

Royal Holloway and Bedford New College

Graduation Policy

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1. Awards Eligible to Attend Graduation

1.1. Summer Ceremonies

Summer Graduation Ceremonies are held in July each year. Awards presented at these ceremonies include:

- Bachelor of Arts (BA)
- Bachelor of Science (BSc)
- Bachelor of Music (BMus)
- Bachelor of Science (Economics) (BSc (Econ))
- Bachelor of Laws (LLB)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work
- Master in Science (MSci)
- Master of Science in Social Work
- Master of Science (Physics) Euromasters
- Postgraduate Research degrees with an award date of 1st June (and finalised copies of the thesis submitted by the 30th June)

Higher Education Certificate, Higher Education Diploma and Postgraduate Certificates are not presented at the Graduation Ceremonies.

1.2. Winter Ceremonies

Winter Graduation Ceremonies are held in December each year. Awards presented at these ceremonies include:

- Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)*
- Master of Arts (MA)
- Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- Master of Music (MMus)
- Master of Research (MRes)
- Master of Science (MSc)*
- Postgraduate Research degrees with an award date of 1st November (and finalised copies of the thesis being submitted by the 30th November)
- Doctor of Clinical Psychology (DClinPsy)

Postgraduate Certificates are not presented at the Graduation Ceremonies.

*PGDip and MSc from the Department of Social Work, and MSc (Physics) Euromasters are not presented at the Winter Ceremonies

2. Students Eligible to Attend Graduation Ceremonies at Royal Holloway

2.1. Kaplan

Students awarded a Royal Holloway, University of London undergraduate degree from the Kaplan Higher Education Academy in Singapore are eligible to attend the summer graduation ceremonies at Royal Holloway.

2.2. Distance Learning Students

Students studying on Distance Learning Programmes are eligible to attend graduation ceremonies at Royal Holloway. Distance Learning Programme students will also appear on the Royal Holloway roll of graduands in the Graduation Programme.

It is the responsibility of Departments who offer Distance Learning Programmes to provide Student Administration with contact and award details of eligible students to enable all relevant administrative processes to be carried out. The deadline for providing this information will be the end of February for Summer ceremonies and the end of September for Winter ceremonies.

Departments will be required to cover the costs of all Distance Learning Programme students attending a ceremony at Royal Holloway, including any complimentary guest tickets.

3. Graduation Timetable

3.1. Timetable

It is the experience of The College that not all students who are eligible to attend a Graduation Ceremony choose to do so. As such, the Graduation Timetables and Ceremony Schedules are based on predicted attendance figures. The Summer Graduation Timetable takes into account the presentation of Honorary Degrees on Wednesday of Graduation Week. Additional Honorary Degrees may also be presented at Thursday or Friday ceremonies.

Departments with large cohorts may need to be split over multiple ceremonies. Where it is necessary to split a department, every effort will be made to schedule these ceremonies on the same day.

Departments with a smaller cohort of students will be combined with other Departments. Where possible ceremonies with multiple Departments will be of the same Faculty. This cannot be guaranteed and, on some occasions, multi-faculty ceremonies may be scheduled.

Students will be invited to graduate with the Department to which their course is registered.

- Students will not be permitted to graduate with an alternative Department

The exception to this is Joint Honours students and Politics, Philosophy and Economics Students. These students are offered the option to graduate with either the first or second named Department in their degree title.

- This choice must be made in writing to Student Administration by the last day of Term 1
- Once this choice has been confirmed, and the graduation timetable finalised,

students will not be permitted to change their choice of Department

3.2 Date & time of ceremony

Any dates and times listed are provisional until official confirmation is posted on the College's graduation website. Graduands are strongly advised against making any travel or accommodation arrangements until the dates and times are confirmed on the graduation website.

Graduands are responsible for making their own travel arrangements and ensuring that they arrive for the relevant Graduation Ceremony in good time.

The College is not responsible for any costs incurred by Graduands with regard to attendance at a Graduation Ceremony.

4. Deferrals

The provisions of this Clause 4 are to be read in light of the following proviso: in respect of any student graduating from Summer 2022 onwards, due to the number of students affected by the postponement of Graduation Ceremonies as a result of COVID-19, it is not possible for the College to guarantee that a Graduand may defer their attendance to the next Graduation Ceremony.

If a Graduand wishes to defer their Graduation Ceremony attendance they will be added to the cohort of students who have been affected by the postponement of Graduation Ceremonies. The College will endeavour to accommodate Graduands wishing to defer their Graduation Ceremony attendance, however the College cannot guarantee that attendance will be offered at a specific future Graduation Ceremony. Graduands deferring their attendance will be contacted in due course regarding attendance of a future Graduation Ceremony.

If a student chooses to defer their ceremony, they will defer their attendance only. They will not be able to defer their appearance on the Roll of Graduands (see Section 10 for further information.)

If a student is unable to attend their deferred graduation ceremony it will be at the discretion of the Head of Student Engagement as to whether a further deferral will be permitted. This will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

4.1. Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Programmes which attend the Summer Ceremonies (as outlined in Section 1.1) can defer until the next Summer Ceremony only. All other Postgraduate Taught students can defer until the next Winter Ceremony only.

4.2. Postgraduate Research Students

Postgraduate Research Students are entitled to attend the Summer or Winter Ceremonies within one year of a deferral request. For example, a student who is first eligible to attend graduation in Summer 2016 can request to defer to the Winter 2016 or Summer 2017 Graduation Ceremonies.

5. Debtors

Any student that has an outstanding academic debt exceeding £50 may not be permitted to take part in the Graduation Ceremony until the debt is cleared or a payment plan is agreed with Student Fees.

- All debts should be cleared before the day of graduation.
- If a student attempts to register for graduation on the day of the ceremony, they will be directed to the Student Fees team to discuss their payment options.
- Only after agreement from Student Fees will the individual be permitted to take part in the Graduation Ceremony.

6. Graduation Communication and Invitation

All invitations to graduation, and all subsequent communication about graduation, shall be sent electronically. The College will send all correspondence to both university and personal email accounts as entered on the Student Records System.

- It is the responsibility of all students to check their university email accounts for any correspondence from The College.
- It is the responsibility of all students/graduates to provide accurate and current personal email accounts to The College by updating this information on Campus Connect.
- The College will not be responsible for the failure of a student to receive information and updates regarding graduation where a student does not check their emails or has not provided accurate and current contact details.
- The College will not be responsible for the failure of a student to receive information and updates regarding graduation where the communication has been filed in the 'Junk Folder' by the student's email provider.

6.2. Summer Ceremonies

The College will issue an invitation to Graduation to all students who are expected to have completed their studies by the end of the current academic year. This will include:

- All Final Year Undergraduate Students.
- All Final Year Postgraduate Taught Students registered on courses which are presented at the Summer Ceremonies (see Section 1.1).
- Postgraduate Research Students who are in their Third or Fourth Year (or Part-Time

equivalents) and those who have submitted their thesis.

- Postgraduate Research Students with an award date between the 1st December and 1st June.
- All eligible individuals who have deferred their graduation.

6.3. Winter Ceremonies

The College will issue an invitation to Graduation to all Postgraduate Students who are expected to have an award date of 1st November or earlier. This will include:

- All Final Year Postgraduate Taught Students (except those registered on courses presented in the Summer Ceremonies (see Section 1.1)).
- Postgraduate Research Students who are in their Third or Fourth Year (or Part-Time equivalents) and those who have submitted their thesis.
- All individuals who have deferred their graduation.

7. Graduation Registration & Guest Tickets

7.1. Graduation Registration

Students who are graduating and taking part in the ceremony do not require a ticket for themselves but must inform the College that they plan to attend the ceremony by registering their attendance.

Student registration must be completed online through the Student Registration and Ticket Booking site. The Registration period will be clearly stated on the Graduation Webpages and the email invitation to graduation sent to all eligible students.

Students who fail to register by the advertised deadline should contact studentservices@royalholloway.ac.uk. Every effort will be made to accommodate the attendance of students who wish to register after the deadline but this cannot be guaranteed.

7.2. Complimentary Guest Tickets

All students are offered up to two complimentary guest tickets to their graduation ceremony. Complimentary guest tickets are offered under the following conditions:

- Complimentary tickets are **not** automatically allocated to students. Complimentary tickets must be reserved online by the student as part of the registration process.

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- Complimentary tickets are offered only to those students who confirm their attendance and book these tickets on the Registration and Ticket Booking Site by the advertised deadline.
- If a student is unable to reserve complimentary guest tickets online before the advertised deadline, they must register their attendance through the Student Registration and Ticket Booking Site and contact studentservices@royalholloway.ac.uk to be added to the waiting list. Contact will be made with the student if complimentary guest tickets become available. This will be on a first come first serve basis. The waiting list will only be in operation until the advertised deadline for the booking of complimentary tickets and will not be available for additional guest tickets once this deadline has passed.
- Students who **do not** register their attendance by the advertised deadline lose their entitlement to complimentary guest tickets. If guest tickets are required, these must be purchased (subject to availability) (see Section 7.3).
- Due to restrictions on venue capacity, the offer of up to two complimentary guest tickets per student is **subject to availability**. Complimentary tickets are offered on a **first come, first served basis** and therefore students are recommended to register their attendance and book their complimentary tickets as soon as possible. In light of Covid-19, and as detailed in Clause 13 below, complimentary tickets do not guarantee entry to the ceremony venue for all ticket holders due to the requirements of social distancing; the College endeavours to ensure that one ticket holder is able to be seated in the main ceremony venue, with provision for the other ticket holder(s) to watch the ceremony via live streaming into another College on campus venue.
- Complimentary guest tickets for the Summer Ceremonies may be in either the Chapel or the Picture Gallery depending upon availability at the time of booking.
- Tickets are non-transferrable and therefore graduating students cannot transfer their complimentary ticket allocation to another student.
- Complimentary Guest Tickets will be held for the graduating student to collect on the day of the ceremony. Photographic identification must be provided in order to register and collect guest tickets.
- Complimentary Guest Tickets will be held until 30 minutes before the start of the ceremony.

The College reserves the right to withdraw any complimentary guest tickets that have not been collected by the graduating student 30 minutes before the start of the ceremony where the student has not informed us of any delay to their arrival and registration.

Withdrawn tickets may be resold.

Graduating students who are running late to their ceremony are expected to contact the Student Services Centre on 01784 276641 as early as possible on the day of the ceremony and no later than 30 minutes before the ceremony start time.

7.3. Additional Guest Tickets

Students wishing to invite more than two guests to their graduation may have the option to purchase additional guest tickets online during a second booking period. The following conditions will apply:

- Additional tickets will be sold at a cost of **£15** per ticket
- Availability of additional tickets is not guaranteed by the College and will depend on whether any seats are remaining after the initial booking period.
- Each student may be able to book up to a maximum of six guest tickets. This includes the allocation of any complimentary guest ticket tickets previously requested. As such the following will apply:
 - o If a student has one complimentary guest ticket, they may purchase up to five additional guest tickets.
 - o If a student has two complimentary guest tickets they may purchase up to four additional guest tickets.
 - o If a student has not booked complimentary guest tickets, they may purchase up to six additional guest tickets.
- Students who wish to book more than six guest tickets should contact the Graduation Officer at studentservices@royalholloway.ac.uk. Students will only be able to book more than six tickets at the discretion of Student Administration.
- The Registration and Ticket Booking site will close two weeks prior to the Summer Ceremonies and one week prior to the Winter Ceremonies. However, if all available tickets are sold for a particular ceremony, the booking site will close before the advertised deadline and a message will be displayed on the Graduation Website.
- Any guest tickets that remain after the second booking period will be made available for sale on the day of the ceremony.
- Additional Guest Tickets will be held for the graduating student to collect on the day of the ceremony. Photographic Identification must be provided in order to register and collect guest tickets.

7.4. Guest Access Arrangements

As part of the Registration and Ticket Booking process, all students are asked to confirm if they are bringing a disabled guest to their graduation ceremony. This is to ensure that all appropriate measures can be taken to enable all guests to enjoy the graduation celebrations.

- All graduating students who indicate that they are bringing a disabled guest to graduation will be contacted two to three weeks before graduation to discuss their guest's needs.
- Appropriate seating will be reserved for the whole party in the relevant venue.
- The College will reserve an area of parking for those with additional access needs to reduce the distance travelled to graduation venues.
- The College will arrange for the provision of First Aid throughout the duration of Graduation. This will include the availability of wheelchairs to help guests transfer between venues during graduation.
- Guests requiring the use of College wheelchairs will not be able to use them for the duration of the reception to allow them to be available for other guests.

7.5. Children

As part of the Registration and Booking Process, all students will be asked to confirm whether they will be bringing a child under the age of five to their graduation ceremony.

- Children under five years of age do not require a guest ticket but must be seated on an adults lap in the venue.
- Children aged five years and over will need to have their own guest ticket. There are no child concessions on the cost of additional guest tickets.

Graduation ceremonies are formal in nature and young children may become restless or unsettled during the ceremony. To ensure the enjoyment of other guests, and to avoid any disruption to the ceremony, guests with very young children will be asked to sit near the venue exit. This will enable them to leave the venue easily at any time should they need to do so.

7.6. On the Day Ticket Sales

The College will sell tickets on the day of a graduation ceremony under the following conditions:

- If tickets remain unsold after the initial online booking period and or tickets have been returned by students who are no longer able or eligible to attend graduation.
- Tickets will be sold 30 minutes before the start of the ceremony.
- Ticket sales will be on a first come, first served basis. The College will not operate a waiting

list system.

- Tickets will only be sold directly to, or with the permission of, a graduating student.
- Tickets will be priced at **£15** per ticket and payment can be made in cash or card payment only.
- Student Administration reserves the right to limit the number of tickets that can be purchased by each graduand on the day, depending on the availability of tickets for each ceremony. Any restrictions on ticket purchases will be advertised at the Ticket Sales desk.

7.7. Full Ceremonies

Once all tickets for a ceremony have been sold, and the venue has reached maximum capacity, a message will be displayed on the Graduation Website.

- The College does not operate a waiting list for returned tickets. Any tickets that are returned before the ceremony will be sold on the day as per Section 7.6.
- If all ceremonies are sold out of guest tickets The College may organise a screening room for guests to watch the live video-stream of the ceremony. The provision of a screening room is not guaranteed.
- All graduation ceremonies are streamed live online so guests without tickets will have the option to watch the ceremony on a mobile device if a screening room is not provided by The College.

7.8. Ticket Returns and Refunds

7.8.1. Academic Failure and Non-Completion

In the result of academic failure or non-completion of a degree in the academic year as expected, students will not be eligible to attend the graduation ceremony. If this occurs:

- All complimentary guest tickets will automatically be withdrawn. Students will be emailed to confirm that this has been done.
- A full refund will automatically be given for any additional guest tickets that have been purchased. This will be administered through the Registration and Ticket Booking Site and therefore refund payments will be made to the card used to make the original booking.

7.8.2. Returning Complimentary Tickets

If a graduating student has booked complimentary guest tickets that they no longer require, they should contact studentservices@royalholloway.ac.uk as early as possible to notify us that they wish to return these tickets.

Once a student has released their complimentary guest tickets, they will not be reallocated.

7.8.3. Pre- and Post-Ceremony Refunds

Students can request a refund on any tickets they have purchased up until the Friday before the Graduation Period.

- Refunds must be requested via the [online form](#).

During and after Graduation week, automatic refunds are no longer available. Refunds will be at the discretion of Student Administration.

- For a refund to be considered, all tickets must be returned, unused. These can be handed to the Student Services Centre, on the day of the ceremony, or returned by post to: Student Administration, Arts Annexe, Royal Holloway, TW20 0EX. Please include a covering letter stating your full name and student ID number.
- Refunds must be requested via the [online form](#).
- The deadline for making a refund request is two weeks after the end of Graduation Week.

8. Filming and photography

Each College Graduation Ceremony is professionally filmed and the footage is live streamed and posted on the College's website after the Ceremony. Footage may also be used by the College for media publications and advertising, including on the College's website, social media channels, the College intranet, in press releases and mailings, on event posters, on TV screens on campus or in magazines or prospectuses. All Graduands and guests should be aware that they may feature in this footage. Further information on how your personal data may be used can be found in the College's Privacy Notice at: [Click Here](#)

The College's professional photographers will be on campus to take photographs throughout graduation day. If you would prefer that your photograph is not taken, please inform the photographer. Please note, we are unable to guarantee the exclusion of any Graduand images from group photographs.

The taking of 'selfies' during the ceremony, particularly on stage, is strictly prohibited.

Flash photography and unauthorised video recording of a Graduation Ceremony is strictly prohibited.

Graduands will be filmed as they process across the stage.

Any gesture to the camera or inappropriate act or use of signage is prohibited. The College reserves the right to edit any inappropriate behaviour from the footage before it is made available online and to remove any Graduand from the Graduation Ceremony.

9. Mobile phones

The use of mobile phones during a Graduation Ceremony is strictly prohibited. Graduands must ensure that their mobile phones are switched off or set to 'silent' during the ceremony.

10. Graduation Dress Code

Graduation is a formal occasion. All graduands wishing to take part in the ceremony must be in correct academic dress. This consists of a cap, gown and hood. It is expected that graduands should wear smart clothing underneath their gown. The Graduand procession involves walking quickly up and down steps during the ceremony, therefore appropriate footwear should be worn.

- The College's official gown supplier is Ede & Ravenscroft.
- It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they have hired or purchased the correct academic dress for the degree they are being awarded.
- Graduands who do not have the appropriate academic dress will not be permitted to take part in the ceremony.
- Casual clothing (e.g. jeans, hoodies, trainers, flip flops) should not be worn to the graduation ceremony.

11. Graduation Programme / Roll of Graduands

The Roll of Graduands is printed in the Graduation Programme. Graduating students appear on the first Roll of Graduands for which they are eligible to be included.

Individuals may only appear on the Roll of Graduands once. In the case of deferrals, this means that the graduand will not appear in the programme of the ceremony they are attending because they will have appeared on a previous Roll. Graduands who have deferred their ceremony will be sent two copies of the programme their name appears in to their current forwarding as recorded on Campus Connect. This will be provided free of charge, subject to availability

Student Administration will keep copies of Graduation Programmes for one year. Graduating students may request a copy of the Programme in which their name appears on the Roll of Graduands by emailing studentservices@royalholloway.ac.uk. This will be provided free of charge, subject to availability.

12. Disclaimer

If a Graduation Ceremony is cancelled, postponed or delayed due to circumstances beyond the control of the College, including but not limited to adverse weather conditions, fire, explosion, terrorist act (or threat of terrorist act), act of God, pandemic (including the ongoing requirements resulting from Covid-19 compliance measures), or as a result of any industrial action or dispute involving the College or the venue at which a Graduation Ceremony is due to be held, the College will not be liable for any losses, whether direct or otherwise, incurred by Graduands or any third party. This includes but is not limited

to travel, accommodation and subsistence costs or any loss of business or earnings due to the cancellation, postponement or delay of a Graduation Ceremony.

The College will, where possible, make alternative arrangements for any Graduand affected by a cancellation, postponement or delay, but Graduands should ensure that they have sufficient insurance protection (where appropriate) to cover any losses they might suffer as a result of a Graduation Ceremony being cancelled, postponed or delayed.

13. COVID-19 Commitment Statement

We want to make it as safe and easy as possible for anyone to attend Graduation in 2021 and onwards. We will use a common-sense approach to ensure you can attend graduation safely and with confidence.

All of our staff and suppliers for the event will be expected to wear a face covering when moving around indoors and we would expect all graduands and guests to do the same. Please do not be surprised if you are approached and asked to wear a face covering if you are moving around indoors without one.

All staff are currently encouraged to undertake lateral flow tests twice a week attending on campus and this will continue through graduation weeks. We have an established process for reporting Covid-19 cases that arise within our community, which is a feature of our 'Playing Your Part' approach to keeping each other safe. All of our suppliers attending graduation events will be asked to produce proof of a negative lateral flow test, and the following specific arrangements will apply to Graduands and their guests:

13.1 Before attending the Ceremony

Each Graduand and guest registered to attend will be required to provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 lateral flow test administered no more than 24 hours in advance of Graduation ceremony date; and we encourage tests to be completed as close to the graduation ceremony as possible.

Graduands and guests unable to provide evidence of the above stated negative COVID-19 tests will be unable to participate in their Graduation Ceremony.

Graduands and guests will be required to submit lateral flow test results via the following GOV.UK website: <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>

We will accept various forms of proof of a negative lateral flow test result, this includes:

- a) an email confirming your result
- b) a text confirming your result
- c) a photograph of your test stick (not the physical stick)

For the avoidance of doubt, all Graduands and guests must agree **NOT** to attend if they answer **YES** to any of the following questions

- a) Are you feeling unwell, including a high temperature, new continuous cough and a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste?
- b) Are you currently required to isolate following a visit to an area or country where quarantine is required upon return?
- c) Have you been told to self-isolate by the government test and trace service?
- d) Is anyone in your household suffering with COVID-19 symptoms?
- e) Have you been in close contact with anyone who has tested positive or anyone is showing symptoms 10 days prior to your ceremony?

13.2 At the Ceremony

Graduands and guests will be required to wear face coverings in indoor spaces on campus.

Graduands and guests will be required to follow all safety guidance as imposed by the College, which may include the wearing of face coverings, hand sanitising, maintaining safe distancing between individuals, and any other measures deemed necessary whilst on campus.

All attendees must agree to leave immediately should they develop COVID-19 symptoms during the event.

All attendees must agree to be considerate to those around them at all times and respectful of all our safety measures at the show

These requirements are subject to more stringent requirements that may be introduced from time to time by the UK Government and apply to events taking place in England, including the requirement to produce a valid covid passport in order to gain entry to an event.

13.3 Following the Ceremony

Graduands and guest are encouraged to have a COVID-19 lateral flow test administered 24 hours after their Graduation Ceremony and submit lateral flow test results via the following GOV.UK website: <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>; positive results should also be reported to the College immediately using Supportingyou@rhul.ac.uk