

Regulations and Procedures for the Award of Aegrotat Qualifications (including Posthumous Awards)

Issued by the Standards and Enhancement Office

Approved by Senate June 2023

Technical updates of this document are undertaken on an annual basis to reflect changes to the University's organisational and management structures and to incorporate earlier, approved amendments to related policies, procedures and regulations.

This document relates to the current year. If you become aware of any previous versions that are available on line please notify SEO@bolton.ac.uk so that action can be taken to remove the document(s).

Scope

These regulations and procedures apply to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught qualifications awarded by the University of Bolton. Postgraduate research degrees are subject to their own regulations and procedures; (see the *Research Degree Regulations*).

Definitions

The following definitions are used throughout the regulation.

Assessment Board: A committee to agree final student marks, determine progression and award of an Intermediate Award or End Qualification as outlined in the *University Regulations and Procedures for the Organisation and Conduct of Assessment Boards*.

End Qualification: The qualification aim for which the student is registered.

Intermediate Award: The highest level of award which a student achieves who has not successfully completed the End Qualification.

Programme of Study: The modules pursued by a student in respect of their programme.

PSRB: A Professional, Statutory or Regulatory body. This includes, but is not limited to, accrediting bodies and statutory bodies that deal with legal requirements and immigration.

Senate: Any reference to Senate in these regulations shall be deemed to include a reference to any committee of Senate to which Senate has delegated the relevant authority.

Any reference in these regulations to the Academic Registrar, Head of School, or, or other named officer of the University shall be deemed to include a reference to any current or subsequent holder of a comparable post and to any person designated by that officer for the purpose.

Any reference in these regulations to a School shall be deemed to include a reference to the Off-Campus Division and to any current or subsequent comparable organisational structures of the University.

1. Aegrotat (including posthumous) qualifications

- 1.1 An Aegrotat qualification is a qualification that may be conferred upon a candidate on the presumption that the candidate, who is unable to continue their studies due to a diagnosis of terminal or debilitating illness, would have satisfied the standard required for the End Qualification, or Intermediate Award, had they been able to continue. An aegrotat qualification may also be awarded posthumously in the event of the death of a candidate prior to completion of their programme.
- 1.2 The award of an Aegrotat qualification may be made in accordance with the regulations outlined in sections 2 and 3 below.
- 1.3 The Aegrotat qualification awarded will normally correspond to the level of study which is interrupted, except in the case of a posthumous award where the qualification will normally be the End Qualification. An aegrotat award is contingent on there being sufficient evidence, in the view of the Assessment Board, that had study not been interrupted the candidate would have completed the level in question. In the absence of such evidence, the Aegrotat qualification will be the relevant Intermediate Award for the body of study already completed.
- 1.4 An Aegrotat (including a posthumous) degree, diploma or certificate may be graded (pass, merit, distinction), or subject to honours classification, where: (a) the original qualification is subject to grading or classification according to the University's Assessment Regulations for Undergraduate or Taught Postgraduate Programmes, or any programme-specific regulations; and (b) there is strong evidence that the candidate would have successfully completed the programme to the given standard. Normally this would mean that a candidate had **completed at least half of the credits at the highest level of the award being made**, and that the **majority of the total credits earned were at or above the grade or classification being awarded**. Whilst Assessment Boards may be flexible in the interpretation of this guidance, there should be good reasons, recorded in the Board minutes, for any significant variations.
- 1.5 An Aegrotat qualification will not normally entitle the holder to registration with a PSRB, or to be exempt from the requirements of any professional qualification which might otherwise be associated with the programme of study or original qualification aim concerned.
- 1.6 An Aegrotat qualification shall normally be a named qualification, as per the original intermediate award or end qualification registered for, except in those cases where PSRB requirements dictate that a named qualification is not appropriate. The full title of an Aegrotat qualification shall be considered as part of the procedures for considering the qualification and shall be made known to the candidate (or the candidate's family member or other representative) prior to his/her acceptance of the qualification.

2. Regulations for awarding an Aegrotat qualification

- 2.1 The request for the award of an Aegrotat qualification may be made by the candidate or, where a candidate is unable or unwilling to prepare or submit a request, by the candidate's family member or other representative, including a member of University staff. All requests shall be submitted to the relevant Programme Leader, who shall preface the request using the form in Appendix 1 to these regulations, for consideration by the Assessment Board.

- 2.2 Except in the case of a posthumous award, or where the request is made by the candidate themselves, the individual making the request shall be required to provide written evidence acceptable to the Assessment Board that the candidate is willing to accept an Aegrotat qualification in principle.
- 2.3 Except in the case of a posthumous award, where a candidate (or their family member or other representative) is unwilling to accept an Aegrotat qualification, the candidate may be permitted to continue the programme in question or be transferred to a new programme, insofar as this is possible. If they decide to continue, the candidate will be subject to the normal University regulations for transfer and progression/assessment.
- 2.4 The Assessment Board shall consider relevant evidence which shall include satisfactory medical certification in the case of illness, or appropriate documentation in other cases, and establish the facts of the candidate's case.
- 2.5 The Assessment Board must be satisfied that:
- the candidate is unlikely to be able to return to complete his/her study at a later date, and;
 - the options of applying adjustments as outlined by the University disability service, mitigating circumstances, appeals, temporary suspension and other university processes and procedures, would not be sufficient to allow the student to complete their programme of study;
 - the candidate's prior performance demonstrates that he/she would have passed but for the illness/event which occurred.

3. Procedures and Guidelines for awarding the qualification

- 3.1 The Assessment Board shall consider proposals for the award of an Aegrotat degree, diploma or certificate.
- 3.2 Prior to the Assessment Board, the Programme Leader from the appropriate School shall gather as much information as possible on the causes which prevented the candidate from attempting the whole or part of the assessment(s), together with evidence of the prospects of the candidate completing the assessment(s) in a subsequent year within the time-limit prescribed by relevant University regulations.
- 3.3 Where a posthumous award is under consideration, the evidence should include acceptable confirmation of a candidate's death. However, as with all aegrotat qualifications, absolute discretion must be used to determine the nature of such evidence; any approach that is deemed essential to make to the candidate's family or other representative should be handled with the utmost sensitivity and confidentiality.
- 3.4 When supporting evidence is received from a medical practitioner outside the University, the Programme Leader, Head of School or Chair of the Assessment Board may require that another suitably qualified practitioner (medical and/or occupational health, as appropriate), be asked to review the evidence, if necessary in consultation with the practitioner concerned, before any recommendation is made on behalf of a candidate.
- 3.5 Whilst always respecting the dignity of the candidate by treating sensitive, personal information as confidentially as possible and only sharing what is permitted by the candidate, their family member, or other representative and considered necessary to arrive at a decision, the Assessment Board shall consider the proposal in the light

of the:

- academic standing of the candidate;
- causes which prevented the candidate from attempting the whole or part of the assessment(s);
- medical or other appropriate evidence;
- recommendation from a qualified practitioner (medical and/or occupational health) (as appropriate);
- evidence on the prospects of the candidate completing the assessment(s) in a subsequent year within the time-limit;
- recommendation on the title of the Aegrotat qualification, if it is not considered appropriate for the qualification to be named in accordance with the original intermediate award or end qualification registered for;
- (except in the case of a posthumous award) written evidence from the candidate or, where the candidate is otherwise unable to provide it, from their family member or other representative, that the candidate is willing to accept an Aegrotat qualification in principle.

3.6 The Assessment Board shall operate in accordance with the *University Regulations and Procedures for the Organisation and Conduct of Assessment Boards*. The Assessment Board shall approve or not approve the proposed award and may approve an alternative award. The decision shall be conveyed to the candidate (or their family member or other representative) by the Programme Leader, Head of School, or Chair of Assessment Board (as appropriate).

3.7 Once the award has been made and entered into the student record, the Office responsible for arranging the Awards Ceremonies and Student Data Management, in consultation with the relevant Programme Leader or Head of School (as they themselves determine) will liaise with the candidate or, where the candidate is deceased, with their designated family member or other representative, regarding arrangements for the award to be conferred and the parchment to be received.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

4.1 It shall be the responsibility of the Education Committee to monitor, evaluate, and review these Regulations and Procedures and make recommendations for changes, where appropriate, to be considered by Senate.

Proposal to an Assessment Board for the Award of an Aegrotat Qualification *(posthumously, if appropriate)*

| | | | |
|--|--|-------------|--|
| Student Number | | | |
| Original Intended Award Aim and Programme Title | | | |
| Number of credits successfully achieved at each FHEQ Level | | | |
| Rationale for awarding the qualification | | | |
| <i>(please include explanatory comments and append relevant evidence for the Assessment Board's consideration, as required by paragraph 3 of the regulations and procedures)</i> | | | |
| | | | |
| Qualification to be Awarded, with grading/classification if appropriate <i>Degree/other Award, Programme Title, grading/classification (if appropriate)</i> | | | |
| Is the candidate deceased? | | | |
| Assessment Board Date | | | |
| Candidate's representative <i>(Family member or other individual)</i> | | | |
| Name(s) | | | |
| Address/other contact details | | | |
| Authorisation of request | | | |
| Programme Leader Approval (name) | | Date | |
| Head of School Approval (name) | | Date | |

| REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR THE AWARD OF AEGROTAT QUALIFICATIONS (INCLUDING POSTHUMOUS AWARDS) | |
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| Name of Developer/Reviewer | Paul Birkett |
| Policy Owner (Group/Centre/Unit) | SEO |
| Person responsible for implementation (postholder) | Programme Leaders/Heads Of Schools/Chairs of Awards Boards |
| Approving committee/board | Senate |
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| Document history (e.g. rationale for and dates of previous amendments) | Original version 16 March 2015 June 2023: Amendments to accommodate the approval of separate aegrotat regulations for PGR degrees and to incorporate updating, clarifications and other improvements and some changes to regulations and procedures. |