

Procedure: Honorary degrees

Purpose

To outline the procedures which underpin the awarding of honorary degrees at the Australian National University (ANU).

Procedure

Proposals

1. The Vice-Chancellor invites proposals for the award of honorary degrees prior to each meeting of the [Honorary Committee](#).
2. Proposals are only made and submitted by the Vice-Chancellor, members of the Council, members of the University Executive or the Dean of an ANU College.
3. Proposals are made using the approved Honorific Recognition Proposal form, signed by the proposer and submitted by email to the Honorary Committee Secretary at secretary.hc@anu.edu.au.
4. Only proposals submitted to the Secretary of the Committee, by the published due date prior to a meeting of the Honorary Committee, are presented for consideration. All other proposals are held over for consideration at a subsequent meeting.
5. Proposals for an honorary degree, completed using the Honorific Recognition Proposal form, include:
 - a. a detailed description of the proposed person's exceptional achievements/service;
 - b. other supporting information, such as biographical information and evidence that the proposed person's achievements have been recognised among peers;
 - c. what links, if any, the proposed person has with the University;
 - d. suggestions regarding the possible future role and positive involvement of the proposed recipient with the University;
 - e. suggestions of how the award of the honorary degree will benefit the University (for example, by enhancing the University's reputation, image, profile, or resources);
 - f. supporting names and contact details of persons who could be consulted in relation to the proposal (i.e. referees); and

- g. a recommendation of which honorary degree should be awarded.
6. For proposals where there is no current/recent affiliation or connection with the University, the proposal clearly articulates what future role the recipient could play at the University and/or the benefits for the University in conferring the honorary degree.

Quality of Proposals and Confidentiality

7. All proposals are checked by the Committee Secretary to ensure that they meet the expected thresholds for the quality and presentation of the case and address all the key requirements of a submission.
8. The Committee Secretary will ensure that all proposals undergo a due diligence review process.
9. Proposals meeting these thresholds are presented to the Honorary Committee for its consideration.
10. Proposals for the award of an honorary degree are considered highly confidential until Council resolves to admit the person concerned to the degree.

Consideration, recommendation and approval

11. The Honorary Committee considers all proposals and endorses recommendations for Council approval.
12. If the Honorary Committee does not endorse a proposal, the Secretary of the Committee informs the proposer in writing.
13. The Secretary of the Committee formally advises accepted nominees to confirm their agreement to accept the proposed honorary degree and to which Council meeting the matter will be formally approved. The Secretary of the Committee notifies the relevant proposer of the successful nominee, in confidence.
14. Upon acceptance of the award by the nominee, the Secretary of the Committee submits the Committee's endorsement of the proposal to the Council for approval.
15. Upon Council approval, the Secretary of Council provides formal notification in writing to the proposer and the manager of [Exams, Graduations and Prizes](#).

Conferral ceremony

16. The Manager of Exams, Graduations and Prizes requests the proposer to prepare the citation for the award.
17. The [Division of Student Administration and Academic Services](#) is responsible for arranging the conferral of all honorary degrees.

18. The conferral of an honorary degree takes place at the University at a time convenient to both the University and the recipient. Only in exceptional circumstances may the conferral occur at a place other than the University.

Revocation of award and title

19. The University reserves the right to review and revoke the awarding of an honorary degree, even after conferral, where an individual:

- a. has engaged in behaviour that would be regarded as inconsistent with the [ANU Code of Conduct](#); or
- b. undertakes activities that are, or are likely to be, in direct conflict with or significantly detrimental to the interests of the University. This does not include where the individual is engaged in the pursuit of research or education, on a not-for-profit basis, at another university, research institute or institution of higher learning;
- c. uses the title of 'Doctor' to aid in the gaining of a private business opportunity or other economic benefit.

Document information

Title	Honorary degrees
Document Type	Procedure
Document Number	ANUP_011614
Version	
Purpose	To outline the procedures which underpin the awarding of honorary degrees at ANU.
Audience	Staff
Category	Governance
Topic	Community & Development
Subtopic	
Effective Date	30 Apr 2024
Review Date	29 Apr 2029
Responsible Officer	Director, Corporate Governance and Risk Office (director.governance@anu.edu.au)
Approved By	ANU Council (director.governance@anu.edu.au)
Contact Area	Corporate Governance and Risk Office (director.governance@anu.edu.au)
Authority	Australian National University Act 1991 57711094 1514042990
Printed On	20 Apr 2025

Please ensure you have the latest version of this document from the Policy Library website before referencing this.