During the Graduation Ceremony - What You Need to Do

This page talks about what happens during the graduation ceremony itself.

Seating

Graduates will sit in allocated seats, to ensure that they are presented to the Chancellor in the correct order. If you are a graduate and you require special seating arrangements (for example, to accommodate crutches), please contact the Graduations Team as early as possible.

- **Guest seating is not reserved.**
  If your guests require special seating, please contact UNSW Graduations.
- **Prams** are not permitted inside the auditorium because of fire and safety regulations. They can be left in the cloak room in the auditorium foyer.

Order of events

Programs for 10am, 2pm and 6.30pm graduation ceremonies at Kensington campus are presented below, as well as a running order for the ceremony itself.

Each ceremony runs for approximately an hour and 15 minutes. Large ceremonies may run to an hour and a half.

10am ceremony program

Academic dress collection from 7am

- 7:00 am - Assistance with academic dress inside the Mathews Pavilion
- 8:00 am - Portrait Photography services commence in the Mathews Pavilion
- 9:00 am - Auditorium doors open and graduate registration commences in the foyer
- 9:30 am - Registration closes - graduates must be in their allocated seat for briefing
- 10:00 am - Ceremony begins
- 11:15 am
  - (approximate) Conclusion of ceremony.
  - Graduation services provided in the Mathews Pavilion
- 2:00 pm - Latest return time for academic dress to Arc's Graduation and Gift Store

2pm ceremony program

Academic dress collection from 11am

- 8:00 am - Portrait Photography services commence in the Mathews Pavilion
- 11:00 am - Assistance with academic dress outside the back of the Clancy Auditorium
- 1:00 pm - Auditorium doors open and graduate registration commences in the foyer
- 1:30 pm - Registration closes - graduates must be in their allocated seat for briefing
- 2:00 pm - Ceremony begins
3:15 pm  
- (approximate) Conclusion of ceremony  
- Graduation services provided in the Mathews Pavilion  
- 6:00 pm - Latest return time for academic dress to Arc’s Graduation and Gift Store

**6.30pm ceremony program**

Academic dress collection from 3.30pm

- **4:30 pm**  
  - Portrait Photography services commence in the Mathews Pavilion  
  - Assistance with academic dress outside the back of the Clancy Auditorium
- **5:30 pm** - Auditorium doors open and graduate registration commences in the foyer
- **6:00 pm** - Registration closes - graduates must be in their allocated seat for briefing
- **6:30 pm** - Ceremony begins
- **7:45 pm**  
  - (approximate) Conclusion of ceremony  
  - Graduation services provided in the Mathews Pavilion  
- **10:00 pm** - Latest return time for academic dress to Arc’s Graduation and Gift Store

**What happens during the ceremony?**

**Detailed order of events**

**Before the ceremony**

1. We advise guests to arrive **at least one hour prior** to the graduation ceremony, as there is no allocated seating for guests.
2. All graduates must register at the registration desk in the Clancy Auditorium foyer and be gowned and seated in their allocated seats **at least 30 minutes prior** to the scheduled start of the ceremony.
3. Graduates are briefed on the procedures of the ceremony approximately 30 minutes before the ceremony begins.

**The ceremony**

1. An **announcement** is made prior to the start of the ceremony detailing the members of the official party.
2. Graduates and guests are asked to stand while the **academic procession enters**. Graduates must put their hats on while standing.
3. Graduates and guests remain standing for the singing of the **National Anthem**. Graduates must remove their hats for the anthem.
4. Graduates and guests are then seated while the officiating Chancellor (Chancellor, Deputy Chancellor or Pro-Chancellor) **welcomes the assembly**.
5. **Graduates are then directed onto the stage, individually, to receive their testamur.**  
   - Ceremony staff ask you to stand and file out of your seating row; they check your name and take your registration card, and then direct you towards the stage.  
   - Your name is checked again, and you are directed to the first white marker at the side of the stage, where you stay until the Duty Dean reads your name (Doctoral candidates wait until their thesis title is read as well).  
   - You then walk to the second white marker in the centre of the stage and stand in front of the Chancellor with your back to the audience.
6. **When facing the Chancellor:**  
   - Take your testamur with one hand. (Your photo is taken when you receive your documents from the Chancellor.)  
   - Doff your cap to the Chancellor by touching the tip of your cap with your other hand and either lifting your cap or bowing your head.  
   - Turn and walk down the centre stairs back towards your seat, as directed by ceremony staff.  
   - You are handed a program as you take your seat. **Note: You will not be returning to your original seat,**
so please ensure that you leave all personal belongings with your guests.

7. After all graduates have been presented with their testamur, the Chancellor introduces the guest speaker, after which there is a Vote of Thanks.

8. All graduates and guests are asked to stand while the academic procession retires. Graduates are directed by ceremony staff to follow the academic procession from the auditorium to the foyer. This is the conclusion of the ceremony.

See next

- What happens after the ceremony