

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)
- Master in Science (MSci)
- Master of Science (Physics) Euromasters
- Postgraduate Research degrees with an award date of 1 June (and finalised copies of the thesis submitted by the 30 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:

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

Postgraduate Certificates are not presented at the Graduation 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 Engagement 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 University 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 Graduation Timetable takes into account the presentation of Honorary Degrees.

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 School. This cannot be guaranteed, and, on some occasions, multi-school 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

3.2. Date & time of ceremony

Any dates and times listed are provisional until official confirmation is posted on the University'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 University is not responsible for any costs incurred by Graduands with regard to attendance at a Graduation Ceremony.

4. Deferrals

If a student chooses to defer their ceremony, they will defer their attendance only.

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 University's will send all correspondence to their university email accounts.

- It is the responsibility of all students to check their university email accounts for any correspondence from The University.

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- It is the responsibility of all students/graduates to provide accurate and current personal email accounts to The University updating this information on Campus Connect.
- The University 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 University 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 University 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 1 December and 1 June.
- All eligible individuals who have deferred their graduation.

6.3. Winter Ceremonies

The University will issue an invitation to Graduation to all Postgraduate Students who are expected to have an award date of 1 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 eligible individuals who have deferred their graduation.

7. Graduation Registration & Guest Tickets

7.1. Graduation Registration

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Students who are graduating and taking part in the ceremony are required to book a ticket for themselves in order to attend graduation.

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 graduation-ceremonies@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 offered on a first come first served basis.
- Complimentary tickets are **not** automatically allocated to students. Complimentary tickets must be reserved online by the student as part of the registration process.
- 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 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 ticketing booking site.
- Students who **do not** register their attendance by the advertised deadline lose their entitlement to complimentary guest tickets. If a guest ticket is required, these must be purchased (subject to availability) (see Section 7.3.).
- Complimentary guest tickets for the Winter Ceremonies will be in the Windsor Auditorium.
- Tickets are strictly non-transferrable and therefore graduating students cannot transfer their complimentary or purchased ticket allocation to another student.
- Complimentary Guest Tickets will be emailed to email address inputted into the booking site system. All tickets are E tickets.

7.3. Additional Guest Tickets

If there are any tickets left over (after the booking site has closed), graduands who have registered their attendance will receive an email with details on how to purchase one extra guest ticket, subject

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to availability. The following conditions will apply:

- Additional tickets will be sold at a cost of **£20** per ticket.
- Availability of additional tickets is not guaranteed by the University and will depend on whether any tickets are remaining after the initial booking period.
- Each student may be able to purchase up to a maximum of 1 additional guest ticket due to the capacity of our venues.
- The Registration and Ticket Booking site will open mid October and close in November for our Winter 2024 ceremonies. 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 ticketing booking site.

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 guest with accessibility requirements. 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 guest with accessibility requirements to graduation will be contacted before graduation to discuss their guest's needs.
- Appropriate seating will be reserved for those with access requirements.
- The University will provide parking permits for those with access requirements to reduce the distance travelled to graduation venues.
- The University 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 University 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 adult's lap in the venue.

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- 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.
- No buggies are permitted in the venue.

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. 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 ticketing booking site.

- 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 University.

7.7. Ticket Returns and Refunds

All refunds must be requested before the start of Graduation week.

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 Ede and Ravenscroft 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.

8. Filming and photography

Each University Graduation Ceremony is professionally filmed and the footage is live streamed and posted on the University's website after the Ceremony. Footage may also be used by the University for media publications and advertising, including on the University's website, social media channels, the University's 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 University's Privacy Notice at: [Click Here](#)

The University'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 University 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 University'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 digital programme and roll of graduands will be available for all to download ahead of your ceremony. The student Engagement Team will keep copies of the programme for one year. Graduating students will be able to request a copy of the programme by emailing Graduation-ceremonies@rhul.ac.uk. This will be provided free of charge, subject to availability.

11.1. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in the roll of graduands is accurate ahead of the ceremony. The University cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions. This publication does not constitute proof of graduation from Royal Holloway.

12. Disclaimer

If a Graduation Ceremony is cancelled, postponed or delayed due to circumstances beyond the control of the University, 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 University or the venue at which a Graduation Ceremony is due to be held, the University 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 University 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.