



UNIVERSITY of NORTHUMBRIA
at NEWCASTLE

Academic Congregations

London 2025

Central Hall, Storey's Gate, Westminster London

3 April 2025

Invitation and Information Guide



Introduction

The following guide will tell you everything you need to know about your congregation, how to book, what to do on the day and frequently asked questions.

Academic Congregations will be held to celebrate the conferral of degrees and other awards upon students of the University who have successfully completed their studies and had their award conferred by a Programme Assessment Board between November 2024 and March 2025.

Date	Time	Faculty	Department
Thursday 3 April	10:30	Business and Law	Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Strategy Marketing, Operations and Systems
Thursday 3 April	15.00	Arts, Design and Social Sciences	All Departments.
		Business and Law	Accounting and Financial Management Leadership and Human Resource Management
		Engineering and Environment	Computer and Information Sciences Mechanical and Construction Engineering

How do I book?

If you wish to attend your congregation, you must book online no later than 9 March 2025. **Don't wait until you have received your results** as bookings will not be accepted after this date. Bookings are placed subject to the successful completion of your programme and conferral of your award by a Programme Assessment Board (see FAQ - Am I Eligible?). If you do not gain the necessary award, your booking will be cancelled. You can also cancel your gown and photography bookings directly with Ede & Ravenscroft if necessary.

Emails will be sent to your Northumbria account and any other email addresses on your student record. After reading this information guide in full, follow the instructions to book online.

Ticket Allocation

Students are entitled to one complimentary graduate ticket and up to two paid guest tickets at a cost of £15 each. All tickets include access to the congregation at Central Hall, a post ceremony drinks reception and a souvenir brochure. Full terms and conditions for tickets are listed at the back of this booklet.

Book Online Now

To book online please follow the personalised link in your email invitation. You can also book online via My Northumbria. Once logged in, see the My Info box, then My Records button. Your ceremony date and time will be confirmed on the invitation email.

Tickets

You will receive a booking confirmation by email a few days before the ceremony which will admit both you and all your guests into Central Hall. The capacity of the hall is strictly limited, therefore only graduates and guests with a valid ticket will be admitted.

Please note that guest tickets are not refundable or transferable between students so please ensure that you and your guests can attend before you book your place. We can only refund your paid guest tickets if the event is cancelled or if you become ineligible to attend, i.e you do not complete your programme successfully in time to attend.

Additional Information

If your allocated date and time are unsuitable, we are unlikely to be able to allocate to a different day due to the huge response we receive for tickets. If you have any concerns about attending a ceremony in April, don't forget the option to defer your ceremony until September 2025 is also available, please see our website for further details. Attendance at congregation is optional and your certificate will be sent to your home address as usual. You can update your certificate delivery address as part of the congregation booking task.

Academic Dress

Graduates must wear academic dress for the congregation. Formal dress, such as a dark suit or similar, should be worn (jeans and trainers are not acceptable). This is the most practical attire as the hood should be securely fastened to a jacket or shirt button. Graduates are also advised to wear sensible footwear as there is a ramp up to the stage. It is University protocol that hats are NOT worn in the hall – they should be carried under the left arm.

Gowns are supplied by Ede & Ravenscroft. They can be ordered via their web site www.edeandravenscroft.com or by telephoning 01223 861 854. Hats will be provided along with the gown and hood. Orders must be placed by 9 March 2025.

Ensure you order the correct gown – they are different for each level of award.

Gowns should be collected from Central Hall on the day at the following times:

10.30 Ceremony collect from 9:00

15.00 Ceremony collect from 13:30

Official Photography

Our official Photographers Ede & Ravenscroft, will be based in Central Hall. You can pre-order your photography at www.edeandravenscroft.com. Orders can be placed on the day, but we recommend that you pre-order to save time. You may also order by calling 01223 861 854.

Please allow sufficient time to collect your gown and have your photograph taken. Photography is available from 09:00 until an hour or so after the last ceremony of the day. It is advisable to arrive early as photographs are taken on a first-come first-served basis.

What to do – your checklist

Before you arrive:

- Read this Congregation Guide in full – it will answer any questions you have
- Book tickets online no later than **9 March 2025**
- Order your gown on the Ede & Ravenscroft website no later than **9 March 2025**
- Ensure the contact details on your student record are correct so you receive further information
- Order photography package, from the Ede and Ravenscroft website, if required
- Successfully complete your programme of study and have the award conferred by a Programme Assessment Board

On the day:

- Arrive at Central Hall, Storey's Gate, Westminster, London SW1H 9NH at least 90 minutes before your ceremony
- You will need to bring some ID with you such as, your student card or official id, e.g. driving licence. Report to the lower ground floor of Central Hall to robe, register and collect your name card. This card includes your name, programme and seat number. You must retain this card as the information is used to announce your name as you are presented to the Presiding Officer on stage. Graduates will also be given a wristband to give to each of their guests to permit entry into the Hall.
- As a number of ceremonies are held each day we must maintain a strict timetable, therefore late arrivals may not be admitted to the congregation.
- Only Graduates are given access to this area so arrange to meet your family and friends in the Library before heading to the Great Hall for the ceremony
- Visit the photo studio to have your official photographs taken before or after your ceremony
- Central Hall doors open up to 1.5 hours before your ceremony begins – you must arrive no later than 45 minutes before the start time and all graduates and guests must be seated 15 minutes before the ceremony begins. Graduates and guests must enter Central Hall together as the confirmation email covers all members of the party
- The ceremony will last approximately 70 minutes
- At the end of the ceremony guests remain seated while graduates formally process from the hall
- Graduates and guests reunite for the official reception where a complimentary drink will be served
- A prayer space will be available within the Central Hall

Guest seating

Guests are not permitted to enter the student robing area, but must enter Central Hall with the Graduate as their confirmation email covers all members of the party. Guests will wait in the Library prior to the ceremony.

Seats for graduates' guests are not reserved and are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Guest seats are located on the balcony on level 4.

Graduate procedure during the congregation

- The ceremony commences with a procession by the platform party and a welcome address.
- When the ceremony commences you will be ushered from your seat and directed to file across the stage. Entry to the stage will only be permitted upon production of your name card. You will be handed a commemorative scroll as you walk on stage. Next, hand your name card to the Presenter. Wait for your name to be announced, then walk to the Presiding Officer and acknowledge them. Continue on to leave the stage. Staff will direct you back to your seat.
- The ceremony will last just over an hour.
- Graduates will formally process from the hall following the ceremony.
- Hats should be worn for the procession only, do not take them on stage with you.
- Please do not chew gum or leave Central hall whilst the ceremony is still in progress.
- Please ensure all mobile phones are switched to silent mode throughout the ceremony.
- Flags and other paraphernalia will not be permitted in Central Hall
- As several ceremonies are held each day, we must maintain a strict timetable therefore late arrivals may not be admitted to the congregation.

Post-ceremony refreshments

- You will be directed to the refreshment area at the end of the ceremony.
- A complementary drink will be served in the Library after your ceremony.

FAQs and Useful Information

Am I eligible?

Students are initially identified as being eligible using the expected end date of their programme. However, attendance at Congregation is subject to the successful completion of your programme and the conferral of your award by a Programme Assessment Board.

Bookings will be cancelled should you become ineligible to attend. Please note that the congregation invitation or any communication from the Congregation Office does not guarantee eligibility. If you have failed your programme or failed to complete a minimum number of credits, you are not eligible to attend.

Students at the award stage of Honours degrees will be able to attend if they have passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 6. Referred students (if they have passed the minimum of 60 credits should attend a ceremony now and not wait until referrals have been completed).

If you are unsure if you meet this criterion, please contact Ask4Help at Student Central.

Can I defer attendance if I cannot attend?

It is University policy that attendance at congregations cannot normally be deferred. However, in exceptional circumstances, the option to defer to the next is available to you.

To apply for deferral please complete the relevant form on our web page and return it to the Congregation Office.

Please note you must apply for deferral by 16 March 2025 and attend a London ceremony within one year of this date. The Congregations Team will be in touch with you following your application to notify you of the outcome.

If you opt for deferral but have already booked your place at the ceremony, we are not able to transfer your booking or tickets to a future ceremony so you would not receive a refund. To transfer your gown hire to a future ceremony, please contact **Ede and Ravenscroft** directly.

Certificates

Your certificate will not be available on the day of the ceremony; it will be posted to your permanent home address. Your certificate is a legal document and should state your full legal name. The name on your student record will be used for this. Certificates will be sent to you as soon as possible, usually within eight weeks of your exam board.

Accessibility

If you or any of your guests require a wheelchair space, please indicate this on your booking form.

Guests: Central Hall has access for guests with disabilities. Although guest seats are not reserved, we do guarantee a seat for everyone and try to minimise queuing time. Lifts are operational in Central Hall. If there are any circumstances you feel we should be aware of please email: rg.congregations@northumbria.ac.uk

Graduates: If you are a wheelchair user please indicate this when you book. If there are any other circumstances you feel we should be aware of please email: rg.congregations@northumbria.ac.uk

We will contact you before the ceremony to confirm your request has been accepted and to explain arrangements for the day.

Babies and children

Although the University aims to make its congregations as welcoming as possible, the formal nature and duration of the ceremonies may make them unsuitable for babies and small children. All children of any age (including babies) require a guest ticket – this is in keeping with the fire regulations. No matter how small, children will not be admitted without a ticket. Prams are not allowed in Central Hall as this also contravenes fire regulations.

Extra Tickets

In addition to the two paid guest tickets, we may offer the chance to purchase additional tickets if any are unsold once the booking deadline has passed. These tickets are sold on a first-come, first served basis and are non refundable. We will contact students if any further additional tickets are available after the booking deadline of 9 March. Due to the venue size it is unlikely that large numbers of further tickets will be available.

Please do not contact the Congregation Office before this date as it is not guaranteed that tickets will become available. We calculate the number of students expected to successfully complete their programme and the number likely to attend the congregation and use this information to set maximum guest ticket allocations for each ceremony. It is therefore not guaranteed that tickets will become available and we do not keep a waiting list, regardless of the circumstances.

FAQs and Useful Information

International visitors

It may be necessary for international visitors to request an invitation letter to support a visa application. Once you have received your invitation and have completed the booking task, you will have the option to download a letter confirming that you have booked a place at the Congregation and your family may wish to join you. If you need to name individual guests, you can download an invitation letter from your Student Portal. This can be found under 'My Requests' > 'Letter Requests'.

Name pronunciation

We would like to ensure that your name is pronounced correctly. To help us do this, you will be given the opportunity to add the phonetic spelling of your name or provide an audio recording during the booking task. Try to think about which parts of your name you think may be difficult to pronounce, then try to spell them as they sound. Name details must be received at least 2 weeks before ceremony. Please note this is advice on the pronunciation of your name only - an alternative name cannot be given - your full legal name is used for Congregation. **Please do not just retype your name in this field, leave blank if you cannot or do not need to give any phonetic pronunciation.**

Parking

Unfortunately, there is no parking available at Central Hall for graduates or their guests. There is limited parking available in Westminster it is advisable not to rely on this on the day. There are good transport links via rail and underground. www.c-h-w.com/contact/location

Use of cameras and photography

There are no restrictions on photography or cameras – but please do not block the view of other guests or block the aisles.

We hope we've answered all your questions but if not please do not hesitate to get in touch. We look forward to seeing you at the congregation!



Ede & Ravenscroft

FOUNDED 1689

HIRE YOUR GRADUATION OUTFIT ON-LINE AND SAVE £5

www.edeandravenscroft.com

Remember, you will need to wear the correct robes to attend your graduation ceremony.

- Before you start, make sure you know your head circumference, chest and height measurements and have your credit/debit card details available.
- If you do not have access to a computer, you can hire or buy your outfit from our call centre on **01223 861854**. Open from 9 am - 5 pm Monday to Friday. **PLEASE NOTE: you will not receive the on-line hire discount if you order via the call centre.**

Calls may be monitored for staff training. Facilities for the deaf or hard of hearing or those with a speech impairment are available using your Textphone dial 1800101223861854 to access the RNID Typetalk system.

- Print out the order confirmation and take it with you when you collect your outfit on the day of your ceremony so we can process your order quickly.

Book early to be sure of your order!

We cannot guarantee to supply you with an outfit if you leave your booking later than 21 days before your ceremony. However, you can still try to place an order through our website or call centre after this date. We take a limited spare stock to the ceremony, but this is charged at a premium rate on a first come first served basis.

Terms and conditions including cancellation policy are available on-line or from our call centre.

Ede and Ravenscroft, UnitA, Denny Industrial Centre, Waterbeach, Cambridge CB25 9QD



Certificates

Certificates are not distributed at congregations. They are posted to the home address on your student record.

Your certificate is a legal document and should state your full legal name. The name on your student record will be used for this.

You must ensure your name and address details are correct on your student record. You will be given the opportunity to update your certificate delivery address during the congregation booking task. To check and update your details log on to My Northumbria or speak to an Administrator in your Student Central.

All details must be updated and correct before the date of your Programme Assessment board.

Incorrect information may cause delays to the receipt of your documents and a fee may apply for replacements.

Certificates will be sent to you as soon as possible, usually within eight weeks of your exam board.

Thank you for your assistance!

For more information please contact Examinations and Awards Team:

Email: rg.certificates@northumbria.ac.uk

HEAR – information for Undergraduate students



What is the HEAR?

The HEAR (Higher Education Achievement Report) is a means for recording student achievement in higher education and is intended to provide more detailed information about a student's learning and achievement than the traditional degree classification system.

- National HEAR website hear.ac.uk/

How can the HEAR be used?

The HEAR is designed to be shared securely with others, for example with potential employers, employment agencies or postgraduate admissions departments, to provide a comprehensive insight into a student's academic and non-academic achievements.

The HEAR contains new, more detailed, information in two key sections

The HEAR provides details about the contents of the programme studied. This includes: details of the course including knowledge and understanding the student can be expected to have gained; a transcript of modules studied and marks obtained; and the main intellectual, practical and key transferable skills that the student should have developed during their studies. A section of the HEAR is dedicated to additional information – providing a fuller picture of the student beyond traditional academic achievement. This includes information which can be verified and validated by the University and the Students' Union in three categories of:

- Additional awards
- Additional recognised activities; and
- University, professional and departmental prizes

The Northumbria HEAR

The Northumbria HEAR will be provided in electronic format only to students gaining awards from undergraduate and postgraduate programmes studied at Northumbria UK campuses.

- Northumbria HEAR website northumbria.ac.uk/hear

Access to your HEAR

You will receive an email via your University email account with information about the HEAR including a password for you to access your Gradintel account and see your HEAR. Gradintel provides an enduring and secure web-based environment to host the Northumbria HEAR which you can then access after you have left Northumbria.

Terms and conditions

General

Under no circumstances will entry to Central Hall be permitted without a valid ticket.

Graduates have been given an initial allocation of one graduate and up to two paid guest tickets each. The Graduate ticket is complimentary. The University reserves the right to close the bookings early if maximum numbers are reached before the published deadline.

All tickets include entry to the ceremony at Central Hall the drinks reception along with a souvenir booklet.

It is the responsibility of the Graduate to inform us of any change of address, contact number or email address.

Tickets which are transferred will become voidable and the holder may be refused entry.

CentralHalltermsandconditions:www.c-h-w.com/files/CHW-Terms-and-Conditions.pdf

Cancellation and Refunds

We advise Graduates that no refunds will be offered to customers who are refused entry or ejected from a venue on account of late arrival, declining to be searched, abusive, threatening, drunken or other anti-social behaviour (including smoking in no smoking areas) or carrying offensive weapons or illegal substances.

Tickets for the event are non transferrable and non refundable. We can only refund the cost of your guest tickets if the event is cancelled or if you become ineligible to attend, for example, if you do not successfully complete your programme in time.

Cancellation Due to Covid-19

Please note this event is subject to any local or national restrictions relating to Covid-19. If you plan to attend, you will be required to follow the Government guidance in operation at the time of the event as well as any protocols and procedures required by the University. The University will not be liable for any losses, direct or otherwise, incurred by graduates or their guests in the event of the ceremonies being cancelled, delayed, postponed or curtailed due to circumstances beyond the control of the University including but not limited to Covid 19, events of force majeure or any cancellation of the ceremony due to the venue owner cancelling the event. For example, any travel and accommodation costs are taken at your own risk and the University shall not be held liable for any loss of your personal property whilst attending the ceremony or otherwise.

Ticket Collection

A confirmation will be emailed to the graduate approximately a week before the ceremony. All guests and the graduate must enter Central hall together as this confirmation email covers all members of the party. It is the Graduate's responsibility to arrive in good time to register and robe before the ceremony and to meet guests before arriving at Central Hall.

Data Protection

Graduates, guests and staff attending congregations (graduation ceremonies) should be aware that they are regarded as public events. The names and awards of graduates (including those graduating in absentia) are published on a web page which is accessed via a QR code published in the Congregation booklet. This is distributed on the day to all in attendance.

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) graduates must 'opt in' to give their consent for their names and awards to be listed in the booklet. If anyone graduating in person, or in absentia objects to these publications of their personal data (name and award) they should choose not to 'opt in' during the booking task and their name will not be published. Please note that should you 'opt in', you can change your permission up to 11 August but no changes can be made after this date.

The University will not be responsible for congregation booklets once they have been distributed to guests.

There will be a photographer at the event and by attending, you give us permission to use any general crowd shots you appear in for University printed publications and our website (including the Venue's publications and website). We will not use individual or small group shots of you in printed publications without asking for your consent first. By attending the event, graduates and guests consent to be party to these practices.

We hope we've answered all of your questions but if not please do not hesitate to get in touch:

Contact us

We look forward to seeing you at the congregation. If you have any queries, please contact the Examinations and Awards Team:

rg.congregations@northumbria.ac.uk

or visit our website for further information: northumbria.ac.uk/congregations

Don't want this to end?

Join the Northumbria University Alumni Association

Northumbria University Alumni Association is here to keep our graduates in touch with the latest University and alumni news. As a graduate we encourage you to become a member of the free Alumni Association - a global network with more than 237,000 graduates based in 178 countries.

As a member you will enjoy a range of benefits including a 20% postgraduate study discount and discounted access to the Library. You will also be invited to attend events, meet friends at reunions and develop social and professional networks.

To keep in touch, join the Alumni Association at northumbria.ac.uk/nugrad and be in with the chance of winning a £250 Amazon voucher (T&C's apply).

Support your University

At Northumbria University, we are inspiring our students to take on the challenges of tomorrow, but for some, financial barriers stand in the way. With your support, we can change this. Donations to Northumbria University's **Higher Education Without Barriers Fund** are helping students like Habeeba. Habeeba joined Northumbria through our supported entry scheme, which gives academically talented students from backgrounds where participation in higher education is traditionally low, the opportunity to develop the skills and mindset to come to university. Along with many other students in this position, Habeeba also received financial support to help her while she studied. We want to make sure that more people are given the same opportunities as Habeeba. Donations from alumni can make that goal a reality. Help us to transform lives. Donate today.



To find out more about the **Higher Education Without Barriers Fund** and the financial initiatives, mental health and wellbeing services and community-based projects it's supporting visit:

northumbria.ac.uk/giving



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