B9. Honorary degrees

1. All staff, students, governors, members of the University Court, the Chancellor and the Pro-Chancellor are eligible to submit nominations throughout the year for Honorary Degrees.

2. Nominations for the award of honorary degrees will be considered by the Honorary Conferments Subcommittee (HCSC), which is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor. The HCSC is granted delegated authority, from the Academic Board and the Board of Governors, to approve nominations. The HCSC will prepare an annual report of approved nominations for receipt by the Academic Board and the Board of Governors.

3. Nominees for Honorary Degrees must demonstrate one or more of the following:
   a) Substantial and significant academic achievements either nationally or internationally, in a relevant field (a subject area taught or researched in the University);
   b) An outstanding contribution to national and/or international life in any way;
   c) Distinguished service to the University, in any capacity, over a long period of time;
   d) An active and influential role in enhancing the provision of education in the UK or abroad;
   e) An ability to contribute to the future aims, strategies and development of the University, e.g. by enhancing its reputation;
   f) Be an alumni of the University who has achieved distinction in the academic, public service, industrial, commercial, artistic, cultural or sporting fields;
   g) An example worthy as a role model to students.

4. Nominations for serving politicians, current members of the Board of Governors, current staff or from any individual on their own behalf will not be considered. If a former staff member or Governor is nominated, this information must be included on the nomination form.

5. Formal submissions must be on the University’s Honorary Degrees Nomination form (Appendix 1) together with a brief biography and a supporting statement from the proposer indicating how the nominee meets the University’s formal requirements. The nominations must also have the support of the proposer’s Dean or Director (where applicable).

6. Once the completed form has been submitted, the HCSC will consider the nomination and aim to make a decision within ten working days. The HCSC will either decide that:
   a) The nominee is not suitable according to the criteria listed above, in which case the proposer should be informed by the secretary of the decision of the sub-committee and the matter closed (the nominee should not be informed);
   b) The nominee be accepted for an honorary degree, and which honorary degree is awarded (drawn from section A1.1.8 of the University regulations: ‘Honorary Degrees’).

7. When the nominations are approved by the HCSC, they will be submitted by the secretary to the Assistant Communications Director as part of the consultation process.

8. Subject to the recommendation from the Assistant Communications Director, the successful nominee will be written to by the Vice-Chancellor and invited to accept the award either at a graduation ceremony or other suitable occasion.
9. The proposer will be informed by the Corporate Relations Manager once the nominee has accepted the invitation from the Vice-Chancellor of an honorary degree, but this must remain confidential (see point 11).

10. The Head of the Conferments Office will be informed of any approvals in order to prepare the certificate of award.

11. If the nominee accepts the invitation, but is unable to attend on the date suggested, the Vice-Chancellor may offer to defer conferment to a future occasion. Any deferred conferment should be reported back to the next HCSC meeting. The HCSC will note the outcome at the next meeting, the proposer will be informed and the matter will be closed.

12. The strictest confidentiality must be maintained throughout the process of nomination and consideration. It is important from the beginning of the process of nomination, through to the point at which a decision is reached and the successful candidates have been invited to receive their award and have accepted, that a high level of confidentiality be maintained.

13. Honorary graduates may use the approved post-nominal letters as contained in section A1.1.8 of the University regulations: ‘Honorary Degrees’. It is not customary, however, for recipients of an honorary doctorate to adopt the prefix ‘Dr’.

Approved by Academic Board, 3 November 2010

**Supplementary Guidance Notes to Section B9 of the Academic Regulations**

An honorary degree is one of Higher Education’s most significant accolades. The University is pleased to confer honorary degrees on individuals of conspicuous merit as part of an ongoing relationship with that individual. The regulations for the award of honorary degrees are designed to encourage applications from the widest possible field of candidates who have made an outstanding contribution in a relevant context and who will develop a lasting relationship with the University.

The University’s normal honorary degree is an honorary doctorate, though other awards are available in appropriate circumstances. The decision to confer an honorary award, and the type of award which is conferred, is made by the Board of Governors on the recommendation of the Honorary Conferments Committee. The Committee’s recommendations will include the precise title of the degree to be conferred from the list of honorary degrees in the University’s Academic Regulations (Section A1.1).

Once the Board of Governors has agreed the recommendation of the Honorary Conferments Committee, it is expected that the award will normally be conferred at the next available graduation ceremony.

Successful nominations have included people who have shown an interest in the University and its work, former staff and alumni who have gone on to great success. Many of these live or work locally. It is anticipated that those accepting the award will be prepared to develop a relationship with the University that will be of mutual value and interest.

All nominations are encouraged, in particular, nominations for individuals from faith communities, the voluntary sector, those that reflect the ethnic, cultural and international diversity of the University as well as nominations which promote the University’s values including its commitment to gender equality and equal opportunities. Nominees will be considered equally against the criteria set out in the regulations for the award of honorary degrees.

It is important from the beginning of the process of nomination, through to the point at which a decision is reached and the successful candidates have been invited to receive their award by the Vice-Chancellor and have accepted, that a high level of confidentiality be maintained. It would be a major embarrassment if a nominee was made aware of their nomination and was then subsequently unsuccessful. Equally it would be embarrassing for the University if there was disclosure in the public domain prior to the successful nominees receiving official notification from the Vice-Chancellor.