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## University of Portsmouth Academic Dress

Philip Goff  
phildress@icloud.com

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## University of Portsmouth Academic Dress

By Philip Goff

The University of Portsmouth has its origins in the Portsmouth and Gosport School of Science and Art (1870), the Portsmouth Municipal Technical Institute (1894) and Portsmouth Municipal College (1908), which replaced the earlier Institute. The College also took under its wing the College of Art, Portsmouth Day Training College for teachers and a public library. The original college building continues in use by the University of Portsmouth and is now known as the Park Building.<sup>1</sup>

After the Second World War, other areas of study, such as arts and humanities, were added and in 1953 the institution changed its name to Portsmouth College of Technology. Gaining polytechnic status in 1969, by the late 1980s it was one of the largest polytechnics in the UK. In 1992, the institution gained University status under the Further and Higher Education Act and the inauguration of the University of Portsmouth took place on 7 July 1992.

The Further and Higher Education Act of 1992 resulted in thirty-three former polytechnics<sup>2</sup> in England,<sup>3</sup> three in Scotland,<sup>4</sup> one in Wales,<sup>5</sup> and the Derbyshire College of Higher Education<sup>6</sup> all receiving charters granting them university status. Several others were created in the following years.

Naturally, there was a huge amount of work involved in the preparations to launch these new places of teaching, learning and research, but at some point in that process, inevitably, the issue of an opening ceremony or official launch came into focus and this brought with it the question of academical costume.<sup>7</sup> Some of the new institutions approached this from the perspective of, ‘what should our graduands<sup>8</sup> and senior members of staff wear at graduation ceremonies?’ For others it was from a firm intention to devise a system of academical and official dress from the outset.

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1 James Thomas, *To Meet All Competition: Park Building and the Provision of Education in Portsmouth 1908–1997*, *Studies in the History of the University of Portsmouth* (Portsmouth: University of Portsmouth, 1998).

2 Or, in Scotland, ‘central institution’.

3 Anglia Ruskin, Birmingham City, Brighton, Bournemouth, Central Lancashire, City, Coventry, De Montfort, East London, Greenwich, Hertfordshire, Huddersfield, Kingston, Leeds Beckett, Lincoln (formerly Humberside), Liverpool John Moores, London Metropolitan (replacing North London and Guildhall), Manchester Metropolitan, Middlesex, Northumbria, Nottingham Trent, Oxford Brookes, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Sheffield Hallam, South Bank, Staffordshire, Sunderland, Teesside, West of England, West London, Westminster, Wolverhampton.

4 Napier, Paisley, Robert Gordon.

5 Glamorgan (now South Wales).

6 Derby.

7 Interestingly, not one British university has yet decided to abandon such costume.

8 The University of Portsmouth confers its degrees at the ceremonies.

## A race against time

The thirty-eight new universities were all chartered on the same day and, consequently, they began to think about such costumes at much the same time. Along with the obvious rewards, this brought challenges and huge financial implications for the limited number of robemaking companies then in business. Indeed, it was something of a struggle to satisfy the demands of so many institutions looking for new designs: to meet with university officials, draw up the designs,<sup>9</sup> source fabrics, make samples and then, once approved, manufacture large numbers of gowns, hoods and hats in order to provide, store, clean and repair robes for hire at ceremonies. This rather precipitated growth for companies such as Ede & Ravenscroft and J. Wippell & Co., and required large investments of cash in order to meet the need, to say nothing of the necessity of expanding workrooms, storage facilities, transport, and staff to service the demand.

In some of the new universities there were members of staff (usually graduates of the older universities) who had knowledge about and interest in academic dress, and a few had some real expertise.<sup>10</sup> Others (the majority) relied on the guidance of established robemakers.<sup>11</sup> Understandably, the robemakers were keen to maximise use of their existing stocks of textiles, so the seasoned eye is able to spot favourite or abundant silks used in different combinations in various schemes or complicated embossed silks which would be difficult for a competitor to reproduce. The University of Portsmouth, however, handed the task to a member of its own staff.

## A man of the cloth

In the spring of 2021, I learned that after a year of cancelled graduation ceremonies, because of the pandemic, the University of Portsmouth was to hold two years' worth of ceremonies, in July: almost fifty ceremonies in all, over nearly three weeks; and that more than 9,000 graduands would take part. I was fortunate to have some time to observe the ceremonies and was hopeful of discovering something of the origins of the University's academic costume.

The Vice Chancellor<sup>12</sup> and Academic Registrar<sup>13</sup> were able to tell me that, in 1992, the University had approached The Revd Adrian Dorber, who was then the University Chaplain,<sup>14</sup> and had asked him to devise its academic dress. I wrote him an email on 13 July 2021, whilst I was present at the ceremonies, to ask him what he remembered about those days and he replied the next day:

Thanks for being in touch. I hope you are enjoying yourself in Portsmouth. Yes, indeed, I was charged with the design of the University's academic dress and negotiating with Wippell's for its manufacture. It was an interesting project to take on. As University

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9 These were, largely, drawn by hand or by colouring-in photocopied outlines of gowns and hoods with felt-tipped pens but in the case of the University of Portsmouth, as we shall see, J. Wippell & Co., Ltd, provided some rather handsome illustrations together with fabric samples.

10 Such as Dr David Avery of the University of Westminster, formerly the Polytechnic of Central London and Dr Bruce Christianson of the University of Hertfordshire, formerly the Hatfield Polytechnic.

11 Such as Ede & Ravenscroft; J. Wippell; and William Northam & Co.

12 Professor Graham Galbraith, MSc, PhD.

13 Stephen Wiggins, BTh, MBA.

14 Now The Very Revd Adrian Dorber, Dean of Lichfield.

chaplain and someone with experience of choreographing large ceremonies and occasions, I had the task of devising the inauguration ceremonies for the granting of the title of University in 1992. Part of that role was to devise a distinctive code of academic dress for the new University. The University itself should have all the regulations about the dress for each of its awards. If not Wippell's certainly do.

The spark of hope, in Dean Dorber's email, that I might find some evidence of his work on the academic dress proposals at the University itself, led me back to the Registrar, but he had no idea where such information might be found, nor, unusually, does the University of Portsmouth publish any official regulations on its dress. I therefore wrote to the Dean again:

I've been chatting with the Registrar, here at Portsmouth, about the dress scheme. The University doesn't appear to have any formal list of its academic dress, so I am hoping to redress the situation (so to speak). Have you kept any original papers, drawings and swatches of your scheme?

To which he replied:

... Sorry I didn't keep any of the swatches and designs. I passed them all on to the Registry. They may be lurking in the archives? However, I plotted the whole scheme with Robin Richardson<sup>15</sup> and he might be able to dig something out from Wippell's. We used materials that they tended to use for ecclesiastical and academic dress and they had a huge range of fabrics and braids. I remember we borrowed the cherry and pink colours from Cambridge academic dress and the lavender is in fact Palatinate purple from Durham (used on their B.Sc. hoods and Ph.D robes). The 'undress' attire for doctors is the master's gown. But it isn't the kind of institution to get fussed about that. Well it didn't used to be ... .

A stroke of luck.

Following up the lead given in Fr Dorber's emails, I visited the University library and explained to the Associate Archivist, Kath Shakespeare, that I was seeking the original drawings and swatches for the Portsmouth scheme of dress. Ms Shakespeare took this up with the archivist, Anna Delaney, when she came back on duty and, endorsed by an email from the Registrar, they began a hunt for the information. A day or so later I received the following email from the Archivist, part of which reads:

The good news is that we have the following items in the University Archive:

UP/15/3.4.1 Portfolio of designs and fabric samples of specifications for academic dress and correspondence with J. Wippell and Company Limited 16 November 1992-5 April 1993.

UP/15/3.4.2 Correspondence from J. Wippell and Company with specifications for academic dress (1 document).

Best wishes,  
Anna Delaney  
Archivist  
University of Portsmouth.

Later that same week I was able to view the documents, samples, and drawings, and the University Archivist very kindly made copies for me to read at leisure. Among the documents was a thoughtful note from the Chaplain to the Vice-Chancellor about the preser-

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<sup>15</sup> Managing Director of J. Wippell.



Fig. 1. Note from the Chaplain to the Vice-Chancellor

vation of the original papers. This, sadly, is not a practice that has been followed at every university in the UK, resulting in much lost information and frustration for those with an interest in chronicling the history of academical and official dress (see Fig. 1).

### Elegant and distinctive

Fr Dorber’s proposal for the University of Portsmouth, designed in collaboration with Robin Richardson of J. Wippell, is rather traditional and attractive and in his emails to me he commented on it as follows:

I worked with Robin Richardson in choosing fabrics. He was one of their directors at the time. The University had devised a new corporate identity with purple featuring as the distinctive colour. We carried this into the design of the whole set of costumes.

We decided on a fairly conventional dress code with the same kind of Bachelor and Masters gowns found in most other English Universities. I didn’t want to go for an expensive contemporary take on the dress as it would have been difficult to make and supply in bulk and could have dated quickly and looked slightly bizarre as time went by.

The Higher Doctorates e.g., D.Univ., D.Sc., D.Litt. are all in purple cloth; the gowns modelled on Cambridge higher doctorates with pointed, surplice style sleeves lined in appropriate colours with matching silk facings; black Tudor bonnet hats with purple cords and hoods in purple cloth and lined in the appropriate silk edged in silver braid.

Glad you think our scheme has a certain something. I was asked to produce something elegant and distinctive. We had the chance to let the dress speak of the aspirations of a fledgling University. I hope it doesn’t look over-stated.

At a first glance, the scheme is certainly distinctive, as its designer intended, and it looks simple and logical, but a couple of anomalies and several later additions make the system less straightforward. One of the most obvious distinctive features of the Portsmouth scheme, as we shall see, is the use of silver/purple and gold/purple braid, used more often on ecclesiastical vestments, in some of the gowns, robes and hoods.<sup>16</sup> Most universities give prominence to robes for certain degrees, usually in medicine or music but a feature of the University of Portsmouth dress is the attention given to the robes for degrees in architecture.

### Gowns and robes<sup>17</sup>

According to the original designs specifications the gowns were the open, pointed, Oxford BA style [b8],<sup>18</sup> of black stuff, for holders of certificates and diplomas and for bachelors;

<sup>16</sup> The scheme was, after all, designed by a clergyman in collaboration with a company which specializes in clerical and ecclesiastical vestments.

<sup>17</sup> Although often used interchangeably, ‘robe’ is often used to describe the full-dress academic garment worn by doctors, and ‘gown’ the black (or another colour) undress garment. Nevertheless, they would seem to share a common origin.

<sup>18</sup> Throughout this article I will describe the shapes of the robes using the excellent and al-

the CNAA glove or boot sleeve gown, with squared-off ends [m10], of black stuff, for masters; the doctoral robes were the Cambridge MA style [m2], of scarlet stuff with purple silk facings and sleeve facings, for the PhD;<sup>19</sup> and for the higher doctors the robes were of the Cambridge doctors' style [d1], of purple cloth with facings and sleeve linings of silk of the faculty colour, and with a cord and button of faculty colour on each sleeve, except for the Doctor of the University (DUniv) robe which had grey shot silk facings and sleeve linings, but silver cords and buttons. Additionally, the facings of the doctoral robes were to be edged, both sides, with silver Benet braid.

Exceptions to this system were the black gown for the Master of Law (LLM), which was of the legal, QC style [d4] with a flap collar and inverted-T cut at the armholes; the gown for the Bachelor of Architecture (BArch)<sup>20</sup> which was the same as for the Master of Arts (MA) [m10]; the Master of Architecture (MArch), which had a narrow strip of silver St Benet braid on the facings; the Master of Philosophy (MPhil), and Master of Surgery (ChM), which had the silver St Benet braid on both sides of the front facings and around the armholes; the robes for the Doctor of Music (DMus) which, following the use of Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, Dublin, and Hull, were of cream 'damask'<sup>21</sup> (see Fig. 9), with facings and sleeve linings of University purple silk and with a purple cord and button on each sleeve and the facings edged with gold and purple St Benet braid; the Doctor of Divinity (DD), which had facings and sleeve linings of red purple 'damask' and the facings edged with silver St Benet braid (see Fig. 10); and the Doctor of the University (DUniv), which was similar to that of the other higher doctors but had its own special silk colour of grey shot with white.

It is worth noting that, in the original scheme of dress for Portsmouth, an undress gown for doctors was envisaged<sup>22</sup> viz. the black [m10] masters' gown (See Fr Dorber's comment, above).

## Hoods

In the original proposals all hoods were of the Cambridge full shape [f1].<sup>23</sup> Two Burgon shaped hoods [s2]<sup>24</sup> for the Advanced Certificate in Higher Education (AdCertHE) and the

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most universally used Groves Classification System. For the convenience of the reader, in this article they are as follows: Gowns: [b8] Oxford BA; [d1] Cambridge doctors; [d4] Queen's Counsel/Cambridge LLD; [m2] Cambridge MA; [m10] basic masters' shape. Hoods: [a1] CNAA Aberdeen shape; [f1] Cambridge full shape; [s2] Oxford Burgon simple shape. See <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groves\_classification\_system>.

19 The sleeves are faced in a similar way to those of Victoria Manchester doctorates.

20 Now defunct.

21 The specifications give 'damask' as the material for the robe of the Doctor of Music (DMus), and for the facings and linings for of the Doctor of Divinity (DD) robes, but the Wippell samples, preserved in the University archive, shows that cream rayon brocade, in the St Aidan pattern was used. See the final section for more on brocades and damasks.

22 Along with their often brightly coloured full-dress robes doctors have traditionally had an undress gown, usually black, often the corresponding master's gown, and sometimes decorated with various features. Now that opportunities for wearing academic dress on relatively informal occasions are fewer, this form of dress is disappearing and often is not prescribed at all when an academic dress scheme is drawn up.

23 The drawings of the [f1] hoods provided by J. Wippell, seen in Figs 2–7, appear to have truncated liripipes but I have seen no evidence that they were, in fact, made like that.

24 The casual reader might appreciate the fact that this style of simple shape hood is named after the nineteenth-century academic and Vicar of the University Church, Oxford: John William Burgon, subsequently Dean of Chichester Cathedral.



Fig. 2. BA dress.



Fig. 3. MSc dress.



Fig. 4. MBA dress.

Advanced Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE) were added soon after.

A system of faculty colours was employed along with a University colour, in Portsmouth's case, blue-purple (violet) silk.

Bachelors' hoods were black stuff, lined and bound 1" around the outside of the cape with University purple, and bordered around the outside of the cape with 1" faculty colour ribbon, or a discrete ribbon for non-degree awards, which was laid next to the purple binding (see Fig. 2).

Masters' hoods were of University purple artificial silk, lined and bound 1" around the outside of the cape with the silk of the faculty colour. (See Figs 3, 4.)

The PhD hood was of scarlet stuff, lined and bound 1" around the outside of the cape with University purple silk, and bordered around the outside of the cape with 1" silver St Benet braid (see Fig. 6); and higher doctors' hoods were of purple corded artificial silk, lined and bound 1" around the outside of the cape with the faculty colour, and bordered around the outside of the cape with 1" silver St Benet braid (see Fig. 7).

As with the gowns and robes there are some exceptions to this system: the hood for the Bachelor of Architecture (BArch) was of black corded artificial silk, lined and bound with lavender silk and bordered around the outside of the cape with 1" silver Benet braid; the Master of Music (MMus) hood was lined and bound around the outside of the cape 1" with cream 'damask'; the Master of Philosophy (MPhil) hood was lined and bound 1" around the cape with dove grey taffeta (see Fig. 5); the Doctor of Divinity (DD)<sup>25</sup> hood was lined and bound 1" around the cape with red purple 'damask' and bordered around the outside of the cape with 1" silver Benet braid; the Doctor of Music (DMus) hood was of cream 'damask', lined and bound 1" around the cape with University purple silk and bordered around the cape with 1" purple/gold Benet braid; and the Doctor of the University (DUniv) hood was lined and bound 1" around the cape with grey shot white silk and faced around the outside of the cape with 1" silver Benet braid.

In addition, hoods for the Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert), Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), and Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) were provided for. They

<sup>25</sup> It seems rather curious that the University of Portsmouth should award the DD degree when there is no faculty of theology or department of religious studies, but it is, of course, empowered to do so and, at Portsmouth, the degree, as with all their higher doctorates, is only ever awarded *honoris causa*, and rarely.



Fig. 5. MPhil dress.



Fig. 6. PhD dress.



Fig. 7. DSc dress.

are like the hoods for bachelors, with 1" ribbons around the outside of the cape, of grey, mid-cherry and silver St Benet braid respectively, set next to the purple bindings although, except in the case of the PGCE, these are not really faculty colours. (See Fig. 8 for a chart of faculty colour ribbons that accompanied the original proposals for the scheme.)

### Hats

The cap is the traditional square for bachelors and masters [h1] but with a blue-purple button and tassel<sup>26</sup> a black cloth Tudor bonnet [h2] with University blue-purple cord and tassel for the PhD and a black velvet Tudor bonnet with University purple cord and tassel for higher doctors and Doctors of the University (DUniv).

### The colours

The faculty silks colours were chosen with some nods to existing well-known English universities, as Fr Dorber recalls in an email:

Each faculty had a distinctive colour: red for Science, white for Arts and Humanities, maroon for Engineering, gold for Business and Finance, lavender for Architecture. This is reflected in all the hoods. The hoods are all designed to have rectangular cowls.<sup>27</sup> We didn't go for the Burgon shape. The palette rather suggested itself by the dominant purple colour. I looked around my garden and saw nature had provided a really good template: fuchsias!

I remember we borrowed the cherry and pink colours from Cambridge academic dress and the lavender is in fact Palatinate purple from Durham.<sup>28</sup>



Fig. 8. Faculty and Certificate colours.

<sup>26</sup> At the very beginning a black button and tassel had been proposed.

<sup>27</sup> He means cape, not cowl.

<sup>28</sup> Durham Palatinate purple appears in different shades depending on the robemaker: some with a pinkish hue whilst others are more towards blue on the spectrum. The Wippell lavender taffeta sample (sometimes described as lilac) is decidedly on the blue end of the scale.





**Fig. 9. Doctor of Music (DMus) St Aidan brocade.**



**Fig. 10. Doctor of Divinity (DD) St Aidan brocade.**

And:

Scarlet for Science came from the symbolism of life and existence in contrast to the reflective and noetic processes of the Arts and Humanities symbolised by pure white.

The faculty silks are:

<b>Architecture</b>	<b>Lavender</b>
<b>Arts</b>	<b>White</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>Mid-Cherry</b>
<b>Engineering</b>	<b>Maroon</b>
<b>Law</b>	<b>Light Cherry</b>
<b>Medicine</b>	<b>Deep Red</b>
<b>Music</b>	<b>Cream</b>
<b>Nursing</b>	<b>Blue</b>
<b>Science</b>	<b>Scarlet</b>
<b>Science (Econ)</b>	<b>Old Gold</b>

Along with the papers in the University archive, outlining the proposals for academic dress, were some drawings and fabric samples, provided by J. Wippell. They give a good idea of the early Portsmouth scheme. (See Figs 1–7.)<sup>29</sup>

### The Original Scheme

By November 1992 Fr Dorber had concluded most of his discussions with J. Wippell, and on 16 November Robin Richardson, the Director, wrote to him and included with his letter a full written specification for all the proposed robes, including the official dress for the senior officers and the University mace bearer. (See section on official robes.) Also noted in the letter was the fact that, along with graduands of the University of Portsmouth, those with awards from the following institutions would be presented at ceremonies: The Insti-

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<sup>29</sup> It is interesting to note that in the early drawing, supplied by Wippell, the PhD robe had not yet acquired the blue purple silk sleeve facings, below the armholes, although they are mentioned in the accompanying text. Moreover, although the drawing and specification indicates that the PhD robe sleeve is to be made in the Cambridge MA [m2] shape it seems, in fact, to have been made in the Oxford MA [m1] shape.

tute of Personnel Management;<sup>30</sup> The Royal Society of Chemistry; and the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC).

Other details of interest include the information that the neckbands of all the Cambridge shape [f1] hoods were to be lined and bound over on the top and bottom edges for  $\frac{3}{8}$ " with the faculty colour silk; and that the hood for bachelors 'is a full shape but cut slightly smaller in size to the generously cut ones used by doctors and masters'.

The specifications for academic dress were as follows:<sup>31</sup>

**Certificate in Education and Certificate in Higher Education (CertEd and CertHE)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Advanced Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.

Hood: Black Burgon shape [s2] polyester worsted, lined and bound  $\frac{3}{8}$ " with blue purple taffeta.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Advanced Certificate in Higher Education (AdCertHE)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.

Hood: Black Burgon shape [s2] worsted polyester, lined and bound  $\frac{3}{8}$ " with white taffeta.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.

Hood: Black [f1] polyester worsted, lined and bound around the cape 1" with blue purple taffeta and with a 1" grey ribbon around the outside of the cape.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.

Hood: Black [f1] polyester worsted, lined and bound around the cape 1" with blue purple taffeta and with a 1" mid-cherry ribbon around the outside of the cape.

**Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.

Hood: Black [f1] polyester worsted lined and bound around the cape 1" with blue purple taffeta and with 1" of silver Benet braid around the outside of the cape.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Bachelor of Arts (BA)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.

Hood: Black [f1] polyester worsted lined and bound around the cape 1" with blue purple taffeta and with a 1" white ribbon around the outside of the cape.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Bachelor of Science (BSc)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.

Hood: Black [f1] polyester worsted lined and bound around the cape 1" with blue purple taffeta and with a 1" scarlet ribbon around the outside of the cape.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

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<sup>30</sup> From 2000, The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

<sup>31</sup> I have omitted the internal fabric reference numbers supplied by J. Wippell, in the original document, have rearranged the sequence in which robes for the various degrees are described, and have attempted to clarify some of the descriptions.

**Bachelor of Science (Economics) (BSc Econ)**

- Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.  
Hood: Black [f1] polyester worsted lined and bound around the cape 1" with blue purple taffeta and with a 1" old gold ribbon around the outside of the cape.  
Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Bachelor of Engineering (BEng)**

- Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.  
Hood: Black [f1] polyester worsted lined and bound around the cape 1" with blue purple taffeta and with a 1" maroon ribbon around the outside of the cape.  
Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Bachelor of Laws (LLB)**

- Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.  
Hood: Black [f1] polyester worsted lined and bound around the cape 1" with blue purple taffeta and with a 1" light cherry ribbon around the outside of the cape.  
Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Bachelor of Nursing (BN)**

- Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.  
Hood: Black [f1] polyester worsted lined and bound around the cape 1" with blue purple taffeta and with a 1" mid-blue ribbon around the outside of the cape.  
Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Bachelor of Music (BMus)**

- Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.  
Hood: Black [f1] polyester worsted lined and bound around the cape 1" with blue purple taffeta and with a 1" cream ribbon around the outside of the cape.  
Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Bachelor of Architecture (BArch)**

- Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, glove sleeves, squared at the ends [m10] and with a straight opening at the armholes.  
Hood: Black [f1] corded artificial silk lined and bound around the cape 1" with lilac taffeta<sup>32</sup> and with 1" of silver Benet braid around the outside of the cape.  
Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Master of Arts (MA)**

- Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, glove sleeves, squared at the ends [m10] and with a straight opening at the armholes.  
Hood: Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk lined and bound around the cape 1" with white taffeta.  
Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Master of Arts (Education) (MAEd)**

- Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, glove sleeves, squared at the ends [m10] and with a straight opening at the armholes.  
Hood: Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk lined and bound around the cape 1" with mid-cherry taffeta.  
Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Master of Science (MSc)**

- Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, glove sleeves, squared at the ends [m10] and with a straight opening at the armholes.  
Hood: Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk lined and bound around the cape 1" with scarlet taffeta.

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<sup>32</sup> Described as 'lilac', but lavender and Palatinate purple elsewhere by the designer.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Master of Engineering (MEng)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, glove sleeves, squared at the ends [m10] and with a straight opening at the armholes.

Hood: Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk lined and bound around the cape 1" with maroon taffeta.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Master of Business Administration (MBA)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, glove sleeves, squared at the ends [m10] and with a straight opening at the armholes.

Hood: Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk lined and bound around the cape 1" with old gold taffeta.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel

**Master of Laws (LLM)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted QC shape [d4] with long, glove sleeves, squared at the ends, a flap collar and an inverted-T opening at the armholes.

Hood: Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk lined and bound around the cape 1" with light cherry taffeta.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Master of Music (MMus)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, glove sleeves, squared at the ends [m10] and with a straight opening at the armholes.

Hood: Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk lined and bound around the cape 1" with cream damask.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Master of Architecture (MArch)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, glove sleeves, squared at the ends [m10], with a straight opening at the armholes and ½" silver Benet braid on the outside edges of the facings.

Hood: Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk lined and bound around the cape 1" with lilac taffeta.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Master of Philosophy (MPhil)**

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, glove sleeves, squared at the ends [m10], with a straight opening at the armholes and ½" silver Benet braid on both edges of the facings and around the armholes.

Hood: Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk lined and bound around the cape 1" with dove grey taffeta.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)**

Robe: Scarlet polyester worsted with long, glove sleeves of the Cambridge MA shape [m2] cut to form a single pointed boot at the bottom, and with facings of University blue purple taffeta edged both sides with ½" silver Benet braid. The sleeve openings are straight at the armhole, edged with ½" silver Benet braid, and the sleeves are faced below the openings with University blue purple taffeta.

Hood: Scarlet polyester worsted [f1] lined and bound around the cape 1" with University purple taffeta and with 1" of silver Benet braid around the outside the cape.

Hat: A black cloth Tudor bonnet with blue purple cord and tassel.

**Doctor of Divinity (DD)**

Robe: Blue purple Russell cord of the Cambridge doctors' style [d1] with long pointed sleeves. The facings and sleeve linings are of red purple damask and the facings edged with ½" silver Benet braid on both sides. The turned back sleeves are held with a red purple cord and button.

Hood: Blue purple Russell cord [f1] lined and bound around the cape 1" with red purple damask and with 1" silver Benet braid around the outside the cape.

Hat: A black velvet Tudor bonnet with blue purple cord and tassel.

**Doctor of Letters (DLitt)**

Robe: Blue purple Russell cord of the Cambridge doctors' style [d1] with long pointed sleeves. The facings and sleeve linings are of white taffeta and the facings edged with ½" silver Benet braid on both sides. The turned back sleeves are held with a white cord and button.

Hood: Blue purple Russell cord [f1] lined and bound around the cape 1" with white taffeta and with 1" silver Benet braid around the outside the cape.

Hat: A black velvet Tudor bonnet with blue purple cord and tassel.

**Doctor of Science (DSc)**

Robe: Blue purple Russell cord of the Cambridge doctors' style [d1] with long pointed sleeves. The facings and sleeve linings are of scarlet taffeta and the facings edged with ½" silver Benet braid on both sides. The turned back sleeves are held with a scarlet cord and button.

Hood: Blue purple Russell cord [f1] lined and bound around the cape 1" with scarlet taffeta and with 1" silver Benet braid around the outside the cape.

Hat: A black velvet Tudor bonnet with blue purple cord and tassel.

**Doctor of Laws (LLD)**

Robe: Blue purple Russell cord of the Cambridge doctors' style [d1] with long pointed sleeves. The facings and sleeve linings are of light cherry taffeta and the facings edged with ½" silver Benet braid on both sides. The turned back sleeves are held with a light cherry cord and button.

Hood: Blue purple Russell cord [f1] lined and bound around the cape 1" with light cherry taffeta and with 1" silver Benet braid around the outside the cape.

Hat: A black velvet Tudor bonnet with blue purple cord and tassel.

**Doctor of Music (DMus)**

Robe: Cream damask of the Cambridge doctors' style [d1] with long pointed sleeves. The facings and sleeve linings are of University blue purple taffeta and the facings edged with ½" purple and gold Benet braid on both sides. The turned back sleeves are held with a blue purple cord and button.

Hood: Cream damask [f1] lined and bound around the cape 1" with University blue purple taffeta and with 1" purple and gold Benet braid around the outside the cape.

Hat: A black velvet Tudor bonnet with blue purple cord and tassel.

**Doctor of the University (DUniv)**

Robe: Blue purple Russell cord of the Cambridge doctors' style [d1] with long pointed sleeves. The facings and sleeve linings are of grey shot white silk and the facings edged with ½" silver Benet braid on both sides. The turned back sleeves are held with a silver cord and button.

Hood: Blue purple Russell cord [f1] lined and bound around the cape 1" with grey shot white silk and with 1" silver Benet braid around the outside the cape.

Hat: A black velvet Tudor bonnet with blue purple cord and tassel.

### Honorary Fellow

Gown: Queen's Counsel style [d4] of blue purple corded artificial silk with long, glove sleeves squared at the ends and with a flap collar and 'wings' at the shoulders. The facings and flap collar are of grey shot white silk. The centre of the collar has the Portsmouth rose and crescent motif embroidered in blue purple thread. The facings are edged in ½" silver Benet braid. The sleeves have an inverted-T opening at the armholes, which are also edged with ½" silver Benet braid as are the shoulder wings. The sleeve ends are decorated with 1" silver Benet braid. There is a slit at the back the gown.

Hat: Black velvet Tudor bonnet with blue purple cord and tassel.

### Honorary Associate

Gown: As for the Honorary Fellow but made from scarlet corded artificial silk and with facings and flap collar of grey shot white silk. The rose and crescent motif is embroidered in dark red silk thread.

Hat: A black velvet stiff mortarboard with scarlet tassel and scarlet grosgrain ribbon around the skull.

### The fine-tuning

The inauguration ceremony of the new University of Portsmouth was held at the Guildhall on 7 July 1992, but over the winter and early spring of 1992/1993 further discussions took place concerning the Portsmouth robes, and on 8 March 1993, Fr Dorber wrote a memo to Roger Moore, the Academic Registrar, part of which reads:

I enclose the schedule from Wippells which represents the agreement I have reached with them about academic dress. It still needs to be fine-tuned as it was formulated on the information Peter Mills gave me last summer.<sup>33</sup> This information although duly minuted in the records of the Academic Council<sup>34</sup> is, I have discovered, not wholly accurate. However, once the University finally determines what degrees and diplomas will be awarded, we shall be in a good position to make sure all categories of award are appropriately robed, as our discussions with Wippells have at least established the main points of the dress code ...<sup>35</sup>

On 5 April 1993, Robin Richardson wrote again to the University Chaplain, and clearly, in the meantime, further discussion had taken place because the letter notes a rethink on one of the taffetas proposed for the scheme, as well as on some of the braid and ribbon used. It also notes a change in title to two of the diplomas offered. Part of the letter reads:

Dear Adrian,

I am enclosing a copy of the new Specifications of Academic Dress for your University.<sup>36</sup> We have amended the Honorary Fellows and Honorary Associates robes to record the grey taffeta that will be used instead of the shot silk. It also changes the specifications on the Doctor of the University where once again grey taffeta will be used for trimming as opposed to shot silk. For the Doctor of Divinity, the Specifications now record that purple and gold Benet braid will be used on the gown and hood, the same as used for the Doctor of Music rather than the original specification which had silver Benet braid. On page 8 you will note that we have added the Bachelor of Education robes and the hood will be edged in a hot pink ribbon. Robe number 30 has had a change in title as

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33 Former Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Portsmouth.

34 A search of the minutes of the Academic Council did not reveal the said information.

35 University archives: AJD/jer.

36 The specification document is dated 'March 1993'.



Figure 11. Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE).



Fig. 12. Doctor of the University (original grey).



Fig. 13. Honorary Fellow (original grey).

previously it was the Advanced Certificate in Higher Education where it is now defined as the University Diploma. Finally, robe number 31 has also been changed in title being now the Diploma in Higher Education as opposed to the Advanced Diploma in Higher Education [see Fig. 11].

### Hot pink<sup>37</sup> and shades of grey

Whether, or not, the Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree had been omitted from the list or was newly introduced, the assigning of the 'hot pink' ribbon to its hood was a break in the logic of the scheme; for the Faculty of Education already had a colour, mid-cherry, assigned to it for the hoods of both the Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) and the Postgraduate Certificate of Education (and the latter had already been assigned what would have been the logical hood for the corresponding bachelor's degree in that subject).

Examining the 'shot silk' that had been prescribed for the robes of Honorary Fellows, Honorary Associates and Doctors of the University, in the original swatches from the University Library Archive, I could see that it is, in fact, composed of a very dark grey, almost black warp and white weft giving, as described, a grey effect.<sup>38</sup> The original drawings from J. Wippell (Figs 12 and 13) show this clearly. However, as well as the grey corded ribbon on the Postgraduate Certificate hood, there are other grey shades used in the Portsmouth scheme. One of them is to be found in the hood for the Master of Philosophy (see Fig. 5) and this is a different, warmer and more attractive grey silk than the black shot white. It is described as dove grey taffeta and, indeed, upon examination has a passing similarity to the much loved and admired turquoise shot rose-pink silk of the Cambridge Doctor of Divinity robes.<sup>39</sup> The warmer grey silk seems to work better with the blue purple robe trimmed with the silver braid. A mark of its appeal (as mentioned in the letter above) is its adoption, in place of the grey shot silk, for the Doctor of the University (DUniv) robes (see Fig. 14)

<sup>37</sup> It being a rather bold description for a robemaker to use, I checked with George Shaw's 1995 work to see if any more information was forthcoming. Clearly, he saw 'hot' as a misprint and renders it 'shot' but the 1993 Specifications for Academic Dress say 'hot'!

<sup>38</sup> The Wippell drawings describe it a 'grey shot white silk'. A similar silk, albeit supplied by a different robemaker, was chosen by the University of London, in 1997, for the hoods of all subsequently instituted bachelors' and postgraduate, taught, masters' degrees, which is rather unimaginative, but that's another story!

<sup>39</sup> By academic dress enthusiasts at any rate and, I dare say, by Cambridge Doctors of Divinity.



**Fig. 14. Doctor of the University (DUniv) robes with dove grey taffeta.**

and the dress for Honorary Fellows and Associates as well as for the Master of Philosophy (MPhil) hood.

Another shade of (dark) grey was adopted for the Master of Public Administration (MPA) hood but we shall come to that later.

### **Additions, subtractions and alterations**

In most if not all universities (at least in the UK) degrees come and degrees go. From the time of the revised Specifications for Academic Dress, written in March 1993, various changes have been made to University of Portsmouth dress. These make little reference, if any, to the unity of the original scheme, which admittedly had its exceptions and incongruities from the start. These changes nearly always concern the hoods, and while some degrees have been given their own discrete hood others have had to share one. Thus, both the grade system and a degree-title specific system now operate within the one scheme. Moreover, other awards have been incorporated by changing the shape of the hood rather than the colours.

**Foundation degrees** At Portsmouth these degrees are awarded in Arts, Science, and Engineering. (FdA, FdSc, FdE). Equivalent to two thirds of an honours bachelor's degree, these were introduced by the UK government in 2003. In the University of Portsmouth all foundation degrees share the same dress:

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.

Hood: Black stuff of the CNAAs shape<sup>40</sup> [a1] lined and bound blue purple silk.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel

**Bachelor of Education (BEd); Master of Arts in Education (MAEd)** The BEd degree, in the UK, has all but disappeared but it is still listed by the University of Portsmouth as an honours degree course beginning in September 2022.<sup>41</sup> The MA(Ed) has been replaced by the MA in Education Studies.

**Bachelor of Architecture (BArch)** This degree, along with its attractive hood, possibly one

<sup>40</sup> Council for National Academic Awards: the former national degree-awarding authority for polytechnics and other non-university institutions, which had its own system of academic dress from 1965 to 1993.

<sup>41</sup> See <[www.port.ac.uk/study/courses/bed-hons-primary-education-with-qualified-teacher-status](http://www.port.ac.uk/study/courses/bed-hons-primary-education-with-qualified-teacher-status)> [retrieved 12 June 2022].



of the most beautiful and dignified in the entire system, is no longer awarded.

**First-Degree Masters** The Master of Engineering (MEng) degree was rebranded as what is sometimes known as an integrated master's degree, or enhanced first degree, but has kept its former dress, which is curious since all the other integrated masters share the same hood.

The degree of Master in Science (MSci) was added along with an increasing number of other first-degree masters' degrees and the following are now added and share its dress: Master of Biology (MBio); Master of Chiropractic (MChiro); Master of Environmental Sciences (MEnvSci); Master of Geology (MGeol); Master of Languages (MLang); Master of Mathematics (MMath); Master of Optometry (MOptom); Master of Pharmacy (MPharm); Master of Physics (MPhys).

The gown and hat for these degrees is as for the MA/MSc etc. [m10] but the hood is as for the MSc but with reduced scarlet.

Hood: Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk bound 1" around the cape, and bordered inside the cowl, with 2" scarlet taffeta.

The MSci (et al.) hood with its border of 2" of science scarlet silk around the inside of the cowl seems a rather poor reward given that bachelors, and the MEng, enjoy a fully lined hood.

**Master of Public Administration (MPA)** The gown and hat for this degree are the same as for the MA/MSc etc., and the hood is:

Hood: Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk, lined and bound around the cape 1" with dark grey taffeta.

**Master of Research (MRes)** This degree has a large research component but is, in fact, a postgraduate taught degree. It often prepares candidates for doctoral research. The gown and hat are the same as for the MA, MSc etc., but if the MSci/integrated masters' hood (above) is a reduced MSc hood, the MRes is a curiously enhanced MSc hood. The MRes and MSc are easily confused. The MRes degree is not particularly related to the faculty of science so there is no obvious reason for the use of the science scarlet taffeta or the extra inch of it around the cape of the hood. (See Figs 15, 16.)

Hood: Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk lined and bound around the cape 2" with scarlet taffeta.

**Master of Surgery (ChM)** This degree shares a gown and hat with the Master of Philosophy (MPhil) but has its own hood.

Hood: Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk, lined and bound around the cape 1" with deep red taffeta.

**Professional Doctorates** Doctor of Biomedical Science (DBMS); Doctor of Business Administration (DBA); Doctor of Chiropractic (DChiro); Doctor of Criminal Justice Studies (DCrimJ); Doctor of Education (EdD); Doctor of Forensic Psychology (DForensPsy); Doctor of Health Science (DHealthSci); Doctor of Health Science Education (DHealthSciEd); Doctor of Medical Imaging (DMedImg); Doctor of Nursing (DN); Doctor of Pharmacy (DPharm); Doctor of Sport and Exercise Psychology (DSEP); Doctor of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences (DSEHS); Doctor of Social Work (DSW); Doctor in Security Risk Management (DSyRM):

These degrees have the same robes as for the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

**Doctor of Medicine (MD)** The robes for the research degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD) are the same as those for the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) except that the MD hood has a different coloured lining.

Fig.15 (near right). Master of Science (MSc) hood.



Fig. 16 (far right). Master of Research (MRes) hood.



Fig. 17. Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE).

Hood: Scarlet polyester worsted [f1] lined and bound around the cape 1" with deep red taffeta and with 1" silver Benet braid around the outside the cape.

**Higher Doctors** As with most UK universities, these days the higher doctors' degrees, Doctor of Letters (DLitt), Doctor of Science (DSc), Doctor of Laws (LLD), are usually only awarded *honoris causa*. In the University of Portsmouth, the Doctor of Music (DMus) and Doctor of Divinity (DD) are only awarded *honoris causa*.<sup>42</sup> The doctoral degree most often awarded *honoris causa* is the Doctor of the University (DUniv).

### The Current Situation<sup>43</sup>

Considering the various changes, the Portsmouth system of academic dress now looks like this:<sup>44</sup>

#### Certificate in Education and Certificate of Higher Education (CertEd, CertHE)

Gown: As for BA.

Hood: No hood.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

#### Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)

Gown: As for BA

Hood: Black Burgon shape [s2] polyester worsted, lined and bound  $\frac{3}{8}$ " blue purple taffeta.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**University Diplomas (UniDip)** As for DipHE, but the hood is lined and bound  $\frac{3}{8}$ " white taffeta.

#### Foundation degrees Arts, Science, and Engineering. (FdA, FdSc, FdE)

Gown: As for BA.

Hood: Black stuff of the CNAAs shape [a1], lined blue purple taffeta.

Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel

#### Bachelor of Arts (BA)

Gown: Black polyester worsted with long, pointed sleeves [b8] as Oxford BA.

Hood: Black [f1] polyester worsted lined and bound around the cape 1" with blue purple taffeta and with a 1" white ribbon around the outside of the cape next to the binding.

<sup>42</sup> Apparently only three Portsmouth DMus degrees (*honoris causa*) have been awarded.

<sup>43</sup> Spring 2022.

<sup>44</sup> I have arranged the degrees to show some order of seniority since this is reflected in the dress. The order used by the University may be found at <polices.docstore.port.ac.uk/policy-110.pdf> [retrieved 10 January 2022].



Fig. 18. Foundation Degrees (FdA, FdSc, FdE).



Fig. 19. Bachelor of Arts (BA).



Fig. 20. Bachelor of Science (BSc).



Hat: Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Bachelor of Education (BEd)** As for BA but with a 1” hot pink ribbon around the outside of the cape of the hood.

**Bachelor of Engineering (BEng)** As for BA but with a 1” maroon ribbon around the outside of the cape of the hood.

**Bachelor of Laws (LLB)** As for BA but with a 1” light cherry ribbon around the outside of the cape of the hood.

**Bachelor of Music (BMus)** As for BA but with a 1” cream ribbon around the outside of the cape of the hood.

**Bachelor of Nursing (BN)** As for BA but with a 1” mid-blue ribbon around the outside of the cape of the hood.

**Bachelor of Science (BSc)** As for BA but with a 1” scarlet ribbon around the outside of the cape of the hood.

**Bachelor of Science (Economics) (BSc Econ)** As for BA but with a 1” old gold ribbon around the outside of the cape of the hood.

**Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)** As for BA but with a 1” grey ribbon around the outside of the cape of the hood.

**Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)** As for BA but with a 1” mid-cherry ribbon around the outside of the cape of the hood.

**Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)** As for BA but with 1” of silver Benet braid around the outside of the cape of the hood.

**First-degree Masters** Master of Biology (MBio); Master of Chiropractic (MChiro); Master of Environmental Sciences (MEnvSci); Master of Geology (MGeol); Master of Languages (MLang); Master of Mathematics (MMath); Master of Optometry (MOptom); Master of Pharmacy (MPharm); Master of Physics (MPhys); Master in Science (MSci).

As for MA, but the hood bound 1” around the cape, and bordered 2” inside the cowl, with scarlet taffeta.

**Master of Engineering (MEng)**<sup>45</sup> As for MA, but the hood lined and bound around the cape 1” with maroon taffeta.

<sup>45</sup> Also, now, an integrated master’s degree but it has kept its former dress.



**Fig. 21.** Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) with Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) and Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) inset.



**Fig. 22.** Integrated Master (MSci, etc.).



**Fig. 23.** Master of Engineering (MEng).



#### **Master of Arts (MA)**

**Gown:** Black polyester worsted with long, glove sleeves, squared at the ends [m10] and with a straight opening at the armholes.

**Hood:** Blue purple [f1] corded artificial silk lined and bound around the cape 1" with white taffeta.

**Hat:** Black square with blue purple button and tassel.

**Master of Business Administration (MBA)** As for MA but the hood lined and bound around the cape 1" with old gold taffeta.

#### **Master of Laws (LLM)**

**Gown:** Black polyester worsted QC shape [d4] with long, glove sleeves, squared at the ends, a flap collar, and an inverted-T opening at the armholes.

**Hood:** As for MA but the hood lined and bound around the cape 1" with light cherry taffeta.

**Master of Music (MMus)** As for MA but the hood lined and bound around the cape 1" with cream damask.

**Master of Public Administration (MPA)** As for MA but the hood lined and bound around the cape 1" with dark grey taffeta.

**Master of Science (MSc)** As for MA but the hood is lined and bound around the cape 1" with scarlet taffeta.

**Master of Research (MRes)** As for MA but the hood lined and bound around the cape 2" with scarlet taffeta.

**Master of Architecture (MArch)** As for MA but with ½" silver Benet braid on the outside edge of the gown facings and the hood lined and bound around the cape 1" with lilac taffeta.

**Master of Philosophy (MPhil)** As for MArch but with ½" silver Benet braid on both edges of the facings and around the armholes and the hood lined and bound around the cape 1" with dove grey taffeta.

**Master of Surgery (ChM)** As for MPhil but the hood lined and bound around the cape 1" with deep red taffeta.



Fig. 24. Master of Arts (MA).



Fig. 25. Master of Science (MSc).



Fig. 26. Master of Architecture (MArch).



**Doctoral degrees** Doctor of Philosophy (PhD); Doctor of Biomedical Science (DBMS); Doctor of Business Administration (DBA); Doctor of Chiropractic (DChiro); Doctor of Criminal Justice Studies (DCrimJ); Doctor of Education (EdD); Doctor of Forensic Psychology (DForensPsy); Doctor of Health Science (DHealthSci); Doctor of Health Science Education (DHealthSciEd); Doctor of Medical Imaging (DMedImg); Doctor of Nursing (DN); Doctor of Pharmacy (DPharm); Doctor of Sport and Exercise Psychology (DSEP); Doctor of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences; Doctor of Social Work (DSW); Doctor in Security Risk Management (DSyRM),

Robe: Scarlet polyester worsted with long, glove sleeves of the Cambridge MA shape [m2] cut to form a single pointed boot at the bottom, and with facings of blue purple taffeta edged both sides with ½” silver Benet braid. The sleeve openings are edged with ½” silver Benet braid, and the sleeves are faced below the openings with University blue purple taffeta.

Hood: Scarlet polyester worsted [f1] lined and bound around the cape 1” with University blue purple taffeta and with 1” silver Benet braid around the outside the cape.

Hat: A black cloth Tudor bonnet with blue purple cord and tassel.

**Doctor of Medicine (MD)** As for PhD but the hood lined and bound around the cape 1” with deep red taffeta and with 1” silver Benet braid around the outside of the cape.

**Doctor of Letters (DLitt)**

Robe: Blue purple Russell cord of the Cambridge doctors’ style [d1] with long pointed sleeves. The facings and sleeve linings are of white taffeta and the facings edged with ½” silver Benet braid on both sides. The turned back sleeves are held with a white cord and button.

Hood: Blue purple Russell cord [f1] lined and bound around the cape 1” with white taffeta and with 1” silver Benet braid around the outside the cape.

Hat: A black velvet Tudor bonnet with blue purple cord and tassel.

**Doctor of Science (DSc)** As for DLitt but with scarlet taffeta on robe and hood, and a scarlet cord and button on the turned back sleeves.

**Doctor of Laws (LLD)** As for DLitt but with light cherry taffeta on robe and hood, and a light cherry cord and button on the turned back sleeves.

**Doctor of Music (DMus)**

Robe: Cream damask of the Cambridge doctors’ style [d1] with long pointed sleeves. The facings and sleeve linings are of blue purple taffeta and the facings edged



Fig. 27. Master of Philosophy (MPhil).



Fig. 28. Master of Surgery (MSurg).



Fig. 29. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Prof. Doctorates.



Fig. 30. Doctor of Medicine (MD).



with ½" purple and gold Benet braid on both sides. The turned back sleeves are held with a blue purple cord and button.

Hood: Cream damask [f1] lined and bound around the cape 1" with blue purple taffeta and with 1" purple and gold Benet braid around the outside the cape.

Hat: A black velvet Tudor bonnet with blue purple cord and tassel.

**Doctor of Divinity (DD)** As for DLitt but with red purple damask on the robe and hood, with purple and gold braid and a red purple cord and button on the turned back sleeves.

**Doctor of the University (DUniv)** As for DLitt but with dove grey taffeta on the robe and hood and a silver cord and button on the turned back sleeves.

#### Honorary Fellow

Gown: Queen's Counsel style [d4] of blue purple corded artificial silk with long, glove sleeves squared at the ends and with a flap collar and 'wings' at the shoulders. The facings and flap collar are of dove grey taffeta.<sup>46</sup> The centre of the collar has the Portsmouth rose and crescent motif embroidered in blue purple thread. The facings are edged on the outside with ½" silver Benet braid. The sleeves have an inverted-T opening at the armholes which are also edged with ½" silver Benet braid as are the shoulder wings. The sleeve ends are decorated with 1" silver Benet braid. There is a slit at the back of the gown.

Hat: Black velvet Tudor bonnet with blue purple cord and tassel.

#### Honorary Associate

Gown: As for the Honorary Fellow but made from scarlet corded artificial silk and with facings and flap collar of dove grey taffeta. The facings are edged on both

<sup>46</sup> Changed from the black and white shot grey silk.

sides with ½” silver Benet braid. The rose and crescent motif is embroidered on the centre of the flap collar in dark red silk thread.

Hat: A black velvet, stiff-skull, mortarboard with a scarlet tassel and scarlet gros-grain ribbon around the skull.

### University of Portsmouth officers’ robes

In a hand-written letter of 5 March 1993, to Roger Moore, the Academic Registrar, Adrian Dorber outlined his proposals for robes for the senior officers of the University. The wording of the schedule for officers had clearly been discussed with J. Wippell and is reproduced below.<sup>47</sup>

**Chancellor** The Chancellor shall wear a gown of blue purple Fairford damask,<sup>48</sup> cut in the manner of a Queen’s Counsel robe.<sup>49</sup> The yoke and facings embroidered with the Hampshire Rose and the Portsmouth Crescent in gold thread.<sup>50</sup> The sleeves of the gown are to be richly decorated with gold frogs and oliphants,<sup>51</sup> and the rear of the gown is to be decorated with five rows of oliphants either side of the slit. The gown will be edged at the shoulder and at the rear with gold oak-leaf lace. (See Figs 31–36.)

The Chancellor shall wear a mortarboard made in blue purple velvet, edged at the skull with gold oak-leaf lace, with a gold tassel.<sup>52</sup>

The Chancellor shall wear a white tunic shirt, a wing collar and a lace water-fall cravat.

**The Vice-Chancellor** The Vice-Chancellor shall wear a gown and cap identical<sup>53</sup> to that of the Chancellor except that it shall be ornamented in silver. (See Figs 37 and 38.)

The Vice-Chancellor shall wear a white tunic shirt, wing collar and a white bow tie and bands.

**The Deputy Vice-Chancellor** The Deputy Vice-Chancellor shall wear a gown cut in the same manner as that of the Chancellor, in black damask.<sup>54</sup> The gown will be faced

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47 It is interesting, and quite uncommon, in such proposals, to see directions for what should be worn under the official robes included with the descriptions of the robes themselves. However, these directions appear to have been abandoned and perhaps were never adopted.

48 Interestingly, Fr Dorber, in an email, mentions that the robes are to be made from Winchester brocade, which would make sense since it has a rose motif and the city is nearby, in Hampshire. Perhaps it wasn’t available at the time. In any case the Fairford fabric is a brocade rather than a damask.

49 Like the Cambridge LLD undress gown [d4].

50 The crescent motif is borrowed from the Arms of the City of Portsmouth in which it is displayed together with a star. Some say it is Islamic in origin while others point out that it existed in Byzantium and predated Islam. It was incorporated into the Arms of Richard I and, by a grant from him, into the Portsmouth City Arms in 1194. King Richard may have encountered it during the Crusades. It is also found in the logo of Portsmouth FC. There are several theories as to the origin of the Hampshire rose, but the truth remains enigmatic.

51 Frogs are decorative ornaments, often in gold or silver braid or bullion. Oliphants are similar to frogs, as decoration, but originally were actual fastenings. I should like to thank Dr Paul Coxon, FBS, for pointing out the distinction between frogs and oliphants.

52 The last three Chancellors, all women, have opted for the lay Tudor bonnet rather than the more usual ecclesiastical square cap customary for such officers and prescribed in the original scheme. They may have been following a precedent set by the Princess Royal, Chancellor of the University of London, who adopted the bonnet because of her raised hairstyles or, perhaps because they simply prefer the style. However, Professor Bruce Christianson pointed out that Ackermann prescribes the round bonnet for the Chancellor of the University of Oxford, and that there are plenty of precedents for its use.

53 This, surely, is intended to mean ‘similar’.

54 The black robes for the Deputy and Pro-Vice-Chancellors, which I have seen, are made



Fig. 31 (far left). Vice-Chancellor and Chancellor.  
Fig. 32 (near left). Vice-Chancellor and Chancellor's robes.



Fig. 33. Chancellor's robe (front).



Fig. 34. Chancellor's robe (back).



Fig. 35. Chancellor's robe (front).

with purple taffeta on the gown facings and at the yoke, the facings and edgings being trimmed with silver oak-leaf lace. The yoke shall be embroidered with three roses and crescents in silver thread. The sleeves shall be ornamented with three chevrons in silver oak-leaf lace and at the bottom of each sleeve there shall be a rose and crescent in silver thread. The bottom of the sleeve is to be edged in silver oak-leaf lace. (See Figs. 39–43.)

A cap in black velvet is to be worn, edged at the skull in silver oak-leaf lace, with a silver tassel.

The Deputy Vice- Chancellor shall wear a white tunic shirt, a wing collar, white bow tie and bands.

**Pro-Vice-Chancellors**<sup>55</sup> These officers wear robes identical with those of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor except that the gown yoke is embroidered with one rose and crown,<sup>56</sup> there are no roses or crowns on the sleeve, and two chevrons appear on the sleeve. (See Fig. 44.)

The cap is decorated with a silver tassel and is of black velvet.

from rayon and silk Truro damask.

<sup>55</sup> Described as 'Assistant Vice-Chancellor' on the drawing.

<sup>56</sup> Fr Dorber meant to write 'crescent' instead of 'crown'.





Fig. 36. Chancellor's robe (back).



Fig. 37. Vice-Chancellor's robe (front).

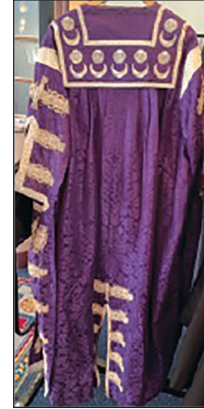


Fig. 38. Vice-Chancellor's robe (back).

They too wear shirts, ties, collars and bands prescribed above for the Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

**The Chairman of Governors** The Chairman of Governors wears a black Russell cord gown in University Doctors' style. The sleeve linings and gown facings are in purple taffeta. The gown is embroidered at the yoke with a single rose and crescent in gold thread. (See Fig. 45.)

The Chairman wears a black velvet Tudor bonnet with a purple tassel.

A white tunic shirt, wing collar, white bow-tie and bands are worn.

**The Mace Bearer** The Mace Bearer wears a black Russell cord gown cut in verger's style, faced at the yoke and gown facings with purple Russell cord. Each sleeve is decorated with a rose and crescent in gold thread. (See Figs 46 and 47.)

A black velvet Tudor bonnet, with a purple tassel, is worn.

A white tunic shirt, wing collar, white bow-tie and bands are worn.

## Overview

The system of academic dress in the University of Portsmouth, as is fitting for a maritime city with a long and rich history, suggests the phrase 'steady as you go'. It certainly fulfils the intent of its designer in that it is elegant and distinctive. It has a well thought-out basic structure, good palette of colours, and has borrowed ideas that have stood the test of time. It also chimes with the University's chosen corporate colours, which have worn well.

There are various anomalies in the scheme.

- The PGCE hood has been given the Education faculty ribbon (mid-cherry) which more logically, perhaps, might have been given to the BEd hood.
- The MRes hood, which is the MSc hood with an extra 1" binding of the Science faculty scarlet silk around the cape.
- The hood for the MSci, and other integrated masters (excluding that for the MEng), is less ornate than the BSc hood.
- The adoption of the MPhil dove grey taffeta for the DUniv robe and hood, and the Hon. Fellows' and Hon. Associates' gowns (in place of the original grey shot white silk)



Fig. 39. Deputy Vice-Chancellor's robe (front).



Fig. 40. Deputy Vice-Chancellor's robe (back).



Fig. 42. Deputy Vice-Chancellor's robe (front).



Fig. 41. Flap collar, Deputy Vice-Chancellor's robe.



Fig. 43. Deputy Vice-Chancellor's robe (detail at back).



Fig. 44. Pro-Vice-Chancellor's robe.



Fig. 45. Chairman of Governors' gown.



**Figs 46, 47. Mace Bearer's gown.**

rather makes the DUniv hood look like the logical PhD hood (it being the MPhil hood with the addition of the silver braid around the cape).<sup>57</sup>

- Some different hood shapes have been introduced: the Oxford Burgon simple shape [s2] both for the University Diploma and Diploma in Higher Education; and the CNAAs shape [a1] for the Foundation Degrees, whereas the system was designed to use the Cambridge [f1] full shape throughout.

Although the original Portsmouth University system of dress has been modified, by the insertion of costumes for new degrees, which do not always follow the logic of the scheme, it is still basically coherent and attractive.

The University itself is a vibrant place, 'home to over 4,000 international students from 150 countries'<sup>58</sup> and, like the famous port, open to the world as it seeks a truly global reach. At graduation ceremonies the piazza in front of Portsmouth Guildhall is a riot of colour as students and staff in their gowns and hoods, together with guests, gather to greet and congratulate one another.

Because the design of its costumes was undertaken by someone with some knowledge of academic dress and a feel for colour, the University of Portsmouth has escaped much of the dreariness that characterizes the costumes of some other post-'92 former polytechnics. Moreover, because Adrian Dorber, the designer and former University Chaplain, was accustomed to arranging large gatherings for worship, he was able to keep in mind the overall effect of the University's costumes when viewed together at ceremonies. In fact, the Portsmouth graduation ceremonies, with the Cathedral organist seated prominently, in his splendid Portsmouth DMus robes, at the excellent pipe organ, rather give the effect of secular liturgies.

<sup>57</sup> Not that this is without precedent, *cf.* Oxford, where part of the charm of its academical dress is the absence of any logical colour sequence.

<sup>58</sup> The University website.

On the other hand, the Portsmouth academic dress system has avoided some of the temptations to be *avant garde* that are sometimes so inviting in a nation with over 150 universities (and counting). All too often, what looks promising, exciting and novel, in one decade, can seem jaded or strange in another. In recent years several universities have had a rethink on items of dress or, indeed, on their complete systems of dress,<sup>59</sup> whilst others still have either merged with other institutions, or de-federalized from their parent bodies, obtaining charters of their own and introducing new academic dress.<sup>60</sup>

The University of Portsmouth can be justifiably proud of its dignified and colourful system of academic dress, which is traditional but not dated; and I can see no good reason why the present scheme characterized, as it is, by much thought, care, and imagination, should not continue to delight, serve, and satisfy its officers, members of staff, diplomats, graduates, families, and friends for many years to come.

### **A note on brocade and damask**

These two fabrics are often mistaken for one another and there are similarities. Both are woven on Jacquard looms.<sup>61</sup>

The word 'brocade' comes from the Italian, *broccato*, meaning a cloth that is embossed. This effect is achieved by use of extra yarn in the weft, as needed, which gives the illusion of a pattern woven on to the top of the material rather like embroidery. The brocades sometimes have a metallic thread incorporated into the weave. The reverse side of a silk brocade will often look unfinished.

The word 'damask' takes its origin from the city of Damascus and refers to a satin weave technique which uses a matte yarn in the weft and a shiny yarn in the warp to give the appearance of a raised pattern. The resulting fabric is reversible, although the obverse side has a sort of photographic negative appearance. The finished weave is enhanced by the way in which it reflects light.

Both techniques are said to have originated in China, but in the Middle Ages damasks were found amongst both Byzantine and Islamic cultures. The French Huguenots, expelled from France, brought their brocading skills to England in the seventeenth century.

Traditionally these fabrics are made from silk but, these days, are often made from rayon, sometimes called viscose, or the older term, art silk, which is a generic term for an entire family of textiles made by dissolving cellulose fibres in various chemicals. The process was first experimented with around the time the aniline dyes were making an appear-

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<sup>59</sup> For example, Brunel and Glasgow Caledonian Universities.

<sup>60</sup> The writer, in his capacity as Academic Consultant to Ede & Ravenscroft from 1996 to 2010, had the pleasure of designing new systems of academic dress for Imperial College, the Institute of Education, the London School of Economics, and London Metropolitan University; new officers' robes for Birkbeck College, Heythrop College, London Business School, the Royal Veterinary College, University College, the School of Pharmacy, the School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine; new designs for King's College London, the University of the Arts London, the University of London, Trinity College London, the University of Westminster; and of choosing the colours and fabrics for Dame Vivienne Westwood's strikingly innovative academic dress for King's College London.

<sup>61</sup> An invention by Joseph Marie Jacquard, in 1804, which was modelled on earlier French designs. Originally, it used a system of punched cards which, when added to a loom, controlled the manufacture of complex fabric designs, such as brocades and damasks, but nowadays the looms are operated digitally: in fact, the Jacquard loom provided Charles Babbage with the inspiration for the stored program mechanism of his analytical engine.

ance from 1856, but it wasn't until the beginning of the twentieth century that manufacture on an industrial scale became a reality.

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I should like to thank Martin Lewis, FBS, Managing Director of Graduation Attire, for inviting me to join his team to assist with the Portsmouth University graduation ceremonies in the summer sunshine of 2021, during which I was able to see many of the robes in action and enjoy conversations about them with the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, other officers, members of staff, and graduates. Thanks are also due to Michael Wittering and Andrew Chase at Graduation Attire, for their help and for the excellent illustrations of Portsmouth hoods.

Professor Bruce Christianson, FBS, was kind enough to read the article several times and to offer helpful suggestions and improvements.

 <p>DipHE</p>	 <p>UniDip</p>	 <p>FdA, FdSc, FdE</p>	 <p>BA</p>
 <p>BSc</p>	 <p>BSc Econ</p>	 <p>BEd</p>	 <p>BEng</p>
 <p>BMus</p>	 <p>BN</p>	 <p>LLB</p>	 <p>PGCE</p>

Table 1. Hoods of the University of Portsmouth, 1 of 3.

 <p>PGCert</p>	 <p>PGDip</p>	 <p>MA</p>	 <p>MSc</p>
 <p>MSci</p>	 <p>MBA</p>	 <p>MPA</p>	 <p>MArch</p>
 <p>LLM</p>	 <p>MEng</p>	 <p>MMus</p>	 <p>MRes</p>

Table 2. Hoods of the University of Portsmouth, 2 of 3.



Table 3. Hoods of the University of Portsmouth, 3 of 3.