

# Graduation Survey 2008

The Graduation Office would like to thank all graduates who took part in the online survey following the June 2008 Graduation Ceremonies. We would also like to thank marshals and staff who took the time to provide feedback following Graduation in June and December 2008.

## Introduction

### Overview

An online survey was conducted in July 2008 to gather student feedback on the Graduation experience, both in the run up to the event and on the day itself. The survey was aimed at students graduating in June 2008, and this report considers their responses as well as feedback received from marshals and staff. The feedback will be used to make sure that the Graduation Office builds on what it does well and continues to improve the Degree Days.

### The Survey

The survey was split into four sections, three of which asked respondents to rate the experience on a scale of 1-10 (1 = completely dissatisfied and 10 = completely satisfied). The first section asked graduates to rate the information received ahead of Graduation; the second asked them to rate their experience of the day itself and the third focused on the services provided by suppliers. The final section asked respondents to confirm which ceremony they had attended.

### Respondents

420 students participated in the online survey, which represents 16% of all of those initially invited to take part and includes undergraduate and postgraduate students who had attended ceremonies on each of the Degree Days. Feedback was also received from staff and marshals in a suggestions book on the day and via email after the event.

## Feedback

### Information before Graduation

The majority of concerns were on the availability of **additional ceremony tickets**. Some respondents indicated that they were disappointed not to receive an additional ticket in advance when extra tickets were distributed on the day. Whilst the Graduation Office did make every effort to distribute as many tickets as possible ahead of the event, some tickets had to be kept in reserve as PhD students could be added to the Graduation list at a late stage. All students who had requested extra tickets were informed in writing if they had not been allocated an additional ticket and were advised to check at the information desk on the day of Graduation for any returned or unused tickets. Unfortunately there is often huge demand for extra tickets and due to the capacity of the Hall (550 seats), we can only guarantee two guest tickets per student for those who register by the deadline.

Respondents were particularly impressed with the **information booklet** they received with their tickets, which provided clear details on what they had to do and where they had to go on the day of Graduation.

Students who contacted the Graduation Office prior to the event commented on how helpful staff had been in **answering their queries**, and in particular, replacing lost tickets.

### On the Day and Suppliers

Some respondents expressed disappointment at the lack of information on the various **School and Departmental receptions** taking place on campus. They found that the welcome marshals were unaware of arrangements for receptions and consequently could not offer directions.

Graduates commented that there was little or no opportunity for **group photographs**.

Some respondents commented on the limited number of **toilets** signposted on campus and indicated that **baby changing facilities** were difficult to find. It was also felt that some of the buildings and the shuttle bus stops could have been **better signposted**. More chairs were also required next to the Readibus stop. There were, however, many positive comments about the transport arrangements with respondents indicating that the parking and shuttle buses had been well organised. Students also said that the use of a mirror on the day would have been useful, and one has now been requested for the robing room.

Whilst respondents were generally positive about the **catering** provided, saying that the catering staff offered a friendly service, some felt that the provision was expensive and that in particular, children should not have been charged the same price as adults. Some also commented that various items were not always available towards the end of the day.

A number of respondents mentioned how much they appreciated the efforts of the marshals on the day, who they believed were helpful and approachable. Many respondents commented positively on the appearance of the campus and the layout of the marquees.

A large number of positive comments were made on the organisation of the day and several respondents remarked that the day was “very well organised” and that this had contributed to their enjoyment of the occasion.

The feedback received on merchandise has been sent on to the relevant suppliers.

## Improvements and changes

There have already been a number of changes implemented in response to both the online survey and the feedback received from marshals.

Although the process for allocating additional tickets cannot currently be changed due to the necessity of holding tickets in reserve, we will make sure that the information sent to students clearly explains that we do not guarantee that any waiting list tickets will be available in advance. We will also make sure students are aware that some tickets may be distributed on the day and that video relay facilities are available on campus for those without ceremony tickets.

The Graduation Office will routinely ask for information about School or Departmental receptions taking place on Degree Days and details will be held at the information desk and communicated to marshals so they can advise students and guests. To help students travelling by car, we have added the University postcode for sat navs to the instruction booklet which accompanies tickets. We will also encourage welcome marshals to direct groups to the lawns for photographs.

Signposting on the day and the facilities have improved significantly. In December 2008, additional toilets on the campus were used, and these were clearly marked on the map and around the London Road campus. The Graduation Office is currently reviewing the location of the baby changing facilities and will improve signposting. Alongside adding a mirror to the facilities available in the robing room, we have also created more signs for the campus and plan to introduce help point signs, which will list frequently asked questions.

Following feedback from graduates, a reduced price buffet lunch will now be available for those under the age of 15.

## Results

### Analysis of Results

In the first two sections of the survey, the majority of the responses were between 8 and 10 (completely satisfied). The percentage of those who rated each element between 8 and 10 is shown below.

#### Service received before Graduation

63% (as applicable)	Telephone assistance
73%	Ease of use of RISISweb portal
73% (as applicable)	Information on website
74% (as applicable)	Email assistance
79%	Information received before graduation
81%	Information sent with tickets
83%	Ease of registration

#### Facilities and services at London Road

48% (as applicable)	Catering
71%	Parking arrangements
75%	Facilities at London Road
80%	Graduation Ceremony
82%	Graduates' enjoyment of the day
83%	Helpfulness of staff/marshals
84%	Shuttle bus service
85%	Organisation of the day
85%	Appearance of the London Road campus
86%	Guests' enjoyment of the day

## Conclusions

One of the main outcomes of the survey was that Graduation was perceived to be very well organised and that areas that would benefit from changes or improvements were few and easy to address and did not detract from the students' enjoyment of Graduation. The areas identified within this report as requiring improvement or attention have either been addressed, or will be addressed by the Graduation Office before future ceremonies.

## Further Information

If you have any further comments or questions about the survey, or the feedback received by the Graduation Office in general please contact [graduation@reading.ac.uk](mailto:graduation@reading.ac.uk) or 0118 378 8116/7.

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