

Rhodes University Honorary Degrees and Titles Policy

Policy Volume	Academic Faculty & Students
Policy Chapter	Registrar's Division Policies
Responsible Committee/Unit/Division/Faculty	The Honorary Degrees Committee
Responsible Chairperson/Director/Manager	Registrar
Dates of First and Subsequent Council Approvals	Insert dates of first approval and revisions
Policy Approval Pathways (e.g. committee, Senex, Senate, Council)	Registrar, Vice-Chancellor, Honorary Degrees Committee, Faculty Boards, Senate, Council.
Revision History: Approved Reviews	N/A
Review Cycle (e.g. every 2/5/7 years etc)	Every 5 years
Next Review Date	2028

1. POLICY PARTICULARS

1.1 Policy Title	Rhodes University Honorary Degrees and Titles Policy
1.2 Policy Statement	<p>Honorary degrees are awarded <i>honoris causa</i>, "for the sake of honour." An honorary degree does not require the completion of a university level study but is granted in recognition of the recipient's exceptional scholarly, literary, scientific, artistic, public service, or professional achievements or outstanding contributions to society or humankind. Through the conferral of an honorary degree on any distinguished person the University makes a public statement on its values, mission and vision.</p> <p>A candidate for an honorary degree should be someone of high ethical standards and who embodies the values and ideals of Rhodes University.</p> <p>Rhodes University may also confer the title of "Professor Emeritus on a full Professor or "Associate Professor Emeritus on an associate professor of Rhodes University who has reached retirement age in good standing.</p>
1.3 Reason for Policy	<p>In accordance with the provisions of the Higher Education Act (101 of 1997) (as amended), subsection 65C (1) and 65C (2), and the Rhodes University Statute (Government Notice 234 of 15 March 2005), Section 55, Rhodes University may confer honorary degree of Doctor. An honorary degree is the highest accolade the University can bestow on any person. Rhodes University confers honorary degrees in order to recognise and honour individuals whose profound, sustained and distinguished contribution to the nation and beyond help advance the creation of a better society and a better world. These are individuals whose selfless service and sacrifices serve as an inspiration and an example worthy of emulation.</p> <p>Rhodes University may also confer the title of Professor Emeritus on a full professor or Associate Professor Emeritus on an associate professor of Rhodes University who has reached retirement age in good standing as a means of recognising sustained and distinguished academic service to the University.</p>
1.4 Policy Objective/s	This policy establishes principles, eligibility criteria and the process and procedure for the receipt, review and recommendation of nominations for the honorary degrees and Professor Emeritus/Associate Professor Emeritus titles..
1.5. People affected by this Policy	All staff, students, alumni, Board of Governors and Council of Rhodes University.
1.5 Who should read this Policy?	Any member of the Rhodes University community including academics, students, administrative and support staff, alumni, members of Council, and members of Board of Governors.
1.6 Implementers of this Policy	The Registrar's Division
1.7 Website address/link for this Policy	https://www.ru.ac.za/institutionalplanningunit/policies/policylibrary/

2 RELATED DOCUMENTS, FORMS AND TOOLS

Relevant Legislation (Legislation/Regulatory requirements/Organisational Reports – name these)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 • Higher Education Act (101 of 1997) • Rhodes University Statute • National Qualifications Framework • Any other applicable legislation

Related Policies:
Rhodes University Code of conduct Rhodes University Institutional Development Plan for reference to institutional values
Related Protocols:
None
Forms and Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nomination Form

3 POLICY DEFINITIONS

No	TERM	DEFINITION – combine 3.1, 3.2 and 3.4 Include definition of Emeritus Professor
3.1	Honorary Doctoral degree	A doctoral degree is the highest academic qualification offered at Rhodes University whilst an honorary doctoral degree is awarded for the sake of honour (Latin: <i>honoris causa</i>). When conferring an honorary degree, the University waives the usual requirements, such as matriculation, residence, study and the passing of examinations. The degree may be conferred to someone who has no prior connection with the institution. Usually, the degree is awarded as a way of honouring a distinguished individual's contributions to a specific field, or to society or humankind, in general
3.2	Professor Emeritus/ Associate Emeritus Professor	An honorary title conferred on a full Professor or an Associate Professor of Rhodes University who reaches retirement age in good standing, as a means of recognising sustained and distinguished academic service to the University
3.3	Honorary Degrees Committee	The Honorary Degrees Committee is a joint committee of Senate and Council whose remit is to receive and review nominations for the honorary degrees and make recommendations for consideration by Senate and Council.
3.5	Rhodes University Statute	The Rhodes University Statute contains the fundamental constitutional and governance provisions of the University. The Rhodes University Statute flows from section 32 of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997).

4 PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THIS POLICY

OVERVIEW
Rhodes University normally confers the following honorary degrees:
4.1 <i>Doctors</i> : Doctor of Laws (LLD), Doctor of Fine Arts (DFA), Doctor of Letters (DLitt), Doctor of Economics (D Econ), Doctor of Music (D Mus), Doctor of Science (D Sc).
4.2. If the <i>primary</i> purpose of the honorary degree is to acknowledge outstanding contribution and exceptional achievement in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.2.1 Economic Sciences, the degree Doctor of Economics (<i>honoris causa</i>) will be conferred; 4.2.2 Natural Sciences, the degree Doctor of Science (<i>honoris causa</i>) will be conferred;

<p>4.2.3 Literature, the degree Doctor of Letters, DLitt (<i>honoris causa</i>) will be conferred;</p> <p>4.2.4 Music, the degree Doctor of Music, D Mus (<i>honoris causa</i>) will be conferred;</p> <p>4.2.5 Fine Art, the degree Doctor of Fine Art, DFA (<i>honoris causa</i>) will be conferred;</p> <p>4.2.6 Education, Humanities, Social Sciences, the degree Doctor of Laws, LLD (<i>honoris causa</i>), will be conferred;</p> <p>4.2.7 Public service, humanitarian endeavours, or Law, the degree Doctor of Laws, LLD (<i>honoris causa</i>) will be conferred.</p>
<p>4.3 The degree Doctor of Laws (LLD (<i>hc</i>)) is the default honorary degree in the event a candidate is recognised for exceptional achievements and outstanding contribution that span a wide range of human endeavours.</p>
<p>4.4. Any member of the Rhodes University community including academics, students, administrative and support staff, alumni, members of Council, members of Board of Governors may nominate an individual for the award of an honorary degree.</p>

5 DIRECTIVES FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS POLICY

5.1. Principles and eligibility

- 5.1.1 Honorary degrees are conferred on “distinguished persons” who merit special recognition for their outstanding achievement or exceptional contribution to society or humankind.
- 5.1.2 A candidate for an honorary degree should be someone of high ethical standards and who embodies the values and ideals of Rhodes University.
- 5.1.3 An honorary degree is not normally conferred to a current member of staff or student of Rhodes University. However retired members may be nominated at least three years after retirement.
- 5.1.4 An honorary LLD degree is normally conferred on retired Rhodes University Vice-Chancellors.
- 5.1.5 Normally, an active politician is not eligible for nomination for an honorary degree.
- 5.1.6 An honorary degree is not conferred in exchange for financial contribution.
- 5.1.7 An honorary degree is conferred at a University’s graduation ceremony. Only in exceptional circumstances may an honorary degree be awarded in absentia. The Chairperson of the Honorary Degrees Committee may in such circumstances motivate for the conferral of an honorary degree in absentia.
- 5.1.8 An honorary degree is not normally conferred posthumously. If, however, a candidate passes away after accepting the University’s invitation to receive an honorary degree, but before the graduation ceremony at which the degree were to be conferred, the honorary degree will be conferred posthumously unless the family of the deceased objects. Where there is no objection, a family representative will receive the award on behalf of the deceased at the graduation ceremony at which the degree were to be conferred.
- 5.1.9 Rhodes University will normally not confer an honorary degree on persons who have already had such degrees conferred on them by a number of other institutions.
- 5.1.10 In making its recommendations for the conferral of honorary degrees, the Honorary Degrees Committee must give due regard to, and endeavour to strike a balance in terms of, the diversity and social composition (race and gender), outstanding South African and international nominees, and between those who have not yet been recognised with an honorary degree and those who have already received a similar recognition elsewhere.
- 5.1.11 Normally, no more than one honorary degree is conferred per graduation ceremony.

5.2. A. Procedure for nomination for an Honorary degree

- 5.2.1 Each year the Registrar must issue a call to all members of the Rhodes University community to submit nominations for the conferral of honorary degrees. This invitation must be sent out in English, isiXhosa, seSotho and Afrikaans, where practicable.
- 5.2.2 The Registrar must set a closing date for the submission of nominations so that they are received in time for consideration by the Honorary Degrees Committee at its first meeting of the year which is normally in May.
- 5.2.3 Throughout the process of nominating, recommending and approving a candidate for an honorary degree, utmost care should be taken to ensure confidentiality of the process. Under no circumstances should a nominee for an honorary degree be made aware of their nomination so as to avoid possible embarrassment that may ensue if the nomination does not receive institutional support.
- 5.2.4 Self-nominations will not be considered.
- 5.2.5 Each nomination for an honorary degree candidate must be in writing and should include:
 - 5.2.5.1 the name(s) of the nominator(s),
 - 5.2.5.2 a curriculum vitae (CV) or a brief biography of the nominee,

- 5.2.5.3 a concise description of the accomplishments, achievements or contributions that make the nominee worthy of recognition by Rhodes University through an honorary degree,
- 5.2.5.4 a strong motivation for Rhodes University, in particular, to confer the degree.

5.2.B. Procedure for consideration for Professor Emeritus/Associate Professor Emeritus titles

- Each year the Division of People and Culture must release a list of full and Associate Professors reaching retirement age at the end of that year.
- Each Dean of Faculty and relevant Head of Department must review and confirm the eligibility of the proposed candidates by a date to be communicated by the Division of People and Culture.
- Candidates under consideration for a Professor Emeritus/Associate Professor Emeritus title must be given an opportunity to indicate if they wish to receive such a title by a date to be communicated by the Division of People and Culture.
- For each candidate under consideration for the title of Professor Emeritus/Associate Professor Emeritus, a confirmation of good standing will be provided by the Division of People and will accompany the submission to the Honorary Degrees Committee.

5.3. A. Approval of candidates for the conferral of honorary degrees

- 5.3.1 The Senate and Council vote on the nomination(s) recommended by the Honorary Degrees Committee.
- 5.3.2 Separate votes are conducted for the two bodies.
- 5.3.3 In each case the electronic voting system will be used.
- 5.3.4 If 25% or more of the members of either body, vacancies and members on leave excluded, do not support a nomination, the nomination is deemed unsuccessful.

5.3B. Procedure for approval of conferral of the Professor Emeritus /Associate Professor Emeritus title

The Honorary Degrees Committee receives the names of candidates nominated for conferral of the Professor Emeritus /Associate Professor Emeritus titles as described in Section 5.2B above.

Upon confirming due diligence, the Honorary Degrees Committee recommends candidates for the conferral of the Professor Emeritus Associate Professor Emeritus titles to Senate

Senate considers the names of candidates recommended for conferral of the Professor Emeritus /Associate Professor Emeritus titles and recommends them to Council for approval.

5.4. Invitation to have an honorary degree awarded

- 5.4.1 The Registrar conveys the outcome of the voting by Senate and Council to the Vice-Chancellor, and indicates which nominations have been approved.
- 5.4.2 The Vice-Chancellor sends a written invitation to each of the approved nominees of the honorary degree.
- 5.4.3 No mention is made of the name(s) of nominee(s) who were not supported by Senate or Council, nor of the names of nominees who have declined the invitation to have an honorary degree conferred on them.

5.5. Rescinding an honorary degree and Professor Emeritus/Associate Professor Emeritus Title

- 5.5.1 The University reserves the right to rescind an honorary degree or the title of Professor Emeritus/Associate Professor Emeritus should circumstances so demand.
- 5.5.2 The Honorary Degrees Committee shall consider and make a recommendation to Senate and Council for the rescission of an honorary degree/honorary title in circumstances where reputational damage may be caused to the University from being associated with the person through an honorary degree or title.
- 5.5.3 A decision to rescind an honorary degree or title shall be based on clear, credible and conclusive evidence established through a due process of the honoree having engaged in a conduct that is at variance with the values, ideals and mission of Rhodes University.
- 5.5.4 A joint committee of Senate and Council will be constituted to consider a request for the rescission of an honorary degree or title. This committee will advise Senate and Council on an appropriate course of action.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
6.1 The Vice Chancellor	<p>6.1.1 The Vice-Chancellor sends a written invitation to each of the approved nominees of honorary degrees.</p> <p>6.1.2 The invitation must clearly state that a maximum of two economy class air tickets will be provided.</p> <p>6.1.3 If invited to address the graduation ceremony, the length of time allocated must be communicated to the speaker.</p> <p>6.1.4 When affirmative replies have been received, the Vice-Chancellor informs the Division of Communications Advancement accordingly so that a statement to the University community announcing the intention to confer honorary degrees at the forthcoming graduation ceremonies may be released.</p>
6.2 The Registrar	<p>6.2.1 Each year the Registrar must issue a call to all members of the Rhodes University community to submit nominations for the conferral of honorary degrees. This invitation must be sent out in English, isiXhosa, seSotho and Afrikaans, as may be practicable.</p> <p>6.2.2 The Registrar must set a closing date for the submission of nominations so that they are received in time for consideration by the Honorary Degrees Committee at its first meeting of the year which is normally in May.</p> <p>6.2.3 Self-nominations will not be considered.</p> <p>6.2.4 Throughout the process of nominating, recommending and approving a candidate for an honorary degree, utmost care should be taken to ensure confidentiality of the process. Under no circumstances should a nominee for an honorary degree be made aware of their nomination so as to avoid possible embarrassment that may ensue if the nomination does not receive adequate support.</p> <p>6.2.5 Each nomination for an honorary degree candidate must be in writing and should include</p> <p>7 the name of the nominator(s),</p> <p>8 a curriculum vitae (CV) or a brief biography of the proposed candidate</p> <p>9 a concise description of the accomplishments, achievements or contributions that make the nominee worthy of a recognition through an honorary degree,</p> <p>10 a strong motivation for Rhodes University, in particular, to confer the degree</p> <p>10.2.1 In collaboration with the Conference & Events Office, the Registrar sends each honorary graduand's details of the ceremonies, including a copy of the order of proceedings, and, where appropriate, indicates that flexibility is permitted in the way in which they present themselves (for instance, a musician may wish to sing/play music in place of making a speech).</p>
6.3 The Honorary Degrees Committee	<p>6.3.1 The Honorary Degrees Committee shall receive, consider and recommend for approval by Senate and Council outstanding persons for the conferral of Rhodes University honorary degrees.</p> <p>6.3.2 The Honorary Degrees Committee shall recommend the appropriate graduation ceremony in which an approved honoree should be recognised with an honorary degree.</p> <p>6.3.3 The Honorary Degrees Committee shall consider and make a recommendation to Senate and Council for the rescinding of an honorary degree in circumstances where reputational damage may be caused to the University from being associated through the honorary degree with the person.</p> <p>6.3.4 The Honorary Degrees Committee will review the Honorary Degrees Committee and recommend changes and/or amendments for consideration and approval by Senate and Council.</p> <p>6.3.5 The Honorary Degrees Committee shall consider and recommend for approval by Senate and Council the title of "Professor Emeritus/Emerita" on a full professor or "Associate Professor Emeritus/Emerita" on an associate professor of Rhodes University who has reached a retirement age.</p>
6.4 Senate	<p>6.4.1 Senate shall vote on the persons recommended by the Honorary Degrees Committee for the conferral of honorary degrees.</p> <p>6.4.2 If 25% or more of the members of Senate, vacancies and members on leave excluded, do not support the nomination, the nomination shall be deemed to be unsuccessful.</p> <p>6.4.3 Senate shall receive and consider a recommendation from the Honorary Degrees Committee for the rescission of an honorary degree, where such becomes necessary and due process has been followed.</p>
6.5 Council	<p>6.5.1 Council shall vote on the persons recommended by the Honorary Degrees Committee for the award of honorary degrees.</p>

	6.5.2 If 25% or more of the members of Council, vacancies and members on leave excluded, do not support the nomination, the nomination shall be deemed to be unsuccessful.
	6.5.3 Council shall receive and consider a recommendation from the Honorary Degrees Committee for the rescission of an honorary degree, where such becomes necessary and due process has been followed.

7. CONTACTS

Area of Concern	Division/Faculty/Department	Telephone	Email
Registrar's Division	Registrar's Division	046 603 8101	registrar@ru.ac.za
Chair of Senate (Vice-Chancellor)	Vice-Chancellor	046 603 8148	vc@ru.ac.za

8. POLICY REVIEW PROCEDURE

The Honorary Degrees Committee will review this policy every 5 years.
Reviewed policy will serve before Senate for comments and input. The policy will then be submitted to Council for approval.
Communication of the review process
The Honorary Degrees Committee will engage stakeholders through TopList@lists.ru.ac.za ; studentnews@lists.ru.ac.za

9. POLICY CONTEXT: RELEVANT DOCUMENTS CITED/CONSULTED/ADOPTED

1	Higher Education Act (101 of 1997)
2	Rhodes University Statute

LIST OF APPENDICES

Guidelines on the Use of the title “Dr” upon conferment of an honorary degree by Rhodes University

1. An honorary degree is awarded *honoris causa*, "for the sake of honour."
2. An honorary degree is awarded to recognise a distinguished contribution to humanity, science or nature, and does not require the awardee to have completed university level study.
3. An honorary doctorate is distinctly different to an earned doctorate, in that it is an honour rather than a qualification, and, so as to distinguish the two, does not accord the awardee who does not already possess an earned doctoral degree the right to use the title of "Dr" in the broader community.
4. The convention is to use the title 'Dr' in engagement with the University. All formal communication with an honorary doctorate awardee will be addressed by the University using the honorary title 'Dr' (unless s/he has a higher academic title which will be used).
5. An honorary doctoral degree recipient should not insist nor expect to be referred to with the title 'Dr' in a setting outside of the University's events or activities.
6. It is inappropriate for an honorary doctorate degree recipient to place the title 'Dr' in front of their name in written correspondence/documents. In order to acknowledge an honorary degree (e.g., an LLD) from Rhodes University, an awardee should use the convention such as Lerato Shuping LLD (RU, *hc*).
7. A recipient of an honorary degree may list their honorary degree in their curricula vitae, resumes or biographies. In a CV or resume, the honorary degree should be listed under 'Awards and Honors', and **not** under 'Education' or 'Academic qualifications'.



RHODES UNIVERSITY

Where leaders learn

Rhodes University honorary degree nomination form

The nomination for a Rhodes University honorary degree is **strictly confidential**. Under no circumstances should there be any communication with a potential candidate prior to the finalisation of the whole process.

Policy provision:	<p>An honorary degree is awarded <i>honoris causa</i>, "for the sake of honour." An honorary degree does not require the completion of a university level study but is granted in recognition of the recipient's exceptional scholarly, literary, scientific, artistic, public service, or professional achievements or in recognition of the recipient's outstanding contributions to society or humankind. Through the conferral of an honorary degree on any distinguished person the University makes a public statement on its values, mission and vision.</p> <p>Rhodes University confers honorary degrees in order to recognise and honour individuals whose profound, sustained and distinguished contribution to the nation and beyond help advance the creation of a better society and a better world. These are individuals whose selfless service and sacrifices serve as an inspiration and an example worthy of emulation.</p>
Nominator:	
Department/Division:	
e-mail address:	
Signature:	
Names of those who second the nomination:	
Nominee's name:	
Address and contact details of the nominee.	
Current professional position of the nominee.	

<p>Brief biographical details of the nominee or attach an abridged CV (if possible).</p>	
<p>Please provide a concise description of the accomplishments, achievements or contributions that make the nominee merit a recognition through an honorary degree.</p> <p>Please indicate how the nominee meets the criteria for the conferral of a Rhodes University honorary degree.</p>	
<p>Please provide a strong motivation on why Rhodes University, in particular, should confer an honorary degree on this nominee.</p>	
<p>Please list other honorary degrees held by the nominee.</p>	

This nomination form will be available for online completion.