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1. ELIGIBILITY AND REGISTRATION

1.1. Am I eligible to attend graduation?

You need to meet the following eligibility criteria to attend graduation:

- Your award must have been agreed at least three working days prior to the start of the ceremonies.
- You must have paid all tuition fees owing to the University. (This does not include any non-tuition fee debts.)

1.2. Can I attend graduation if I have a Tuition Fee debt?

If you have tuition fee debts your results will not be reviewed by the relevant Assessment Board and you will not be awarded. This means that you would not be eligible to attend graduation. Please refer to the [Student Fees and Other Charges Policy](#) available on the University website. Information on paying your fees can be found on our [Paying your fees page](#). The Student Lifecycle team is not responsible for the removal of fee holds and award processing. Any queries should be directed to the Student Centre via [COMPASS or Live chat](#).

1.3. Do I have to attend graduation to graduate?

No. You can select the option to not attend in the online registration task and your name will not be read out at the ceremony. This will not impact your overall award or conferring of your degree. Your degree certificate and transcript are posted to their home address, not handed out at ceremony.

1.4. Can I defer my attendance to a future ceremony?

Yes. You must complete the online registration task, where you can choose to defer your ceremony for up to one calendar year. You will be invited to the next graduation ceremony for your course.

1.5. When does registration open?

You will receive an email once registration opens:

- July ceremonies – Registration normally opens in early May
- November ceremonies – Registration normally opens in early October

1.6. When will the date of my ceremony be confirmed?

We aim to publish the ceremony dates three months in advance. All dates published on the [Graduation website](#) are provisional until you receive your graduation invitation email. We strongly advise that you **do not make any travel or accommodation arrangements** until you have received your invitation email and booked your ticket. The University of Westminster cannot take responsibility for transport or accommodation costs incurred and you make these arrangements at your own risk.

1.7. How do I register to attend?

If you are eligible to attend, you will receive an email from the Student Lifecycle Team inviting you to Graduation. This email will be sent to your University email contact and your personal email address that we have on record. For further information, please see the [How to book](#) webpage.

1.8. What if I don't receive the email inviting me to graduation?

All invites will be sent at least 6 weeks prior to the graduation ceremony. If you do not receive an email but believe that you are eligible attend, please contact the Student Centre via [COMPASS or Live chat](#) immediately.

1.9. My name is showing incorrectly on my student record when I make my registration.

When completing your registration, please check that your name is correct. It will appear as stated in the online graduand name listing. If it is incorrect, log your enquiry via [COMPASS](#) or [Live chat](#).

Your full legal name as recorded on the University's system will also appear on your award documents. If this is incorrect, please notify us via [COMPASS](#) or Live chat as soon as possible.

1.10. I have not received my results, should I register my attendance?

You do not need to wait for your results to register your attendance. If you have any queries about your expected completion date, or the date your results will be published please log your enquiry via [COMPASS or Live chat](#). Note that registering your attendance does not mean you are eligible to attend.

1.11. I have booked my place but not completed my course successfully.

If you have been referred, deferred or have an ongoing academic appeal, your award may not be confirmed in time for you to be eligible to attend this ceremony. Upon award confirmation, you will be invited to the next ceremony for your course.

1.12. I have additional support requirements, how do I let you know?

When you book your place, please complete the additional support requirements section before the deadline. If you need to notify us of any additional support requirements after the registration deadline, you will need to log your enquiry via [COMPASS or Live chat](#).

1.13. My guests have additional support requirements, how do I let you know?

All guests who have accessibility requirements are expected to go through the [Southbank Centre's Accessibility Guide](#) before purchasing guest tickets. Should guests have accessibility requirements which may impact them on the day, they are recommended to sign up to the [Access Scheme](#) on the Southbank Centre's webpage.

A hearing loop system will be accessible during the Graduation ceremony. The Southbank Centre website provides further information on access and facilities.

If you, the graduand, or your guests are Deaf, please do make a note of this during the registration task under the 'Accessibility Requirements' section. You are also advised to contact us at least 6 weeks in advance via [COMPASS or Live chat](#), so that we can ensure that a BSL interpreter is present on the day.

Guide dogs are welcome at the venue, but you must notify us in advance. However, pets will not be allowed.

1.14. I missed the registration deadline. Can I register on the day?

No. We cannot take registrations on the day of graduation. You must book your place and guest tickets before the registration deadline in your graduation invitation email.

1.15. How do I cancel my place at graduation?

Before registration closes, you can cancel at any time by re-entering the registration task through '[My Student Record](#)'. After registration has closed, you will need to log your enquiry via [COMPASS or livechat](#).

1.16. Can I choose what name will be read aloud as I walk across the stage?

During the registration task, you can choose whether your legal first name or preferred first name is read aloud. Your surname will always be your legal surname as recorded in the University's systems and cannot be changed for your ceremony.

The name read aloud will therefore always be in the following format:

Legal or Preferred First Name and Legal Surname

Please note that middle names are not read aloud. You will also have the opportunity to provide a phonetic pronunciation of your name to help the reader pronounce it correctly.

2. VENUES, ACCESSIBILITY & TRAVEL

2.1 Where are the graduation ceremonies held?

Our ceremonies are held at the [Royal Festival Hall](#) on London's Southbank. The venue is easily accessible by public transport. The full address is: Southbank Centre, Belvedere Rd, London SE1 8XX

2.2 How do I get to the venue?

The venue is within the congestion charging zone and parking is very limited. We recommend that you and your guests travel to the venue by public transport where possible. [Plan your journey with Transport for London.](#)

2.3 What is accessibility like at the venue?

The venue is fully accessible with spaces available for wheelchair users. Further information can be at [Royal Festival Hall Access and Facilities.](#)

2.4 Are cloakroom facilities available?

[Cloakroom facilities](#) are managed by the Royal Festival Hall and are available at a charge per item. Students and guests should refrain from bringing large items. Kindly note that space is limited and will be provided on a first come first served basis.

2.5 Are refreshments available at the venue?

There are many [cafes and restaurants](#) on the Southbank.

2.6 How do I organise travel / accommodation?

Graduands and their guests are responsible for arranging their own travel and/or accommodation. We are unable to make recommendations.

3 TICKETS

3.1 Do I need to register for my Graduand Ticket?

Yes. Although your graduand ticket is complimentary (free), it is not automatically allocated and you must register to attend on the My Graduation Task, via ["My Student Record"](#) by the booking deadline in the invitation email.

3.2 How much do tickets cost?

Tickets for Graduands are free. The price of guest tickets will be published in your invitation email. A booking fee and restoration levy may also be charged by the venue when booking.

Guest tickets for children aged 18 months - 12 years old are free. However, they must have a guest ticket or they will not be allowed access to the auditorium. Children's tickets are included in your overall ticket allocation.

Children aged under 18 months do not require a ticket and are **not** included in your overall allocation. They will need to sit on the lap of a ticketed guest as they will not be allocated a seat in the auditorium.

We are unable to seat children with graduates.

The Royal Festival Hall also has a limited number of boxes (private seating areas) for up to a maximum of four guests.

There are no concessions on ticket prices.

3.3 How many guest tickets can I buy?

Graduands are allocated a set amount of guest tickets. Upon receiving your invitation, you will be notified as to how many guest tickets are available for you to purchase.

Closer to your graduation date we will notify you if there are any additional tickets available for purchase. These will be sold on a first come, first served basis.

3.4 Who can buy guest tickets and when is the deadline for this?

Subject to availability, guest tickets can be purchased up to and on the day of your graduation ceremony. These can be purchased online and from the Royal Festival Hall box office. We recommend buying tickets as soon as they become available to avoid disappointment.

All guest tickets must be purchased by the graduand.

3.5 Can I change the number of guest tickets I require?

When buying guest tickets, please ensure that you know how many you will require. We advise purchasing these at the same time to ensure that guests are seated together. Depending on availability, we **may** put additional guest tickets on for sale on a first come first served basis. **Any tickets purchased in separate orders will not be seated together.**

Please note that guest tickets are non-refundable.

3.6 If I don't need any guest tickets, can someone else buy them?

No. For fairness, each graduand gets a set amount of guest tickets regardless of how many they choose to use. You cannot purchase tickets for other graduates or ask another graduate to purchase tickets for you.

3.7 Are the tickets posted to us?

No, all purchased tickets are received digitally. It is the graduands' responsibility to ensure that all e-tickets are downloaded and shared with guests either by forwarding the tickets to guest's mobile devices or printing the PDF's out in advance. Tickets will be emailed one week before your graduation ceremony to the email address used when placing your order.

3.8 Can guests purchase tickets for me?

No. All tickets **must** be purchased by the graduand.

3.9 Are guest seats allocated?

Yes. Any tickets purchased at the same time through the online booking system will be allocated together. If you purchase additional tickets for your ceremony it will not be possible

to seat all your guests together.

If you have notified the Southbank Centre in advance of any access requirements for your guests, then your seats will have been assigned with these requirements in mind. It is not possible to change your guest seat allocations.

3.10 Can I bring children to the ceremony?

Children and young adults (under 17) are welcome to attend our graduation ceremonies, but they **must** be accompanied by an adult. Please note that childcare facilities are not available at the venue.

Please bear in mind that the ceremonies are formal occasions and can feel quite long for very young children. The ceremony is shown on screens in the foyers of the Royal Festival Hall, if you need to leave the auditorium with a small child you can still watch the ceremony. Please see 3.2 for further information.

4 VISA SUPPORT

4.1 How can I obtain a visa to come to London for the ceremony?

If your visa is no longer valid, you can apply for a [Visitor Visa](#) to attend the ceremony.

4.2 Can Westminster provide a visa letter for me or my guests?

We can provide you with a letter, which can be used in support of a visa application for you or your guests. However, we cannot include the names or passport details of your guests on the letter, as the university is not responsible for inviting them. The letter will confirm the graduands eligibility to attend the ceremony and the date and time of the event.

Upon completing your registration, you will be able to generate and download a visa letter. This will only be available upon registering for the ceremony. Should you require this letter on an urgent basis, please log this enquiry via [COMPASS or Live chat](#).

4.3 I have the wrong address on my visa letter.

The Student Lifecycle team cannot update student details. You must check these details are correct in '[My Student Record](#)' prior to requesting the visa letter. Should you require further support, please raise this via [COMPASS or Live chat](#).

5 GOWN HIRE

5.1 How do I hire my gown?

The University of Westminster has a recommended supplier, [Ede & Ravenscroft](#) and **we**

encourage that you order your gown at least three weeks before your ceremony. If you opt to source a gown independently you should check that it adheres to University of Westminster regulations.

5.2 I forgot to hire my gown in advance, can I hire my gown on the day?

Yes, although it is slightly more expensive on the day and Ede & Ravenscroft cannot guarantee that they will have the correct sized gown for you. **We strongly advise that you hire the gown ahead of the ceremony.**

5.3 Where do I collect my gown before the ceremony?

In order to collect the gown you have hired from [Ede & Ravenscroft](#), you will need your gown order confirmation and to have checked in with us at our registration desk first. You will collect your gown at the venue on the day.

5.4 Where do I return my gown after the ceremony?

Please return it to the drop off point at the venue on the day. This will be signposted.

5.5 I am no longer able to attend, can I receive a refund for the gown hire?

As the gowns are issued by [Ede and Ravenscroft](#) you will need to contact them directly.

5.6 Do I have to wear a gown to the ceremony?

Wearing a gown is recommended but not compulsory. As this is a formal event, smart clothing is expected.

6 PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING

6.1 Can I have professional graduation photographs taken on the day?

[Tempest photography](#) will have studios set up for photographs before the graduation ceremony and throughout the day if you would like to have photos taken of yourself, your family, and friends. You must visit the photography studios prior to your graduation ceremony to avoid the queues afterwards during the allocated time slot. We recommend that you and your guests proceed to photography immediately after gowning where possible to benefit from priority queuing. Please note you may be asked to queue.

6.2 Can I book my photography session prior to attending the ceremony?

No. You will need to visit the photography stand on the day of your graduation. Prints can be ordered on the day, or you can order them online after the ceremony. You will also have the

chance to buy professional photographs taken during the graduation ceremony. For more information contact [Tempest Photography](#).

6.3 Will I need to queue on the day for photography?

Yes, there may be a wait for photography on the day of your ceremony. Photography opens before the ceremony, and opening times will be included in your 'On the Day' email and the accompanying information. We recommend arriving with plenty of time before your ceremony if you would like professional photographs taken.

Please note that photography after the ceremony cannot be guaranteed, so we strongly advise having your photos taken before the ceremony where possible.

To help manage demand, Tempest Photography may operate a digital or virtual queuing system. This means that even if there is no visible queue, there may still be a waiting time. If you are unsure, please speak to a member of the Tempest Photography team, who will be happy to assist.

Graduates who arrive during their allocated photography timeslot will be prioritised.

6.4 What is the maximum group size I can have in my photographs?

The maximum group size for photography is 6, including the graduate.

6.5 What time do the photography studios open and close on the day?

Studio opening times will be provided in your '**On the Day**' information. The studios will open at least 90 minutes before your ceremony begins.

Please ensure you arrive during the photography opening times listed in your '**On the Day**' information. Due to limited capacity and demand on the day, we cannot guarantee that photographs will be available outside of these times. If you arrive late, you may miss the opportunity to have your official graduation photographs taken.

6.6 Will I / my guests be able to take photos during the graduation ceremony?

Yes, but please be considerate of those nearby if taking photographs or filming during the event and please remain seated.

6.7 I have not received my graduation photographs.

If your studio graduation photographs have not arrived, please contact [Tempest photography](#)

6.8 Will the ceremony be live streamed?

Yes. The ceremonies can be viewed on our [Live Stream page](#). You will need to accept

cookies for the live stream to load.

6.9 Will there be screens at the ceremony to watch the ceremony?

There are screens in the Level 4 Foyer where guests can watch the graduation.

7 ON THE DAY

7.1 What should I bring with me on the day?

You will need to show your confirmation email at the Registration Desk - no need to print it. Please also ensure that e-tickets for your guests have been distributed before arrival.

7.2 What is the dress code on the day?

Graduands. Graduation is a formal occasion. As your clothes can be seen under your gown, we recommend smart formal dress for your ceremony. Graduands are very welcome to wear national dress. Please note that shorts, denim, and trainers are not appropriate attire for a graduation ceremony. Please ensure you wear appropriate footwear for walking up and down steps and across the stage.

Guests. There is no dress code for your guests, but as the ceremony is a formal occasion, we would recommend all guests wear smart dress.

7.3 Do I need to register on the day?

Yes. The first thing that you must do when you arrive at the venue is to register so that we know you have arrived. This is where you will collect your ticket which gives you access to the auditorium.

7.4 Is my seat allocated?

Yes. Seats for graduands are allocated by course and then alphabetically by surname. This is the order in which you will be presented on stage, so you **must not** change your seat. Your seat number will be listed on your graduation ticket. When everyone is called into the auditorium, please take your seat promptly.

7.5 Do my guests sit with me?

No. Guests will sit in a separate area of the auditorium. You will be able to meet up with your guests after the ceremony.

7.6 What time should I / my guests arrive?

We strongly recommend that you and your guests arrive at the same time. This should be approximately 2 hours before your ceremony begins to allow enough time to register, collect your gown and have professional photographs taken. If this is not possible, guests must arrive at least 30 minutes before your ceremony to allow them time to take their seats.

We recommend that graduates and guests allow additional time on arrival to accommodate

security checks and any associated queues.

7.7 What if I arrive late?

Go straight to the registration desk to check in. A member of staff will show you what to do next. We will try and get you into the Graduation Hall at an appropriate time to graduate, but it may not be possible for you to graduate with the rest of your course if they have already crossed the stage.

7.8 What if my guests are late?

If any of your guests are late and do not have an e-ticket, they will be unable to enter the auditorium. Please ensure that e-tickets are circulated with guests in advance so that they can access the auditorium, even if they are running late.

Subject to availability, additional tickets may be available for sale from the box office; the graduand must accompany guests in order to purchase tickets at the venue. If the graduand is already in the auditorium, guests will be unable to enter but can watch the ceremonies on the screens in the level 4 foyer.

7.9 What happens on the day of the ceremony?

Students are strongly advised to plan their day to enable them to have enough time to enjoy all aspects of their graduation. Full details can be found in the [On the day information](#).

7.10 How long does the Graduation Ceremony last?

Each graduation lasts between 1.5 to 2 hours, depending on the number of graduands being presented. Each graduation is followed immediately by an hour-long reception. At the end of the ceremony, you will need to stand and wait for the Academic Procession to leave the auditorium.

7.11 How will I know when to walk across the stage?

Row by row, you will be asked by a member of staff to stand and wait for the announcer to call your name. You will be guided across the stage where you will be greeted by the Vice-Chancellor who will acknowledge your achievements.

7.12 What if I am unable to shake hands at the ceremony for personal or religious reasons?

If you would prefer not to shake hands, clasp your hands in front of you as you cross the stage or doff your cap. A demonstration will be shown at the beginning of your ceremony.

7.13 Will my award classification be read out or printed in the online graduand name listing?

No. Our ceremonies are inclusive, and we are celebrating all our graduating students' achievements at graduation.

7.14 Will my preferred first name or legal first name be read aloud when I cross the stage?

When you reserve your place at graduation, you can choose which name will be announced as you cross the stage. You may select either your **legal first name** or your **preferred first name** with your **legal surname**.

Only your first name and surname will be read aloud. Middle names are not included in the stage announcement.

7.15 Will I receive my degree certificate / diploma at the ceremony?

No. Full details of when you will receive your documents can be found on our [Transcripts and Certificates webpage](#).

8 DATA PROTECTION

8.1 Where does my name appear in relation to graduation?

All graduands attending graduation should be aware of the following:

8.1.1 You can choose to have either your full legal name or preferred first name and legal surname published in the University's online graduand name listings. When registering, you will have to opt in to have your name published, otherwise it will be excluded from the graduand name listing. This is available to all those attending the ceremony. Please note that your degree classification will not be published in the graduand name listing or read out at the ceremony.

8.1.2 Your name will be printed on the University's 'Class of 20xx' T-shirt. When you complete your registration, you will need to opt in to provide consent to be included in the graduation merchandise. You can choose whether you would like either your legal first name or preferred first name and legal surname to appear on the merchandise.

8.1.3 By completing the graduation registration task and opting in to be included in the online graduand listing, you consent to your name being published on the University's public graduation webpages prior to, during, and for up to three months following your graduation ceremony.

8.2 Where does my image appear in relation to graduation?

All graduates attending graduation should be aware of the following:

In attending the ceremony, you and your guests acknowledge that the ceremony is live streamed via the University's website. Your image may also appear in generic photographs that can be used for: Social Media, future graduation programmes or listings and other university publications.

