



Award and Alumni Documents Policy and Procedure

1. OVERVIEW

The Award and Alumni Documents Policy and Procedure set out how the University manages the process for making the award and alumni documentation available to its students, graduates and early leavers.

For the purposes of this policy and procedure, the terms 'student' or 'students' refer to both students and graduates of the University. The policy and procedure are administered by the Graduation Office on behalf of the University and is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

All students who have an award conferred by the University receive one set of award documents free of charge as follows:

- Award Certificate
- Academic Transcript (taught postgraduate students and undergraduate students registered before September 2014 only)

Charges apply for further copies of these documents: see the [Student Documentation Ordering System](#) for further details.

For students who leave the University before the completion of their studies where no award has been made, an Academic Transcript may be available if enough credits have been accrued. This can be ordered online from our [Student Documentation Ordering System](#).

The above list is not exhaustive and is based upon individual awards.

2. AWARD DOCUMENTS

Once the Award documents have been printed, a notification email is sent to the student's Essex email and the external email address as recorded on ESIS (the Essex Student Information System).

All Award documents are retained for two working weeks and are despatched by post on the date advised in the notification email to a student's permanent postal address as recorded on ESIS.

Where the Graduation Office is not notified of a change to the permanent home address before the document posting date, the address recorded on ESIS is used.

All Award documents are sent by standard Royal Mail (second class) or standard Royal Mail international post. No documents are sent using tracked mail or by courier, unless by special arrangement – please [email](#) the Graduation Office for further information.

3. HIGHER EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT REPORT (HEAR)

If you're an undergraduate and started in or after 2014, you have access to your HEAR now and

you just need to activate your account. You can find out more about your HEAR by going to <http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/hear.aspx>

When you graduate, your HEAR will be finalised and you'll have full access to it for life. The HEAR is electronic and there is no hard copy version.

Some institutions and organisations do not currently recognise the HEAR: if you require a hard copy transcript for this reason, please order [online](#) and include a copy of the request for the hard copy transcript from the institution or organisation that is requesting it. Please note we cannot process your order without this information. (see notes below in section 15 subsection 3 for further information)

If you're an undergraduate who started before 2014 or you're a postgraduate, you'll receive a printed [transcript of your academic results](#) along with your degree certificate.

4. JUNE AWARDS

Due to the high level of certificate and transcript production at this time of year, degree certificates for students who finish their studies in June are not available for collection before Graduation week.

Students who do not attend Graduation receive an email notifying them of the exact date when their certificate will be posted to the permanent home address as recorded on ESIS. For all emails regarding this, the Graduation Office uses the Essex email address and the external email address as recorded on ESIS.

For students attending Graduation, certificates are available for collection on the day of Graduation **after** the relevant Graduation Ceremony. **It is not possible for certificates to be collected by a third party during Graduation week.**

Students wishing to collect certificates after Graduation should inform the Graduation Office by email **before** Graduation week.

5. AUTUMN TERM AWARDS

Award documents for students who finish their studies in the Autumn Term are available after the Examination Boards have confirmed results in November or December.

Information on when the results will be released is available at <http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/exams-and-coursework/schedule.aspx>

Students are notified by email using the external email address as recorded on ESIS, once the Award documents have been printed and are ready for despatch. The email notification includes an exact date of posting.

Students wishing to collect Award documents in person must inform the Graduation Office. No Award documents are issued to a third party. **Documents being collected in person must be collected from the Student Information Team in the Silberrad Student Centre or you must inform us if you wish to collect from the Southend or Loughton campuses. Please be aware that if you chose to collect from either Southend or Loughton there will be several days delay as the documents have to be couriered down to the campus requested.**

6. AWARDS AT OTHER TIMES OF THE YEAR

Award documents for students who finish their studies at other times of the year are usually available within 28 days of the conferral date and usually earlier than 28 days.

Students are notified by email to the external email address as recorded on ESIS once the Award documents have been printed and are ready for despatch. The email notification includes an exact date of posting.

Students wishing to collect Award documents or who wish for a third party to collect them on their behalf must inform the Graduation Office. No Award documents are issued to a third party without written (usually by email) consent from the student. **Documents being collected in person or by a third party must be collected from the Student Information Team in the Silberrad Student Centre or you must inform us if you wish to collect from the Southend or Loughton campuses**

8. UNDELIVERED DOCUMENTS

Where documents are posted to you and they have not arrived, a second set may be issued at the University's discretion.

Students are not eligible for another set of documents free of charge where:

- the documents were posted out more than six months ago;
- the documents were posted out to an address outside of the UK and less than 6 weeks have passed;
- a second set of documents free of charge has already been issued;
- no response was received from a student following the request from the Graduation Office to notify the University of any changes of address within two weeks of the printing of the documents.

9. LOST OR MISSING DOCUMENTS

Students who have lost or misplaced the original Award documents will need to order a replacement set from the [Student Documentation Ordering System](#).

10. DEBT

In accordance with [Academic Affairs regulation 6.31](#), where a student is in educational debt to the University, no award shall be conferred and no transcript for the programme of study issued. Accordingly, Award documents are not issued by the Graduation Office and the Higher Education Achievement Report not finalised until the debt has been paid in full. A Statement of Results will be issued to confirm marks achieved, until such time as the award has been conferred.

Debts may be paid up to and including the day of Graduation and at any point following Graduation. Award documents are held indefinitely until they may be released in accordance with University policy and regulations.

11. ALUMNI DOCUMENTS

Former students of the University may order copies of their award documents from the [Student Documentation Ordering System](#).

For some older Undergraduate and Postgraduate records, where a copy cannot be obtained from ESIS, the Graduation Office refers to the appropriate paper archives. In the case of an incomplete paper record, a partial transcript may be produced, accompanied by a letter of explanation.

The University makes every effort to retain records of all student marks and information on awards conferred. In the event that a record cannot be found, a standard letter of confirmation of studies is issued.

In the event that the former student has a debt recorded on ESIS, all award documents are withheld until the debt is cleared. A document may be issued where the debt was accrued during a subsequent period of study unrelated to the ordered document.

12. DOCUMENT RETENTION

Original documents not collected or despatched 6 months after the original printing date are destroyed. Documents withheld due to education debt are held until such time as the debt has been paid in full.

13. NAME CHANGES

In accordance with University policy, ESIS provides the definitive record of a student's legal name as it appears on the photographic identification (passport or driving licence) provided at the time of registration or used to change the name during the period of study. The name is recorded and checked during the initial registration process and each student is required to provide evidence of their legal name. The record remains unchanged for the duration of a student's studies and beyond unless formal notification is received from the individual student and a request made for the name to be changed.

Once a student's award has been conferred, retrospective reporting of a name change for that period of study is not accepted, even where the change may have occurred during the period of study. There may be circumstances where changes can be made, which will be considered on a case by case basis and for which no charge will apply should documents need to be reissued.

14. VERIFICATION OF AWARD DOCUMENTS

The verification of University awards for third parties is currently managed via the Higher Education Degree Database (HEDD) <https://www.hedd.ac.uk/>. The University does not verify Award documents. All Award documents carry the embossed seal of the University and the signature of the Registrar and Secretary at the time the award document was produced, which confirms authenticity. Award documents are **only** valid if both the seal and the signature are present.

Advice on how to enable a document to be legalised can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/get-document-legalised>

15. DOCUMENTATION REFUND POLICY

1. OVERVIEW

The documentation refund policy is applicable to students, graduates and early leavers of the University that have ordered and paid for formal student documentation, be it on-line or via other methods.

Documents that currently bear a charge and are included within the remit of this policy, are as follows:

- Academic Transcripts (taught postgraduate students and undergraduate students registered before September 2014 only)
- Replacement Award Certificates
- Award Confirmation Letters
- DOATAP Award Confirmation Letters

2. REFUND PRINCIPLES

2.1 Refunds may be issued at the request of the student or graduate (within 30 days of the order being placed) or the University and may be issued in full or in-part dependent on the circumstances of each request. Refund requests are individually assessed and will normally be authorised under the following conditions:

- A technical error on the part of the Student Documentation Ordering System

- Once payment has been made for a document(s) but the order is cancelled via email to the Student Services Hub or Graduation Office before the documentation has been produced.

2.2 Refund requests will normally be **rejected** if the request is made for the following reasons:

- S/he/they were not aware that an Award Certificate and Transcript (if applicable) is available free of charge after graduation (one per graduate). This is clearly stated on the Student Documentation Ordering System and on-line results page
- The student or graduate claims that the wrong documents were produced when there is demonstrable evidence to the contrary.
- The student or graduate misunderstands the documents s/he required and ordered the wrong ones. The Student Documentation Ordering System gives details of what each document means. The customer is given full opportunity to read the information provided to them on the website
- The student or graduate claims that s/he has received the documents later than published on the Student Documentation Ordering System, or on any of the receipt,
- The student or graduate places a refund request more than 30 days after the payment for the documents have been made.

3. HIGHER EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT REPORT

If a HEAR eligible student or graduate orders a transcript a refund will be made if the following evidence is sent to either the Student Services Hub or Graduation Team:

- Proof in the form of an email that the recipient requires a hard copy transcript.

Once the evidence has been received the appropriate team will produce the document and issue a refund.

If a HEAR eligible student or graduate orders a transcript but **does not** provide the evidence, as shown above, the transaction will be automatically refunded and the document will not be printed. An advisory email will be sent to the student or graduate directing them to use their HEAR.

4. PROCESS FOR REQUESTING REFUNDS

Requests for a refund should be made as follows:

Current Students documents@essex.ac.uk

Graduates alumni-docs@essex.ac.uk

The request will be assessed against the previous criteria and issued as appropriate.