

## Graduation & Award Ceremonies 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 Thursday and Friday during March every academic year.

#### Eligibility

- Courses eligible for invitation can be located on the graduation web pages. If not listed a formal request to the Graduation Manager for inclusion is required.
- 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 Course Director must request inclusion.
- Students must RSVP before the closing date to confirm their place at their graduation/award ceremony.

#### Invitations

- Invitations are emailed (to both CCCU and personal email addresses) to students who have completed their studies approximately 6 weeks prior to the graduation date. Provisional invites are not permitted under any circumstance. Courses are 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 Board of Examiners will be invited to the January event.
- 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 ceremony guest ticket fee of £22.00 per person, each student is guaranteed, a maximum of two guests. There is a separate guest ticket fee of £6 per person for entrance to the celebratory drinks reception. 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 £14.00 per person. Every student is guaranteed a maximum of two guest tickets to attend both the ceremony and celebratory drinks reception.
- 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. Please see below for details regarding children and babies attending graduation ceremonies. 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 if any additional tickets will be available for purchase. Students will receive an RSVP Confirmation email confirming their ceremony time and if any additional tickets are available. Tickets (if available) 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). Additional tickets are generally very unlikely due to operational requirements.
- 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.
- Unitemps staff members are not eligible for graduation staff benefits.
- 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 Team and possibly reallocated on the day of the ceremony.
- All guest tickets will be available for collection on the day of the respective ceremony, students should present their Final Confirmation email to redeem guest tickets. Tickets are not posted to students.
- All sales of tickets prior to the event date are online and no cash payment taken. If guest tickets are available on the day payments will be via credit or debit card (no cash payments).

#### Children and Babies Attending Graduation

- Graduation is a family occasion but it is important to remember that ceremonies are long and formal events and may not be suitable for babies and very young children.
- We recommend that any graduand, or guest, with childcare responsibilities seek alternative childcare arrangements. However, we recognise this is not always possible, so it is important to ensure each child guest holds the appropriate ticket;
  - Children aged 5 years and over must hold a standard guest ticket and will be allocated their own guest seat in the ceremony.
  - Children aged 4 years and under (including babies) must hold a complimentary 'child on lap' ticket. These can be requested free of charge via the i-zone ([i-zone@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:i-zone@canterbury.ac.uk)).

- Please note, if children 4 years and under are present, they must be kept on a guest's knee for the duration of the ceremony.
- The ceremony is also live streamed to the St George's Centre for Canterbury ceremonies and the Medway Campus for Rochester Cathedral ceremonies, these locations provide a more relaxed setting in which to watch the ceremonies for guests with children.

### Location

- For Canterbury based graduations Augustine House is used for gowning and photography and the celebratory drinks reception is held on North Holmes Road. The ceremony is live streamed to St George's Centre.
- For Rochester based graduations, gowning and the celebratory drinks reception 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 graduation events 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 can be hired via our preferred suppliers, Ede & Ravenscroft. It is important to note Ede & Ravenscroft require 15 working days' 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.
- Academic staff who process at graduation are entitled to free gown hire if requested via the Graduation Team 15 working days' 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 Team 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 Wellbeing Services team process special arrangement 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 Team. All requests should be submitted via the i-zone and prior to the RSVP deadline. The Graduation Team cannot guarantee that the University will be able to accommodate any request for special arrangements received after the RSVP closing date.

#### In Memoriam

- The Dean of Chapel will inform the Graduation Team 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 Manager 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 Team as part of your application.
- Please contact CCCU's International Office for immigration advice.
- A copy of the invite emailed to you approximately 6 weeks before the event by the Graduation Team should suffice with employers.

#### Marketing Materials

- Students are listed in the graduation programme in alphabetical order within their course 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 4 weeks before the ceremony date after which no changes can be made.
- The first name and surname signed off at the Board of Examiners 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 emailed approximately 6 weeks prior to graduation. All students who confirm their attendance will be sent an RSVP Confirmation email the week following the deadline and a Final Confirmation email one week prior to the event. Invites are emailed to the

personal email address and CCCU email address held on the University's student record database; students are responsible for updating their details in advance of invites being sent.

### 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 adding the prize winners to the University's student record database at least 6 weeks prior to the graduation date, the Graduation Team 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. Course Directors for courses eligible to attend will supply names of VIPs who will attend.

### Honoraries

- Honoraries are chosen by the Governing Body and relayed to the Graduation Manager via the VCs Office.
- 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 Graduation Team is 5 working days.
- Weekly team meetings are held.
- One to ones are held 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 a web link is provided in the invitation booklet.

NOTE - (Subject to change - the University in addition to our own procedures will ensure COVID secure measures are in place in line with guidance from the Government and Public Health England)