

UNIVERSITY of CUMBRIA ACADEMIC PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES

APPENDIX 7

Degree and Award Ceremony Procedures

1. Degree and Award Ceremonies

1.1 Definition

1.1.1 Degree and Award Ceremonies (Graduation Ceremonies) shall be held for awards that merit a formal conferral. This will normally include awards from Diploma of Higher Education and Foundation Degree upwards. Other awards will not normally be presented at a conferment ceremony.

1.1.2 Awards are ratified at the University Progression and Awards Board and take effect from this date. A public conferral of those awards shall subsequently take place at the Degree and Award Ceremony.

1.1.3 Graduands who choose not attend the Degree and Award Ceremony will graduate in absentia and their names will be included in the graduation programme. Where posthumous awards are conferred, student names will be included in the graduation programme. Students may be permitted 1 opportunity to defer their attendance within 3 years of being awarded. Deferrals must be requested 3 months before their allocated ceremony date unless there are exceptional circumstances in which case a deferral may be granted up to 3 weeks after the date of the ceremony.

1.1.4 The Degree and Award Ceremonies shall follow a common order of proceedings.

1.1.5 All Degree and Award Ceremonies shall be held in a location specified in advance by the University.

1.1.6 The University Mace is the symbol of authority of the University and should normally be carried and exhibited on all occasions when awards are being conferred.

1.2 Ceremonial Officers of the University

1.2.1 The following shall be Ceremonial Officers of the University:

i. **Honorary members:** the Chancellor; the Chair of the University Board; the Deputy Chair of the University Board.

ii. **Ex-officio members:** the Vice Chancellor, the Deputy Vice Chancellor, the University Secretary, the Academic Registrar, the Chief Operating Officer, the Director of Finance & Planning.

iii. **In attendance:** the University Mace; the University Orator, the Master of Ceremonies; the Ceremonial Marshals; the Assistant Marshals.

1.2.2 The Chancellor and the Vice Chancellor shall have the authority to publicly confer awards. These officers may also delegate authority to the Deputy Vice Chancellor, the Chair of the University Board or the Deputy Chair of the University Board.

1.3 Debt and Deferral

1.3.1 Graduands who have outstanding academic debt to the University are not permitted to attend a Degree and Award (Graduation) Ceremony. Graduands who are not permitted to attend their ceremony as a result of outstanding academic debt will not be permitted to attend a subsequent ceremony, unless the debt is cleared. At the discretion of the Vice Chancellor, financial good standing conditions may be waived in the case of a posthumous award.

1.3.2 Those graduands who are not permitted to attend their ceremony due to outstanding assessment will be invited to attend a corresponding ceremony in the following academic year.

1.3.3 Deferral of a ceremony for any reason other than outstanding assessment is only permitted in exceptional circumstances. All requests for deferrals must normally be put in writing to the Ceremonies Office before the date of the ceremony to which the graduand has been originally invited. Late deferrals will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances following clear rationale received by the ceremonies office within 3 weeks of the graduation ceremony.

1.4 Information about Degree and Award Ceremonies

1.4.1 A schedule of ceremonies will be published by the Ceremonies Office on an annual basis. The specific dates and times of ceremonies will be published approximately six months prior to the ceremonies.

1.4.2 Graduands are expected to familiarise themselves with the timeframes for ceremonies as published by the Ceremonies Office. If a graduand does not arrive at a ceremony within the specified timeframe this may result in the graduand being prevented from attending the ceremony.

1.4.3 Graduands are normally entitled to two guest tickets providing a request is made within the published timeframe. There will normally be a further opportunity to apply for extra tickets if these are still available once the standard entitlement of all graduands has been met. Priority, when allocating extra guest tickets, will be on a first-come first-served basis and will be subject to availability. The quantities of extra tickets allocated will be at the discretion of the University. Information regarding the online live streaming of the event will be issued to attendees one week prior to the ceremony.

1.4.4 The University reserves the right to transfer graduands to an alternative ceremony for operational reasons.

1.4.5 Guest tickets are non-transferable to another ceremony or to another student without the approval of the Ceremonies Office.

1.4.6 To enable the University to ensure that students and guests are able to participate fully in ceremonies, any special access requirements must be made known to the graduation team in advance.

1.5 Presentation of Students, Badges and Prizes

1.5.1 Graduands will be presented by the Dean/Director of the Institute (or an appointed representative) responsible for the programme of study.

1.5.2 Badges will be presented by a ceremonial marshal or by a representative of the relevant Institute if otherwise requested.

1.5.3. Prizes, where appropriate, will be presented separately following the main ceremony, as advised by the Ceremonies Office. The Dean/Director of the appropriate Institute (or an appointed representative) will preside over any prize giving presentations.

1.6 Unforeseen circumstances

If the graduation ceremonies cannot take place or are delayed due to circumstances beyond the control of the university including (without limitation) fire, flood, adverse weather, power cut, explosion, terrorist act (or threat of terrorist act), act of God, pandemic, traffic incident, or as a result of any industrial action or dispute involving the university, or the venues at which the ceremonies are due to be held, the University will not be liable for any losses direct, or otherwise, incurred by students or their guests. The University will, where at all possible, make alternative arrangements for any students affected, but students and their guests should ensure that they have sufficient insurance protection to cover any losses they might suffer as a result of a ceremony being cancelled or delayed.

2. Honorary Degrees & Fellowships

2.1 The University may award Honorary Degrees, Fellowships and Doctorates in accordance with the criteria laid down by Academic Board.

2.2 The presentation of Honorary Graduates, Fellows and Doctorates shall be preceded by a short biography by the appointed University Orator. After the conferral of the award the Honorary Graduate/Fellow/Doctorate may be asked to give a response.

2.3 The presentation of PhD awards shall be preceded by a short description of the presented thesis by the Institute Director (or representative). The graduating PhD student will be presented with a bonnet by the presiding officer.

3. Academic Dress

3.1 Academic Dress, as detailed below, must be worn by all active participants of the Degree and Award Ceremonies.

3.2 Officers of the University shall wear robes as prescribed by the University.

3.3. The presenting officer (Institute Director or representative) shall where appropriate academic dress of their respective awarding institution.

3.4 Honorary Fellows shall wear robes as prescribed by the University.

3.5 Honorary Doctorates shall wear robes as prescribed by the University.

3.6 Alumni of the Year shall wear robes as prescribed by the University.

3.7 Honorary Graduates shall wear comparable dress to the equivalent merited award, with suitable trim denoting the honorary status of the award.

3.8 Members of the academic procession who hold a degree or degrees shall wear the appropriate academic dress of the respective awarding institution. Participants with more than one degree should wear the academic dress of the higher award. Participants who do not hold a degree are eligible to wear black gown and mortarboard.

3.9 All participating graduands must acquire the appropriate academic dress as prescribed by the University. All graduands (except for PhD) shall wear black gowns and mortar boards along with the appropriate hood for the specified award. PhD graduands will wear blue gowns with light blue panels and silver trim along with a black oxford bonnet.

3.10 Prescribed academic headwear shall be worn throughout the ceremony by all participants.

4. Review of procedures

The University will review these procedures periodically.