

AWARD DOCUMENTATION POLICY: Certificates/Transcripts/Confirmation of Award Letters

Responsibility for Policy:	Registrar and Chief Operating Officer
Relevant to:	All LJMU Students, Staff, Alumni and Academic Partners
Approved by:	Academic Board, 28 June 2017 Academic Planning & Finance Panel June 2023
Responsibility for Document Review:	Head of Registry Services and Academic Registrar
Date introduced:	September 2017
Date(s) modified:	December 2019, December 2020, May 2023
Next Review Date:	May 2025

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Replacement Certificate Application Form
Dispatch to Partner Institution Form

RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

Gender Diversity Guidance Document
Academic Framework Regulations (Undergraduate and Postgraduate, pre and post September 2016 versions)

The policy relates to the documents issued to a student following the completion of modules and the conferral of an award of the University. In addition, the policy outlines the circumstances in which a student may obtain replacement or duplicate copies of these documents.

Institutional Context

This policy relates to the documents issued to a student following the completion of modules and the conferral of an award of the University. In addition, the policy outlines:

- the circumstances in which a student may obtain replacement or duplicate copies of these documents.
- Information relating to franchise/partner awards.

Final Transcripts and Award Certificates

A student who successfully achieves credit and/or an award, is entitled to receive a formal document of confirmation and is issued with an award certificate and/or a final transcript, following the formal publication of results.

An LJMU award certificate is a formal document issued on official parchment confirming the completion of an award. A final transcript is a list of modules undertaken, credit value and grades achieved during each academic period. The overall award and/or credit obtained will be indicated, a final transcript is only issued where the relevant award is fully completed. Some programmes/awards fall outside the standard setup and would be managed/documentated as per specific agreement following validation. Award certificates and final transcripts issued by the University are unique and valuable documents and should be carefully preserved by the recipient.

Awards are conferred at the relevant assessment board following completion of study. LJMU does not make retrospective awards for study undertaken many years previously (Academic Framework Regulations UG.C6.1.4/PG.C6.1.4). If a student is unsure if they are entitled to an award this should be raised at the time of completion/exit. Any queries for previous credit where an award has not been issued would be advised that there is no award/certificate. A student wishing to exit a programme of study before they have achieved sufficient credit for an award can submit a request for a transcript to the relevant LJMU school following the Board of Examiners at which credit was awarded.

A student wishing to withdraw from a programme of study before they have achieved enough credits to gain an award must submit a request for a transcript to the relevant School following the Board of Examiners at which credit was awarded.

Personal Details of a Student

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all their personal details are accurate and up to date on the University's Student Information System (SIS). Therefore, a student must inform the University of any change in personal details. Certificates and final transcripts are produced using the details held on the student system at the time of completion.

The name shown on the award documentation will be the primary (UK students) or passport (international students) name as held on the official student record of the University (SIS) and as conferred by the Academic Board. If a student has failed to inform the University of their correct details during the period of study and wishes to amend information after completion, e.g., they have used a shortened form of their formal name during study, they would need to supply identification valid at the time of study and would incur a charge for any replacement documentation.

For queries relating to gender reassignment please see Gender Diversity Guidance Document policy (Section 6.3 September 2021 version).

Debt

While a student is in debt to the University, the final transcript and/or award certificate will not be issued to a student. For a student to attend the Graduation Ceremony, debts must be paid (in full) prior to and including the day of the Graduation Ceremony. Debts can be paid at any time after this to enable a student to receive the formal documents.

Conferral of Awards

The Academic Board confers Awards of the University on 1st of each month. Awards are conferred throughout the calendar year.

Issuing of Final Transcripts and Award Certificates

Following conferral of an award, formal award documentation is posted to the student's **permanent home address** on file (not the term time address) by Royal Mail Signed For® 1st Class (UK students) or International Tracked and Signed (Overseas students), normally within six to eight weeks of the conferral date.*

It is not possible to prioritise printing of individual award documents. If a student wishes their formal documents to be posted to a different address or they wish to make an alternative arrangement for collection, they must notify awards@ljmu.ac.uk prior to completion.

If an award is revoked following production of documentation, evidence of destruction of the revoked award must be received before any further award documents are issued.

Where a specific agreement is in place with a partner/franchise, certificates will be distributed accordingly.

It is the responsibility of the student to inform the University of any address change. Formal documents returned to the Awards office undelivered by Royal Mail will be kept for a period of ~~six months~~ two academic years. A student is informed via email when their documentation is returned, they can then arrange postage (for which a charge is incurred) or collection within the two-year period. All queries following the two-year retention period would be directed to the replacement document application process.

Any documentation sent via an external mail system will not be considered as lost for 3 months from the posting date. After this time, if the document has not been returned and cannot be tracked, a replacement may be issued.

If a student does not receive the formal documents within six months of their conferral date, they must contact awards@ljmu.ac.uk , failure to do so could lead to a fee for the re-issue.

Final Transcripts

A final transcript is a list of modules undertaken, credit value and grades achieved during each academic period (only where this information is available from the University records). The overall award and/or credit obtained will be indicated. If the University is unable to provide a final transcript then a letter verifying the award/and or credit may be provided.

The final transcript issued by the University is a unique and valuable document, which should be carefully preserved by its recipient.

Electronic copies of award confirmation and transcripts can be issued to third parties with the consent of the student. A student will receive a paper copy.

A duplicate final transcript will be issued at the discretion of the University and the University reserves the right not to issue a duplicate final transcript or to specify reasons for its decision. There is a charge for this service.

A final transcript is available for students who left the University **after** September 1992. Final transcripts were not issued prior to this date.

The University reserves the right to check any applications with a fraud prevention agency.

Partner/Franchise Documentation

Liverpool John Moores University has the sole authority for issuing certificates. A university certificate states the student name, the subject area of the award; award achieved and date of award. Information relating to the name and location of any partner organisation engaged in delivery of the programme of study is not normally stated on the certificate (unless by prior agreement).

Partners can request approval to given by Academic Planning and Fees Panel where the request by the partner is made at the partnership approval stage for the partner name and/or location to be printed on the certificate, and by Academic Standards and Quality Committee where a post programme approval/validation request is made by the partner.

Partners with programmes that are 'validated' as defined by Liverpool John Moores University:

Where the partner institution develops its own programme and delivers it as an LJMU validated programme leading to an LJMU award. Students on a validated programme are LJMU students and the University retains control and responsibility for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities.

These partners may request the following words be included on the certificate; "Having followed a programme of study designed by and delivered at '.....

Partner Award Documents

It is the responsibility of the partner/franchise institution to ensure that LJMU is supplied with correct information relating to student details and award documentation. Award documentation for partner/franchise institutions will be produced alongside

LJMU documentation, within the same timeframe. Partner/franchise institutions can request their own arrangements for distribution which must be agreed with Academic Registry (Awards Office).

Documentation for international partner/franchise institutions will normally be sent directly to the partner/franchise, UK partner/franchise documents will be posted directly to the students. For award documentation to be distributed directly to a partner/franchise they must demonstrate that they have relevant processes in place to ensure the secure transit, storage, and onward distribution of documentation, including full postal records. Upon collection/receipt of the award documentation the partner/franchise representative is asked to sign and confirm a receipt form. If a document is lost or damaged without a full, accurate, distribution record, then the partner/franchise may be charged a fee for reissue.

Any issues raised after the printing and distribution of award documentation relating to incorrect information supplied by the partner/franchise (e.g. name spelling/date of birth) resulting in a request for the reissue of documentation would be subject to the relevant fee for reissue. Any documentation not distributed by the partner/franchise after 6 months should be returned to the Awards Office.

Posthumous/Aegrotat Awards

Where a posthumous/aegrotat award is made, the relevant flag on the student record prevents the award documentation from printing in any bulk certification process. The documentation would only be printed upon specific request and released with prior agreement from any relevant parties (Faculty/Corporate Communications/Family). Please contact Awards@ljmu.ac.uk for further information.

Replacement Award Certificates/Additional Documentation

Various award related documents are available via the LJMU online shop. The availability of documents is dependent on the period of study and records held relating to that period. To ensure the ongoing authenticity and integrity of LJMU award documents there are processes in place that must be followed when such documents are issued. The expected completion time is normally within ten working days of the order being placed*

- Replacement certificate: Only one copy of a certificate can be in circulation at any given time, additional copies of certificates will not be produced under any circumstances. If a certificate is lost or damaged the alumni can apply for a replacement. There is a payment to be made online and, for a lost certificate, an additional form to complete requiring a legal declaration to be made. *Please note, this form, must also be counter signed by a Commissioner for Oaths / or Practising Solicitor / or Notary Public, in accordance with the Statutory Declaration Act, 1835 (there is likely to be a charge for this service). Applicants who are resident overseas with no access to the above counter signatories should normally complete the declaration through a solicitor or the British Embassy or Consulate. The certifier must be clearly identifiable, and verification of authenticity may be sought.*

A damaged certificate must be returned to the University before a replacement would be issued. The replacement would be issued on the current parchment

and would therefore not necessarily be a facsimile of the original. LJMU does not issue electronic copies of degree certificates.

- Transcript: Alumni who completed a relevant programme can apply for a copy of their transcript. There is a charge per document for this service for all former students. Anyone who fully completed their programme post 2006 would be automatically issued a final transcript, anyone completing prior to this would be issued the relevant completion transcript. Anyone who did not fully complete a programme would be issued a progress transcript/non-standard transcript. An electronic copy of this document would not be sent directly to the alumni but can be sent to an authorised third party directly e.g., employer/educational institution/embassy at the request of the alumni.
- Award confirmation letter: An award confirmation letter (confirming programme of study/award achieved/attendance and conferral dates/grade if applicable) can be purchased by the alumni or a third party. This is a standard, system generated document. The letter is posted to the alumni in hardcopy but can be sent electronically to an authorised third party. Applications received direct from third parties must be accompanied by a hand signed declaration of consent from the candidate, permitting LJMU to release their information. (Note: An Embassy is permitted to request an award confirmation letter, free of charge, for any student they have sponsored who has completed within the last five academic years but must provide relevant consent).
- Bespoke award related letter: If the standard award confirmation letter is insufficient for requirement the alumni can order a bespoke letter. The order would be completed provided the requested information can be verified.
- Authenticity check: Alumni can submit copies of their award documentation to be authenticated. The copy would be checked, printed and signed/stamped verifying it as a true copy of the original.
- Document postage: Where documents have been posted to the alumni and returned undelivered, payment can be made to request the documents are reposted.
- Module proformas: These documents can be requested and are issued dependant on historic availability. Documents relating to alternative years will not be provided if the correct relevant year is unavailable.

(There is a charge associated with all the above documentation orders. Documents are issued at the discretion of the University and the University reserves the right not to issue a document or to specify reasons for the decision.)

- GTCNI award letter: A specific letter, as required by the GTCNI, can be issued upon request by the alumni, this letter is issued free of charge upon receipt of a shop order from the alumni but a copy is only sent directly to the GTCNI. The letter is provided by the School of Education confirming the relevant information, stamped on behalf of Academic Registry, and sent to the GTCNI as per their requirements. Should the alumni request a copy of an award related letter they would be directed to the standard confirmation of award letter/bespoke letter service.

- Programme specification: these documents can be requested free of charge and is issued dependant on historic availability. Documents relating to alternative years will not be provided if the correct relevant year is unavailable.

LJMU is unable to issue replacement documentation for study undertaken at Liverpool Polytechnic (prior to September 1992). Any queries relating to Liverpool Polytechnic would be advised to contact the relevant awarding body directly. Details for various awarding bodies are available by contacting awards@ljmu.ac.uk

**During exceptionally busy periods such as examinations and graduation, this timeframe may be extended*

Changes of Names on Certificates

The name on an award certificate or replacement will be the name held on the official student record of the University and that conferred by the Academic Board at the point of the award completion. This is the definitive record of the student and their achievement. Replacements will bear the name of the graduate as they were known at the time of graduation and names cannot be changed retrospectively.

The only exception to this is where the name change is related to a gender reassignment. Students should contact awards@ljmu.ac.uk

Confirmation of an Award to a Third Party

A letter issued by the University to confirm an award is a summary of specific information regarding that award and the period of study.

A letter of confirmation can be issued to either a student or a third party.

Liverpool John Moores University can provide confirmation to a third party of the award of a degree. In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 all requests from third parties must be made in writing (on headed paper and signed) and be accompanied by written and signed consent from the data subject i.e. the student.

There is a charge for this service.

A letter confirming an award will only be issued at the discretion of the University and therefore it reserves the right not to issue the letter or specify the reason for this decision.