- (i) Conferral of an award entitles the graduate to a testamur, specifying the award conferred, the date of conferral, the name of the graduate, the conferring institution and the other information required to be included under the HESF or other laws.

4. Date of conferral

- (a) In approving the course completions and graduand lists, the relevant award is conferred on eligible students.
- (b) The date on which an award is conferred is the date on which the Chair, Academic Board approves the course completions and graduand lists and this is the date that will be specified on the testamur.
- (c) UNSW College may organise graduation ceremonies to celebrate the conferral of awards.

5. Testamurs

- (a) The testamur is a legal document formally issued by the College on behalf of the Board of Directors to confirm that a student has completed the requirements for the award. It is issued in original form once only for each specific award to a student.
- (b) The testamur specifies information including the award conferred, the date of conferral, the name of the graduate, the conferring institution and may also include specification of specialisations where that is approved by the Academic Board with due consideration of the accurate representation of the program content, and consistency with the requirements of relevant professional bodies and practice in the higher education sector.
- (c) Testamurs will include security features, such as watermarked paper, a serial number corresponding to student number held in a secure and appropriately backed up system and digital certification.



- (d) Testamurs are issued with additional certification documents, such as academic transcripts, which together provide sufficient information for it to be authenticated and to minimise its fraudulent use.
- (e) UNSW College will make arrangements for the secure collection of testamurs by, or the secure despatch of testamurs to, students who are entitled to them.

6. Variation to requirements for award completion

- (a) The Academic Board may, in exceptional circumstances, approve variations to the standard requirements for completion of an award for a particular student on the recommendation of the Executive Director, Academic provided that the variation does not:
 - i. subvert the academic integrity of the program;
 - ii. disrupt the achievement of the program's graduate outcomes;
 - iii. reduce the volume or level of study;
 - iv. compromise any academic or professional accreditations associated with the program.
- (b) Exceptional circumstances include but are not limited to:
 - i. where a program has undergone approved changes and the student requires a transition arrangement to move between the earlier program structure and the subsequent program structure;
 - ii. where courses required to complete the requirements for an award are no longer offered or are not offered in a study period such that a student can achieve timely completion of their program;
 - iii. where a student has been materially disadvantaged by College decisions regarding course offerings or program structures.

7. Conferral of posthumous and aegrotat awards

- (a) On the recommendation of the Executive Director, Academic, the Academic Board may, in special circumstances, approve the conferral of a posthumous or aegrotat award.
- (b) Consideration of the conferral of a posthumous or aegrotat award may be requested by family members or members of the College community.
- (c) A posthumous or aegrotat award may only be made where:
 - i. a student has died or is suffering an incapacitating condition that prevents further study;
 - ii. was enrolled in the program at the time of death or onset of the incapacitating condition;
 - iii. the student has no more than one full-time year of study remaining to complete the requirements for completing their program; and



- iv. the Executive Director, Academic judges that the student was likely to have completed those requirements.

8. Rescission of awards

- (a) On the recommendation of the Academic Board and in exceptional circumstances, the Board may rescind an award that has been conferred. Exceptional circumstances include but are not limited to:
 - i. an administrative error that has resulted in the conferral of an award for which the student was not eligible; or
 - ii. the student is in breach of a Policy of the College where rescission of an award is a valid penalty for such a breach.

9. Roles, responsibilities and delegations

Role	Responsibility
UNSW College Board of Directors	Ensures that qualifications are awarded legitimately.
Academic Board	Approves Policies, approves the structure of awards and the conditions for completion, approves conferral of awards.
Director of Student Services	Overall management of processes relating to transcript integrity and security, and recommendations related to rescission or correction of transcripts.
Academic Services Team	Monitors program progression, advises students regarding program choices that may impede completion, advises Academic Board of students who are eligible for conferral of awards, manages the issuing of testamurs and the register of graduates.

10. Definitions

Definitions and Acronyms	
Academic transcript	The official record of courses attempted and completed in a program of study and the grades achieved in those courses.
Aegrotat award	An award conferred on a student who, because of illness or incapacitating conditions, is unable to complete the standard requirements for that award.
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	The national Policy for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training, incorporating the qualifications from each



	education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework.
Award	A degree, diploma or certificate conferred following completion of an award program, providing official recognition of successful completion of that program.
Award program	A program of study, the successful completion of which, may result in the conferral of a formal award aligned with the Australian Qualifications Framework, or another formal award from an institution.
Census date	The date in a study period at which program enrolments are determined for reporting to the Commonwealth.
Conferral	The formal and authorised granting of an award by the governing body of an educational institution to a person whose academic achievements entitle them to that award.
Credit	The value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content, volume of learning, and learning outcomes between different types of learning or qualifications within and between institutions.
Formal Articulation Pathway	An arrangement formally established in writing between UNSW College and another institution such that the latter provides an agreed quantum of credit to a graduate of a UNSW College program into one of its programs.
Graduate	The recipient of an award that has been conferred.
Testamur	The legal document attesting to the conferral of an award.

Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents

Legislation and government policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Australian Qualifications Framework</u> • <u>Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth)</u> • <u>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth) or HESF</u> • <u>Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth)</u> • <u>National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (Cth)</u>
Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Program Completion and Conferral Procedure</u>



Policy Governance

Program Completion and Conferral Policy	
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Approver	Academic Board
Responsible Officer	Executive Director, Students
Contact Officer	Head of Student and Program Administration
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