



Graduation Guide

19 September 2025

Wolfbrook Arena

Te Rā Whakawhiwhi Tohu | Spring Graduation Guide



These details are subject to change. Please visit www.ara.ac.nz/graduation for the most up-to-date information.

DATE AND TIME

Friday 19 September 2025, 2pm.

VENUE

Wolfbrook Arena (formerly Horncastle or Christchurch Arena),
55 Jack Hinton Drive, Addington, Christchurch

There is free carparking on site and bus stops nearby. For more information, including details on accessibility, parking, and directions, check out their [website](#).

GRADUATION ARRIVAL AND PROCESSION

Graduates must arrive by 1pm.

Doors will open at 1pm and guests must be seated 20 minutes prior to the ceremony start time.

GRADUATION STUDENT ASSEMBLY

Graduates are to assemble at the Christchurch Arena one hour before the ceremony starts. When you arrive, please follow the signs to the graduates assembly area and:

1. Find the row your department is in (A, B, C, D, E or F)
2. Find the name of your qualification.
3. Find your department sign and the sign on the ground that has your qualification name on it and stand behind it.
4. The marshals will then arrange you in alphabetical order, ready to proceed into the hall.
5. You need to stay to ensure you are ready to cross the stage when your name is called.
6. The Head Marshal will brief you on the details of the graduation ceremony. Then at a signal from the Head Marshal you will move in procession into the hall. Follow the directions of the marshals, who will direct you to your seat.

Don't worry, we will have plenty of signage and friendly staff onsite to ensure you know where to go, and end up in the right place.

CROSSING THE STAGE

1. After the welcome and introductions, you will be called to receive your graduation parchment scroll. Marshals will direct you when to leave your seat.
2. File from your seat to the side of the stage and wait for your name to be checked.
3. When directed by the marshal, proceed across the stage.
4. You will shake hands with two people as you cross the stage.
5. If you are receiving a Bachelor's Degree, you will be ceremonially capped; you may then place your trencher on your head.
6. Move across to the second person on stage who will hand you a parchment scroll and shake hands with you.
7. Once you have received your parchment scroll, leave the stage down the central steps and return to your seat.

Watch our [How to Graduate Guide](#) for a better understanding of what to expect on the day.

TICKETING / GUEST SEATING

All graduates are entitled to up to four tickets free of charge for friends and whānau - you request these when you register for graduation.

Graduation guest tickets will be emailed to you around two weeks before graduation - by 8 September. This email will come from Humanitix (not Ara). Tickets are general admission only.

If you would like to request extra tickets, you can also do this when you register for graduation. We try our best to accommodate these requests, but unfortunately this is not always possible as there is limited availability. Extra tickets will not be confirmed until 15 August, after registration closes (this is so we can ensure all graduates receive their guaranteed tickets).

PHOTOGRAPHY & LIVESTREAMING

If any of your friends or family are unable to attend your graduation in person, they can watch online as our graduation ceremonies are streamed live on the Ara website on the day.

Ara's graduation ceremonies are filmed for livestreaming, and photographed. Footage and photos will be available publicly on our digital media, and may also be used in Ara publications and promotional materials (digital and print). If you have any questions regarding graduation photography, please email graduation@ara.ac.nz.

ACCESSIBILITY

If you or any of your guests have special mobility or access needs, please let us know by contacting us at graduation@ara.ac.nz.

If you or any of your guests communicate by NZ Sign Language, we will have an interpreter at the ceremony.

TIPS FOR ON THE DAY

1. Regalia - ensure you arrive at the venue already dressed and in your regalia.
2. Graduation ceremonies are lengthy so please make sure you're well hydrated and have eaten beforehand. If you feel unwell either before or during the ceremony, just let a staff member know and we can help.
3. Please leave personal items (e.g. handbags, mobile phones, flowers, etc) with your guests during the course of the procession and graduation ceremony.
4. Linton Photography are the official photographers for graduation. Studios will be set up at the venue so you can have portraits taken with family or friends. A limited number of session times are available to book, and sessions are also available on a first come, first served basis before and after your ceremony. Photographs will also be taken of every graduate as they are presented with their award on stage. To find out more or book a session time please phone 03 339 6699 or visit www.lintonphoto.com/graduation.

REGALIA

As part of the formal graduation ceremony, you are required to wear official Ara regalia. If you are not wearing regalia, you will not be able to cross the stage.

GWC Regalia Hire own and maintain the regalia for Ara ceremonies and graduates are responsible for ordering their own regalia directly through them. Please [use this link](#) to access the GWC Regalia Hire application form for this graduation ceremony. Please DO NOT use the GWC Casual Hire form.

You must order your regalia by Thursday 11 September. Any orders placed from Friday 12 September will be charged a late fee of \$30.

You will receive a confirmation email after your regalia order is placed – if you do not receive this, please check directly with GWC Regalia to ensure that your order has been processed.

Some graduates also add traditional elements such as korowai or ta'ōvala. These may be worn over your academic gown. If you are wearing one of these elements, please request a lighter-weight gown when ordering your regalia.

REGALIA ITEM HIRE COSTS

The hire cost of your regalia will depend on the qualification you are receiving:

Regalia	Cost
Ara scarf (certificate or diploma)	\$15
Gown	\$40
Ara hood	\$20
Trencher Hat	\$20

If you are receiving	Do you have a previous degree?	You will need
Certificate	No previous degree	Gown, Ara certificate scarf
	Yes – NZ or overseas degree	Gown, trencher, Ara certificate scarf
Diploma	No previous degree	Gown, Ara diploma scarf
	Yes – NZ or overseas degree	Gown, trencher, Ara diploma scarf
Graduate Diploma or Graduate Certificate	No previous degree	Gown, trencher, Ara diploma/certificate scarf
	Yes – NZ or overseas degree	Gown, trencher, Ara diploma/certificate scarf
Degree	No previous degree	Gown, trencher, Ara hood
	Yes – wear new Ara hood	Gown, trencher, Ara hood
Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma	Yes - wear new Ara hood	Gown, trencher, Ara postgraduate hood
Masters	Yes - wear new Ara hood	Gown, trencher, Ara Masters hood

COLLECTING AND RETURNING REGALIA

You collect your regalia from GWC's premises on the UC Dovedale Campus, Wairarapa Building, Block ED15, Ilam. Parking is in Car Park 1, off Parkstone Ave or Solway Ave.

During graduation season, GWC's hours are extended, and you can collect your regalia anytime between 9am – 7pm on Thursday 18 September. Regalia can be collected on the morning of Friday 19 September, but you must be at the graduation venue by 1pm, so please allow ample time for this.

If you are unable to collect your regalia, a family member or friend can collect it on your behalf. However, you **MUST** give your nominated collection person your correct height measurement - and if you are eligible to wear a trencher - your head circumference (measured just above the ears).

Regalia must be returned, in good order, on Friday 19 September (the same day as graduation) by 7pm. Regalia cannot be returned at the venue and must be returned to GWC's premises on the UC Dovedale Campus (same location as collection).

A \$50 security hold will be applied to the card used to purchase the regalia hire with GWC. If you cannot provide this amount at check-in, you will not be able to collect your regalia. This security hold cannot be paid in cash. The security hold will show as a pending transaction and will automatically 'drop off' after 7 days, once it's been confirmed that the regalia was returned undamaged within the above timeframe.

After 19 September, the GWC Regalia Hire opening hours go back to standard hours which are Tuesdays and Thursdays 9.30am – 2.30pm.

Penalties for non-return of regalia

A family member or friend can return regalia on your behalf. Please be aware if regalia is not returned, or is damaged, you will be charged at replacement cost which is:

Gown	\$650
Hood	\$180
Trencher Hat	\$225
Scarf	\$100

REGALIA REFUND POLICY

If you notify Ara that you are withdrawing from your Graduation ceremony by Thursday 18 September, you will receive a full refund of your regalia hire costs minus a \$10 administration fee. However, in the event you do not collect your regalia and do not let us know in advance, there are no refunds.

If you are prevented from attending graduation at the last minute due to illness or travel disruption, you can hire your regalia for photos or a private ceremony at another time.

To advise your withdrawal from a graduation ceremony, please complete our [Graduation Cancellation Form](#).

REGALIA ITEMS

Gown

A black, Cambridge-style gown is worn under the Ara graduation scarf or hood. The sleeves on the Cambridge gown have two openings:

- graduates for a certificate, diploma or degree that have no previous degree use the lower opening
- any graduate with a previous degree, new degree, graduate certificate, graduate diploma, postgraduate or Masters use the higher opening

Diploma and certificate scarf

A diploma scarf (dark teal) is worn by graduates receiving diplomas or graduate diplomas and a certificate scarf (light teal) is worn by graduates receiving certificates or graduate certificates.

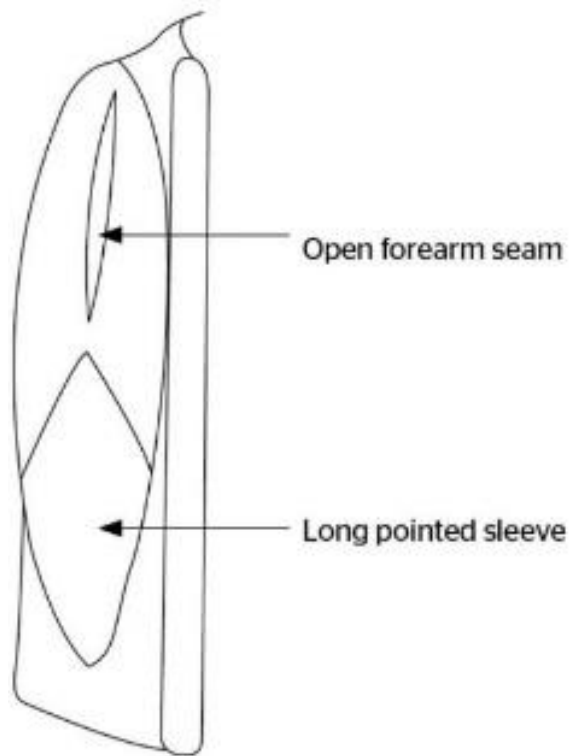
Degree hood

The degree hood incorporates an Ara diploma scarf. The hood is worn with the scarf sitting on the shoulders and the hood hanging down the wearer's back.

Hood lining colours

Each degree hood lining is a different colour denoting the degree being conferred.

GOWN



TRENCHER



HOOD

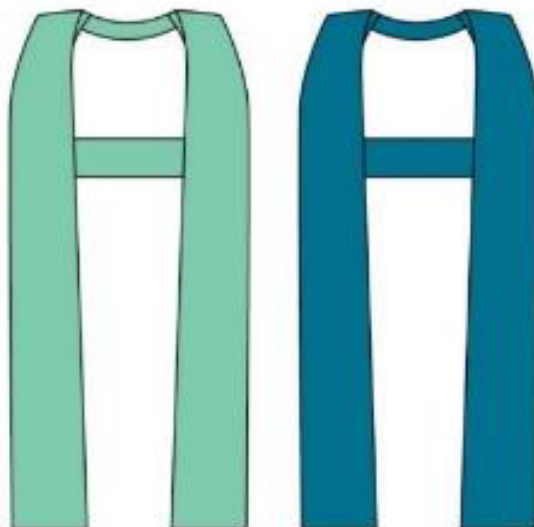


FRONT VIEW

BACK VIEW

DEGREE COLOUR

SCARF



CERTIFICATE
SCARF

DIPLOMA
SCARF

Degree (Bachelor of)	Hood Colour	Department
Applied Management	Sky Blue	Hospitality, Business & Service Industries
Applied Science	Indigo	Applied Sciences and Social Practice
Architectural Studies	Camel	Engineering & Architectural Studies
Broadcasting Communications	Silver Grey	Creative Arts & Digital Information
Construction	Rust	Engineering & Architectural Studies
Design	Yellow	Creative Arts & Digital Information
Engineering Technology	Scarlet	Engineering & Architectural Studies
Information & Communication Technologies	Jade	Hospitality, Business & Service Industries
Language (Japanese)	Pink	Humanities
Language (Māori)	Scarlet & Kowhaiwhai	Humanities
Medical Imaging	Irish Green	Health Practice
Midwifery	Burnished Gold	Health Practice
Musculoskeletal	Cobalt Blue	Applied Sciences and Social Practice
Musical Arts	Old Gold	Creative Arts & Digital Information
Nursing	Purple	Health Practice
Performing Arts	Orange	Creative Arts & Digital Information
Social Work	Red	Applied Sciences and Social Practice
Sustainability & Outdoor Education	Forest Green	Humanities
Tourism and Hospitality Management	Blue Sapphire	Hospitality, Business & Service Industries
Post Graduate Certificates and Diplomas	Gold	All Departments
Masters	Gold with blue stripes	All Departments

Note: If you already have a degree and are now receiving an Ara degree, you are required to wear the Ara regalia. It's not appropriate to wear two hoods.

Spring Graduation – Checklist

Use our graduation ceremony checklist to make sure you're ready for your big day!

- ☐ **Graduation Guide:** Read the Ara Graduation Guide so you are prepared for the day.
- ☐ **Register for graduation:** Ensure you've completed your graduation registration.
- ☐ **Order your regalia:** Don't forget to order your regalia before the deadline.
- ☐ **Check ceremony details:** Make sure you know the date, time and location of your ceremony.
- ☐ **Watch "HOW TO GRADUATE" video:** Watch our video so you know what to expect on the day.
- ☐ **Collect your regalia:** Pick up your regalia from GWC Regalia Hire the day before graduation.
- ☐ **Inform your guests:** Tell your guests the details of the ceremony, including where and when they need to arrive.
- ☐ **Send E-tickets to guests:** Check that you've received your e-tickets, and forwarded these on to your guests.
- ☐ **Check venue information:** Look up parking and accessibility information for the Wolfbrook Arena.
- ☐ **Plan your arrival:** You must arrive one hour before the ceremony. If you're late, you may not be able to take part in the ceremony.
- ☐ **Celebrate!** Enjoy this special day and celebrate your achievement with friends and whānau.

OPTIONAL

- ☐ **Book photography session:** Studios will be set up at the venue so you can have portraits taken with family or friends.
- ☐ **Order a Graduation Bear:** If you want a keepsake, order your graduation bear before or after the ceremony.

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Ara is a Business Division of Te Pūkenga – New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology