

Graduation & Events Office Policy

Canterbury & Rochester Cathedral Graduations and Augustine House Award Ceremonies

Dates

- Canterbury Cathedral graduations are scheduled for the same Tuesday and Wednesday in mid-September and Friday the last week in January every academic year.
- Rochester is scheduled annually for the same Friday during the first week in February.
- Award ceremonies take place on a Saturday to avoid disruption to teaching. The dates are one Saturday in November and one Saturday in March annually.

Eligibility

- Students who have completed the following Canterbury Christ Church awards are eligible to attend a Cathedral graduation: Bachelor's (BA/BSc), Postgraduate Diploma in Speech & Language Therapy, Postgraduate Diploma in Physician Associate Studies, Master's, MPhil, PhD, Doctorate in Clinical Psychology.
- Students who have completed Level 4 programmes and upwards who are not eligible for a cathedral graduation can attend an Augustine House award ceremony however, the Programme Director must request inclusion.

Invitations

- Invitations are posted to students who have completed their studies approximately 8 weeks prior to the graduation date. Provisional invites are not permitted under any circumstance. Every programme is allocated to a graduation date in April annually for the forthcoming academic year. Students are not able to choose their graduation date.
- Students that complete via an Exam Board after the final RSVP deadline will not be invited to graduate and will be invited to attend the next graduation or award ceremony.
- Students who complete via the July Reassessment Exam Board and are due to attend a September Graduation, will be invited to graduate via email, once reassessment results are published. These students will have a limited window (5 days) to submit their RSVP in order to attend their graduation in September. Details regarding invitation timelines for these students will be communicated via email and information will be posted on the Student Portal in July. Students who complete via the same July reassessment Exam Board and are due to complete in January will receive a postal invitation 8 weeks prior to the ceremony.
- Those who respond after the RSVP deadline will not be permitted to attend.
- Any student with outstanding debt/disclosure barring service/qualifications/occupational health will not be invited to graduate.

Ticket Cost/Allocation

- There is no fee to the student.
- There is a cathedral graduation guest ticket fee of £22.00 per person, up to a maximum of two guests per student. This fee guarantees entrance to the ceremony and celebratory drinks. The cost covers venue hire, live streaming, logistical arrangements, hospitality and all marketing literature including a copy of the graduation programme.
- There is an award ceremony guest ticket fee of £12.00. Every student is guaranteed two guest tickets to attend both the ceremony and celebratory drinks.
- All tickets are non-refundable, non-transferable and not for resale and refunds are not available for tickets once they have been purchased.
- Every guest attending the event must hold a ticket, this includes babies/infants. Tickets are per person (including babies and children) not per seat. This ensures compliance with the health and safety guidelines of the Cathedral and the University.
- During the ceremony students will be seated separately to guests.
- After the RSVP closing date a calculation will be done to confirm numbers of additional tickets available (due to non-attending students). Additional tickets will be published on the graduation website and available to attending students to purchase until all have sold on a first come first served basis (subject to availability).
- No personal circumstances are taken into consideration for obtaining additional ticket(s).
- If a current University staff member (employed via the CCCU HR Department) has been in continual employment for at least 6 months prior to their graduation date and they are still in employment they are entitled to benefits.
- If a current Unitemps staff member and has been in continual employment for at least 6 months prior to their graduation date and they are still in employment they are entitled to benefits. Volunteers and Unitemps working odd or occasional hours/days are not eligible.
- Any tickets sold in advance of the event should be paid for 4 weeks before the event. Where payment is outstanding after this time, tickets will be withheld by the Graduation Office and possibly reallocated on the day of the ceremony.
- All sales of tickets prior to the event date are online and no cash payment taken. If tickets are available on the day payments will be via credit or debit card (no cash payments).

Location

- For Canterbury based graduations Augustine House is used for gowning and photography and the celebratory drinks is held on North Holmes Road. The ceremony is live streamed to the St Georges Centre.
- For Rochester based graduations, gowning and the celebratory drinks are held at the Corn Exchange with photography held in the Guildhall Museum. The ceremony is live streamed to the Medway Campus.
- Award ceremonies are held at Augustine House in Canterbury.
- When graduation is held on a teaching day, the Timetabling & Rooming Office will allocate rooms for teaching that will not affect graduation arrangements. Graduation set up will take place the day prior to the ceremonies.

Academic Gowns

- Part of the event is for all those who are taking part in the ceremony to dress appropriately. Academic dress (consisting of robe, hood and hat which together we call a 'gown') is mandatory for those taking part in the ceremony. A student must wear a Canterbury Christ Church University gown appropriate to the level of qualification for which they are being presented, even if they already hold a higher qualification. National dress may be worn.
- Gowns are hired via our official suppliers, Ede & Ravenscroft. It is important to note Ede & Ravenscroft require 3 weeks' notice to hire a gown. A student arriving in inappropriate academic dress or not gowned will be unable to join the procession and will not be presented for their award during the ceremony.
- Where outstanding gown hire payment occurs before the graduation date the student may not be permitted to attend their graduation until payment is made in full to Ede & Ravenscroft.
- Academic staff who process at graduation are entitled to free gown hire if requested via the Graduation Office 3 weeks' prior to the event, if not, academic staff are required to hire the gown at their own expense, a gown is mandatory. If they do not attend the graduation and do not inform the Graduation Office they will be charged. Alternatively, academic staff can claim a reimbursement of 40% of the purchase cost of their academic gown, claims must be submitted to the Graduation Manager within two months of purchase.

Car Parking

- There is no parking available at Canterbury or Rochester Cathedral or Canterbury Christ Church University.

Special Arrangements Provision

- All special arrangement requests must be submitted via the RSVP form, the Student Disability Service process special arrangements requests relating to the graduating student, all student requests must be made by the student. Guest special arrangement requests must be submitted to the Graduation Office. All requests should be submitted via the online RSVP and prior to the RSVP deadline. The Graduation & Events Office cannot guarantee that the University will be able to accommodate any request for special arrangements received after the RSVP closing date. Find further details regarding special arrangements provision at CCCU ceremonies [here](#).

In Memoriam

- The Dean of Chapel will inform the Graduation Office of any deaths and these will be recorded for future reference.
- Following collaboration between the Dean of Chapel and the Vice-Chancellor's Office, the Graduation Manager will determine the appropriateness of issuing an invitation to the family of the deceased to attend graduation.

Deferrals/Graduating in Absentia

- Students may request to defer their graduation only after they have been invited to graduate. All requests for deferrals must be made to the Graduation & Events Office and it is at their discretion as to which date the student may defer to. This may be in the following academic year due to capacity.
- Students are only permitted one opportunity to defer their graduation.

- Any student who does not attend their graduation for whatever reason is admitted to their award in absentia.

Visa/Employer Requests

- Students are unable to extend their UK student visas solely in order to attend a graduation. They are expected to either switch into a different immigration category (if permitted) or return to the UK at a future date with fresh entry clearance under the visitor route. If choosing the latter option, you may need to show the Entry Clearance Officer a copy of the invitation sent to you by the Graduation Office as part of your application.
- Please contact CCCU's International Office for immigration advice.
- A copy of the invite sent to you 8 weeks before the event by the Graduation & Events Office should suffice with employers.

Marketing Materials

- Students are listed in the graduation programme in alphabetical order within their programme of study, classifications are not listed. Students who are the recipients of prizes are also listed in the annual prize listing at the back of the graduation programme. Those who graduate in absentia are not distinguished in any way. Students can request for their details to be omitted from the programme, but are required to do so in writing 6 weeks before the ceremony date after which no changes can be made.
- The first name and surname signed off at exam board will be the name read at the actual graduation ceremony and the name printed in the graduation programme and all other graduation marketing literature.
- Students eligible to graduate are posted an invitation pack 8 weeks prior to graduation, (please see below for information regarding students who successfully complete via the July Reassessment Board). All students who confirm their attendance will be sent a ticket pack posted approx. 3 weeks prior. Invites and ticket packs are posted to the permanent address held on the University's student record database, students are responsible for updating their details in advance of invites being sent.
- Students who complete via the July Reassessment Exam Board and are due to attend a September Graduation, will be invited to graduate via email, once reassessment results are published with a limited 5 day RSVP window.

Music

- The Director of Music is responsible for the choir, musicians and organist both prior to (rehearsals and travel to and from) and at the actual event.

Prizes

- Department's for which the prize fund is set up are responsible for administering and paying the prize.
- Departments are responsible for advising Planning & Academic Administration of prize winners and 4 weeks prior to the graduation date, the Graduation & Events Office must be informed for publication of the prize in the programme.

Processing Staff/Governors

- Any member of the University's current academic staff and Governors has the right to process at graduation.
- 35 spaces are reserved at the Cathedral for processing members of staff and Governors but after the RSVP deadline any remaining spaces will be reallocated to students and their guests via additional tickets.
- The Vice-Chancellors Office will approve yearly a list of VIPs to be invited to the following year's ceremonies. This includes Civic Dignitaries and Governors who are permitted to process.
- 12 spaces are reserved at the award ceremonies for processing members of staff and Governors. Programme Directors for programmes eligible to attend will supply names of VIPs who will attend.

Honoraries

- Honoraries are chosen by the Governing Body and relayed to the Graduation & Events Office and it is customary for Honoraries to give a short 2 minute speech during the ceremony.

General Office Housekeeping

- All enquiries via voicemail, email and the i-zone are checked daily. Post is also checked daily.
- Resolution of all enquiries for the office is 5 working days.
- Formal team meetings are held monthly.
- One to ones are held with line managers regularly to review progress.
- Paperwork and emails are kept for two years for audit purposes then destroyed.
- Risk assessments, policies etc. are reviewed annually.
- A data protection notice is available to students online and in the invitation booklet.