

Graduation - What to wear under your Robe

Some institutions have formal dress codes, we do not, but if you are graduating at a ceremony, then here are some things to consider when deciding what to wear on the day.

Adult robes are based on your height (total from floor to the top of your head). XL robes are available if you have a chest size of 50"+. Also because UK style robes are open-fronted, they are a comfortable fit for most.

The first and most important thing is not to wear any extreme examples of the current fashionable styles. Go for a classic look where you are the centre of attention, not what you are wearing under your robe. Your photograph is going to be on the wall for a long time!

Traditionally most graduands wear dark clothes with light or white shirts or blouses. Ideally men wear jackets and ties and women wear skirts not trousers. Jackets are a great idea as they give the robe a better shape and mean your photographs will look even better. After all if you have invested time, energy and money in gaining your award, why not spend a few minutes preparing to look your best when you receive public recognition for your achievement, so ditch those jeans and that t-shirt.

Then there is the graduation hood. This is worn around the neck and over the robe. It will have a loop on the neck band so you can hold it in place with a button on a shirt or blouse. It can be pinned but this can leave a mark or a tear on the shirt or top, so avoiding the use of pins is good, although we do have pins available should they be necessary.

For men, the neckband of the hood can be worn under or over your tie. Some people say there is a protocol for this, but it isn't a rule we have so far seen written down anywhere.



For ladies, wearing a low cut dress or top makes pinning the hood rather difficult, so please be aware that this is not a good idea from a robing point of view.

Weather is also a factor to bear in mind. The robes were originally designed to keep out the cold in so they can make you very warm. On warm days, wear lightweight clothes as changing once you are robed may not be convenient. You may have to return to the Robing Room to get your hood, robe and hat adjusted before the ceremony to ensure you look your best.

Finally, hair. The wearing of hats is traditional in many places. They come in a number of styles, the most common often known as "mortar boards". They do not accommodate lumps and bumps like buns, hair ties, pony tails, spiky gelled hair etc very easily. Hairgrips are normally available in the Robing Room to help keep the hat stable on your head, although our elasticated sided hats need this less often than more traditional mortarboards.

Please bear in mind that your carefully prepared hairstyle may be squashed or otherwise spoiled by the hat, so to avoid disappointment and time spent repairing that "look" after you return your robes, try to keep your hairstyle relatively simple for this day.

We hope you have found this information useful. Ultimately the ceremony is a fun day for all, and with the right clothes under your robes, you will relax and enjoy the day to the full.