

UWS Graduation: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The following information will give you an idea of what to expect at your graduation and answer some common questions.

1. When will the graduations take place?

The dates of graduation ceremonies are listed, as soon as they become available, on our website: [Graduation | UWS | University of the West of Scotland](#)

Arrangements for in-person ceremonies may be subject to change and the University reserves the right to make adjustments as required. Any changes will be communicated to you via email, to your UWS and personal email addresses which we hold on the system.

**In the event that graduation is cancelled for any reason, the University does not accept liability for direct or indirect loss or damages incurred. This includes any loss incurred with external suppliers, such as travel, accommodation, photography or robing. We would recommend that you consider the cancellation and refund policies of any suppliers before making a booking with them and you may also wish to consider having appropriate insurance in place.*

2. Where will the graduations be held?

The physical graduation ceremonies will take place as follows:

for Dumfries graduands (Winter ceremonies): Crichton Memorial Church in Dumfries ([The Crichton | We connect people, place and the past to shape the future](#));

for Ayr, Lanarkshire, Paisley, Distance Learning and franchised - not validated - programmes graduands (Summer and Winter ceremonies): Paisley Abbey ([Paisley Abbey](#)).

for London graduands (Spring and Autumn ceremonies): St Marylebone Church (<https://www.stmarylebone.org>).

All our venues are fully accessible. Please contact us at graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk to discuss your specific requirements.

All graduands also have an option to attend a virtual graduation ceremony instead of the physical event.

3. Who is being invited to graduation ceremonies?

The **Spring** ceremonies are for all London Campus students whose awards have been confirmed at the current academic session Term 1 School Boards of Examiners or at the previous academic session Term 3 School Boards of Examiners.

The **Summer** ceremonies are for Ayr, Lanarkshire, Paisley, Distance Learning and franchised (not validated) programmes Honours students whose awards have been/will be confirmed at the Term 1 and Term 2 School Boards of Examiners and for other students from these campuses whose awards have been confirmed at the Term 1 School Boards of Examiners. Please note that Honours students will be asked to register for the Summer graduation ceremonies **before** their awards have been confirmed by the School Board of Examiners. The awards will be verified after the School Boards of Examiners have taken place and the information will be amended accordingly/students will be contacted as required.

The **Autumn** ceremonies are for all London Campus students whose awards have been confirmed at the Term 2 School Boards of Examiners.

The **Winter** ceremonies in **Dumfries** are for all Dumfries students (including Honours students) whose awards have been confirmed at the Term 1, 2 and 3 School Boards of Examiners.

The **Winter** ceremonies in **Paisley** are for Ayr, Lanarkshire, Paisley, Distance Learning and franchised (not validated) programmes Level 9 students who have decided not to continue to Honours year, for Honours students whose awards have been confirmed at the Term 3 School Boards of Examiners and for Postgraduate students whose awards have been confirmed at the Term 2 and Term 3 School Boards of Examiners.

4. When will I be invited to register for graduation?

If you are eligible to graduate (see Question 3), you will receive an email from us inviting you to complete online graduation registration approximately six weeks before graduation ceremonies are due to take place. If you are eligible and have not heard from us three weeks before the ceremony, please contact graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk as a matter of urgency.

5. How will I know if I am eligible to graduate?

If you are eligible to graduate (see Question 3) and have not heard from us three weeks before the ceremony, please contact graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk as a matter of urgency.

6. Do I need to register for my graduation?

Yes, all eligible graduands must register online for their graduation ceremony, whether they choose to attend the physical ceremony, attend the virtual event, or are unable to attend and graduate "*in absentia*" from the physical ceremony. **If you do not register, you will not receive your parchment.**

If you were invited to register, you need to register even if you have not yet completed your programme of study. Your results will be checked after the School Board of Examiners to check your eligibility to graduate i.e. whether you have received a decision of 'Award Graduate'.

The deadline for graduation registration will be specified in the email inviting you to register. Please ensure that registration is completed by the deadline as **late registrations will not be possible.**

7. When do I choose between the physical ceremony or the virtual ceremony?

You will be asked at the time of registration to indicate whether you wish to attend the physical graduation for your programme, or whether you would like to attend the online, virtual ceremony instead.

Due to the timescales for arranging each event, it will not be possible to change your preference after graduation registration has closed.

8. What do I choose if I am not able to attend either the physical ceremony or the virtual ceremony?

If you are unable to attend either the physical or virtual ceremony you still need to register. During registration you should indicate that you wish to graduate "*in absentia*" on the day of your physical ceremony.

9. What does '*in absentia*' mean?

Graduating "*in absentia*" means the University will confer your award without you attending a ceremony. Your award parchment will then be sent to you by post within one month of the date of your ceremony to the address you provide during registration.

10. Will I be able to defer my graduation?

No, it is not possible to defer your graduation until a later time. By introducing a virtual ceremony in addition to physical events, and also giving you the opportunity to graduate "*in absentia*", you will have a range of opportunities to graduate without delay and in the way which best suits you so that you can provide evidence of your UWS qualifications to future employers/academic institutions for further study.

If you are unable to attend your physical graduation and do not wish to attend the virtual event, your award will be conferred "*in absentia*" on the day of your physical ceremony.

11. Will there be any UWS charges for students to attend the virtual or physical graduations?

No, the University is delighted to be able to offer the graduation ceremonies at no cost to students. There will however be a cost for all guest tickets to attend the physical ceremony (see Question 20).

12. What if I am late for my ceremony?

We will tell you the exact time you need to be at the location in advance of the ceremony. Any graduands who arrive beyond this time will not be permitted to take part in the event.

13. If I am not attending a physical graduation, to what address will my parchment be sent?

If you completed Graduation Registration and told us you want to graduate in absentia, your parchment will be sent by post to the address noted within a month after your graduation ceremony has taken place. If your address has changed since then, please email graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk.

If you completed Graduation Registration and told us you want to take part in the online graduation, your parchment will be sent by post to the address noted within a month after your virtual graduation date. If your address has changed since then, please email graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk.

If you were eligible to graduate and did not register on time, your award will still be conferred "*in absentia*". Your parchment will not be sent to you. You will need to contact us by emailing graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk to confirm your full name and current address before your parchment can be sent.

14. When will I find out the time of my virtual graduation?

The schedule showing which programmes and Schools will be attending each ceremony will be available on the UWS graduation website [Graduation | UWS | University of the West of Scotland](#) as soon as it becomes available. The University will also contact you with more details closer to the date of the ceremony.

15. If I am unable to participate at the scheduled date/time, can I change to another physical ceremony?

Unfortunately, no, each programme in each School has an allocated ceremony and therefore it is not possible to request a change to a different date or time.

16. How long will each ceremony last?

The physical ceremonies will last about an hour but please note that you **must arrive at the church one and a half hours before the** start of your graduation ceremony in order to check-in and collect your gown.

The virtual ceremony should last about 45 minutes. Virtual ceremonies will be live broadcasts, so you must be logged in to attend at the allotted time you will be given. Your family and friends will also be able to log in and watch the ceremony live from anywhere in the world via YouTube. You will be provided with the relevant live-stream link for your

graduation ceremony nearer the time. Afterwards a recording of the ceremony will be available on our UWS YouTube channel for on-demand viewing.

17. How do I hire my academic dress (robe/hood) for the physical graduation?

Academic robe and hood to wear at the physical graduation can be hired from the University's official gown provider, Ede & Ravenscroft and the link will be provided to you when you are invited to register for graduation. The link will also be provided within the confirmation email which you will receive automatically when you have completed Graduation Registration.

Please note that the link will close a number of days before the ceremony – the specific date will be provided to you during the online registration process – so please ensure that your academic robe and hood are hired before that date.

18. What is UWS academic dress?

Pictures showing various examples of UWS academic robe and hood can be found on the UWS graduation website ([Graduation | UWS | University of the West of Scotland](#)).

Please note that only official academic dress will be allowed during the physical ceremonies. If unofficial robes, hoods, or mortarboards are worn, they will be removed before you cross the stage at the graduation ceremony.

19. Will I be able to hire academic dress when I participate in the virtual graduation?

There is no opportunity for gown hire for the virtual graduations. If you'd like to get into the celebratory spirit, please do feel free to dress to impress for your virtual live graduation ceremony. Please note that at the virtual ceremony, only your head and shoulders will be visible on screen.

20. How many guests may I bring to my physical graduation?

Each graduand will be able to book up to a maximum of 2 guest tickets at £15 per ticket at the time of Graduation Registration. The link to pay for these pre-booked guest tickets will be provided to you as part of Graduation Registration. The pre-booked tickets must be paid for no later than 24 hours before your graduation ceremony.

Your guest tickets will be handed to you when you check-in before the start of your graduation ceremony.

Please note that the graduation is a formal ceremony. The entire proceedings can take up to an hour and are not therefore considered suitable for pre-school aged children.

21. How will I receive my Guest Tickets?

You will receive your pre-paid guest tickets when you check-in for your graduation ceremony. You will then be able to give them to your guests. Please note that you may be

asked to show an email from the UWS online store as a proof of payment so please have it ready.

If you have applied for extra tickets via the ballot, we will contact you one week before your ceremony to let you know if you have been successful and how to pay for ballot tickets.

22. Can I bring young children to the graduation ceremony?

Unfortunately the graduation ceremony can last up to an hour and we are therefore strongly recommending that pre-school children should not attend.

If you nevertheless decide to bring young children to the ceremony, please note that all children and toddlers will require guest tickets. This is due to Health & Safety requirements of the graduation venues.

23. I would like to invite my family/friends from abroad to attend my graduation as guests – what documents do we need?

If you are planning to invite relatives from abroad for the graduation, you can and should start the process of applying for a visa 3 months before graduation day. You do not need to wait for an official invitation to graduation, you can use a student status letter as evidence for the visa application.

See the [International Student Support team SharePoint page](#) (note that you must be signed into your UWS Microsoft 365 account to access the Share Point site). Scroll down to the **'Resources for UWS Students'** section where you can access the **How to Guide: Inviting relatives to visit you in the UK**. If you need further advice/support, see the [SharePoint page](#) for information on how to get in touch with the International Student Support team.

24. Can mobile phones be used during graduation ceremonies?

Although phones can be used for photography, all graduands and their guests must ensure that all mobile phones are on silent mode throughout the ceremony.

We also ask all graduands and guests not to conduct conversations during the ceremonies in order to enable the names of all graduands to be heard clearly and to make the ceremony enjoyable for everybody.

25. Can my guests take photographs during the ceremony?

Yes, photographs may be taken during the ceremony, although we ask that guests are considerate to other guests sitting near them when standing up to take photographs.

The use of Drones (Unmanned Aircraft Systems or UAS) at UWS Graduations is not permitted. This includes indoors within Graduation Ceremonies, and both indoors and outdoors at UWS premises. For further information on the operation of Drones please refer to [The Drone and Model Aircraft Code | UK Civil Aviation Authority \(caa.co.uk\)](#)

26. Will there be official graduation photographs?

Yes, the University's official photography partners, [Marston Events](#), will be present at the physical events and you can pre-book your photographs using the link which will be provided to you when you are invited to register for graduation. The link will also be provided within the confirmation email which you will receive automatically when you have completed Graduation Registration.

Please note that the link will close a number of days before the ceremony – the specific date will be provided to you during the online registration process – so please ensure that your official photographs are booked before that date.

27. Will I have any souvenirs from my graduation?

A printed copy of the graduation programme will be made available for graduands and guests attending the physical events.

For graduands attending the virtual ceremony, we will publish a souvenir graduation programme which you can save digitally or print. Your friends and family will be able to view your graduation ceremony live online and our digital platform will provide a recording of the virtual ceremony which can be accessed over and over again.

You can purchase a range of quality UWS branded merchandise, and the details of this can be found on the UWS graduation website ([Graduation | UWS | University of the West of Scotland](#)).

28. When will I receive my award parchment if I don't attend a physical ceremony?

If you completed Graduation Registration and told us you want to graduate *in absentia*, your parchment will be sent by post to the address noted within a month after your graduation ceremony has taken place. If your address has changed since then, please email graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk.

If you completed Graduation Registration and told us you want to take part in the online graduation, your parchment will be sent by post to the address noted within a month after your virtual graduation date. If your address has changed since then, please email graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk.

If you were eligible to graduate and did not register on time, your award will still be conferred "*in absentia*". Your parchment will **not be posted to you**. You will need to contact us by emailing graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk to confirm your full name and current address before your parchment can be sent.

29. I need confirmation of my academic award before my ceremony – what should I do?

Parchments cannot be provided until after you have graduated. However, an authorised version of your Academic Transcript showing your progress to date on all the modules you

have studied is available at any time – this should be requested via The Hub portal or by email to hub@uws.ac.uk. It will be updated to include your final award decision within two weeks of the meeting of the School Board of Examiners where any award is approved. This should provide sufficient evidence of your qualifications until your parchment is available.

30. Cancellation / Liability

In the event that graduation is cancelled for any reason, the University does not accept liability for direct or indirect loss or damages incurred. This includes any loss incurred with external suppliers such as travel, accommodation, photography or robing. We would recommend that you consider the cancellation and refund policies of any suppliers before making a booking with them and you may also wish to consider having appropriate insurance in place.

31. Where can I get more information about graduation?

We appreciate that you may have other questions about the event, and we will endeavour to add more information to this page as it becomes available. Please check back regularly.

Any graduation updates will be published on the graduation page of our website [here](#).

If you have any specific questions please contact us by email to graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk

UWS Registry
7th April 2025