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Policy Document Approver	Council
Responsible Body/Person	Council
Next Review date	June 2028
Superseded documents	Nil
Related documents	Academic Governance Policy Conferral Policy Posthumous and Major Disability Awards Policy Risk Management Policy Risk Management Procedure
Related HE Standards	1.5.11
Related National Code Standards	
Glossary	Definitions for any words in Bold in this document can be found in the Policy Glossary . The first instance of each defined term has been outlined in bold.

1. PURPOSE

To outline the rules and processes for awarding the honorary degree of the Australian University of Theology, Doctor of Theology (honoris causa).

2. DEFINITIONS

Definitions for any words in **Bold** in this document can be found in the [Policy Glossary](#). The first instance of each defined term has been outlined in bold.

For the purpose of this policy:

In Australia is understood in this policy as criteria that emphasises the Australian focus or benefit of the person's work rather than nationality or residence of the person.

Nomination is representation to the **Council** in the format prescribed in the policy

Nominator is someone eligible according to the policy to make **nomination** as prescribed in the policy.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to the **Council** and eligible **nominators**.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Australian University of Theology honorary degrees recognise significant contributions of people whom it is appropriate to honour in accordance with the policy.



5. PRINCIPLES

5.1 Eligibility

- 5.1.1 The **Council** may confer the degree of Doctor of Theology (honoris causa) on a person if the **Council** is satisfied that person meets one or more of the following criteria:
- (i) The person has made a sustained and distinguished contribution to theological scholarship **in Australia**;
 - (ii) The person has made a sustained and distinguished contribution to theological education **in Australia**;
 - (iii) The person has made a significant contribution to the leadership of the Christian church **in Australia**;
 - (iv) The person has made a significant and academic service to the Australian University of Theology
- 5.1.2 These criteria in 5.1.1 emphasise the Australian focus or benefit of the person's work rather than nationality or residence of the person.
- 5.1.3 The person's theology must be consistent with the theology of the Australian University of Theology.
- 5.1.4 The person must have a demonstrated godliness of character such that this award would not obviously bring disrepute or scandal to the **AUT**.
- 5.1.5 Awards are not limited to persons who have retired. However, awards would not normally be made to current:
- (i) **AUT** staff
 - (ii) **Council** members
 - (iii) Staff of **Affiliated Colleges**
 - (iv) Board members of Affiliated Colleges
- 5.1.6 Circumstances envisaged where awards may be made to those usually excluded in 5.1.5 include awarding to someone who no longer undertook a major role with the AUT or Affiliated Colleges but held a part time role in a diminished or honorary capacity.
- 5.1.7 Nominees for honorary degrees must be alive at the time that the nomination is made but a posthumous award may be made if the person died after the nomination was submitted.

5.2 Frequency of honorary awards

- 5.2.1 It is envisaged that normally no more than 3 persons in one year would



receive this degree. Honorary degrees do not need to be made every year, and a number less than 3 may be awarded.

5.3 Nomination process

5.3.1 **Nominations** of people to be considered for an honorary doctorate can be made to the Chair of the **Council** by

- (i) Any **member** of the AUT
- (ii) Any **Director** of the AUT
- (iii) The **Vice-Chancellor**
- (iv) Any Board chair or Principal of an Affiliated College

5.3.2 Those not eligible to nominate may make representation to eligible **nominators** regarding suitable candidates. **Nomination** is at the discretion of eligible **nominators**.

5.3.3 **Nominations** should include:

- (i) A summary statement of no more than two pages giving reasons for the **nomination** plus how the person fits into the criteria for the award;
- (ii) A CV of the person being nominated;
- (iii) The names of two eminent referees who may be approached.

5.4 Nomination evaluation

5.4.1 **Nominations** would be considered by the **Council** Chair, **Council** Deputy Chair, Chair of the Academic Board and VC (unless one of those is being nominated).

5.4.2 On agreement by a majority of this group, **nominations** would be brought to the **Council** for approval.

5.4.3 If a **nomination** is unsuccessful, the Chair of the **Council** will inform the **nominator** that the **nomination** was unsuccessful.

5.5 Conferral

5.5.1 A citation would need to be written to accompany the award and to be used in publicity.

5.5.2 The award would be conferred by the Council. The citation would be read and testamur issued at an Affiliated College presentation ceremony



or other event by mutual agreement with the awardee or other relevant parties in the event of a posthumous award.

- 5.5.3 The testamur issued with the award of an honorary qualification unambiguously identifies the qualification as an honorary qualification. The qualification on the testamur is to read "Doctor of Theology (honoris causa)". Furthermore, the Australian Qualifications Framework logo, as used on the testamurs of AQF awards of the University, will not be used on the testamur of an honorary qualification.

6. RELATED LEGISLATION

Higher Education Standards Framework, 1.5.11.

TEQSA provides no specific guidance in this matter.

7. REFERENCES

In preparing this document, the practices at Australian Universities were reviewed, including Curtin University, Federation University, James Cook University, Macquarie University, University of Divinity and University of NSW.

8. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Changes made
1	Board of Directors	13/09/2021	13/09/2021	New policy
2	Board of Directors	03/06/2024	03/06/2024	Policy review; Section 5.5 (Conferral) to include reference to the practices in conformance with HESF 1.5.11; minor edits.
3	Vice-Chancellor	May 2025	May 2025	Update to document template and implementation of University language

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