Overview of Graduation

Thank you for volunteering to assist with the University’s graduation ceremonies. This is a great day for our students where they get to celebrate all the hard work that has culminated in their award from us.

On the day of their ceremony, graduands collect their gown in Percy Gee (Queen’s Hall). They can also have professional portrait photographs taken.

At the Hall, guests enter through the main doors and Graduands enter through the side door. Graduands receive their seat number at the check-in desk and then take their seat in the hall.

Graduands process across the stage from left to right, and they go across in order based upon their degree (e.g. PhD, MA, Msc, BA then BSc) and alphabetically by course. They will then return to their allocated seat to watch the rest of the ceremony.

Graduands do not wear their hats before the ceremony.

After the ceremony, graduates receive their degree certificate and transcript before leaving their seat to re-join their guests.

Please note that we issue e-tickets for all guest seating; guests are required to print the ticket at home and bring it with them.

Graduation Roles

Please note that roles 1 to 12 are overseen by the Registry Operations team. Please direct any queries you may have about these roles to Aboo Aboobaker: amra3@le.ac.uk. Roles 13 to 16 are overseen by the Events team. Please direct any queries you may have about these roles to Katie Morris or Clare Chisholm: kmm48@le.ac.uk or cc336@le.ac.uk

1. Tickets – Production
The Box Office, Percy Gee

You will be based at the Box Office in Percy Gee and your role will entail printing the pre-allocated guest tickets. Whilst we expect guests to have printed their tickets beforehand, we need to make provisions for printing tickets in situ in case they have not been able to do so. You will have access to a computer and a printer to ensure you’re able to produce the tickets. This role will also require access to SITS so that you can retrieve the guest tickets from the SCY screen. We have prepared a step-by-step guide for your reference.

2. Guest Support and Supervisor
The Box Office, Percy Gee & De Montfort Hall

You will be based in Percy Gee and provide support to guests and graduands. Typical questions will be: where is the photography or the gowns, where do they collect tickets, and where can they get extra tickets. This role will also entail supervising a team of Ambassadors on campus to assist with signposting guests and graduands. The Ambassadors will be provided with training beforehand but they will need briefing on the day. We will provide you with a briefing document for your reference.
3. Tickets – Replacements & Spares  
Foyer, De Montfort Hall

Most guests will come to the hall with their tickets. You will have two enquiries: guests who did not receive/print their tickets, and guests looking for extra tickets.

If someone has not received their tickets, check the seating plan on the laptop and write out new tickets for the seats they have been allocated. If someone is looking for spare tickets you can allocate any seats that have not already been assigned (on the spreadsheet). You should have blank tickets for each ceremony. Remember to mark off on the spreadsheet that you have allocated the seats!

Spares will not be next to wherever their other guests are seated. If you have time, and spare seats, you can “broker” the spares – e.g. take the allocated tickets off the group and give them more, and then reallocate the tickets you have received. For example, a group of 4 people come in and they only have 3 seats. You take the 3 tickets from them, re-allocate them 4 seats together, and save the original 3 tickets for someone else.

But - you only have a limited time to give out additional seats, don’t get so caught up with brokering spares that you allow a queue to build and guests to miss the ceremony.

A sash should be worn.

4. Check in Area – Queue Support  
Foyer, De Montfort Hall

Helping to ensure that all the students get into the correct queue within the checking-in area so that they can be seen as quickly as possible.

There are five desks, each allocated a different set of courses. The courses are displayed on the windows and also above each desk. If a graduand looks unsure of what to do, ask them which course they studied and direct them to the correct queue to be seen. Be aware graduands will often join any queue, even if it isn’t for their course.

A sash should be worn.

5. Students with special requirements  
Victoria Suite, De Montfort Hall

The Student Support Service allocates one member of staff per ceremony to meet and assist students who have special requirements. They are required to wait in the Victoria Suite for the students to arrive, make sure that they are registered and are ready to enter the auditorium, and then accompany them (and possibly their carers) to their seats. If they are unable to manage the stairs, they will take them onto the stage using the disabled lift at the end of the Victoria Suite corridor (the key to this is held by a De Montfort Hall steward) and remain with them throughout the ceremony. The main purpose of this, apart from making sure that students are comfortable and supported, is to make sure that they go forward for their degrees at the correct time. The presenters’ lists are annotated to show when there is a candidate coming from the stage.

A gown must be worn on stage.
6. Checkers Table  
Graduands’ Suite, De Montfort Hall

You will have... A box of tickets. A list of graduands. A highlighter pen. Please note that we will have five check-in desks with two members of staff at each desk.

When a graduand comes to the desk, ask for their name and find them on the list. Find the accompanying card and hand it to the graduand. Instruct them that they must go straight into the hall and take their seat. Cross through their name on the list with the highlighter pen.

Approximately 15 minutes before the ceremony, cross check that all the cards you have remaining are the same as the graduands who have not yet checked in. At this point, one of the check-in staff (per table) needs to go into the hall to check that the seats from the remaining cards are not occupied. If they are, ask to see the card of whoever is sitting in the seat (as they’ll typically be sitting in the wrong place!)

Master List update: Just before the ceremony starts, a group of people will come across with the Presenter’s and “Foot of Stairs” lists. These are used to check that the graduands are in the correct order as they come to the stage, and to read out the name as they cross the stage. We need to remove anyone who has not arrived, so that their name is not called out (which would mean everyone would then be out of order).

The group of three will go to all five desks in turn, and check each page of the report. If all graduands have checked in, you can say “page x all in” – if someone has not arrived, say their name and they will be removed from the list.

Once the ceremony starts... you can relax, your work is done!

A sash should be worn.

7. Checking In Supervision  
Graduands’ Suite, De Montfort Hall

A member of Registry staff will collect all spare gowns and hoods from Ede and Ravenscroft representatives. These are used in case any graduands arrive without academic robes. You will also support the checking-in staff. Please conduct a briefing with staff just before the doors open.

The most typical query is when a graduand attends a table and the check-in staff can’t find a seating card for them. In that case, use the alphabetical list to identify the correct desk. If they’re not on the list, we check back with Registry to confirm the student should be attending graduation.

Manage late arrivals by completing the “Late Arrivals” form and getting it to the Presenters (via Jim Butler) and seating the graduands. At this point, graduands do not sit in the seat which was originally allocated to them, but are seated at the final row and go on stage at the end of the ceremony.

Coordinate the checking of certificates during the ceremony and allocate to the certificate distributors. For this we work through all of the certificates, ensuring each certificate is there for all the graduates. If a graduand has not arrived, their certificate is removed from the batch and posted to them after the ceremony. Once the certificates have been sorted they need to be split into 6 groups: 2 for each area. These are then given to the Certificate Distributors for the end of the ceremony.

A sash should be worn.
8. **Door Usher**  
**Great Hall, De Montfort Hall**

Graduands will enter the hall from the doors at the front. The role of the door usher is to get the graduands into the right “area” of the hall so that they can be seated. With this role, it’s important that the graduands are encouraged to move into the hall as quickly as possible. You only need to get the graduands into the correct section of the hall, so concentrate on directing them into the appropriate seating block so that the Hall Ushers can take them to their specific seat.

The hall layout is as follows:

Identify seat numbers on the student seating card: 1-12, 13-26 and 27-38 and direct them to the appropriate section of the hall.

9. **Door Usher/Degree Certificates**  
**Great Hall, De Montfort Hall**

This role is the same as the Door Usher. But, once the ceremony has started you are required to go back into the check-in area and help the Check-in Supervisor with the final check of degree certificates. You will then prepare them so that they are ready to be handed out at the end of the ceremony.

A sash should be worn.

10. **Hall Usher**  
**Great Hall, De Montfort Hall**

The role of the hall usher is to ensure students take their correct seats. With this role you will need to be pro-active and approach students who are in the hall, ensuring that they are able to find their seats.

A gown should be worn.

11. **Usher Coordinator**  
**Great Hall, De Montfort Hall**

The Usher Coordinator oversees the operations in the hall of getting students into their seats. This role requires movement between the Door and Hall Ushers. It is important to ensure that students are getting into the hall quick enough and are not queuing in the corridors.
A sash should be worn.

12. Certificate Distribution
Graduands’ Suite, De Montfort Hall

At the end of the ceremony, graduates are asked to remain in their seats. Six people go in, armed with a batch of certificates. As the graduates file past you, check that their name is the same as the one printed on the envelope, and hand them their certificate and transcript. Everyone should have an envelope. Feel free to say congratulations!

A sash should be worn.

13. Presenters’ Lists
Graduands’ Suite, De Montfort Hall

This person is responsible for the final version of the list of names read out by the Presenter on stage. He/she receives the list from the Degree Ceremonies Manager about thirty minutes before the ceremony begins. Around ten minutes before the ceremony begins, or when all students apart from stragglers are in the Hall, he/she (together with the two members of staff responsible for foot-of stairs checking) will go to each check-in table and go through the list, deleting those who have not registered. This should be done twice if possible.

The Presenter’s list and the list used at the foot of stairs should be identical, including notes of where the ceremony breaks in the middle, and any students on the stage or with any special needs. The list is then delivered to the Presenter, who will either be lined up in the foyer to go on stage or already seated on stage.

A gown should be worn.
14. **Student Flow in Hall**  
*Great Hall, De Montfort Hall*

This person stands at the foot of the stairs where the graduates leave the stage and gestures them back to their seats. The flow of graduands is in a clockwise direction; they leave their rows from the left and return on the right. The aim is to prevent graduates crossing over each other and blocking the aisles – on-site briefing is provided in the Hall by the Degree Ceremonies Manager.

A gown should be worn.

15. **Foot of stairs**  
*Great Hall, De Montfort Hall*

Two people are assigned to the job of ensuring that students go on stage in the precise order of the list being read out by the Presenter. One person stands further back from the foot of stairs (around a row full of students away) and undertakes an initial name check; this is the opportunity to make sure that students have not moved seats/rows. The second checker stands at the bottom of the stairs and undertakes a second name check. That person is also responsible for preventing too many students reaching the top of the stairs and bunching, holding back the line, or slowing it down if there is someone on stage in a wheelchair or if someone requires assistance in the line.

If students arrive late, they are added to the end of the Presenters’ list via a message taken on stage; the foot of stairs checkers are also notified.

A gown should be worn.

16. **VIP Reception**  
*First floor, De Montfort Hall*

The VIP reception area is on the first floor of the Hall, on the right at the top of the main stairs. Light refreshments are provided there for VIP guests, served for one hour before each ceremony. The Hall provides the catering and a server. The role of the University member of staff is to greet guests, answer any questions and steer them to the auditorium when it is time to take their seats (around 15 minutes before the start of the ceremony). Seat tickets are sent in the post, but spares are available, together with a list of guests and a seating plan. At ceremonies where an honorary degree is awarded, the Honorary’s host is told to report to the reception area to collect tickets for the guest party. These are not sent out in advance.

A sash should be worn.