Degrees are conferred at Congregations (ceremonial meetings) of the Regent House, the Governing Body of the University, held in the Senate-House. Normally these are held monthly from October to July, although like many Colleges, Darwin does not present candidates at all of them.

The College Praelector is responsible for presenting Darwin’s candidates for conferral or celebration of their degrees. It is possible for your degree to be conferred ‘in absence’, without attending a Congregation, but graduands are encouraged to experience the ceremony and nearly all find the day enjoyable.

With effect from Easter Term 2022 guests will be welcomed back to the Senate House for the conferral of degrees (two guest limit).

As guests are now in attendance at degree congregations, if you opt to have your degree conferred ‘in absence’, the option to return for a ‘celebration’ at a later date ceases. For those who graduated ‘in absence’ while normal ‘in person’ conferral with guests was not possible, they can still opt to have their degree ‘celebrated’ at a future date providing there is space available. Celebration will be almost identical to graduation, with some small differences in the Latin used.

Students who delay graduation or plan to return to ‘celebrate’ will still be able to attend Congregations in 2021-22 and beyond, provided the College has the capacity*.

Going forward, all Degree Congregations will now be videoed and available both as a live-stream and on a catch-up basis for a limited period.

Neither Darwin College or the University can predict changes made necessary by Covid-19 and we must comply with public health advice and rules. An ‘upsurge’ of infection may result in increased restrictions and a change in Congregations to ‘in absence’ only.

(* Please be aware that, for the foreseeable future, Degree Congregations are expected to be very busy as we clear the back-log caused by the pandemic).
APPLYING TO PROCEED TO YOUR DEGREE

Please see below for a list of future Congregations at which you can proceed to your degree along with further particulars. Any queries should in the first instance be addressed to the Deanery Office at deanery@darwin.cam.ac.uk or on 01223 335675. Dates listed for Michaelmas Term 2022 are correct; further details to follow.

REQUIREMENTS TO PROCEED IN PERSON

- Bookings for graduation are made via your CamSIS self-service account. Please click on the ‘Graduation’ tile on your homepage and follow the instructions. If you no longer have access to your CamSIS self-service account, or are having a degree that was conferred in absence celebrated, please contact the Deanery Office for a booking form or download it from the College web-site: https://www.darwin.cam.ac.uk
- Confirmation of approval for the degree must have been received by the College from the Student Registry at least ten days prior to the event. However, you may book in ‘subject to final approval’.
- All graduands must be clear of College debt. In common with other colleges, Darwin declines to present for a degree those in debt to the College. Contact the Accounts Office, phone (01223) 335665 or email accounts@darwin.cam.ac.uk to ensure that you have settled all bills before making arrangements to proceed to your Degree.

We will do our best to accommodate those wishing to graduate ‘in person’ or have a degree celebrated at a particular Congregation, but there are limits to the number of candidates and guests that the College can host, so to avoid disappointment, you are urged to book as early as possible. This applies particularly to the July and October Degree Congregations.

Please note that we cannot accept responsibility for any arrangements you may make to take up employment requiring a degree certificate, or for your family or friends to visit Cambridge, without meeting the above conditions. If you have a query, please check with the Deanery Office.

DEGREES IN ABSENCE

For those taking their degree ‘in absence’, the following two criteria still apply: the need to book with the College to have the degree conferred and to be clear of debt.

CERTIFICATES AND OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS

If you proceed ‘in person’, you receive your degree certificate when leaving the Senate-House. If you graduate ‘in absence’ it will be posted to you later. The College will usually POST your degree certificate to you once it has been forwarded to us by the University, approximately 2-3 weeks after the ceremony. Should you wish to have it sent via courier you should organise this independently. Please indicate this on your booking form so we may contact you as soon as the documents are available for collection.
**Contact:** It is important that you make sure your contact details on CamSIS are up-to-date so that we can send you the timetable for the day or contact you with any queries. It is also useful to add any alternative permanent contact details. It is particularly important that those who have graduated ‘in absence’ during the pandemic and wish to have their degree ‘celebrated’, ensure that the College has your current contacts.

**Timing:** The overall timetable for each Congregation is decided by the University on the basis of the number of candidates ‘in person’ from all the Colleges for that day and is notified to Colleges’ one week before the ceremony. Some Congregations start in the morning and others in the afternoon. Darwin candidates are often called to the Senate-House sometime between 2pm and 5pm but on certain days it may be later than 5pm or earlier than 2pm. Once we have the precise time from the University, we endeavour to let you have the timetable for the whole day’s events by email as soon as possible, usually on the Monday beforehand.

**College Reception:** With effect from April 2022, the College will host a reception for those graduating/celebrating along with their guests. The graduate and two guests may attend free of charge, with a third guest costing £16.00. You must indicate when booking if there are any special dietary requirements.

During the reception you will have a chance to engage with the Master, various Fellows, DCSA Officers and other graduands.

**ACADEMICAL DRESS**

**Dress:** You must wear the prescribed academical dress for the Congregation, which will be preceded by a full-dress rehearsal in College (see below for information on dress). Unless you are correctly dressed in every detail, you may not be admitted to the Senate-House. The rules given here should enable you to dress correctly for the ceremony. Please enquire at the Deanery Office if you are in any doubt.

Correct dress consists of the correct personal dress (see below), together with the prescribed gown and hood for your status and the degree you are about to take or to have celebrated. The College DOES NOT provide academical dress. Gowns and hoods can be hired or purchased from robemakers in Cambridge, such as the two firms whose websites are given below. If you follow the directions on the websites, they will ensure that you end up with the right items for the degree you are taking, but they will also give advice by phone or email. Please note that those choosing Dress Option 1 (see below) will require a white bow-tie and ‘bands’, both of which can be hired from these firms.

You are strongly advised to make a booking to hire the necessary items in good time once you know which Congregation you will be attending, or you risk finding that there is nothing left to hire, particularly in July or October. Items must be collected from the hire firms and returned to them in accordance with the information from these firms, which will not deliver to the College.

**Cambridge Robemakers:**

**Ryder & Amies,** 22 King’s Parade, Cambridge CB2 1SP. Phone: 01223 350 371; Fax: 01223 315 883; E-mail: rental@ryderamies.co.uk; Website: http://www.ryderamies.co.uk.

**Ede & Ravenscroft,** 71-72 Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1QR. Phone: 01223 350 048; Fax: 01223 354 173; E-mail: customerservices@academic-services.co.uk; Website: http://www.edeandravenscroft.co.uk.
REGULATIONS ON GOWNS AND HOODS FOR THOSE PROCEEDING TO DEGREE ‘IN PERSON’ OR HAVING A DEGREE CELEBRATED

• Under **no circumstances** may the dress of any other University be worn.

• A person who **already holds** a degree of the University of Cambridge (so including anyone who has graduated ‘in absence’ during the pandemic and is now having their degree celebrated) wears the gown and hood of the highest Degree he/she has **already received** from the University. Anyone who **already holds** the PhD (or any other Cambridge doctorate) must wear the **black** gown for that degree with the hood and **not** the special ‘festal’ gown (which for PhDs has red facings).

• For anyone who **does not** already hold a degree from the University of Cambridge, then if aged 24 or older, you should wear the MA status gown, or if under 24, the BA status gown, with the hood of the highest degree **you will be receiving** on this occasion. The MA and BA status gowns are identical to the MA and BA gowns, but without the two hanging ribbons, or ‘strings’.

• A Fellow or Senior Member of a College being admitted to a degree by incorporation or to the MA degree under Statute B II 2 wears the gown and hood of the Cambridge degree to be received.

• You are not required to wear a square cap (‘mortar board’), but may do so when outside the Senate-House if you wish; once inside the House it must be removed and placed under the left arm. Those graduating to the PhD or any other doctorate, or having it celebrated, may also use the square cap (‘mortar board’). Please note that the round bonnet with gold cord and tassels is **only** for use with the ‘festal’ gowns for those who are already doctors (e.g. with the scarlet facing strips for PhDs) which **cannot** be worn at any Congregation in which Darwin presents candidates, although they may be used during private photography afterwards.

PERSONAL DRESS

The University states the requirements in a non-gendered way, as ‘Dress Options One and Two’. You can choose whichever you prefer, but you must choose **one option** and follow it; you cannot ‘pick and mix’ to create a composite style. The College Praelector will need to know which you have chosen in case of any query, so please make a clear choice and be ready to state this if asked. The **overall effect for both should be** formal, tidy and sober.

**Dress Option One**

• A dinner jacket or black, very dark grey or very dark blue lounge suit. The suit must not be striped or have any obvious patterns which will contrast with a black gown.

• A plain, long-sleeved, collared, white shirt. Shirts with a pattern are not permitted. Cummerbunds are not permitted.

• Formal black shoes without obvious decoration such as metal buckles and of sober style. Sandals or boots are not permitted.

• Unpatterned black socks.

• White bow-tie and bands must be worn.
**Dress Option Two**

- A black, dark grey or very dark blue skirt suit or trouser suit, or a black, dark grey or very dark blue skirt without a jacket, or a black or dark, long-sleeved dress. In addition, either a white or black cardigan may be worn. The dress, jacket, blouse or cardigan must have **long or three-quarter length sleeves**, i.e., they must be below the elbow. Short skirts are not considered ‘sober’ and will not be permitted – please be conservative in this regard. Skirts should be knee length. Short skirts are not considered sober and will not be permitted.
- A plain, long-sleeved, white shirt or blouse (unless a long-sleeved dress is worn).
- Formal black shoes without obvious decoration such as metal buckles, and of sober style. Sandals or boots are not permitted. Coloured or very high heels are not permitted.
- Non-patterned black, nearly-black, or natural coloured stockings or tights covering all visible parts of the legs and feet. Bare legs and feet are not permitted.
- A white bow-tie and bands may be worn (optional) but only with a properly collared white shirt (this means a shirt with a slightly rigid collar of the type which one might wear with a conventional tie).

**For either option:**

- Jewellery (with the exception of wedding rings, small sober ear-rings and wrist watches) and hair accessories should not be worn.
- Striking hair colouring and/or style is inappropriate for Degree Congregations and hair styles should be neat and tidy.
- Handbags should not be carried and should be given to guests; they can cause difficulties during the ceremony.
- Those who wish to cover their hair for religious reasons may do so. A plain, dark covering is preferred in accordance with the general requirements for dress.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Smoking is not allowed in the Senate-House or the Yard around it and private photography or recording are not permitted inside the Senate-House. Graduation/celebration photographs are taken automatically at the Senate-House and can be bought after the ceremony has taken place (charges apply).

Degrees will normally be conferred using words containing a Latin formula referring to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, *in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti* (in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit). Alternatively, you have the option of **either** being admitted to your degree *in nomine Dei* (in the name of God), or **for all religious reference to be omitted**. Please indicate your wish when booking.

Degrees already conferred ‘in absence’ will be ‘celebrated’ using a slightly different Latin formula without any religious reference.

It is customary to kneel during the actual conferral of the degree. This act is not intended to have any religious significance, but those with an objection on religious or other strong conscientious or health grounds may be dispensed from it. Please indicate this when booking, but **please also note that kneeling during the ceremony has been suspended during the pandemic**.

As part of the special arrangements for Covid-security, **those attending will spend more of their time in Senate-House Yard outside the Senate-House than usual**. If wet-weather is a possibility, umbrellas can be carried.
CONGREGATIONS OF THE REGENT HOUSE AT WHICH DEGREES MAY BE CONFERRED OR CELEBRATED

Easter Term 2022

30 April 2022 (fully booked)
21 May 2022 (fully booked)

Long Vacation 2022

23 July 2022 (bookings open on 1 May 2022 via CamSIS) (*)

(*) Guests allowed at the Senate House (2) & College Reception (3)

Michaelmas Term 2022

22 October 2022 (**)  
26 November 2022 (**)  

(** details to be confirmed at a later date)

THE SENATE-HOUSE, KING’S PARADE, CAMBRIDGE CB2 1TS

How to get there from Darwin College – please ensure that your guests know where to go, since they will leave College before you do.
DRESS TO WEAR AT GRADUATION OR CELEBRATION OF DEGREE FOR DARWIN STUDENTS

Do you already possess a Cambridge degree?

Yes

Gown and hood of the highest Cambridge degree already held

No

You have been a graduate student without any previous degree from this University.

What is your age?

Under 24

BA Status gown (without strings) plus hood of the highest degree to be taken.
Lining inside black hood is:
- PhD: Red
- MPhil: Royal Blue
- MRes: Dark Plum Red
- MAST: Gold
- LLM: Pink
- MCL: Pink with white
- MBA: Green
- MFin: Light Green
- MEd: Light Blue
- MSt: Yellow

24 & over

MA Status gown (without strings) plus hood of the highest degree to be taken.
Lining inside black hood is:
- PhD: Red
- MPhil: Royal Blue
- MRes: Dark Plum Red
- MAST: Gold
- LLM: Pink
- MCL: Pink with white
- MBA: Green
- MFin: Light Green
- MEd: Light Blue
- MSt: Yellow