



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

GUIDELINES FOR THE AWARD AND USE OF HONORARY DOCTORATE DEGREES IN NIGERIA, 2026

[DEVELOPED BY NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION (NUC)]

The Statutes of Nigerian Universities empower them to award honorary doctorate degree while the Education Act Chapter E3, Law of the Federation (2004) (National Minimum Standards and Establishment of Institutions), empowers National Universities Commission (NUC) to provide minimum standards for all universities and other Higher Institutions including the accreditation of all degrees and other academic awards.

The guidelines below has been developed following the Federal Executive Council (FEC) approval for the establishment of a uniform policy for the award and use of Honorary Degrees by Nigerian Universities and has incorporated the resolutions of the Association of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities (AVCNU) as articulated in the Keffi Declaration (2012). All universities eligible to award Honorary Doctorate Degrees in Nigeria are required to strictly comply with the FME-NUC-approved Guideline.

S/N	KEY COMPONENT	GUIDELINE
1	Institutional Eligibility	Only approved universities (ether public or private) shall be eligible to award honorary doctorate degrees.
2	Maturity	Only universities that have graduated the first set of PhD students shall be eligible to award honorary doctorate degrees.
3	Purpose of the award	The purpose of the award shall be to recognize exceptional, and sustained contribution, reflect institutional values, and ensure diversity.
4	Criteria for the award	<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. The criteria for the award shall be clear and transparent with balanced representation across gender, race, nationality, and discipline to reflect the global mission of the university and avoid conflicts of interest;ii. All procedures for selecting and awarding honorary doctorate degrees shall be clearly stated and made accessible on the official website of the awarding institution;

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		iii. All nominations shall be forwarded to NUC for clearance, in collaboration with the Special Fraud Unit established at NUC, before conferment.
5	Recipient Eligibility	Excludes self-nominations, and elected or appointed serving public officials.
6	Confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. All aspects of the nomination and selection process for honorary doctorate degrees shall be treated with the highest level of confidentiality; ii. Nominees shall only be contacted after their nominations have been approved by the Senate and Governing Council and cleared by NUC and Special Fraud Unit.
7	Award nomination and Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. All nominations shall be processed by the statutory committee. ii. All nominations shall be approved by the University Senate and Governing Council.
8	Number of awards	The number of the awards at each convocation shall not exceed three.
9	Nomenclature and title of the Award	All honorary doctorate degrees shall contain the nomenclature or title <i>Honoris Causa</i> . For example: Doctor of Science (<i>Honoris Causa</i>) D.SC. (<i>h.c</i>).
10	Conferment	Conferment shall be in-person and at the ceremony. In exceptional cases, the conferment may be done virtually, however, no honorary doctorate degree shall be awarded in absentia, but it may be awarded posthumously.
11	Fee	Honorary doctorate degrees shall be conferred without any fee or expectation of payment from the recipients.
12	Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The recipients are at liberty to use the approved nomenclature or title of the honorary doctorate degree such as Doctor of Law (<i>Honoris Causa</i>) or LL.D, (<i>h.c</i>); Doctor of Letters (<i>Honoris Causa</i>) or D.Litt. (<i>h.c</i>); and Doctor of Science (<i>Honoris Causa</i>) or D.Sc. (<i>h.c</i>) after their names; ii. Recipients must refrain from using the title "Dr.", which is reserved for holders of earned doctoral and medical degrees; iii. Recipients are not permitted to use the honorary doctorate degree to practice as scholars or professionals, supervise research or oversee administrative units.
13	Orientation to recipients	All the awarding universities shall provide both written and verbal orientation to recipients on how to use the award.
14	Record of recipients	All Universities shall regularly publish names of honorary doctorate degrees' recipients on their official website and

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		make it accessible to the public in order to uphold transparency.
15	Revocation policy	All awarding universities shall provide a formal mechanism to rescind awards if a recipient is convicted of fraud, or has engaged in any unethical conduct that is inconsistent with the values of the awarding institution.
16	Sanctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The Inspector General of Police (IGP) shall establish a Special Fraud Unit at NUC, headed by a Senior Ranking Police Officer (on secondment) to monitor and prosecute violators of the guidelines and any other related fraud; ii. For any defaulting university, there shall be suspension of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. resource verification for two (2) years b. programme accreditation after three (3) academic sessions from the year of violation; iii. Federal Ministry of Education (FME) shall recommend to the Visitor for the dissolution of the Governing Council of any defaulting university.