



Graduation: Deferrals Procedure

Policy and Procedure for requesting a deferral to Graduation

1. A student becomes academically eligible for Graduation (and therefore becomes a graduand) upon conferral of their award and, subject to meeting the [full eligibility criteria](#), are entitled to attend the next Graduation ceremony following conferral of the award prior to the Graduation cutoff date (usually 10 days prior to the week of Graduation).
2. Eligible graduands and students expected to become eligible to attend before the cutoff, will be able to book a place to attend the ceremony specifically scheduled for their programme, Department, School or Faculty, depending on the nature of the ceremony schedule.
3. A graduand is not permitted to attend an alternative ceremony to the one their eligible programme has been allocated to.
4. If a graduand is unable to attend their allocated ceremony, they may submit a formal request to defer their attendance at Graduation, in certain circumstances.
5. A graduand is usually not permitted to defer their attendance at Graduation. A deferral will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and each case will be considered individually by the Graduation and Awards Manager, on their appointed nominee. Situations which may allow for deferral include:
 - a. A death in the graduand's family;
 - b. Critical illness in the graduand or the graduand's family;
 - c. Problems with obtaining a visa to attend Graduation;
 - d. A pre-arranged event which cannot be easily cancelled, such as a wedding, booked work conference, or a consultant appointment;
 - e. Birth of a child.

In all of the above circumstances, a form of evidence pertaining to the deferral circumstances may be requested by the Graduation and Awards Office.

In addition to the above circumstances, the below circumstances are also considered reasonable grounds in light of the continuing challenges that COVID-19 presents across the world, and also in light of the University's commitment to offering students an opportunity to attend a future in-person graduation ceremony for those who have been affected by ceremony postponements due to COVID-19.

- f. Travel restrictions or complications in travel due to COVID-19;
- g. Vulnerability or personal concerns over the risk level of COVID-19 and attending such an event;
- h. Where a graduand is unable to attend due to symptoms of COVID-19 or a positive test.

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6. A graduand must request a deferral before or immediately after (up to and including 10 working days) the original Graduation ceremony date at which they were eligible to graduate. Any request after this period will not be considered as the student will be deemed to have graduated in absentia and will no longer have the status of graduand.
 7. A deferral will be granted on only one occasion, and deferral can only be to a ceremony in the year following that which the graduand would have been originally eligible to attend.
 8. Where a deferral is approved, this does not, in any circumstances, guarantee or secure tickets for the graduand and guests to the deferred ceremony. For all ceremonies, graduands cannot attend without pre-booking tickets, which are subject to availability and sold on a first come first served basis.
 9. All formal requests for deferrals should be made in writing to graduation@essex.ac.uk, including the reasons for deferral and any supporting evidence, if appropriate.

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By: Chelsey Smith, Graduation and Awards Manager