



POSTHUMOUS DEGREE POLICY

Policy Sponsor:	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)	First Approved:	15 SEPTEMBER 2026
Primary Contact:	University Registrar	Last Updated:	n/a
Approved by:	Senate	Review Scheduled:	SEPTEMBER 2029

1. PURPOSE

This policy outlines the circumstances under which Brandon University will issue a degree to a student who has passed away before fully completing degree requirements. The possibility of a posthumous degree is made available on compassionate grounds where the student had substantially completed the requirements of their degree program.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to Brandon University degree-seeking students who pass away prior to completing all degree requirements. It is effective for students who passed away during the 2025-26 academic year or later.

3. DEFINITIONS

Policy: Posthumous Degree Policy

Degree-Seeking: Refers to a student enrolled in a Bachelor or Master degree

Next of Kin: The deceased student's closest living relative(s)

Senate: The Brandon University Senate

Substantial Progress: Refers minimally to completion of data collection (if relevant) and demonstrated thesis draft in progress

University: Brandon University

4. POLICY

1.1. Responsibility

The Dean of Students is responsible for liaising with a student's next of kin concerning posthumous degree possibilities and Convocation preferences (as appropriate).

The University Registrar is responsible for receiving posthumous degree requests, determining a student's eligibility to receive a posthumous degree, and recommending eligible posthumous degree students to the Senate.

The Brandon University Senate is responsible for approving eligible students to receive posthumous degrees.

Posthumous degrees will be issued only with express permission of the student's next of kin.

1.2. Eligibility

A posthumous degree may be conferred upon a Brandon University student who meets all of the following criteria:

- Passed away a maximum of 12 months from the end of the last term in which they were registered in at least one course or in which they were actively working on a graduate thesis. Individual exceptions to this requirement will be considered on a case-by-case basis (such as where the student had to cease studying due to an illness that led to their passing, but more than 12 months passed between the interruption of studies and the student's passing).
- Good academic standing
- Course-based programs: at least 75% of required credit hours were successfully completed.
Research-based programs: at least 75% of required credit hours were successfully completed and there was substantial progress on the thesis.

1.3. Convocation

The posthumous degree recipient's name will be included in the program for the next Convocation ceremony following Senate's approval of the posthumous degree. At the ceremony, the recipient's next of kin may elect to cross the platform to receive the posthumous degree parchment in place of the recipient.

1.4. Student Records

1.4.1. Degree Parchment

The degree parchment will not include indication that the degree was conferred posthumously.

1.4.2. Transcript

The transcript will include a notation that the degree was conferred posthumously.

1.5. Procedure

The University Registrar, upon becoming aware of a student's passing, will assess the student's eligibility for a post-humous degree in accordance with Section 1.2 of this policy, in consultation with relevant Department Chairs and Deans as needed.

If the student is eligible to receive a post-humous degree, the Dean of Students will liaise with the student's next of kin to determine whether they wish a posthumous degree to be issued.

If yes, the Registrar will undertake the following steps:

1. Confirm the student's eligibility for a posthumous degree and the next of kin's wishes to the relevant Department Chair/Program Coordinator(s), Dean(s), Provost & Vice-President (Academic), and President;
2. Add the student to the list of graduands for recommendation to the Senate; and
3. Arrange Convocation details with the Convocation planning team and with the next of kin (through the Dean of Students).

If no, no further action will be taken.

1.6. Alternate Recognition Options

In cases where a deceased student is not eligible to receive a posthumous degree, the Dean of Students will liaise with the student's next of kin to determine whether they would welcome an informal form of recognition near the time at which the student would most likely have graduated. Where relevant, the Dean of Students, in collaboration with the next of kin and the University Registrar, will determine a suitable form of recognition. With the exception of oral or visual presentations during formal Convocation ceremonies, this recognition may take various forms according to the preferences of the next of kin, such as, but not restricted to, the following:

- Inclusion of the student's name and degree program in an *In Memoriam* section of the Convocation program in the year in which the student would likely have graduated;
- A private meeting between the student's next of kin and appropriate senior University representatives (such as the Chancellor, President, Provost, Faculty/School Dean, and/or University Registrar) prior to the Convocation ceremony at which the student would likely have graduated, including presentation of a Convocation cap and year tassel;
- A letter from the President and Vice-Chancellor to the student's next of kin in advance of the Convocation ceremonies at which the student would likely have graduated.

5. POLICY AUTHORITY

- **Policy Sponsor:** Vice-President (Academic)
- **Primary Contact:** University Registrar
- **Approval Authority:** Senate

6. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

[Brandon University Act.](#)

7. RELATED POLICY DOCUMENTS

Death of a University Employee, Retiree, Student or Officer