

ACADEMICAL DRESS

Dress at Congregations: advice to those proceeding to degree as instructed by the proctors of the University of Cambridge.

The following rules apply to academical dress worn by those proceeding to degrees:

- 1) A person who already holds a degree or degrees of Cambridge University wears the gown and hood of the highest degree he or she has already received from this University
- 2) Under no circumstances should the academical dress of another university be worn by the graduand.
- 3) The only form of head-dress which may be worn with academical dress (and the use of head-dress is optional) is the square, unless an exception is made for religious reasons. Graduates may not, however, wear a square in the Senate House; it must be carried.
- 4) Men will wear bands, except when national or religious dress (see over) would not allow it.

You must also pay attention to your non-academical dress as, unless you are correctly dressed, it will not be possible to present you for a degree. Your Praelector or Presenter is able to offer further advice on dress.

Dress Option One

A dinner jacket or black, very dark grey or very dark blue lounge suit. These must be dark enough not to contrast obviously with a black gown.

A plain, long-sleeved, collared, white shirt.

Formal black shoes. Sandals are not permitted.

Unpatterned black or very dark grey socks.

White bow-tie and bands must be worn.

Dress Option Two

A black, very dark grey or very dark blue skirt suit or trouser suit, or a dark skirt without a jacket, or a dark, long-sleeved dress. These must be dark enough not to contrast obviously with a black gown.

A plain, long-sleeved, white shirt or blouse (unless a long-sleeved dress is worn).

Formal black shoes. Sandals are not permitted.

Unpatterned black, nearly-black, or natural coloured hosiery.

A white bow-tie and bands may be worn (optional) but only with a properly collared white shirt.

A black cassock may be substituted for a dark suit, skirt or dress in either Dress One or Two, but it must be worn with either a white bow-tie and bands or a clerical collar and bands.

Headdress

The square cap, or 'mortarboard', is optional for graduands at Cambridge. If you do decide to wear one on the day, you should take it off and carry it in your left hand inside the Senate-House.

Jewellery

Conspicuous jewellery and hair accessories are not permitted.

National/religious dress

National or religious dress may be worn in exceptional cases by both men and women with academical dress, as an alternative to the dress indicated above. As an example: a person who wears a turban as part of their everyday attire will be allowed to wear the turban to his graduation. Hood and gown are still worn, but bands may not be appropriate. Praelectors need to get approval for national or religious dress from the University Proctors so all parties involved (Alumni Officer, Praelector, Proctors) will need to be informed well before the date of the Congregation.

What should guests wear?

Guests should dress smartly. Ladies are most welcome to wear hats.

Guests who are members of Cambridge University may wish to wear a gown, and if they are resident members of the University they should wear a cap (or, if appropriate, bonnet) outside the Senate House but must carry this when inside. Non-residents should not wear a cap or bonnet but the custom of wearing a top hat instead has not entirely lapsed.