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| Responsible Officer | Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) | | |
| Contact Officer | Director, Student Management | | |
| Superseded Documents | University Medal Policy, UNSW Council, 30 October 1995 (CL95/84) (m) (v5.0) | | |
| Review | Annual review by the University Medal Committee | | |
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| Associated Documents | University Medal Procedures Recommendation for the Award of a University Medal | | |
| Version | Authorisation | Approval Date | Effective Date |
| 6.0 | Approved by the Vice-Chancellor | 21 November 2009 | 1 December 2009 |

1. Preamble

1.1 Purpose

This policy specifies requirements for the award of a University Medal.

1.2 Background

The award of a University Medal indicates outstanding academic performance by an undergraduate student across a program and/or a particular major within their Bachelor degree.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all undergraduate programs, whether or not they include an Honours component.

3. Definitions

Definitions are consistent with the UNSW Glossary of Terms:
<http://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au/general/2010/SSAPO/glossary.html>

Academic Statement: An unofficial record of a student's academic history. The statement includes details of a student's program, enrolled courses, results summary assessment statistics, advanced standing and awards obtained at UNSW.

Bachelor Degree: A Bachelor degree is normally the formal award students receive when they successfully complete their first university degree program. However, some Bachelor degrees are for graduate entry only.

Cohort: The group of students expected to complete their program of study within the same semester.

Combined Degree Program: A program with a single set of rules that leads to the award of two degrees.

Graduand: A student who has completed all the requirements for her or his program, but has not yet been formally awarded the degree.

Graduate: A student who has completed all the requirements for her or his program, and has been formally awarded the degree.

Honours: A Bachelor degree with Honours demonstrates in-depth learning in one or more majors, and often has a research training focus. Some Honours programs may comprise an optional fourth year of intensive study after three years of basic undergraduate study, or may be awarded on the basis of a student's entire program of study

Major: A specified sequence of study in an area of academic or vocational specialisation within a program. Majors require students to take an approved set of courses and UOC. Majors may include core and elective courses. [Previously known as Specialisation]

Program: A sequence of courses leading to a degree or award conferred by the University.

Registrar: The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) & Registrar.

Semester: The administrative time period in which Teaching Periods are defined, students enrol, and for which students are charged fees or student contributions.

Undergraduate: Undergraduate programs of study are designed for students who have completed secondary studies (high school) in Australia or have a level of education deemed equivalent to this (e.g. equivalent overseas study or alternate entry programs).

Units of Credit: Each course at UNSW has a particular load or weighting which is referred to as units of credit (UOC). UNSW programs require the successful completion of a specified number of UOC.

WAM: A Weighted Average Mark (WAM) is calculated by multiplying the mark obtained for each relevant result by the units of credit of the particular course, adding up the products and dividing by the total number of units of credit for the relevant courses. A 'Term WAM' is calculated for relevant results in a semester, and a separate 'Cumulative WAM' is calculated for relevant results over the student's entire program.

4. Policy Statement

4.1 University Medal Committee

On the advice of the Vice-Chancellor, a UNSW Council appointed committee will receive and consider recommendations for awards of a University Medal. The Committee shall normally comprise:

- ◆ The Vice-Chancellor or nominee (as Presiding Member)
- ◆ President, Academic Board
- ◆ Deputy President Academic Board, nominated by the President
- ◆ Pro-Vice Chancellor (Students) and Registrar

4.2 Timing of awards

The award of the University Medal is normally to be determined twice in each year by the University Medal Committee following the Semester 1 and Semester 2 series of Faculty Assessment Review Group meetings. Nominations received outside the standard timeframe may be considered by the Committee via circulation.

4.3 General Principles

On the recommendation of a Faculty Assessment Review Group (FARG), the University Medal Committee may award a University Medal to a student in an undergraduate program who has shown highly distinguished merit in completing her or his program of study.

The University Medal Committee will take into account the whole academic record of the student (including performance across combined degree programs).

In order to be considered eligible for the award of a Medal, students will normally have completed at least 48 UOC of Level III courses (or above) at UNSW. For students who have completed part of their studies at another university, the FARG should ensure comparability with UNSW students.

Students enrolled on a combined degree program may be considered eligible for the award of a medal in both degrees.

4.4 Honours

Where an award of Honours is made in a program, it is expected that a student would have performed at a level significantly above the minimum required for Honours Class 1, in comparison with her or his peers in the major.

It is likely that the recommended student will have achieved the highest (or equal highest) mark for the Honours component of the program, with a Cumulative WAM that is the highest, or amongst the highest, of the graduating cohort for their program. In making their recommendation(s), Faculties are required to advise the criteria used in determining cut-offs.

Students who complete an Honours program that includes more than one major may be considered eligible for the award of a Medal in one or more of the majors.

4.5 Award of more than one Medal

Only in exceptional circumstances may more than one Medal be awarded for a particular Major. In such circumstances, Schools will be expected to make a compelling argument for additional awards at the time of the recommendation.

Students enrolled in a combined degree program, and who intend to complete Honours in both degrees may be considered eligible for the award of a medal in both degrees.

4.6 Non award of a Medal

The University Medal Committee is the final authority for the awarding of a University Medal.

4.7 Appeals

Appeals can only be made on the basis that the University Medal Committee did not follow due process. Appeals are decided by the Vice-Chancellor, or Chancellor when the Vice-Chancellor has acted as Presiding Member.

In cases where recommendations have been made on the basis of incorrect or missing data, such as late results, Faculties should submit the correct information, together with an explanatory note, to the Presiding Member, as soon as practicable after the data has been rectified.

4.8 Presentation of Medals

Graduands or graduates who have been awarded a University Medal shall receive a congratulatory letter from the Vice-Chancellor, and be invited to receive their Medal at an appropriate Graduation Ceremony.

Notification of the award of a University Medal shall be recorded on the University Testamur.

5. Legal & Policy Framework

This policy operates within the context of state and federal legislation and within the context of university policy.

Relevant Legislation:
5.1 Higher Education Support Act 2003
5.2 Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1989 (NSW)

6. Implementation

6.1 Roles & Responsibilities

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) is responsible for implementation of this policy.

6.2 Support & Advice

Support and advice in relation to this policy is available from the Director, Student Management.

6.3 Communication

The standard communication from the Policy Development Process shall be applied.

7. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

8. Acknowledgements

- The Australian National University: University Medal Nomination Form
<http://www.anu.edu.au/sas/prizes/2009%20Uni%20Medal%20Nomination%20Form%20Mid-year.pdf>
- Monash University: Recognition of Excellence Policy
<http://www.buseco.monash.edu.au/asg/agu/policies/recognition.html>
- The University of Sydney: Academic Board Policy on Awards with Honours (18 April 2007)
http://www.usyd.edu.au/ab/policies/Honours_award.pdf
- The University of Queensland: Guidelines for the Award of University Medals (22 March 2007)
<http://www.uq.edu.au/hupp/?page=25102&pid=25075>

Appendix A: History

| Version | Authorised by | Approval Date | Effective Date | Sections modified |
|---------|----------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1.0 | UNSW Council (162) | 12 November 1951 | 12 November 1951 | |
| 2.0 | UNSW Council (77/150) | 11 July 1977 | 11 July 1977 | Full review |
| 3.0 | UNSW Council (80/60) | 21 May 1980 | 21 May 1980 | Full review |
| 4.0 | UNSW Council (84/96 (a)) | 12 November 1984 | 12 November 1984 | Full review and inclusion of Medal Committee. |
| 5.0 | UNSW Council (CL95/84) (m) | 30 October 1995 | 30 October 1995 | Full review |
| 5.1 | UNSW Council (CL98/62) | 10 August 1998 | 10 August 1998 | Amendment of Medal Committee composition |
| 6.0 | Vice-Chancellor | 22 November 2009 | 1 December 2009 to 29 September 2013 | Full review |

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