



HTG012-1 – Graduation Protocol

Abstract

This How-To-Guide will inform staff of the ceremony and programme requirements for The IIE (Independent Institute of Education (Pty) Ltd. It aligns with the Tertiary Operating Academic Model (TOAM) structure and provides for combined graduation ceremonies of different entities.

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Date	Version Number	Document Changes
February 2010	1	First Release – used for 2011 and 2012
2013	4	
2014	5	
2015	6	
2016	7	
2017	8	
2018	9	
2019	10	Inclusion of IIE MSA
2020	11	
2021	12	Inclusion of new faculties COVID-19 Protocol included
2023	13	Removal of reference to COVID-19 protocols and updates to the procedure and programme.
2024	14	Updates to attendance of ceremonies, and the inclusion of the uncollected certificate procedure.
2026	15	Alignment with the Tertiary Operating Academic structure and provision for combined graduation ceremonies

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1. Graduation Ceremonies and Testamur/ Award Presentations

- (1) Graduation ceremonies follow this protocol.
- (2) Other ceremonies to celebrate achievements may be held but may not be called graduations.
- (3) Awards other than the conferring of qualifications, such as awarding prizes, can take place at the ceremony but must be clearly and accurately named and annotated on the programme.
- (4) Venues chosen for the graduation ceremony must reasonably accommodate students with disability.
- (5) To achieve cost efficiencies, graduation ceremonies for campuses or other business units within the group may be conducted jointly. In such cases, appropriate measures must be implemented to preserve the distinct identity of each provider. Each entity will remain responsible for issuing its own certificates and preparing its respective graduation programme, while ensuring a seamless and well-coordinated transition between the different segments of the ceremony.

2. Responsibility and Authority

- (1) Graduations are conducted under the authority of the Senate.
- (2) The responsibility for the arrangements associated with the ceremony rests with the campus concerned and must align with this Protocol. Exceptions must be made with permission from the Registrar or should not happen.

3. Ceremony Requirements

3.1 Attendance of Ceremony

- (1) Graduands generally attend the graduation ceremony of the campus at which they completed their qualification.
- (2) The online students may, however, select a campus within the brand at which to attend the graduation ceremony and communicate this to the online campus by the 15th of February each year. Online students will be included in the graduation programme of the site where they elect to attend the ceremony.
- (3) Graduands may also attend the graduation ceremony at an alternative IIE campus. Such arrangements must be formally coordinated and mutually agreed upon by the campuses involved.
- (4) Graduands are required to inform the campus at which they completed their studies, at least six (6) weeks prior to the scheduled ceremony date, if they do not intend to attend that ceremony and instead plan to graduate at an alternative campus.
- (5) The campus at which the graduand completed their qualification must notify the campus where the graduand has elected to attend the ceremony of their participation and must ensure that the certificate is transferred to the host campus prior to the ceremony.

- (6) Notwithstanding the above, the student will form part of the formal graduation sign-off process at the campus where the qualification was completed, for purposes of finalising the graduation lists and programme. The student's name will, however, be reflected on the collection register for the ceremony at which they are scheduled to attend.

3.2 Academic Dress – academics and staff

- (1) Academic and administrative staff may wear the academic regalia to which they are entitled, except where the official IIE academic dress is prescribed (see below).
- (2) Individuals may only wear academic dress to which they are duly entitled. Where the correct regalia for the relevant qualification or institution is not available, a plain black gown must be worn.
- (3) Designated office bearers (see below) are required to wear the prescribed official IIE academic dress.

3.3 Academic Dress – students

- (1) Students (NQF Levels 5–9) are required to wear black academic gowns, together with the official IIE academic stole corresponding to their qualification.
- (2) Students (NQF Level 10) are required to wear the red doctoral gown and tam, together with the official IIE academic stole corresponding to their qualification.
- (3) Individual brands are responsible for clearly communicating their position regarding the use of caps. Although caps do not form part of the official IIE academic dress, they may be included at the discretion of the brand, provided that the prescribed academic attire is worn in full.

3.4 Office Bearers

- (1) The Director, Registrar, and each Faculty have their own gowns. The most senior IIE Academic Centre of Excellence (ACE) person/ Brand National Office Senior Academic/ Faculty Member, or the Site Senior Academic present at the ceremony, will confer qualifications.
- (2) There are two-, three-, and four-striped gowns. If all role-players are present:
 - a) The Director or their representatives wear the four-striped gown.
 - b) The Registrar or their representatives wear the three-striped gown.
 - c) The two-striped gown is worn by the Campus Head, Reader of Names, ACE/Brand Executive, Master of Ceremonies, and any other campus or brand person with an official function or who is part of the procession.
- (3) Where additional two-striped IIE gowns are available, they may be allocated to ACE, brand national, or campus staff participating in the academic procession.
- (4) All office bearers must wear the formal Institutional graduation regalia. They are not allowed to wear their own academic gowns as they are representing the institution during the graduation ceremony.
- (5) Where practicable, up to three representatives from The IIE—ACE, Brand National Office, or faculty—should be included in the stage party and academic procession.

Their participation enhances the formality of the ceremony and provides visible institutional representation.

- (6) The Brand National Office Registry Clerks, Elizabeth Mhlanga (Emeris) and Asiphe Zondeka (Rosebank International), may be contacted at emhlanga@emeris.ac.za or azondeka@rbi.co.za to ensure that the appropriate academic regalia is available for office bearers and faculty representatives at the ceremony.
- (7) All academic regalia must be formally issued and returned, with accurate records maintained in a register by the relevant Brand National Office representative.
- (8) As conferring duties during extended ceremonies may be physically demanding, the Office of the Registrar (OoR) may request that ACE or the Brand National Office designate an additional representative for subsequent ceremonies held on the same day. This provision applies in instances where large graduating cohorts necessitate shared responsibilities

3.5 Procession

- (1) As a general practice, the audience should be requested to stand as the academic procession enters, accompanied by appropriate music. The selected music must reflect the solemnity and ceremonial significance of the occasion and be chosen with due regard for its dignity.
- (2) The audience and academic procession should remain standing until the ceremonial book has been placed on the designated lectern.
- (3) At the conclusion of the ceremony, the individual bearing the ceremonial book should exit the stage first, followed by the academic procession in the order of entry. While this sequence is preferred, practical considerations may require adjustment. Appropriate and dignified music should accompany the recessional; satirical or humorous selections are not suitable during this portion of the ceremony.
- (4) Some institutions transition from formal to more contemporary music once the academic procession has exited and the audience begins to depart. While lighter musical selections may be introduced at this stage, they should remain appropriate to the significance of the occasion.

3.5.1 Procession Order

- (1) A designated campus representative, attired in official IIE academic dress, shall lead the academic procession while carrying The IIE ceremonial book. The book must be placed open in a prominent and clearly visible position on the stage or at the front of the venue.
- (2) The order of the procession, following the ceremonial book bearer, shall be as follows:
 - a) The Director or a senior IIE ACE, Brand National Office representative, or Campus Senior Academic acting in an officiating capacity;
 - b) Other senior brand representatives;
 - c) Other IIE office bearers (as referenced above); and
 - d) Remaining campus staff and lecturers.
- (3) Lecturers should proceed in ascending order of seniority (*juniore priori*), with those holding lower academic qualifications positioned at the front. Where lecturers hold qualifications at the same level, those with shorter periods of service should precede

others. While this convention may be adapted to suit campus-specific requirements, it serves as a meaningful way of reinforcing the importance of academic achievement within The IIE.

3.6 Order of Proceedings

- (1) The designated Master of Ceremonies shall be responsible for overseeing and managing the proceedings of the ceremony. The sequence outlined below represents the preferred order of events, with mandatory items clearly indicated
- (2) Skills-based qualifications and awards may be presented following the conferral of Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) qualifications and awards.

Compulsory	The Academic Procession enters the hall.
Compulsory	The Congregation is requested to remain standing until all members of the academic procession are seated on stage.
Compulsory	The Master of Ceremonies formally opens the ceremony and facilitates proceedings.
Optional	A choir performance or suitable musical/other rendition is presented.
Compulsory	The keynote speaker is introduced.
Compulsory	The keynote address is delivered.
Compulsory	The conferral of qualifications takes place, conducted by faculty and by qualification, with higher-level qualifications conferred last.
Optional	Presentation of Top Academic Awards.
Optional	SRC Speaker
Optional	Conferral of skills-based qualifications and certification.
Optional	Presentation of Top Awards for skills-based programmes
Optional	Singing of the National Anthem.
Compulsory	Formal closing of the ceremony
Compulsory	The Academic Procession leaves the hall.

- (3) Additional items, such as musical performances or presentations of student work, may be incorporated into the programme where appropriate. However, it is strongly recommended that the duration of a ceremony does not exceed 90 minutes (with an absolute maximum of 120 minutes). The number of such additional items should therefore be carefully determined in consideration of the length of the graduation list. As a general guideline, it is recommended that ceremonies accommodate an average of no more than 250 graduands.

3.7 Conferral of Qualifications

- (1) A name card indicating each graduate's name and qualification must be placed on their allocated seat in advance of the ceremony. Name cards must correspond with the official graduation sign-off list, including any indication of overall distinction.
- (2) Each Graduand shall ascend the stage carrying their stole draped over their left arm. Upon approaching the stage, the graduand must hand their name card to the designated campus representative responsible for announcing names (e.g. the Master of Ceremonies, Head of Department, or another appointed official). This process ensures that only the names of present graduands are announced.
- (3) The Graduand shall then proceed to the Director, or designated conferring official, who will place the stole over the Graduand's shoulders, ensuring that the ends face forward and the loop rests at the back of the neck.

- (4) The Graduand will thereafter proceed across the stage to a senior campus representative, who will formally congratulate them.
- (5) Graduands who are not in attendance will not have their names read aloud; however, their names will appear in the graduation programme, and their qualifications will be conferred *in absentia*.
- (6) After exiting the stage, graduands will be directed to a designated area (on, behind, or adjacent to the stage) to receive their certificate. Each graduand must sign the collection register to acknowledge receipt of the envelope containing their certificate, or, where applicable, a letter indicating outstanding requirements, as well as any awards or trophies.
- (7) Where a student has outstanding fees or documentation, they will receive a letter in an envelope notifying them that their certificate has been withheld pending fulfilment of these requirements.

3.8 Conferral of Master's and PhD Qualifications by Dissertation

- (1) This procedure applies exclusively to research-based qualifications. Graduands registered for coursework Master's programmes must adhere to the requirements set out in Section 3.7 of the Graduation Protocol.
- (2) A name card, reflecting each graduate's name and qualification, must be placed on their designated seat prior to the ceremony. These name cards must correspond with the approved graduation sign-off list and should indicate, where applicable, whether the qualification has been awarded with distinction or merit (for research-only qualifications), as well as the title of the Graduand's research study.
- (3) Each Graduand shall proceed to the stage carrying their stole draped over their left arm. Upon reaching the stage, the graduand must hand their name card to the designated official responsible for announcing names (e.g. the Master of Ceremonies, Head of Department, or another appointed representative). This ensures that only the names of attending graduands are announced.
- (4) The Graduand shall then proceed to the Director, or designated conferring official, who will place the stole over the Graduand's shoulders, ensuring that the ends face forward and the loop rests at the back of the neck.
- (5) Thereafter, the graduand will proceed across the stage to be formally congratulated by their Supervisor and/or Co-Supervisor.
- (6) Graduands who are not in attendance will not have their names announced; however, their names will be included in the graduation programme, and their qualifications will be conferred *in absentia*.

3.9 Presentation of an Award Posthumously

- (1) If a Graduand has passed away before the ceremony at which they would ordinarily have been conferred, and the relevant brand or campus is informed within a reasonable timeframe, the qualification may be presented to a family member or another appropriate representative in attendance. This presentation should take place at the conclusion of the relevant faculty's conferral.
- (2) A moment of silence of approximately 30 seconds may be observed as a mark of respect.

3.10 Prizes or Testamur Awards

- (1) These are normally awarded by campus or brand representatives.

3.11 Academic Regalia (This is now printed on the Programme Cover)

- (1) Academic regalia (the gowns and stoles) worn at graduation ceremonies symbolise the values and traditions of the conferring institution and are used to represent the field of study and level of the qualification. The symbolism of The IIE regalia captures the key values that The IIE aims to instill in its graduates. The IIE Office Bearers wear a gown that has been made using a Japanese pattern template – these templates leave no waste, with all elements fitting together like a jigsaw puzzle before the garment is assembled. This has been chosen as a representation of The IIE's commitment to efficiency, effectiveness, and innovative, responsible use of resources.
- (2) By combining the traditional idea of an academic gown with the use of the pinstriped fabric, which is normally associated with “work attire, The IIE is communicating its commitment to graduating work-ready citizens who can combine the best of tradition and innovation. The use of lightweight fabric rather than wool further anchors our regalia in the African context.

3.11.1 The IIE

- (1) The **light-blue** colour of the stripes on the officiators' gowns is often associated with depth and stability. It symbolises trust, loyalty, wisdom, confidence, intelligence, faith, and truth. This is also the colour used in the logo.
- (2) The number of stripes on an office bearer's gown and cuffs indicates their position on the academic hierarchy of The IIE. In addition, the stripes represent the pages of the book of learning, which is a symbol further picked up in the large books used to indicate the start and end of each ceremony, instead of the more traditional mace used in other institutions.

3.11.2 The Faculty of Commerce

- (1) The **salmon-orange** colour has been associated with high principles and thought leadership in the business world since The London Financial Times started to use the colour for its newsprint from 1983. We have thus chosen this colour for our Business graduates to represent our confidence in their ability to contribute to the development of our economy as business leaders.

3.11.3 The Faculty of Education

- (1) The colour **yellow** symbolises education as a bright future. It is associated with sunshine, hope, happiness, freshness, positivity, clarity, energy, optimism, enlightenment, remembrance, intellect, honour, loyalty, and joy. We have chosen this colour for our Education Alumni to emphasise the importance of education as a beacon of hope for a bright future. Educators are therefore encouraged to bring hope, optimism, joy, and all of the above-mentioned attributes into education in order for those being empowered to see education as valuable.

3.11.4 The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

- (1) **Red** is an emotionally intense colour, associated with energy, strength, determination, passion, and love. This epitomises the graduates who excel in this field and who seek to contribute to the development of a society that supports us all through enhancing and advancing the way that people interact with each other and with the world around them.

3.11.5 The Faculty of Information and Communications Technology

- (1) The **blue** used in the ribbons for graduates from this faculty is derived from the blue used in many technological applications to signify connection and movement and routes to follow – the blue used for most “clickable links”.
- (2) By using this colour for this faculty, we aim to represent the dynamic drive, perception, depth, expertise, and adaptability that are characteristics of our graduates who are well positioned to contribute to the development of South Africa as a key player in an information technology-enhanced society.

3.11.6 The Faculty of Law

- (1) **Purple** is a rare colour in nature and has come to symbolise that which is exceptional, significant, dignified, and powerful. Graduates of The Faculty of Law are well represented by this colour and are erudite, knowledgeable, adaptable, tenacious, and judicious.

3.11.7 The Faculty of Engineering, Science and Health

- (1) **Dark Green** is associated with nature and our environment, growth, vigour, and stability. Graduates from the Faculty of Engineering, Science, and Health display traits of curiosity, logical thinking and reasoning, innovation, reliability, endurance, and compassion.

3.11.8 The Faculty of Finance and Accounting

- (1) The colour **Navy** denotes authority, dependability, loyalty, trust, and integrity and has traditionally been worn by people in positions of power, influence, or prestige. Graduates from the Faculty of Finance and Accounting will have the knowledge, power, and seriousness coupled with the ethical and stability traits required by the discipline.

3.11.9 Teach-out qualifications: Monash South Africa

- (1) The ceremony will be arranged by the Emeris- Ruimsig campus, and a senior IIE ACE person or Brand National or Campus Senior Academic will confer the MSA qualifications, which are being taught out – the graduands will wear the MSA gowns (as these are MSA qualifications), but the office bearers will wear The IIE academic regalia.

4. Programme Requirements

- (1) The Brand National Offices are responsible for the preparation of graduation programmes. Each brand may elect to produce a separate programme for each ceremony or a consolidated programme for all ceremonies held on a given day.
- (2) The names of all graduates on the signed-off list are needed, as a graduation list is a required record.

- (3) The programme should follow the prescribed structure below, with compulsory and optional items indicated. All placeholders must be completed by inserting the relevant Names or details:

Compulsory	The Academic Procession enters the hall. The Congregation is requested to remain standing until all members of the Academic Procession are seated on stage.
Compulsory	The Master of Ceremonies, [insert name] , opens the ceremony and facilitates the proceedings.
Optional	Choir or appropriate rendition
Compulsory	Introduction of the keynote speaker [insert name]
Compulsory	Conferral of Qualifications [insert conferring official's name] Qualifications are conferred on all graduands who are present here today, as well as those receiving their qualifications in absentia.
Compulsory	Conferral of qualifications by faculty and programme, listed in order of progression (with higher-level qualifications presented last). For example: FACULTY OF COMMERCE FACULTY OF EDUCATION FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (name of faculty (only those that are relevant), then the name of qualifications (this is to happen by faculty and by qualification - the more advanced qualifications are done last), and then the names of people who are being awarded); e.g.: Full Qualifications Higher Certificate in Photography • Kevin Peter Anderson Diploma in Journalism • Moonin Karla** Diploma in Public Relations*** • Kaidoo Namini • Zevji Dara FACULTY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY FACULTY OF LAW FACULTY OF ENGINEERING, SCIENCE AND HEALTH
Optional	Presentation of Top Academic Awards [insert name]
Optional	SRC Speaker
Optional	Skills-based qualifications: conferral and certification
Optional	Presentation of Top Awards for skills-based programmes
Optional	SRC Speaker
Compulsory	Closing of Ceremony [insert name]
Optional	Singing of the National Anthem (if this is done, then the words need to be included in your programme)

*Denotes student graduates with distinction (Student achieved an overall qualification mark of 75%)

** Denotes Master's by research student graduates with Merit >65%

*** Denotes qualification currently being phased out

5. Collection of Uncollected Certificates

- (1) Certificates that are not issued and for which no acknowledgement has been recorded in the collection register at the graduation ceremony must be securely retained at the relevant campus for a period of one (1) calendar year following the ceremony. Thereafter, any uncollected certificates must be returned to the Brand National – Registrar's Office.
- (2) During this one-year period, graduates who did not attend the ceremony may collect their certificates in person and must sign the collection register upon receipt.
- (3) **Please Note:** Certificates may not be issued to students who have outstanding financial obligations or incomplete documentation.
- (4) Graduates collecting their certificates must present valid identification, which may include, but is not limited to, a national identity document, passport, student card with photograph, or driver's licence.
- (5) Where a graduate authorises a third party to collect a certificate on their behalf, the authorised individual must present a signed letter of authorisation (see Annexure A), together with certified copies of both the graduate's identification (ID, passport, student card, or driver's licence) and their own identification. All such documentation must be retained for audit purposes.
- (6) Certificates may not be released to a third party where the student has outstanding financial obligations or incomplete documentation.
- (7) The individual collecting the certificate must sign and date the collection register at the time of collection.
- (8) Where a student with outstanding obligations attended the graduation ceremony, signed the collection register, and received a letter of such outstanding items, they must sign the register again upon collection of the certificate. This subsequent signature must appear next to the original entry.
- (9) Where a graduate authorises a courier company to collect a certificate, such authorisation must be provided in writing.
- (10) A campus may dispatch a certificate via registered mail or courier upon receipt of a written request from the graduate. All associated costs shall be borne by the graduate.
- (11) All entries in the collection register must be clearly dated. Any undated signature will be deemed to indicate that the certificate was collected on the day of the graduation ceremony.

Annexure A

LETTER OF AUTHORITY

This is to certify that I, _____

(Graduate's full name and surname)

with ID/Passport Number _____

hereby authorise _____

(Full name of 3rd party),

with ID/Passport number _____

whose signature is verified below, to collect my Graduation Certificate from

(Name of Campus)

on my behalf.

Signed at _____ (Place) on this ____ day of

_____ (Month) 20__(Year)

Name of Graduate

Name of Representative

Signature of Graduate

Signature of Representative

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Graduation Certificate Issued by:

Name of Staff Member

Signature of Staff Member

Date: _____