

Convocation Photography and Recording Guidelines

Convocation is first and foremost a milestone for our graduates and a meaningful celebration for their families and friends. Photography and recording play an important role in capturing these moments and sharing them more broadly across the university community. Our shared responsibility is to do so in a way that is respectful, unobtrusive and supportive of a smooth, memorable ceremony for everyone involved.

These guidelines outline the shared expectations for Carleton University staff and students who wish to photograph or record Convocation on behalf of a department, unit or the university.

Scope

These guidelines apply to all Carleton University staff and students attending Convocation for the purpose of taking photographs or recordings on behalf of a department, unit or the university, including content intended for social media or internal use.

To help us coordinate access and ensure appropriate credentials, **all individuals covered by these guidelines are asked to [register in advance through the Convocation website](#)**. Registration allows the Convocation team to provide authorization credentials and direct staff and student photographers and videographers to appropriate locations.

These guidelines do not apply to the official university photographer or videographer formally designated for Convocation by the University Registrar nor the official photography company that has been contracted to take official photos of the graduands when they receive their diploma. They also do not apply to members of external media, who are asked to coordinate coverage through the Department of University Communications.

Guidelines

To support a positive Convocation experience for graduates, guests and the university community, the following practices apply when photographing or recording on behalf of a department, unit or the university:

- The event photography consent notice applies to event premises and campus grounds, specifically in and around the Athletics complex and other areas where Convocation events are being held. When photographing posed individuals, ensure that they [sign a Consent to Publish form](#), particularly if they will be named in publication.
- A Convocation photography lanyard must be collected from the information tent in the Fieldhouse, worn visibly at all times while photographing or recording and returned when leaving the event.
- Photography and recording must take place from designated areas only (see floor plan), unless specific permission has been provided in advance by the University Registrar or their delegate.

- Sightlines and freedom of movement must be respected at all times, with priority given to graduates, guests and event staff, including Convocation Ambassadors and Beadles.
- Care must be taken to avoid obstructing or interfering with:
 - the academic procession or recessional
 - the official university photographer or videographer
 - guests and family members taking photographs
 - the live stream, cameras or production equipment
- Backstage, the procession lineup and other restricted areas are reserved for authorized personnel only, unless written authorization has been provided by the University Registrar or their delegate.
- During the formal Convocation ceremony, images or recordings intended for official university use and platforms must align with the [university's regalia guidelines](#).
- Convocation includes an official photography company contracted by the university to take formal photographs of graduands as they receive their diploma. To respect this process and the university's contractual obligations, departmental staff and students should not:
 - take posed headshots of graduands on stage or immediately off stage, or
 - attempt to replicate or substitute the official photographs provided by the contracted photography company.
- The event staff room is reserved for registrarial staff, Convocation Ambassadors, Beadles and other approved event staff. Staff and/or students attending Convocation to take photos or recordings do not have access.
- Directions from ceremony officials and event staff, including Convocation Ambassadors are to be followed at all times to help ensure the ceremony runs smoothly and on schedule.

Acknowledgement

These guidelines are intended to support a positive, meaningful Convocation experience for our graduates, their families and guests, while ensuring the ceremony run smoothly and on schedule.

Individuals who are unable to follow these guidelines may be asked to adjust where or how they are photographing or recording, to pause their activity or, if necessary, to step away from the event.

By participating in Convocation photography or recording, I acknowledge that I have read and will follow these guidelines.

Questions

Questions about these guidelines, advance registration or photography and recording at Convocation can be directed to convocation@carleton.ca. The Convocation team is happy to help clarify expectations in advance to support a smooth and positive event experience.

Best Practices

The following best practices are intended to support a respectful, effective photography and recording approach during Convocation and to help ensure a positive experience for graduates, guests and event staff:

- **Be graduate-centred.** Prioritize moments that celebrate graduates' achievements while remaining mindful that this is their ceremony and their time with guests including family and friends.
- **Stay aware of surroundings.** Regularly check sightlines and foot traffic, especially near aisles, stage access points and seating areas, and reposition as needed to avoid disruption.
- **Capture candid moments thoughtfully.** Candid photographs often best reflect the spirit of Convocation. When doing so, avoid interrupting conversations, family interactions or ceremonial moments.
- **Ensure clear identification at all times.** Wearing the Convocation photography lanyard visibly helps graduates, guests and event staff easily recognize who is photographing or recording on behalf of the university. Being identifiable supports trust, reduces confusion and allows event staff to assist or redirect as needed.
- **Introduce yourself when appropriate.** When photographing or recording near graduates or their families, a brief and courteous introduction (e.g., name and department) can help set expectations, build comfort and reinforce that the role is to document the ceremony respectfully on behalf of the university.
- **Coordinate informally with others on site.** Where multiple photographers or videographers are present, communicate briefly and respectfully to avoid crowding or overlapping coverage.
- **Respect the official photography process.** Allow the contracted photography company to carry out formal diploma-stage photography without interference, ensuring graduates can move smoothly through this process.
- **Follow event cues.** Be attentive to signals from Convocation Ambassadors, Beadles and other event staff, particularly during processional, recessional and stage transitions.
- **Represent the university.** All photography and recording should reflect Carleton University's values of respect, professionalism and care for the student experience.