

# Awards and Courses Policy and Procedure

## 1. Purpose

This policy sets out the conditions by which the Institute may:

- confer or revoke an award;
- bestow student awards on students who excel academically at the Bachelor and Master levels; and
- establish procedures as required to support the policy relating to testamur integrity, revocation of awards, academic dress and award classification.

## 2. Scope

This policy and procedure applies across all of the Institute's higher education courses.

## 3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Academic Board	the Academic Board of the Institute.
Academic Registrar	Academic Registrar means the person holding the position of Group General Manager within the Institute.
Award	the issuing of a testamur to graduates who have successfully completed a defined course of study.
Board	the Board of Directors of the Institute.
Credit Points	units in higher education courses all have credit points which reflect the total student workload required in order to satisfactorily complete the unit. Each full-time trimester of the course totals 60 credit points. Credit points are also the basis for calculating Equivalent Full Time Study Load or EFTSL (120 credit points equals 1.0 EFTSL).
Course	a defined structure of study that if completed results in the awarding of a degree or diploma.
Cumulative Credit Points	total credit points of units studied in a course
Distinction Average	an average of 70 to 79 percent (rounded nearest) by numerical calculation, weighted by credit points, of the mean of the percent mark received by a student in units in the course <sup>1</sup> .

<sup>1</sup> 1 The formula for calculating the Distinction Average and the High Distinction Average is the sum of the percent marks for units multiplied by the credit points for each unit for all units taken for the course divided by the total credit points for the course. Expressed as a formula it is  $\sum (PM_i \times UCP_i) / TCP$  where  $PM_i$  is the percent mark in the  $i$ th unit,  $UCP_i$  is the unit credit points in the  $i$ th unit and  $TCP$  is total credit points. For example, for a student enrolled in a bachelor's degree who has completed 20 units [the first trimester results are not part of the calculation, see section 5.3], each of which is 15 credit points, gives a total of 300 credit points and where the student receives percent marks of 70, 70, 70, 70, 72, 72, 72, 72, 72, 73, 73, 73, 73, 73, 73, 73, 74, 74, the calculation is:  $(70 \times 15 \times 6) + (72 \times 15 \times 6) + (73 \times 15 \times 6) + (74 \times 15 \times 2) / 300 = 21,570 / 300 = 71.90$  percent. This formula is also applied to calculate the High Distinction Average.

### Warning: uncontrolled when printed.

Original Issue:

Revised by the Policy Committee

(Revision) Approved by the Academic Board

Endorsed by Board of Directors (BOD):

Current version:

Review Date:

04 June 2015

29 February 2024, 18 April 2024

18 August 2022

02 August 2024

02 August 2024

01 August 2029

Term	Definition
Fraud	Includes, but is not limited to, falsifying or fabricating work, plagiarism, breaching research ethics, impersonation and misrepresentation.
Grade Point Average (GPA)	Grade Point Average is a numerical calculation, weighted by credit points, of the mean of the grades received by a student over a defined study period (e.g. a trimester/year) or over an entire course <sup>2</sup> . The numerical values are described in clause 4.5.1.
High Distinction Average	an average of 80-100 percent (rounded nearest) numerical calculation, weighted by credit points, of the mean of the percent mark received by a student in units in the course.
Institute Secretary	the person holding the position of Secretary of the Board of Directors within the Institute.
Mean	value calculated by dividing the sum of a set of terms by the number of terms (average).
Schedule	is the Schedule to this policy and procedure.

## 4. Policy statement

### 4.1. Courses

4.1.1. The Institute may offer any academic courses of study of higher education approved by the Academic Board and accredited by TEQSA.

4.1.2. The following types of higher education courses are offered by the Institute:

- Masters (Research) degree
- Masters by coursework;
- Graduate Diploma;
- Bachelor degree

The listing of accredited higher education courses offered by the Institute will appear on the Institute website.

### 4.2. Awards

4.2.1. The Board may confer any currently approved academic award. The Board may approve that an award be conferred on, or granted to, a candidate.

4.2.2. Where the Board confers an award, the Institute will issue a testamur for the award.

4.2.3. The Institute will establish the requirements for admission to candidature as described in the Admission Policy, and for the completion of awards.

4.2.4. To be eligible for conferral of an award (except in instances of posthumous awards referred to in sub-section 4.6), a candidate must:

- fulfill the course requirements for completion of the award approved by

<sup>2</sup> The formula for calculating the GPA is the sum of the grade point for a unit multiplied by the credit points for that unit for all units taken per trimester/year/course divided by the total credit points for the defined period. Expressed as a formula it is  $\sum (GP_i \times UCP_i) / TCP$  where  $GP_i$  is the grade points achieved in the  $i$ th unit,  $UCP_i$  is the unit credit points for the  $i$ th unit and  $TCP$  is the total credit points for the period under consideration. For example, the GPA for a trimester where a student enrolls in 4 units, each of which is 15 credit points giving a total of 60 credit points and where the student receives grades of 4, 5, 6 and 7 for the 4 units is:  $(4 \times 15) + (5 \times 15) + (6 \times 15) + (7 \times 15) / 60 = 330 / 60 =$  a GPA of 5.5

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Academic Board,

- comply with course and Institute rules and policies; and
- complete the course within the maximum period of study for each course.

4.2.5. The Board may establish:

- the form and styles of all awards;
- the academic dress to be worn by members of the Institute, and the occasions on which it is to be worn;
- the form to be used in the presentation of candidates for awards; and the procedure and circumstances in which the Institute may issue a testamur for any award conferred.

4.2.6. The Board may confer any award posthumously on any candidate who has satisfied the provisions of the relevant policies or procedures.

4.2.7. The form and style of the Institute's academic dress is contained in the Schedule.

### 4.3. Revocation of awards

4.3.1. Following a recommendation from the Academic Board, the Board will revoke an award if it is satisfied:

- that the relevant award has been obtained by a person as a result of Fraud; or
- the award has been conferred as a result of an administrative error.

4.3.2. This policy applies to awards conferred or granted before and after the date of commencement of this policy.

### 4.4. Awards with distinction

The award classification of distinction or high distinction is determined when all the requirements of the degree award as approved by Academic Board have been met and the Academic Board considers the candidates results to be at a meritorious level. In such cases, the testamur states that the degree is awarded with distinction or high distinction. Awards with distinction are not made for Masters (Research) degrees.

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## 4.5. Awards for Academic Excellence

- 4.5.1. Awards for academic excellence are determined by a comparison of the Grade Point Average of graduating students. The GPA is calculated by assigning the following numerical values to the final grade for each unit completed by a student:

Final Grade	Numeric Value
HD (80-100%)	7
D (70-79%)	6
C (60-69%)	5
P (50-59%)	4
MN (40-49%) or PC	3
N (0-39%)	1.5

The numeric value of the grade achieved for each unit is then multiplied by the number of credit points associated with that unit to give a grade point value. Finally, the total number of unit grade points is summed, and then divided by the cumulative number of credit points to give the Grade Point Average.

- 4.5.2. The Institute will recognise students, who excel academically in their studies. Recognition will take the form of the presentation of a certificate, usually presented at graduation, stating that the student has achieved a grade point average of 6.5 or greater over their course of study. Such recognition does not apply to Masters (Research) degrees.
- 4.5.3. The criteria for an award for academic excellence is:
- Students must have completed all the academic requirements to be eligible to graduate from a particular course. Only the grades from units undertaken at the Institute will be taken into account.
  - On completion of their course, students must have a grade point average of at least 6.5 or greater.
  - Students must maintain passing grades in all units in the course with the exception that the grades gained in the first trimester of an undergraduate course will not form part of the calculation of the grade point average. Also non-graded units [pass/fail units] will not form part of the calculation.
  - A student must have been enrolled in and have completed at least 50 percent of the requirements for the course at the Institute.
  - The awards are open to students studying either full-time or part-time.
- 4.5.4. The award for the Institute's most outstanding student in any given year is presented to the student graduating with the highest GPA over their course. In the event of a tie, each student with the highest GPA will receive an award for the most outstanding student. This award is available for all courses other than Masters (Research) degrees.

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## 4.6. Posthumous Awards

- 4.6.1 The Institute may posthumously grant an award in the event of the death of an enrolled student who has:
- completed all of the required work that would entitle the granting of an award; or
  - successfully completed more than a given percentage of the credit points of an award in which s/he was enrolled. For a bachelor degree, it is 83%, and for a masters degree, it is 75%. For a Masters (Research) degree, the student must have successfully completed both research thesis units. Generally a posthumous award will be granted for a Graduate Diploma only if the course was completed.

The Chair of the Academic Board will consider whether MIT should make a posthumous award when in receipt of a recommendation and will make a recommendation to the Board of Directors.

- 4.6.2 Where the above criteria has not been met, and exceptional circumstances exist, the Chair of the Academic Board may consider a posthumous award on a case by case basis, and make a recommendation to the Board of Directors.
- 4.6.3 The Chair of the Academic Board will notify the Academic Board of all recommendations to grant a posthumous award at its next meeting.
- 4.6.4 The Head of the relevant School will normally make application to the Chair of Academic Board for the granting of a posthumous award following consultation with the immediate family of the deceased. An application may also be made by the immediate family to the Institute, which would then be forwarded to the Head of the relevant School.
- 4.6.5 The decision to award a posthumous award must take into account the wishes of the immediate family of the deceased. The family of the posthumous award recipient may elect to receive the award in absentia, at a graduation ceremony or at a private ceremony.
- 4.6.6 In instances where a posthumous award is not appropriate or recommended, the Chair of the Academic Board may recommend to the Board of Directors that a 'Certificate of Achievement' be forwarded to the student's next of kin.

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## 5. Procedure

### 5.1. Approval to confer award

- 5.1.1. Students eligible to graduate may apply through the Institute web-site to graduate. The Chair of the Academic Board will authorise each conferral list of graduands by signing the list, which will then be forwarded to the Board of Directors for approval.
- 5.1.2. The Office of Student Services and Engagement (OSSE) is responsible for the issuing of accurate testamurs and for the security of testamurs. The process for printing and sealing of Institute testamurs is:
- 5.1.3. testamurs that have appeared on a conferral list are generated by staff from OSSE for printing via the Student Management System;
- 5.1.4. testamur paper must be securely stored in a locked cupboard at all times, and an up to date inventory must kept by staff within the Graduation Office;
- 5.1.5. testamur paper must be protected against fraud by marking each with a secure and confidential serial number;
- 5.1.6. testamurs will be printed with the following information:
- 5.1.7. the issuing organisation – Melbourne Institute of Technology Pty Ltd.
- 5.1.8. the full name of the graduate who is entitled to receive the AQF qualification
- 5.1.9. the awarded AQF qualification by its full title, certified with either the logo of the AQF or the words "This qualification is recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework".
- 5.1.10. the date of issue/award/conferral.
- 5.1.11. the name, office and signature of the person(s) in the Institute authorised to issue the documentation, and
- 5.1.12. The Institute Seal and/or corporate identifier will be attached to each testamur (to authenticate the document and reduce fraud).
- 5.1.13. In addition to 4.2.4, no candidate (with the exception of posthumous award recipients) shall have any award conferred unless the candidate has:
  - paid the prescribed fees, and
  - paid any charge, fee or fine whatsoever which the candidate may owe to the Institute.
- 5.1.14. The Academic Registrar keeps a register of which students have received an award of the Institute including the title of the award and the date it was conferred.
- 5.1.15. The student's name that appears on a testamur is the name recorded in the student's enrolment papers, unless the student can provide satisfactory evidence of a change of name to the Academic Registrar.

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## 5.2. Process for revocation of an award

- 5.2.1. The Institute will instruct the Institute Secretary to investigate the facts relating to the possible revocation of the award.
- 5.2.2. The Institute Secretary will provide a written report of his/her investigation to the Academic Board.
- 5.2.3. The Academic Board will consider the findings of the report and make a recommendation to the Board to revoke an award where the Academic Board is satisfied that a prima facie case for revocation exists.
- 5.2.4. Where an award is revoked by the Board, the Academic Registrar notifies the person to whom the award was issued, in writing, of the decision and that the person is required to return the testamur and all associated documents issued in respect to that award.

## 5.3. Degrees with distinction

- 5.3.1. Degrees with distinction shall be awarded to graduands who have completed a three-year undergraduate degree [excluding the first trimester's results] or a Masters by coursework degree who achieve a distinction average during the course. To be eligible for the award, the student must have completed at least fifty percent of their degree at the Institute.
- 5.3.2. Degrees with high distinction shall be awarded to graduands who have completed a three-year undergraduate degree [excluding the first trimester's results] or a Masters by coursework degree who achieve a high distinction average during the course. To be eligible for the award, the student must have completed at least fifty percent of their degree at the Institute.

## 5.4. Process for determining which students will be recognised for academic excellence

- 5.4.1. At the end of each trimester the Academic Registrar will provide the Chair of the Academic Board with the names and academic record of students who have fulfilled the academic requirements for graduation and have a grade point average of 6.5 or greater. This does not apply to students who completed a masters by research degree, as the thesis component, for those graduating, is graded only as a pass.
- 5.4.2. The academic record of students who have fulfilled the criteria will be considered by the Chair of Academic Board who will formally recommend those students to the Chair of Board, for delegated approval on behalf of the Board.
- 5.4.3. Once the Chair of the Board has approved the recipients of the awards, the recipients will be notified of their award by the Academic Registrar [or nominee] indicating that the award either will be presented at the Institute's graduation ceremony in December of each year, or if the student graduates in absentia, sent by registered mail.
- 5.4.4. Following graduation, the names of the award recipients will be announced on the Institute's website and on the Institute's Virtual Honour Board.

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## 6. Responsibility

- 6.1.1. The Academic Board is responsible for the scheduled review of this policy.
- 6.1.2. The Academic Registrar is responsible for the operational implementation of this policy.

## 7. Implementation and communication

This policy and procedure will be implemented and communicated through the Institute via:  
Announcement on the Institute's webpage;

Internal circulation to staff; Staff professional development.

### Supporting Documents

Legislative Context:  
MIT Policies and Procedures

### Reference:

Admission Policy and Procedure  
AQF (Australian Qualification Framework 2013)  
TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency)  
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015

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## 8. Schedule 1 – Academic Dress

8.1. In this Schedule the 'colour of the discipline' means-

- for Information Technology – the colour oyster;
- for Business – the colour heliotrope;
- for Education – the colour spectrum green;
- for Engineering – the colour spectrum blue.

8.2. At a public ceremony of the Institute or of another university or educational institute, a member of the Institute representing the Institute may wear the academic dress prescribed in this schedule.

8.3. The academic dress for undergraduates is a black trencher cap and a black Oxford gown.

8.4. The academic dress for bachelors is a black trencher cap and a black Oxford gown, together with a black hood edged with white binding and lined with the colour of the discipline to which the studies undertaken for the degree relates.

8.5. The academic dress for bachelors who have undertaken a joint degree is a black trencher cap and a black Oxford gown, together with a black hood lined with the colour purple.

8.6. The academic dress for masters is a black trencher cap and a black Oxford gown, together with a black hood lined with the colour of the discipline to which the studies undertaken for the degree relates.

8.7. Academic dress for diplomates and certificants is a black trencher cap and a black Oxford gown together with a black stole lined with-

- for diplomas of Business – the colour yellow;
- for graduate diplomas of Information Technology – the colour oyster;
- for graduate diplomas of Business – the colour aqua; and
- for graduate diplomas of Engineering – the colour spectrum blue.

8.8. The academic dress of members of the Board is the habit of their degrees or a black light weight woollen gown and a stole of gold.

8.9. For every other member of staff of the Institute, being a graduate of the Institute or another institution, the academic dress shall be the habit of that member's degree or a black light weight woollen gown and a stole of gold.

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## 9. The Schedule 2- Revocation of Award

This Schedule sets out the process to be undertaken where a prima facie case is presented to the Institute indicating that an award was granted due to an error or fraud.

- 9.1. The Chair of Academic Board will appoint a committee to investigate the matter. The Chair of the Academic Board will not normally be a member of the committee.
- 9.2. The committee must contain a minimum of three members.
- 9.3. In investigating the matter, the committee:
  - 9.3.1. may follow any procedure it considers appropriate;
  - 9.3.2. is not bound by the rules of evidence or other technicalities or legal forms, and may inform itself of any matter in any manner it thinks fit;
  - 9.3.3. must act fairly in all the circumstances, having regard to the requirements of natural justice;
  - 9.3.4. may not take into account prior unrelated findings of misconduct when deciding whether or not to recommend revocation of the award; and
  - 9.3.5. must inform the graduate of the evidence it intends to take into account in making its decision, and allow the graduate to present a case and to respond to any relevant evidence or allegations orally and/or in writing. The graduate may be accompanied, but will not normally be legally represented.
- 9.4. The committee may, after considering all the evidence, recommend that the award:
  - 9.4.1. be revoked as it was improperly granted due to an error; or
  - 9.4.2. be revoked due to the commission of fraud that was materially significant to the granting of the award, where such fraud brings the Institute, the award, or the recipient into disrepute; or
  - 9.4.3. not be revoked, due to a factual basis for revocation not being established.
- 9.5. The committee must put its recommendation in writing to Academic Board, with reasons for its determination. The Academic Board must forward the recommendation to the Board for final decision in accordance with section 4.3.1 of the policy. The Board may conduct its own enquiries and is not bound by the recommendation received from the Academic Board.
- 9.6. Where the Board accepts the recommendation to revoke the award, the graduate must be informed of its decision, with a statement of reasons, within 14 business days of the decision being made.
- 9.7. In the case of an award revoked due to an error, the Board may allow the individual to rectify the error if appropriate.

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- 9.8. If the Board decides to revoke the award, the award is rescinded and the graduate will be asked to return the testamur, to the Board Secretary. If the graduate cannot return the testamur, for example, due to loss or destruction, the graduate is to complete a signed statutory declaration detailing the reason for the inability to return the testamur and send the signed statutory declaration to the Board Secretary.
- 9.9. The Board Secretary sends a notice of revocation to the Academic Registrar who must:
- 9.9.1. amend the register of graduates must be amended to reflect that the award has been revoked and the date of revocation; and
  - 9.9.2. update the relevant academic record to indicate that the award was revoked by the Board.
- 9.10. The Board Secretary must append the revoked testamur or the statutory declaration to the Board of Directors minutes where approval to revoke was granted.
- 9.11. A decision to revoke an award is not subject to an Institute appeal.

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