

COVID-19 - 2020 Graduation FAQs

- **Why has the University made the decision to cancel the July and December 2020 Graduation ceremonies at this stage/so early?**

As many of our graduates will need to book travel and accommodation in order to attend, we felt we needed to make an early decision to allow as much notice as possible. While coronavirus restrictions are being eased, the UK Government's Chief Medical Adviser has indicated that some level of social distancing will be required until the end of the year. It is also possible that a 'second peak' of the virus nationally may result in stricter measures returning at short notice.

- **Will I be able to attend a Graduation ceremony and when will this be?**

The July and December 2020 Graduation ceremonies have been postponed to July 2021.

July 2020 Finalists

If you are eligible to graduate in July 2020 you should have received an email on 15 April from the Graduation Team asking you to register your choice about graduating in absence or attending a ceremony in December.

If you chose to defer to December 2020 you will be invited to attend the July 2021 ceremonies. If you now wish to graduate in absence in July 2020 please let us know via graduation@reading.ac.uk so we can update your record.

If you chose to graduate in absence in July 2020 you will not be able to attend a future ceremony.

December 2020 Finalists

If you are eligible to graduate in December 2020 you will be invited to register and you will have two options:

1. Graduate in absence in December 2020. Your certificate will be posted from early January. You **will not** be able to attend a future graduation ceremony.
2. Defer your graduation to July 2021. We will exceptionally allow you to receive your degree certificate prior to attendance at a ceremony and it will be posted to you in early January. If you choose to defer to July 2021 you **will not** be able to defer again (i.e. to December 2021). If you defer to July 2021 and then do not attend, you will automatically graduate in absence in July 2021.

You can check if you are eligible to graduate [here](#).

We will do our best to accommodate you in a ceremony if you choose to defer your graduation to July 2021.

- **Is the University arranging any virtual celebrations for finalists?**

Yes, we want to celebrate your achievements with you and recognise all your hard work! We have created an interactive page for each School on a platform called Flipgrid where staff, students and supporters will be able to share congratulatory messages for finalists. You will receive further information in due course about how to get involved.

Your School or department may also be organising a virtual event and they will contact you directly.

We will be running the virtual celebrations in December for students due to graduate at that time.

- **When will I receive my degree certificate?**

If you are graduating in July your certificate will be posted* to you from late-July onwards, whether you have chosen to graduate in absence or defer your graduation ceremony. We are exceptionally allowing you to receive your degree certificate prior to attendance at a physical graduation ceremony.

If you are due to graduate in December your certificate will be posted* to you from early January 2021. You will confirm your details for your degree certificate during the registration process when it launches later in the year.

Please note, if you are graduating in July and did not complete the registration process this means that we do not have a confirmed delivery address for you. Please email graduation@reading.ac.uk as soon as possible to provide a delivery address.

*certificates will only be posted once we are assured that business as usual postal services are in operation in your country. This is in order to maintain security processes around these documents.

- **Can I receive my degree certificate earlier?**

Your ability to graduate is dependent on the Examinations team receiving a final result for you from your School, which is then in turn confirmed by a University Examination Board. Finalist results are due to be released in the week commencing 20 July. We then need to produce and check each student's degree certificate, meaning we will not have them ready for posting until late-July.

The same processes will be in place for those due to graduate in December.

- **Can I receive my PhD certificate earlier?**

Although your award may have already been confirmed to you, it is University policy that degree certificates cannot be released until the point at which you graduate (July or December) regardless of whether a physical ceremony takes place. The Doctoral Research Office in the Graduate School (dro@reading.ac.uk) are able to produce confirmation of award letters prior to the release of your degree certificate if you need proof of your qualification at an earlier date.

- **What if the UK Government's current restrictions on movement are still in place in July?**

Whilst we are currently planning to be able to be working back in our office on the University campus in July, if this is not the case and the Graduation team are still working from home we will not be able to produce or post out any degree certificates to those who graduate in July. In these circumstances we would endeavour to post* out any degree certificates as soon as we would be allowed to regain access to our office.

*certificates will only be posted once we are assured that business as usual postal services are in operation in your country. This is in order to maintain security processes around these documents.

- **What if the UK Government enforces restrictions on movement in December/January?**

Similar to the above, the Graduation team are planning to be working back in our office on the University campus in December and January in order to produce and post out the degree certificates to those who graduate in December 2020. However, if UK Government advice or instructions mean that we have to

work from home then it will not be possible to produce or post certificates. We would endeavour to post* out any degree certificates as soon as we would be allowed to regain access to our office.

*certificates will only be posted once we are assured that business as usual postal services are in operation in your country. This is in order to maintain security processes around these documents.

- **How will my degree certificate be posted?**

We will post certificates going to UK addresses via Royal Mail 48 hour service. Certificates going to overseas addresses will be posted via Royal Mail International Tracked & Signed or International Signed (depending on the destination).

If you would like your certificate to be posted via courier you can make the payment for this here: <https://www.store.reading.ac.uk/product-catalogue/student-applicant-services/graduation-office/certificates/degree-certificate-courier-postage-payment-options>

Certificates will only be posted once we are assured that business as usual postal services are in operation in your country. This is in order to maintain security processes around these documents.

- **Can I collect my certificate in person or nominate someone to collect it on my behalf?**

Unfortunately we are not able to facilitate the collection of degree certificates. If anything changes then information will be updated here.

Registration FAQs - Those due to graduate in July were sent an email on 15 April regarding graduation registration. Those due to graduate in December will receive further information in due course.

- **What happens if I do not complete the registration process?**

If you do not complete the registration process you will automatically graduate in absence in July. You will not be able to attend a future ceremony. We will withhold your certificate until you contact us with a confirmed delivery address. Please note we only hold onto certificates for 12 months before securely destroying them, after which you would be liable for a replacement certificate fee. If you are graduating in July and did not complete the registration process please email graduation@reading.ac.uk as soon as possible to provide your delivery address.

The above will apply to those due to graduate in December who do not complete the registration process when it is launched later in the year.

- **What happens if I complete registration but owe a tuition fee debt to the University?**

The usual policies will apply. For more information, go to <http://student.reading.ac.uk/essentials/your-graduation-and-beyond/get-ready-to-graduate/step-5-eligibility-to-graduate.aspx>

- **What happens if I receive my results in time to graduate this July but then submit an appeal against my results?**

The usual policies will apply. For more information, go to <http://student.reading.ac.uk/essentials/your-graduation-and-beyond/get-ready-to-graduate/step-5-eligibility-to-graduate.aspx>

The above will apply to those due to graduate in December who submit an appeal against their results.

- **What happens if my results are not approved in time/some individual results are not available?**

The usual policies will apply. For more information, go to http://student.reading.ac.uk/essentials/your-graduation-and-beyond/_get-ready-to-graduate/step-5-eligibility-to-graduate.aspx

- **Can I change my mind after registration has closed if I initially register to graduate in absence in July 2020 but then want to defer?**

You will need to tell us of your intention to switch your choice by 1st June. We will not be able to defer you after this date.

- **Can I change my mind after registration has closed if I initially register to defer but then want to just graduate in absence and not attend a ceremony in July 2021?**

As you are giving up your choice to attend a ceremony in July 2021, and would have received your certificate in the post, we are happy to facilitate this particular change at any point prior to the July 2021 ceremonies.