



# Regulations for Award of Honorary Doctorates

## Administration of the Regulations

These Regulations will be administered by the Office of the Vice Chancellor.

## Regulations Review

These Regulations will be reviewed from time to time

### 1. Preamble:

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- 1.1 It is the policy of Open Christian University to award honorary degrees to distinguished individuals who merit special recognition for genuine achievement and distinction in a field or activity consonant with the mission of the University. Only the University Council (*Senate*) may authorize the award of an honorary degree in accordance with *Statute XXXV* of Open Christian University ([University Statutes, 2023](#)).
- 1.2 An Honorary Doctorate is the highest mark of distinction that a university can award. In approving candidates for the conferment of an Honorary Doctorate, the University Council (*Senate*) shall therefore pay particular regard to a record of outstanding achievement in scholarship or in public life and to contributions of unusual importance.
- 1.3 Recipients of Open Christian University honorary degrees will serve as models of the University's aspirations for its students and community. Candidates should be nominated on the basis of their life's work and should exemplify the highest quality of professional, intellectual, humanitarian or artistic achievement and leadership.
- 1.4 Evaluation is based on the level of intellectual and professional attainment and the significance of the nominee's contributions to the enrichment and/or welfare of the University, their nation or the world. Recipients of these awards will normally have or have had a close association with Open Christian University.
- 1.5 The purpose of the regulations is to provide the rules and procedural guidelines for use by those who wish to make nominations for Honorary Degrees.
- 1.6 The electronic version of these regulations and all the forms are available from the [Open Christian University intranet](#).

### 2. The purposes of Honorary Doctorates awarded by SU:

- 2.1 To recognize excellence in the fields of academic pursuit at Open Christian University as well as business, philanthropy, public affairs, and public service which exemplify the mission and purposes of the University.
- 2.2 To honour meritorious and outstanding service to the University, to nations and Africa or to humanity at large.
- 2.3 To recognize men and women whose lives and significant achievements serve as examples of the University's aspirations for its diverse student body.

2.4 To elevate the corporate reputation of the University by honouring individuals who are widely known and highly regarded for achievements in their respective fields of endeavour.

### **3. Degrees to be Conferred:**

3.1 The **Honorary Degree Committee** will make a recommendation on the type of honorary degree to confer. The following honorary degrees are the most commonly conferred, although other degrees may be considered as appropriate:

3.1.1 *LLD (Doctor of Laws)*: Awarded in recognition of exceptional service to the University or the community at large.

3.1.2 *DSc (Doctor of Science)*: Awarded in recognition of outstanding achievement in science or engineering.

3.1.3 *DLitt (Doctor of Letters)*: Awarded in recognition of outstanding achievement in the humanities or literature.

3.1.4 *DMed (Doctor of Medicine)*: Awarded in recognition of outstanding achievement in health sciences

### **4. Criteria for Honorary Doctorates:**

4.1 A nominee must have sufficient stature and recognition to ensure that the awarding of an honorary degree brings enhanced reputation to Open Christian University and to the academic community as a whole; upholds the values that lead to the advancement of learning and to the pursuit of greater knowledge; inspires students and has the potential to act as a champion and supporter of the University.

4.2 In addition, candidates must meet one or more of the following criteria:

4.2.1 *Eminence in a field of activity or profession*-exceptional record of distinction and achievement in an academic field, in the creative or performing arts, or in a profession or discipline.

4.2.2 *Outstanding public or community service*-distinguished service to the community, locally, nationally, or internationally, or exceptional accomplishments having contributed to the betterment of culture, or society, or the local community.

4.2.3 *Significant connection or benefaction to the University*-extraordinary contribution to the development of the University or magnanimous contribution to the University, creatively, materially or financially.

4.2.4 An adequate reason for recognition by Open Christian University, in the form of an association or relationship with the University or a nexus between the individual's achievements and the mission of the University.

## **5. Eligibility and Exclusions:**

- 5.1 For reasons of propriety, honorary degrees will not be given to:
  - 5.1.1 Current members of the University Council (**Senate**) or their family members;
  - 5.1.2 Current employees or students of the University; or
  - 5.1.3 Current directors and employees of the University's affiliate or subsidiary organisations.
- 5.2.1 Administration, faculty and staff at Open Christian University are normally not eligible for nomination until at least three years after leaving the University.
- 5.3 Politicians currently in office will not normally be considered.
- 5.4 The nominee must be living. If the candidate dies after accepting the nomination, but prior to its award, the degree will be awarded posthumously.
- 5.5 Other than in exceptional circumstances, candidates must be present at the Graduation ceremony to receive a degree; degrees will not be offered in absentia.
- 5.6 Prudence should also be shown in recommending honorary degrees to holders of public office as well as any member of a University or Faculty advisory committee.

## **6. Honorary Degree Committee:**

- 6.1 The decision to confer an award and the precise title of the degree rests with the University Council (**Senate**) on recommendation from the University's **Honorary Degree Committee** and the Academic Council.
- 6.2 The Honorary Degree Committee is established by *Statute XXXV* of [Open Christian University Statutes, 2023](#), and is convened by the Vice Chancellor. The membership of the Committee is as follows:
  - 6.2.1 The Vice-Chancellor
  - 6.2.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellors
  - 6.2.3 The University Secretary
  - 6.2.3 The Registrar
  - 6.2.4 The Dean of the Faculty, School or Institute in which the degree falls.
  - 6.2.5 Two representatives of the Academic Council
  - 6.2.6 Two representatives of the University Council (**Senate**)
- 6.3 This Committee considers proposals for the award of honorary degrees and makes recommendations to the Academic Council. The Vice-Chancellor chairs the Committee and the Registrar is its Secretary.

## **7. Selection Criteria:**

- 7.1 Since almost all candidates for honorary degrees will be distinguished people in one way or another, the **Honorary Degree Committee** will consider the following:
- 7.1.1 In what ways is the candidate's achievement truly outstanding?
  - 7.1.2 In what ways has the nominee made an extraordinary contribution to scholarship, society and culture?
  - 7.1.3 Will this person's achievement be seen to be important and exemplary to the students who will graduate at that Graduation Ceremony?
  - 7.1.4 Has this person already been sufficiently recognized by other honours and awards?
  - 7.1.5 Has this person been appropriately recognized by the field or profession in which he or she is said to excel?
  - 7.1.6 Is it appropriate and/or strategic for Open Christian University to honour this person at this time?
  - 7.1.7 Is the nominee already aware of Open Christian University and would he or she appreciate the significance of the award?
  - 7.1.8 Does this candidate help Open Christian University achieve the goal of serving society?

## **8. Nomination Process:**

- 8.1 The University confers honorary degrees at its Graduation Ceremonies. The **University Honorary Degree Committee** invites nominations in December of each year for honorary degrees to be awarded at the August Graduation Ceremony held the following year.
- 8.2 Nominations may be submitted by any member of staff or member of the University Council (Senate) or Academic Council or alumni and other friends of the University. Individuals may not nominate themselves or members of their family.
- 8.3 Nominations for honorary degrees are strictly confidential and should not be discussed with any individual until approval of the award has been granted by the University Council and offers have been accepted by candidates.
- 8.4 Recommendations for honorary degrees are received by the Registrar. They are filed on a standard form, the contents of which are summarized for consideration by the **Honorary Degree Committee**.

- 8.5 The official nomination form, available on the Open Christian University website must be submitted, including the nominee's verifiable mailing address, email address and phone number.
- 8.6 Nomination material should include sufficient documentation to clearly support the nomination and assist the Committee with the review, including a concise statement of the nominee's extraordinary contributions to academia and/or to Open Christian University and/or to society and how these contributions distinguish him or her. The proposed title of the degree to be awarded should be stipulated on the nomination form.
- 8.7 Nominators should not seek outside letters of support. If they are solicited, a nominator must inform the reference of the strict confidentiality of the process.
- 8.8 Nominations may be submitted at any time; however for submissions to be considered for a particular year the deadline is typically the end of January. Official deadlines will be published by the Registrar.
- 8.9 The nomination and selection process is confidential. All materials submitted are held in confidence and nominators should not inform the nominee of the nomination. The outcome of any individual nomination shall not be released out of respect for the nominee and to ensure the integrity of the process.
- 8.10 Nominators will receive a confirmation of the receipt of the nomination, but, due to the confidential nature of the process, will not be informed about the status of that nomination. Approved candidates will remain active for three years.

## **9. Approval Process:**

- 9.1 The closing date for nominations shall be advertised throughout the University by the Registrar and all nominations received by this date will be considered at the first available meeting of the **Honorary Degrees Committee**.
  - 9.1.1 Recommendations from the Honorary Degree Committee will be put to the first available meeting of the Academic Council, which will either support or decline the recommendations of the *Honorary Awards Committee*. Those nominations supported by the Academic Council will be submitted to the next available meeting of the University Council (**Senate**) which will either give approval to, or decline, the recommendations of Academic Council.
  - 9.1.2 The University shall admit no person to an honorary degree unless both the University Council (**Senate**) and the Academic Council have approved the name of such a person for that purpose.
- 9.2 An Honorary Doctorate might not be conferred in the year in which it is approved. The University is under no obligation to award an honorary doctorate in any year.

- 9.3 Normally not more than one honorary degree will be awarded at each Graduation Ceremony.
- 9.4 Unsuccessful nominations may be revised and resubmitted at a later date. The resubmission would begin again at the start of the process. Strict confidentiality must continue to be applied at all times.
- 9.4.1 Only after approval has been given by University Council (**Senate**) shall the nominee be invited to accept the Honorary Degree. This invitation shall be extended in writing by the Vice Chancellor.
- 9.5 Until the nominee has accepted, the nomination remains strictly confidential and should not be discussed with any individual outside or within the University.
- 9.6 Except under unusual circumstances when the Management Board determines otherwise, an honorary degree recipient shall not receive a speaker's fee or honorarium for accepting an honorary degree or delivering a commencement address or the equivalent.

**10. Parchment:**

- 10.1 The parchment for an Honorary Graduate shall be branded in the current style and shall record:
  - 10.1.1 the name of the University;
  - 10.1.2 the honorary degree being conferred;
  - 10.1.3 the date of the ceremony at which the Honorary Degree is conferred;
  - 10.1.4 The name of the person receiving the honorary award
- 10.2 The parchment shall bear the signatures of the Chancellor or Pro-Chancellor, and the Vice Chancellor.

**11. Review of the Regulations:**

11.1 The regulations for awarding honorary doctorates may be reviewed from time to time, following discussion at the **Honorary Degree Committee**. Prior to publication of any amendments, details would be ratified by the Academic Council and the University Council (**Senate**).

**12. Policy Administration:**

12.1 These regulations will be administered by the Office of the Vice Chancellor.

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**Document written or revised by:**

Name:.....Signature:.....

Date:.....

**Approved by: Head of Department:**

Name:.....Signature:.....

Date:.....

**Checked by Quality Assurance Office:**

Name:.....Signature: .....

Date:.....

**Updated in Open Christian University Quality Manual by Adhengo Institute**

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