

UWS Graduation: Winter 2024 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

We are pleased to announce that information about Winter 2024 Graduation Ceremonies is now available.

The following information will give you an idea of what to expect at your graduation and answer some common questions. The FAQs will be updated accordingly over the coming weeks.

1. When will the graduations take place?

The events will take place as follows:

Dumfries – 23rd October 2024

Virtual Graduation Ceremony – 8th November 2024

Paisley – w/c 11th November 2024

The schedule showing which programmes and Schools will be attending each ceremony will be updated on the UWS graduation website.

Arrangements for in-person ceremonies may be subject to change and the University reserves the right to make adjustments as required. Any changes will be communicated to you via email, to your UWS and personal email addresses which we hold on the system.

In the event that graduation is cancelled for any reason, the University does not accept liability for direct or indirect loss or damages incurred. This includes any loss incurred with external suppliers, such as travel, accommodation, photography or robing. We would recommend that you consider the cancellation and refund policies of any suppliers before making a booking with them and you may also wish to consider having appropriate insurance in place.

2. Where will the graduations be held?

The physical graduation ceremonies will take place in Crichton Memorial Church in Dumfries ([The Crichton | We connect people, place and the past to shape the future](#)) and in Paisley Abbey ([Paisley Abbey](#)).

3. What if I am late for my ceremony?

We will tell you the exact time you need to be at the location in advance of the ceremony. Any graduands who arrive beyond this time will not be permitted to take part in the event.

4. Who is being invited to the Winter 2024 graduation?

The Winter 2024 ceremonies in Dumfries are for all Dumfries students whose awards have been confirmed at the Term 1, 2 and 3 School Boards of Examiners.

The Winter 2024 ceremonies in Paisley are for Ayr, Distance Learning, Lanarkshire and Paisley Campus Level 9 students who have decided not to continue to Honours year, for Honours students whose awards have been confirmed at the Term 3 School Boards of Examiners and for Postgraduate students whose awards have been confirmed at the Term 2 and Term 3 School Boards of Examiners.

UWS London students eligible to graduate will be invited to a graduation ceremony in London in the spring in 2025.

5. I am due to graduate in Winter 2024 – what is happening with my graduation?

The University will be holding its physical graduations in Crichton Memorial Church in Dumfries and in Paisley Abbey and we hope that as many graduands as possible will attend the event to which they are invited *. However, we recognise that not all graduands or their family members will be able or want to attend, and so the University is also organising a virtual graduation on **Friday 8th November 2024** for those students who would prefer to attend an online event.

The virtual ceremonies will be hosted on our high-quality online events platform and will be live streamed on the UWS YouTube channel, so that family and friends can watch the proceedings, either in real time or on demand. Links to watch each ceremony will be available on the UWS graduation website nearer the time.

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6. How will I know if I am eligible to graduate in Winter 2024?

Dumfries graduands should have by now received an email inviting them to confirm their attendance for graduation. However, if you think you are eligible to graduate (see Question 4) and have not heard from us, please contact graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk as a matter of urgency.

Paisley graduands will receive an email inviting them to confirm attendance for graduation mid-October.

7. When do I choose between the physical ceremony or the virtual ceremony?

You will be asked at the time of confirmation of attendance process to indicate whether you wish to attend the physical graduation for your programme in October/November 2024, or whether you would like to attend the online ceremony instead in November 2024, or whether you wish to graduate in absentia.

Due to the timescales for arranging each event, it will not be possible to change your preference after the confirmation of attendance period has closed.

8. What do I choose if I am not able to attend either the physical ceremony or the virtual ceremony?

If you are unable to attend either the physical or virtual ceremony, then when you complete the registration process, you should indicate that you wish to graduate "*in absentia*" on the day of your physical ceremony.

9. What does '*in absentia*' mean?

Graduating "*in absentia*" means the University will confer your award without you attending a ceremony. Your award parchment will then be sent to you by post after the ceremony to the address you provide during your confirmation of attendance process.

10. Will I be able to defer my graduation?

No, it is not possible to defer your graduation until a later time. By introducing a virtual ceremony in addition to physical events, and also giving you the opportunity to graduate "*in absentia*", you will have a range of opportunities to graduate without delay and in the way which best suits you so that you can provide evidence of your UWS qualifications to future employers/academic institutions for further study.

If you are unable to attend your physical graduation and do not wish to attend the virtual event, your award will be conferred "*in absentia*" on the day of the physical ceremony.

11. Will there be any UWS charges for students to attend the virtual or physical graduations?

No, the University is delighted to be able to offer the graduation ceremonies at no cost to students. There will however be a cost for all guest tickets to attend the physical ceremony in Crichton Memorial Church in Dumfries and in Paisley Abbey (see Question 20).

12. If I am not attending a physical graduation, to what address will my parchment be sent?

If you completed graduation confirmation of attendance and told us you want to graduate in absentia, your parchment will be sent by post to the address noted within a month after

your graduation ceremony has taken place. If your address has changed since then, please email graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk.

If you completed graduation confirmation of attendance and told us you want to take part in the online graduation on 8th November 2024, your parchment will be sent by post to the address noted within a month after graduation date. If your address has changed since then, please email graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk.

If you were eligible to graduate and did not confirm your attendance on time, your award will still be conferred "*in absentia*". Your name will not be included in any listings and will not be read out as part of the graduation. You will need to contact us to confirm your current address before your parchment can be sent.

13. When will I find out the time of my virtual graduation?

The detailed schedule showing which programmes and Schools will be attending each virtual ceremony will be available on the UWS graduation website mid-October ([Graduation | UWS | University of the West of Scotland](#)). The University will also contact you with more details closer to the date of the ceremony.

14. If I am unable to participate at the scheduled date/time, can I change to another physical ceremony?

Unfortunately, no, each programme in each School has an allocated ceremony and therefore it is not possible to request a change to a different date or time.

15. How long will each ceremony last?

The physical ceremonies in Crichton Memorial Church in Dumfries and in Paisley Abbey will last about an hour.

The virtual ceremony should last about 45 minutes. Virtual ceremonies will be live broadcasts, so you must be logged in to attend at the allotted time you will be given. Your family and friends will also be able to log in and watch the ceremony live from anywhere in the world via YouTube. You will be provided with the relevant live-stream link for your graduation ceremony nearer the time. Afterwards a recording of the ceremony will be available on our UWS YouTube channel for on-demand viewing.

16. Do I need to confirm my attendance for my graduation?

Yes, all eligible Winter 2024 graduands must confirm their attendance online for their graduation ceremony, whether they choose to attend the physical ceremony, attend the virtual event or graduate "*in absentia*" from the physical ceremony.

If you confirm that you will attend your physical ceremony you must report at the venue **one and a half hours before the actual start of the ceremony**. Please note that if you turn up later than that, you will not be permitted to attend the ceremony.

If you do not confirm your attendance, your award will still be conferred using personal information currently held in your student record.

17. How do I hire my academic robe/hood for the physical graduation?

Academic robe and hood to wear at the physical graduation can be hired from the University's official gown provider, Ede & Ravenscroft and the link and timescale has been/will be provided to you when you are invited to confirm your attendance.

18. What is UWS academic dress?

Pictures showing various examples of UWS academic robe and hood can be found on the UWS graduation website ([Graduation | UWS | University of the West of Scotland](#)).

Please note that only official academic dress will be allowed during the physical ceremonies. If unofficial robes and hoods are worn, they will be removed before you cross the stage at the graduation ceremony.

19. Will I be able to hire academic dress when I participate in the virtual graduation?

There is no opportunity for gown hire for the virtual graduations. If you'd like to get into the celebratory spirit, please do feel free to dress to impress for your virtual live graduation ceremony. Please note that at the virtual ceremony, only your head and shoulders will be visible on screen.

20. How many guests may I bring to my physical graduation?

Each graduand will be able to purchase up to 2 guest tickets at £15 per guest ticket. Payment details are provided as part of confirmation of attendance process.

If you have applied for additional tickets via the ballot, please note that any ballot will take place one week before the ceremony. You will be informed by email the same day regarding the outcome of any ballot including details for payment/collection if successful.

Please note that the graduation is a formal ceremony. The entire proceedings can take about an hour and are not therefore considered suitable for pre-school aged children.

21. Can I bring young children to the graduation ceremony?

Unfortunately the graduation ceremony last about an hour and we are therefore strongly recommending that pre-school children should not attend.

22. I would like to invite my family/friends from abroad to attend my graduation as guests – what documents do we need?

If you are planning to invite relatives from abroad for the graduation, you can and should start the process of applying for a visa 3 months before graduation day. You do not need to

wait for an official invitation to graduation, you can use a student status letter as evidence for the visa application.

See the [International Student Support team SharePoint page](#) (note that you must be signed into your UWS Microsoft 365 account to access the Share Point site). Scroll down to the **'Resources for UWS Students'** section where you can access the **How to Guide: Inviting relatives to visit you in the UK**. If you need further advice/support, see the [SharePoint page](#) for information on how to get in touch with the International Student Support team.

23. Can mobile phones be used during graduation ceremonies?

Although phones can be used for photography, all graduands and their guests must ensure that all mobile phones are on silent mode throughout the ceremony.

We also ask all graduands and guests not to conduct conversations during the ceremonies in order to enable the names of all graduands to be heard clearly and to make the ceremony enjoyable for everybody.

24. Can my guests take photographs during the ceremony?

Yes, photographs may be taken during the ceremony, although we ask that guests are considerate to other guests sitting near them when standing up to take photographs.

The use of Drones (Unmanned Aircraft Systems or UAS) at UWS Graduations is not permitted. This includes indoors within Graduation Ceremonies, and both indoors and outdoors at UWS premises. For further information on the operation of Drones please refer to [The Drone and Model Aircraft Code | UK Civil Aviation Authority \(caa.co.uk\)](#)

25. Will there be official graduation photographs?

Yes, the University's official photography partners will be present at the physical events and you can pre-book your photographs using the link provided to you during confirmation of attendance process.

26. Will I have any souvenirs from my virtual graduation?

A printed copy of the graduation programme will be made available for graduands attending the events in person.

For graduands attending the virtual ceremony, we will publish a souvenir graduation programme which you can save digitally or print. Your friends and family will be able to view your graduation ceremony live online and our digital platform will provide a recording of the virtual ceremony which can be accessed over and over again.

27. When will I receive my award parchment if I don't attend a physical ceremony?

If you completed graduation confirmation of attendance and chose to graduate in absentia, your parchment will be sent by post to the address noted within a month after your

graduation ceremony has taken place. If your address has changed since then, please email graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk.

If you completed graduation confirmation of attendance and chose to take part in the online graduation on 8th November 2024, your parchment will be sent by post to the address noted within a month after your physical graduation date. If your address has changed since then, please email graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk.

If you were eligible to graduate and did not confirm attendance on time, your award will still be conferred "*in absentia*". Your name will not be included in any listings and will not be read out as part of the graduation. You will need to contact us to confirm your current address before your parchment can be sent.

28. I need confirmation of my academic award before my ceremony – what should I do?

Parchments cannot be provided until after you have graduated. However, an authorised version of your Academic Transcript showing your progress to date on all the modules you have studied is available at any time – this should be requested via The Hub portal or by email to hub@uws.ac.uk. It will be updated to include your final award decision within two weeks of the meeting of the School Board of Examiners where any award is approved. This should provide sufficient evidence of your qualifications until your parchment is available.

29. Cancellation / Liability

In the event that graduation is cancelled for any reason, the University does not accept liability for direct or indirect loss or damages incurred. This includes any loss incurred with external suppliers such as travel, accommodation, photography or robing. We would recommend that you consider the cancellation and refund policies of any suppliers before making a booking with them and you may also wish to consider having appropriate insurance in place.

30. Where can I get more information about the Winter 2024 graduation?

We appreciate that you may have other questions about the event, and we will endeavour to add more information to this page as we finalise arrangements. Please check back regularly.

If you have any specific questions please contact us by email to graduationenquiries@uws.ac.uk

31. Where can information be found about visiting Paisley for graduation?

If your family and friends are joining you for the graduation ceremony in Paisley, they may want to visit the [Paisley.js](#) for more information about what the town has to offer. We also suggest the [Food and Drink Map](#) developed by Paisley First.

UWS Registry
2nd October 2024