

Honorary Awards Policy

Policy Number	AC19
Approving Authority	NIDA Board of Directors
Date Implemented	April 2026
Current Version	2.0
Date of Review	February 2028
Contact Officer	Director Learning and Innovation
Related Policies, Procedures and Documents	Minutes of the Academic Board Minutes of the NIDA Honorary Degrees and Fellowships Committee Nomination Forms Minutes of the NIDA Board of Directors Qualifications Register – Honorary Degrees Equity and Diversity Policy, Course Completion and Awards Policy

1. SCOPE OF POLICY

1.1. This policy applies to all nominations for Honorary Awards

1.2. This policy applies to all:

- a) NIDA staff, Academic Board and NIDA Board of Directors members involved in the administration and approval of honorary awards.
- b) Honorary award recipients.

1.3. This policy does not cover:

- a) Naming of prizes.
The giving or receiving of scholarships.
- b) Key partnerships.
- c) Honour naming of facilities and physical entities.
- d) Honorary awards, honorary titles and honour names conferred or awarded to NIDA staff by external bodies.

2. PURPOSE

2.1. The Honorary Awards Policy outlines:

- a) The conditions for nomination and conferral of the honorary awards of Honorary MFA and Honorary Fellow of NIDA.
- b) Obligations and entitlements of honorary award recipient.

- c) The right of NIDA or an honorary award recipient to terminate their honorary award.

3. PRINCIPLES

- 3.1. The principles of diversity and strategic alignment, equality of opportunity and process transparency apply to this policy.
- 3.2. Honorary awards should be conferred:
 - a) on the basis of merit, and
 - b) with a focus on the potential for positive contributions to NIDA's strategy, commitments, values and culture, or
 - c) for exceptional service and /or outstanding achievements in the performing arts at a national or international level.
- 3.3. Staff and external stakeholders must be aware of, and disclose and manage any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest
- 3.4. Confidentiality of process.

4. POLICY

- 4.1 The NIDA Board of Directors may from time to time on the recommendation of the NIDA Honorary Awards Committee and the Academic Board issue Honorary Awards.
- 4.2 All honorary awards represent the highest level of recognition from NIDA, acknowledging either positive contributions to NIDA's strategy, commitments, values and culture or exceptional service and/or outstanding achievements in the performing arts, which is recognised nationally or internationally.
- 4.3 An Honorary Masters Degree may be awarded on the basis of one or more of the criteria set out in the Honorary Awards Committee Charter in the Governance Manual.
- 4.4 Honorary Fellowships may be awarded on the basis of one or more of the criteria set out in the Honorary Awards Committee Charter in the Governance Manual.

Limitations on eligibility for the award of Honorary Awards

- 4.5 A serving politician, aspirant to political office or public servant is not eligible for an honorary award.
- 4.6 A member of NIDA staff or a NIDA Board of Directors member who is, when nominated still engaged in their NIDA role and expected to be still so at conferral, is not eligible for an honorary award.
- 4.7 Where a nominee is a retiring staff member or NIDA Board of Directors member, they must cease their engagement no later than two months after the time of conferral to be eligible for an Honorary award.
- 4.8 Proposals for honorary awards, in particular degrees should be considered only if there is a reasonable expectation that the recipient will be able to travel to Sydney to receive the award at the annual Graduation ceremony.

Nominations for Honorary Awards

- 4.9 The Honorary Award process is strictly confidential. A person nominated for an Honorary Award must not be consulted beforehand, nor at any time prior to the NIDA Board of Directors determination, and all deliberations, investigations and recommendations relating to the nomination must be treated as strictly confidential by all persons involved.
- 4.10 Nominations for Honorary Awards must be made in accordance with the procedure set out in the Honorary Awards Committee Charter in the Governance Manual

- 4.11 Nominations for the conferral of an Honorary Award can be made by:
- a. NIDA staff.,
 - b. NIDA students.
 - c. NIDA Board of Directors.
- 4.12 Background checks will be undertaken as appropriate.
- 4.13 If the number of suitable nominations is greater than can be accommodated at a single Graduation Ceremony, the eligible nominations can be held over for future consideration for a period of up to five (5) years.
- 4.13 Once reviewed, selected nominations will be presented to the NIDA Academic Board for endorsement.
- 4.15 Academic Board endorsed nominations will be sent to the NIDA Board of Directors for approval.

Notification

- 4.16 If the NIDA Board of Directors resolves to grant an honorary award, the NIDA Chair, or their appointed representative will contact the nominee to determine whether the award is accepted.
- 4.17 If the recipient accepts the award, a formal letter of offer will be made to the recipient by the NIDA Chair or their representative. The names of recipients will not be released until after they have accepted the offer of award.
- 4.18 The Secretary of the Honorary Awards Committee will:
- a. Inform the Director, Learning and Innovation of the approved recipients so that the Honorary Award may be conferred at the next graduation ceremony.
 - b. Inform the nominators of the outcome of their nomination.
 - c. Inform the Director, Partnerships and Engagement and the Head of Marketing so that citations and publicity can be developed for each relevant Ceremony.

Conferral of Honorary Awards

- 4.19 Honorary awards are only to be conferred at a scheduled NIDA graduation ceremony, the exception is the award of a Fellow of NIDA (honoris causa) which may in special circumstances be conferred at an alternate significant NIDA event.
- 4.20 Honorary awards are not conferred in absentia. Live link video conferral of an MFA (Honoris causa) during a graduation may be considered under exceptional circumstances.
- 4.21 An Honorary Award must be conferred in person within 18 months of the NIDA Board of Directors approving the recommendation.
- 4.22 An Honorary Degree can be conferred posthumously if the Secretary of the Honorary Awards Committee receive the nomination before the death of the nominee.
- 4.23 An Honorary Fellowship cannot be awarded posthumously.
- 4.24 No more than two (2) Honorary Degrees should be conferred at any one Graduation Ceremony, this is inclusive of a delayed conferral.
- 4.25 NIDA limits the awarding of Honorary Fellowships to one (1) per academic year.

Honorary Awards - Titles and Postnominals

4.26 A conferred Honorary Award will be named as appropriate following the naming convention below, with the recipient eligible to use the post nominals as prescribed for period set out below:

a. Honorary Degree

Honorary Award	Master of Fine Arts (honoris causa)
Postnominal	MFA (honoris causa)
Conferral term	Title is retained for life

b. Honorary Fellowship

Honorary Award	Fellow of NIDA (honoris causa)
Postnominal	FNIDA(honoris causa)
Conferral term	Title is retained for life

Honorary Award title holder obligations and entitlements

4.27 Honorary Award title holders may be asked to perform duties, including but not limited to:

- a. Contribution to NIDA's profile and reputation through public dissemination of knowledge and intellectual engagement.
- b. Contribution to activities associated with developing NIDA's external relationships with industry and community.
- c. Representation of NIDA in conjunction with senior NIDA staff in professional forums, conferences and public seminars.
- d. Sitting on assessment/judging panels.
- e. Contribution to curricula and/or teaching including guest lectures/masterclasses.
- f. Staff and/or student engagement, development or mentoring.

4.28 Honorary Award title holders are expected to uphold NIDA's values.

Entitlements

- 4.29 Honorary Award title holders are not considered NIDA staff and are not bound by any of the awards or employment agreements that NIDA functions under except that they must comply with the NIDA Staff Code of Conduct when engaging in any of the activities set out in clause 4.27.
- 4.30 Honorary Award title holders will not normally receive remuneration (including honorarium, consultancy fees or other salary payment). Honorary title holders (with a right to work in Australia) may be remunerated for undertaking specific assignments, for which they will be issued with a separate contract.
- 4.31 A member of the NIDA Executive may approve the reimbursement of expenses reasonably associated with the duties of an Honorary Award title holder in line with NIDA's Delegations of Authority and staff travel policy.
- 4.32 Honorary Award title holders are not covered by NIDA's workers compensation insurance. However, honorary title holders are covered by the following NIDA insurance policies when engaged in activities on behalf of NIDA:
- a. Public liability and professional indemnity insurance.
 - b. Personal accident insurance for limited expenses that are not covered under Medicare or private medical insurance.
 - c. NIDA's travel insurance when travelling directly to or from NIDA activities in line with the Travel Policy and Procedure.

4.33 Honorary Award title holders are provided the following:

- a. The right to use the relevant post nominals as prescribed in 4.26 of this policy.
- b. NIDA Library borrowing privileges as per rights of academic staff.
- c. NIDA email addresses and access to NIDA IT services.
- d. Where capacity allows short term access to meeting rooms.
- e. Discounted Corporate training opportunities.
- f. Discounted access to NIDA Open courses for immediate family members.

Honorary Award title discontinuation or termination

4.34 The NIDA Board of Directors may terminate an Honorary Degree or Honorary Fellowship where:

- a. The title holder has acted in a manner inconsistent with NIDA values and code of conduct expectations.
- b. The continuation is considered to be against NIDA's or Australia's best interests.

4.35 Terminations may be requested via the Chief Executive Officer and must be authorised by the NIDA Board of Directors. A letter of termination will be issued by Company Secretary following the approval of a request for termination.

4.36 The recipient may request the termination of their Honorary Degree/Fellowship at any time in writing via the NIDA Company Secretary. A letter of termination will be issued by the NIDA Company Secretary following approval by the NIDA Board of Directors of the request to terminate.

Record Keeping

4.37 The Secretary to the Honorary Degrees and Fellowship Committee will maintain a record of all nominations and their outcomes.

4.38 The name of the recipient and the date of conferral of an Honorary degree is to be entered into NIDA's Graduate Register under Honours by Student Services.

4.39 Where the NIDA Board of Directors terminates an Honorary Degree or Honorary Fellowship, or a recipient requests termination of an Honorary Award, Student Services will update the NIDA Graduate Register with the effective date of the termination on notification from the Company Secretary.

5. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Accredited Course	A course that is recognized under the Australian Quality Framework (AQF) and is registered with one of the two main regulatory agencies, being TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality Standards Authority) for Higher Education and ASQA (Australian Skills Quality Authority) for Vocational programs. An accredited course is one that leads to the conferral of a degree or the award of a certificate or diploma.
Honorary	Conferred as an honour, without the usual requirements or functions.
Honorary Award (an)	For the purposes of this policy Honorary Awards is the overarching term covering both Honorary Degrees and Honorary Fellowships
Honorary Degree	A Master of NIDA may be awarded to a person for exceptional service or contributions to the achievement of the mission, values and aspiration of NIDA, significantly enhancing the reputation and standing of NIDA at a national and international level.
Honoris Causa	The Latin for "the sake of honour,"

NIDA Honorary Degrees and Fellowships Committee	A Committee of 8 members as prescribed in the NIDA Governance Manual who meet yearly to consider nominations for the award of honorary degrees and Fellowships.
Outstanding	For the purpose of this policy means a level of sustained excellence that has resulted in industry prominence nationally and or internationally
Special circumstances	For the purpose of this policy means the decision to use a non-graduation NIDA event for the awarding of a Fellowship because the event selected is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. specifically associated with the rationale for the awarding of the Honorary Fellowship, or b. of significant profile and import that the inclusion of the Fellowship will enhance the event and profile of NIDA nationally or internationally
Sustained period	For the purposes of this policy a sustained period is consistent support and advocacy for NIDA for 10 or more years
Testamur	A formal certificate issued by NIDA to an Honorary Award recipient or to a Graduate on the completion of an accredited Award

6 CONSULTATION/BENCHMARKING

Benchmarked against policies and practice from several higher education providers and other sources
Relevant policy documents from the following are gratefully acknowledged:

- Australian National University (ANU)
- University of Sydney
- University of Technology Sydney (UTS)
- James Cook University (JCU)

Consultation: Academic Heads of Courses, students

Legislation and Regulatory Frameworks	Australian Qualifications Framework HE Threshold Standards 2015 TEQSA Guidance Notes
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7 CHANGE HISTORY

Date	Change Description	Reason for Change	Author	Version
April 2026	Update 4.7 to allow awarding of an Honorary Award to a retiring staff member or NIDA Board of Directors member in the year of retirement	Change to timing of graduation ceremonies	Head of Quality and Compliance	2.0
December 2025	Editorial update to review date	Revised policy review schedule approved by Academic Board October 2025	Academic Compliance Manager	1.1
May 2025	New policy	Needed to ensure clear guidance on policy and process	Learning and Innovation	1.0