The Public Orator’s main role is to present Honorary Graduands at the relevant Graduation Ceremonies (Ordinance 25.4 [https://www.kent.ac.uk/governance/about/Ordinances%202020.pdf]). The oration is a stand out moment, occurring halfway through the ceremony; when the Public Orator makes a compulsive (and usually entertaining) case to the University community on the worth of the nominee to receive the honorary award.

**Appointment Process**

- Each Public Orator (PO) has a term of 3 years, which can be renewed.
- All employed University of Kent staff are eligible to become a Public Orator.
- Suggestions should be emailed to councilsec@kent.ac.uk, with a brief note of suitability. Self nominations are encouraged, but should include at least one referee along with a brief note on suitability.
- Suggestions are discussed at the Honorary Degrees Committee and recommended to Senate for approval. Before names are put to Senate the Vice Chancellor and President approaches the nominee to ask if they will accept the role, on the understanding that they will commit to delivering at least one oration per year.
- It is expected that conferences and leave will be arranged in such a way that POs can still meet their commitment of giving one oration a year.

**Allocation of Honorary Graduands**

In the spring term the Development Office calls a meeting of POs, chaired by the Director of Development (or nominee), to agree the allocation of Honorary Graduands (HGs) to POs.

**The Oration**

The ideal oration length is 900 words as the oration needs to be delivered very slowly in the Cathedral and should not exceed 5 mins.

**The ceremony**

The honorary award is made in middle of the ceremony, after half of the main graduands have received their awards; at this point the Presiding Officer will call upon the Public Orator to make the oration. It is traditional for the Public Orator to doff their cap toward the Presiding Officer before turning to face the audience to deliver the oration. Once the HG has been commended to the University the Presiding Officer will give the HG their certificate and shake hands; it is usual for applause to break out at this point and therefore best if the PO remains at the lectern until the HG crosses over to it, to make their reply.

**Congregation dates**

[https://www.kent.ac.uk/congregations/ceremony-dates](https://www.kent.ac.uk/congregations/ceremony-dates)

**Additional duties**

Public Orators will be occasionally asked to attend other public events.