

## HONORARY AWARDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH: GUIDANCE

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The University of Greenwich confers honorary awards on distinguished individuals who merit special recognition for their outstanding achievement, distinction and contribution which is consonant with the vision, mission, principles and values of the University.
- 1.2 The University seeks to establish and maintain strong and lifelong relationships with all members of its honorary graduate community.
- 1.3 Honorary awards are normally conferred at the University's graduation ceremonies.
- 1.4 Following the review of nominations by an internal panel, the Governing Body's Honorary Degrees Committee considers nominations and recommends nominations to the Governing Body for approval (see section 5). The Committee appreciates the time taken by members of University community to bring nominations to its attention and hopes to receive a wide and diverse selection of nominations.
- 1.5 We welcome nominations from members of the University community, including current students, current staff, alumni and Governors. All nominations must be appropriately endorsed (see section 4).

### 2. TYPES OF AWARD

- 2.1 The University confers two types of honorary awards:
  - **Honorary Doctorate** in an appropriate subject determined by the University (e.g. Doctor of Arts (HonDArts), Doctor of Laws (HonLLD)) – see the Appendix;
  - **Honorary Doctor of the University** (HonDUniv).
- 2.2 The criteria for awards are set out in section 3.

### 3. CRITERIA FOR AWARDS

- 3.1 **Honorary Doctorates** are conferred on distinguished individuals who merit special recognition for their outstanding achievement, distinction and contribution which is consonant with the vision, mission, principles and values of the University. The factors which determine whether an Honorary Doctorate should be conferred include, but are not limited to:

- Outstanding achievement and distinction, particularly in fields or activities associated with the work of the University (e.g. education, business, culture, creative work, health, public service, science or sport);
- Outstanding contribution to society at a local, national or international level;
- Relevance (e.g. a former student, a local resident or an individual who has provided voluntary service to the University or the local community);
- Exceptional individuals who can inspire our students and graduands;
- Willingness to develop or maintain an ongoing relationship with the University aligned to our strategic priorities.

Nominations are particularly welcomed for individuals from underrepresented groups.

- 3.2 The award of **Honorary Doctor of the University** is limited to individuals who meet the criteria in 3.1 for an Honorary Doctorate, and whose contribution or achievements are considered to be truly exceptional. The Honorary Degrees Committee will determine whether an award should be bestowed in this category (normally, no more than one or two a year would be expected).
- 3.3 Awards will not be conferred on current students, current staff, current Governors or members of major advisory committees of the University. Awards will not normally be considered for serving politicians, heads of state or persons who have direct or significant influence over funding bodies. Awards will not be conferred posthumously.

#### 4. THE NOMINATION PROCESS

- 4.1 Nominations may be submitted by current students, staff, Governors and alumni of the University. Nominations will not be accepted from individuals outside these categories. Self-nominations will not be accepted.
- 4.2 Nominations from students, staff and alumni will only be considered if appropriately endorsed. Normally, this should be by the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the faculty which is most relevant to the nomination. Nominations may also be endorsed by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost. The University Secretary will decide who to send the nomination to for endorsement. University staff are strongly advised to discuss their nomination with the relevant person before submitting it and may seek advice on this from the University Secretary.
- 4.3 Nominations must be submitted to the University Secretary by the advertised deadline using the University's [nominations form](#). Nominations not submitted by the deadline using the nominations form will not be considered.
- 4.4 Brief biographical notes on the nominee should be provided on the University's

nomination form. The statement in support of the nomination should indicate clearly how the nominee has met the criteria for an Honorary Doctorate (see 3.1). When determining which nominations to recommend to the Governing Body, considerable importance shall be attached to this statement.

- 4.5 Nominations for honorary awards are **strictly confidential** and must not be discussed with the individual nominated until the nominator has received written confirmation from the University Secretary that the award has been approved by the Governing Body. This will avoid the embarrassment that would arise should a nomination not be accepted.
- 4.6 Before submitting a nomination, please check the list of [honorary graduates](#) to determine whether the individual has already received an honorary award from the University, as an honorary award cannot be conferred twice.

## **5. THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

- 5.1 Nominations will initially be reviewed by an internal panel comprising the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Exchange) and the University Secretary, which may reject nominations which are considered not to meet the criteria and may require nominations to be revised and re-submitted.
- 5.2 Nominations which are accepted will be passed to the Governing Body's Honorary Degrees Committee for the final decision on whether to recommend the award to the Governing Body. Nominations will be subject to web-based due diligence by the University Secretary's Office before being submitted to the Committee.
- 5.3 The Honorary Degrees Committee comprises the Chair of the Governing Body (acting as chair), the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, one other Independent Governor and one Staff Governor (appointed by the Governing Body on the recommendation of the Nominations, Staffing and Governance Committee), the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Exchange) and the University Secretary.
- 5.4 The Honorary Degrees Committee will determine whether to recommend an award to the Governing Body and the appropriate category of award. The final decision is made by the Governing Body. Decisions on nominations by the Honorary Degrees Committee and the Governing Body are not subject to appeal.
- 5.5 The Honorary Degrees Committee may, at its discretion, decide to carry over a nomination for consideration in the following year. The Committee shall ensure that there is no devaluation of standards for University of Greenwich honorary awards.
- 5.6 Following the consideration of nominations by the Governing Body, the University

Secretary will write to nominators to provide the outcome of their nomination. Reasons for nominations being approved, rejected or carried over will not be provided.

## **6. CONFERRAL OF AWARDS**

- 6.1 Once the Governing Body has approved an honorary award, the Alumni and Fundraising Office will write to the nominee to offer them the award and agree an appropriate date when it will be conferred.
- 6.2 Normally, honorary awards are conferred at one of the University's graduation ceremonies. The date of the ceremony at which the honorary award is to be conferred is inscribed on the certificate and should be decided well in advance so that the documentation can be prepared. Honorary awards are not normally awarded in absentia.
- 6.3 Once the award has been conferred, recipients of an honorary award may use the approved designatory letters after their names (see the Appendix). It is not customary in the UK for recipients of an honorary doctorate to use the title 'Dr' in front of their name.

## **7. EXPECTATIONS ON HONORARY AWARD HOLDERS**

- 7.1 Recipients of honorary awards are expected to attend the relevant graduation ceremony (or other event where the award is being conferred) and deliver an acceptance speech, which should be provided to the University in advance.
- 7.2 There is an expectation that honorary graduates will have the potential to develop an ongoing relationship with the University. Holders will be expected to attend at least one event at the University each year and to explore potential collaboration with a member of the Alumni and Fundraising Office (e.g. delivering lectures or presentations, mentoring students, advancing an area of strategic focus, acting as an ambassador for the institution, or attending University events when invited).

## **8. REVOCATION OF HONORARY AWARDS**

- 8.1 Honorary awards may be revoked by the Governing Body on the recommendation of the Honorary Degrees Committee where an honorary graduate, through behaviour or actions after their award, brings the University into disrepute or conflicts with the University's mission, values and principles. The Governing Body's decision to revoke an award is final and is not subject to appeal.

## **9. FURTHER INFORMATION**

- 9.1 For further information on the honorary awards process, please contact the University Secretary (email to [universitysecretary@greenwich.ac.uk](mailto:universitysecretary@greenwich.ac.uk)).

Document owner: University Secretary's Office

Last updated: 05 November 2025

### **APPENDIX: CATEGORIES OF HONORARY AWARDS AWARDED BY THE UNIVERSITY**

Honorary Doctor of Arts (HonDArt)

Honorary Doctor of Business Administration (HonDBA)

Honorary Doctor of Design (HonDDes)

Honorary Doctor of Education (HonDEd)

Honorary Doctor of Laws (HonLLD)

Honorary Doctor of Letters (HonDLitt)

Honorary Doctor of Music (HonDMus)

Honorary Doctor of Science (HonDSc)

Honorary Doctor of Technology (HonDTech)

Honorary Doctor of the University (HonDUniv)