



Graduation Booking Policy

Terms and Conditions

Student eligibility

1. All students must meet the following eligibility criteria to be able to attend their Graduation ceremony:
 - 1.1. Students must have had an award conferred within the dates published on the [Graduation webpage](#), or have accepted an exit award no lower than a Certificate of Higher Education;
 - 1.2. For students who have an academic appeal in progress, their eligibility to graduate is determined by their published examination results and award;
 - 1.3. In accordance with the University's [Student Debt Policy](#), students will not be eligible to attend their graduation ceremony while they are in debt to the University, whether the debt is educational or non-educational.
 - 1.4. Students who are in debt to the University will be able book tickets for their Graduation ceremony and will be provided the opportunity to clear their debt up to and including the day of their ceremony. Students will not be able to collect their tickets and gown and will not be permitted entry to their Graduation ceremony until the debt has been cleared. Students who clear their debt after their Graduation ceremony will not be invited to a future Graduation but will be sent their Award Certificate.
 - 1.5. If a disciplinary case is ongoing a student's award, in some cases, may not be conferred and they may not be able to attend Graduation. Please refer to the University's [Regulations relating to Academic Affairs \(6.28\)](#).

Student attendance

2. All eligible students will be invited to attend their Graduation ceremony, but attendance is not compulsory.
3. If a student chooses not to attend their Graduation ceremony, they will not be invited to a future Graduation ceremony, unless there are exceptional circumstances and a formal deferral is approved. More information can be found in the University's [Graduation Deferrals Procedure](#).
4. All students who wish to attend must book their place through the online [Graduation Booking system](#) to attend Graduation.

Guest tickets and attendance

5. Guest tickets for Graduation will be available to purchase at £30 per ticket and will admit the ticket holder to the Graduation ceremony in the Ivor Crewe Lecture Hall and to the departmental reception, which includes light refreshments.
6. Guests will not be permitted entry to the Graduation ceremony or reception without a guest ticket.
7. **Babies and children under the age of five will not be admitted into the ceremony.** If a guest ticket has been purchased for a child under the age of five, they will not be admitted into the ceremony and, if turned away on the day, the ticket will not be refunded. To cancel guest tickets purchased for children under the age of five, the graduating student should email the [Graduation and Awards Office](#) ahead of Graduation and before the published [refund deadline](#).
8. Children aged five and over may attend the ceremony and must have their own guest ticket and be accompanied by an adult. There are no discounts for children's ceremony tickets.
9. Booking for Graduation is divided into two phases. The opening and closing dates for each phase of booking will be clearly communicated via email to all eligible students and on the [Graduation webpage](#).

10. Phase one of booking

During phase one of booking, students can confirm their place and purchase up to two guest tickets, subject to availability.

- a. Students who do not purchase guest tickets when booking their place, but wish to do so later, may check ticket availability via the [Graduation Booking system](#) at any time prior to the closure of phase one.
- b. There is no automatic entitlement to two guest tickets per student during phase one and all tickets are sold on a first-come, first-served basis.

11. Phase two of booking

Booking for Graduation will temporarily close at the end of phase one at which time ticket availability is reviewed. Any unsold guest tickets will be released for sale during phase two.

- a. The release of additional guest tickets in phase two is subject to availability, and this will differ across ceremonies. It is likely that some ceremonies will sell out of guest tickets during phase one and for those ceremonies additional guest tickets will therefore not be available in phase two.
 - b. Where tickets are available, students will be able to purchase them via the [Graduation Booking system](#) on a first-come, first-served basis.
12. Guest tickets can only be booked and paid for through the booking system. Once booking and payment has been processed, a confirmation email will be sent to the external email address that the student has registered with the University.

13. If the confirmation email has not been received within two working days, students should email the [Graduation Office](#) as this may mean that the student's place and/or their guest tickets have not been successfully booked.
14. For ceremonies with capacity, it may be possible to purchase guest tickets, or reception only tickets, on the day of the ceremony. Availability of tickets for sale on the day cannot be confirmed in advance and will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis.
15. All ceremonies are livestreamed at various venues across the Colchester campus. This facility is offered to guests without tickets, including babies and children under the age of five, and is available free of charge. It is not possible to book seats at any of these venues.
16. Tickets remain the property of the University of Essex and are non-transferable.

Collection of tickets

17. All tickets will be available for collection on the day of the Graduation ceremony, up to two hours before the ceremony start time. It is not possible to collect tickets in advance of the day of the ceremony.
18. Tickets can only be collected by the graduating student; guest tickets will not be issued to any individuals without the student present.
19. Students will be asked to present their University of Essex student card, or other form of photographic ID, when collecting their tickets.

Cancellations and refunds

20. Students who have purchased guest tickets but subsequently become ineligible to receive an award, as determined by the Board of Examiners, will automatically have their booking cancelled and a full refund will be issued.
21. Students who choose to cancel their place must do so before the published [refund deadline](#) to be eligible for a refund for any guest tickets purchased.
22. Cancellation requests received after the refund deadline will not be eligible for a refund, unless exceptional circumstances are presented for consideration by the [Graduation and Awards Manager](#). Requests must be sent via email by the graduating student and contain their full name, registration number, the number of guest tickets to be cancelled, and the reason for cancellation.
23. Where a student is not eligible to attend their Graduation ceremony due to being in debt to the University, any refund due for guest tickets purchased will be offset against the debt. If the outstanding debt is greater than the sum of the refund, no refund will be provided.
24. Approved refunds will be processed after all Graduation ceremonies have taken place and will be refunded via the original method of payment.
25. The University reserves the right to postpone or cancel Graduation ceremonies, where a significant health or security risk is made apparent.

Policy Owner	Graduation and Awards Manager Academic Section
Published	February 2026
Policy review date	February 2027