Graduation Ceremony Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This Procedure supports the Awards Policy by detailing the ceremonial roles and the conduct of graduation ceremonies.

(2) This Procedure applies to all staff and graduates of The University of Queensland.

Section 2 - Process and Key Controls

(3) Graduation ceremony periods are published on the Academic Calendar of The University of Queensland.

(4) Graduation fees will be set by the Academic Registrar and be published in the Administrative and Miscellaneous Charges Fees Schedule.

(5) Graduation ceremony information for graduates and deadlines are published on the UQ Graduation website.

Section 3 - Key Requirements

Part A - Graduation ceremony planning

Ceremony arrangements

(6) The graduation ceremony periods are set during the development of the Academic Calendar.

Order of proceedings

(7) A graduation ceremony will comprise the following components:

a. Academic Procession;
b. Acknowledgment of Country;
c. Welcome by the Vice-Chancellor (or nominee);
d. Address by the Valedictorian;
e. Acknowledgement of Awards;
f. Professional Declaration or Oath if approved by the Academic Registrar;
g. Presentation of Awards;
h. Conferral of any Honorary Award granted in accordance with the Honorary Awards Policy (if applicable) and if the recipient chooses, their address to the graduating cohort;
i. Musical Item;
j. Exhortation to Graduates;
k. Departure of Academic Procession.

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Ceremonial roles

(8) The Chancellor may be represented by the Deputy Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Provost or an appointed Member of Senate.

(9) The Vice-Chancellor may be represented by the Provost, a Deputy Vice-Chancellor or a nominee endorsed by the Vice-Chancellor.

(10) The President of the Academic Board may be represented by the Deputy President of the Academic Board or the Academic Registrar.

(11) The Dean, Graduate Research School may be represented by the Deputy Dean, Graduate Research School, the Associate Dean (Research) or Director of Institute relevant to the ceremony.

(12) The Executive Dean may be represented by a Deputy Dean, Associate Dean, Head of School or a nominee endorsed by the Executive Dean.

(13) Joint Faculty ceremonies must be attended by both Executive Deans (or their representatives).

(14) The Master of Ceremonies must be nominated by the Faculty and must be an Associate Dean, Head of School, or a nominee of a Senior Manager or above endorsed by the Executive Dean.

(15) Faculties must nominate a Marshal who can be an academic or professional staff member from the Faculty or its constituent Schools.

(16) Faculties must nominate a Beadle who can be an academic or professional staff member from the Faculty or its constituent Schools.

(17) A Valedictorian will be selected to deliver an address on behalf of the graduates for each ceremony. Nominations for Valedictorian will be managed by the relevant Faculty and must:

a. be a graduating student;
b. take into consideration both academic performance and other contributions to the University as determined by the Faculty; and
c. receive Executive Dean approval for the nomination.

(18) Valedictorians will receive guidance on the tone and content of their speech from the relevant Faculty.

Part B - Graduation ceremony

Attendance

(19) A graduate must respond to their invitation to attend a graduation ceremony.

(20) Graduates may defer their attendance to another graduation ceremony for no longer than two additional graduation ceremony periods.

(21) Graduates will be charged:

a. a fee to attend a Graduation Ceremony; and
b. an administrative charge for the cancellation of attendance prior to the advertised deadline.

(22) There is no refund for:

a. the cancellation of graduate attendance received after the advertised deadline; or
b. the cancellation of guest tickets.

(23) By attending the event, the graduate and their guests consent to be filmed, photographed and/or recorded and for the images to be used publicly by UQ without payment or consideration.

Academic dress

(24) Academic dress as per the Academic Dress Requirements will be worn by Senate Members and Officers of the University at graduation ceremonies.

(25) The Beadle and the Marshall will wear the academic dress of their most appropriate or highest qualification, or the UQ equivalent.

(26) Other members of the Academic Procession must wear academic dress which would typically be of their highest qualification, or the UQ equivalent.

(27) Graduates must wear academic dress as per the Academic Dress Requirements without alteration or decoration with the following exceptions:

a. a trencher or bonnet is not worn where it cannot be worn over religious dress; and
b. a family member receiving a posthumous award will be invited to wear the hood over their arm.

(28) Any traditional dress must be worn under the prescribed academic dress.

Conduct

(29) Graduates and guests should conduct themselves in a manner that is appropriate for a formal occasion and respect their fellow graduates, guests and the members of the academic procession.

(30) Graduates and guests are required to hold a ticket. Entry to the graduation ceremony may be refused if the ticket is not authentic or valid.

(31) The following items may not be taken into the graduation ceremony:

a. balloons, incendiary devices (flares, fireworks and smoke bombs), confetti cannons or similar devices/materials;
b. banners, poles, signs, flags or similar;
c. animals (other than service animals).

(32) The University may inspect attendees' bags or other items before entry or during the graduation ceremony. Attendees who do not consent to an inspection may be refused entry or required to leave the ceremony.

(33) All graduates and guests are required to remain in their seats for the duration of the graduation ceremony unless otherwise directed.

(34) Late arrivals will only be admitted during a suitable break in the graduation ceremony.

(35) Graduates are not permitted to take mobile phones or any other items onto stage (other than those required to enable accessibility).

(36) Graduates and guests may be denied entry or removed from the graduation ceremony if their conduct is disruptive or adversely affects the experience of the event by other attendees. The graduate may have their stage photo withheld and will not be entitled to a refund.

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Section 4 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

(37) The Chancellor, or representative selected to attend under clause 8:

a. Presides over the ceremony on behalf of Senate;
b. acknowledges the graduates; and
c. gives an Exhortation to Graduates.

(38) The Vice-Chancellor, or representative selected to attend under clause 9 gives:

a. the Welcome Address; and
b. Honorary Award Citation if applicable.

(39) The President of the Academic Board, or representative selected to attend under clause 10:

a. requests an acknowledgement of graduates by the Chancellor or representative; and
b. announces the recipients of the University Medal awarded in accordance with the Awards Policy if applicable.

(40) The Dean, Graduate Research School, or representative selected to attend under clause 11:

a. presents the graduates names to the Chancellor or representative for Higher Degrees by Research; and
b. reads the citation of a Higher Doctorate if applicable.

(41) The Executive Dean, or representative selected to attend under clause 12 presents the graduates names to the Chancellor or representative on behalf of their faculty.

(42) The Master of Ceremonies, selected to attend under clause 14:

a. begins ceremony proceedings and introduces the Welcome Address;
b. introduces the Valedictorian, musical item and the Exhortation to Graduates;
c. concludes the ceremony; and
d. manages unplanned ceremony interruptions.

(43) The Marshal leads the academic procession and carries the University Staff.

(44) The Beadle joins the academic procession in front of the Chancellor or representative and carries the University Mace.

(45) Graduations, Academic Services Division:

a. develop the graduation ceremony schedules for USET approval;
b. allocate graduates into graduation ceremonies;
c. issue invitations to the graduation ceremony to graduates, academic staff and Executive Staff;
d. liaise with the external providers for venue, registration, ticketing, academic dress, and photography services;
e. fill graduation ceremony roles;
f. manage the valedictorian nominations and timelines;
g. recruit, onboard and roster casual graduations staff;
h. produce procession cards, seating lists, scripts and programs books for each graduation ceremony;

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i. determine stage seating;
j. brief the Master of Ceremonies, ceremonial role holders, the valedictorian and graduates prior to each ceremony; and
k. ensure correct academic statements are provided to graduates.

(46) The University Senior Executive Team (USET) approves the graduation ceremony schedules.

Section 5 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

(47) This Procedure is monitored by the Academic Registrar and reviewed by the Academic Board through the Committee for Academic Programs Policy (CAPP).

Section 6 - Recording and Reporting

(48) Records concerning enrolments, grades, awards, applications and University decisions are stored in the student/graduate's record in the University's approved records management systems in accordance with the Information Management Policy.

Section 7 - Appendix

Definitions, Terms, Acronyms

Term	Definition
CAPP	Committee for Academic Programs Policy.
USET	University Senior Executive Team.

Status and Details

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Effective Date	24th April 2026
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Enquiries Contact	Academic Services Division

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