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Academic Dress of the University of Bath 1966–2020

By Edward Ripley

Abstract

The University of Bath initially set off, in 1965, with the intention of having a very simple academic dress specification, having only four hoods, all of which would be science awards. Furthermore, it originally determined to have only one gown to share across bachelors', masters' and doctors' undress. The University's designs were not ground-breaking, being linked to those of the University of Oxford, having an Oxford simple hood [s1], an Oxford doctoral gown [d2] and the University of Cambridge bachelors' gown [b2]. The colours were chosen to represent the city of Bath: old gold grosgrain (representing Bath stone) being present on all hoods. This colour was also adopted as the University's official colour and remains so to this day. Through a chance request the University had distinct bachelors' and masters' gowns ([b7] and [m16]) for a short period of 1966–97 before becoming standardized, although not reverting back to the initial designs of one standard gown. The system has adapted well to additional degrees being awarded, and indeed some removed and consolidated, whilst firmly remaining in the spirit in which it was initially designed. The aim of this article is to set out the development of the academic dress of the University, how it has evolved over time and how it also maintains a strong connection to the past.

The University of Bath can trace its roots back to the School of Applied Sciences, founded in 1865, which was part of Bristol Trade School. The institution went through many changes over the next hundred years, maintaining a strong connection with the sciences and engineering throughout, which persists through to today. In 1959 the college achieved the status of a College of Advanced Technology (CAT) as the Bristol College of Science and Technology; soon after, the Robbins Report of 1963 recommended the College be given university status. Space proved to be an issue in Bristol and through a chance encounter later that year a site was proposed in Bath. The College received its Royal Charter in 1966.

1. Brief history of the University

To understand the University of Bath's academic dress some consideration must first be given to the history of the institution and the circumstances for its creation. This can help to explain some of the choices and also the designs for the academic dress for the institution.

The University can trace its roots back to the Bristol Trade School's School of Applied Science, which was founded in early 1865. The impetus was the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the desire to boost the knowledge of scientific principles in order to compete with continental engineering and craftsmanship.¹ The School itself became very success-

¹ G. H. Moore, *The University of Bath: The Formative Years, 1949–1969* (Bath: University of Bath Press, 1982), p. 1.

ful and later in the nineteenth century came under the management of the Society of Merchant Venturers, founded in 1552,² and became known as the Merchant Venturers' Technical College (MVTC). This was in addition to the city's existing College, which was incorporated in 1896 and received its charter in 1909 to become the University of Bristol, at which point the MVTC provided the newly formed University with its Faculty of Engineering department, together with the Principal of the College becoming the Dean of Engineering. This was run alongside its courses for sciences and crafts at the MVTC.³

In 1929 the MVTC took over control of the Bath School of Chemistry and Pharmacy. However, in the light of the rapid post-war expansion of education it was decided that it was no longer financially viable for the Society of Merchant Venturers to sustain it. Talks were entered into with Bristol City Council and the University of Bristol, the outcome being that in 1949 the local authority would take over the College. Also at this time the links with the University of Bristol were broken and the College renamed the Bristol College of Technology (BCT), with strong links in engineering, chemistry and pharmacy. The College functioned through awarding degrees via the University of London and professional qualifications through the Royal Institute of Chemistry and various engineering institutions.⁴

The BCT gradually grew over the years, expanding its syllabi whilst also consolidating its departments to the Ashley Down site in Bristol. In 1956, the government announced the publication of the white paper, *Technical Education*, which acknowledged the need for scientific manpower with the highest qualifications.⁵ As a result of this the BCT was upgraded to the Regional College for the South West, which led to an increased demand in courses and space for the rapidly growing institution. In the late 1950s the governing body began pursuing recognition as a College of Advanced Technology (CAT), which it achieved in 1959, splitting to become two separate bodies, the Bristol College of Science and Technology (BCST) and Bristol Technical College (BTC). The newly formed BCST would focus on engineering (electrical and mechanical), mathematics, chemistry, biology, physics, pharmacy and general studies.⁶

The Robbins Report of 1963 recommended the immediate expansion of universities and that all CAT institutions should be granted the status of university.⁷ Eventually ten of the twenty-four CATs received the new designation, including BCST. The rationale behind the report's recommendations was the increased demand for higher education by young people and also the realization of the country's economic dependence on higher education and the inadequacy of the current arrangements, especially in a 'fiercely competitive world of the future'. The CATs were also closely aligned to the governance and structure of universities already, meaning any transition would be easier.

2 John Latimer, *The History of the Society of Merchant Venturers of the City of Bristol* (Bristol: Arrowsmith, 1903), p. 38.

3 Moore, p. 1.

4 Unfortunately, Moore does not elaborate on which Engineering Institutions awarded the qualifications, though later on references that the College was offering courses in Civil Engineering; Aero-Engineering; Mechanical Engineering and Electrical Engineering.

5 HMG, *Technical Education*, 15 February 1956, available at <filestore.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pdfs/small/cab-129-79-cp-56-40-40.pdf> [accessed 4 August 2021].

6 Moore, p. 20.

7 HMG, *Higher Education* [The Robbins Report], October 1963, available at <www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/robbins/robbins1963.html> [accessed 4 August 2021].

BCST initially sought to relocate to elsewhere in Bristol but was ultimately unsuccessful. However, fortunes changed via a chance meeting between the College's Principal and the Director of Education for Bath, at a children's school play in late 1963.⁸ Within three days of this meeting BCST was offered a site just outside Bath, which would later be formalized to a site of 150 acres. The College therefore assumed the title of Bath University of Technology, receiving its Royal Charter in 1966, later changing in 1971 to the University of Bath.⁹

Abbreviations for degrees

BA/MA/DArts	Bachelor/Master/Doctor of Arts
BArch/MArch	Bachelor/Master of Architecture
BEd/MEd/EdD	Bachelor/Master/Doctor of Education
BEng/MEng/DEng	Bachelor/Master/Doctor of Engineering
BMus/DMus	Bachelor/Doctor of Music
BPharm/MPharm	Bachelor/Master of Pharmacy
BSc/MSc/DSc	Bachelor/Master/Doctor of Science
DClinPsy	Doctor of Clinical Psychology
DHealth	Doctor of Health
DLitt	Doctor of Letters
DPRP	Doctor of Public Research and Policy
DUniv	Doctor of the University
LLD	Doctor of Law
MBA/DBA	Master/Doctor of Business Administration
MBiochem	Master of Biochemistry
MBiol	Master of Biology
MChem	Master of Chemistry
MD	Doctor of Medicine
MMath	Master of Mathematics
MPharmacol	Master of Pharmacology
MPhil/PhD	Master/Doctor of Philosophy
MPhys	Master of Physics
MRes	Master of Research
MSurg	Master of Surgery

2. Academic dress of the University

2.1 1965 and the initial designs for hoods

The first available evidence for the academic dress of the University can be found in a letter dated 18 March 1965,¹⁰ which is a response to Dr George Shaw's letter dated 14 March 1965, which is sadly lost. However, we can assume it was enquiring over the nature of the academic dress and if it was acceptable for it to be included in his book, *Academical Dress of British Universities*,¹¹ the first edition of which was to be published in 1966. It includes a note that the University was in its early stages of organiza-

⁸ Moore, p. 40.

⁹ L. Richmond, 'The Story of the University', 2016, available at <www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/the-story-of-the-university/> [accessed 21 March 2023].

¹⁰ Hardie, letter dated 18 March 1965, Burgon Society Paper Archives, SHAW/1/1/3 [hereafter BS Archives, SHAW].

¹¹ Published by Heffer in Cambridge.

tion (p. 10). Bath would have a full entry in his second edition published in 1995 (pp. 53–54).¹² The response was from the Vice-Principal of the Bristol College of Science and Technology, Dr A. M. Hardie, who was to sit on the newly established University's Ceremonies and Academic Dress Committee and can be considered the key person in the development of the academic dress at the University. In it he stated the 'basic hood material is old gold grosgrain, symbolizing the colour of Bath stone, and degrees are distinguished by the colours of the linings. The scheme is very simple, there being only four hoods without the complicated distinctions for various disciplines which seem to proliferate these days.' As will be demonstrated throughout this article the old gold grosgrain would be the mainstay of all future Bath hoods with the distinctions made for the level of qualification by the lining, as set out below, quoted from Dr Hardie's letter of the 18 March 1965 and also Figure 1 (below).

- 1) Hoods – all Oxford 'simple'¹³ shape [See Fig. 1 for a diagram of the hoods]
 - (i) Bachelor: old gold grosgrain lined with olive taffeta
 - (ii) Master: old gold grosgrain lined with pale blue taffeta
 - (iii) Doctor of Philosophy: old gold grosgrain lined in medium crimson taffeta
 - (iv) Doctor of Science: old gold grosgrain lined with scarlet taffeta
- 2) Gowns
 - (i) Bachelors; Masters and Doctors Undress: all black stuff, shape as Cambridge but without slit in the forearm.
 - (ii) Doctor of Philosophy: medium crimson lightweight cloth, shape as Oxford¹⁴ with old gold silk facings and cuffs.
 - (iii) Doctor of Science: scarlet lightweight cloth shape as Oxford with old gold silk facings and cuffs.
- 3) Hats
 - (i) Bachelors; Masters and Doctors Undress: Black Mortar Boards for men and Plain black soft squares for women.¹⁵
 - (ii) Doctor of Philosophy: Black cloth bonnets with silver cord and tassels for men and Partially soft black velvet squares for women.
 - (iii) Doctor of Science: black cloth bonnets with gold cord and tassels for men and Partially soft black velvet squares for women.

Unfortunately, the minutes from the Ceremonies and Academic Dress Committee have not survived the test of time and only certain items of information can be picked up via the University's Senate meetings, in which the more mundane matters of the logistics of ceremonies, ticket allocations and set-up costs are discussed and approved. There is, however, a reference to the University carpeting the Assembly Rooms for the first graduation ceremony (November 1966)¹⁶ in the colours of the bachelors' hood, old gold aisles with a moss green podium, supplied by Jolly's department store of Bath

12 *Academical Dress of British and Irish Universities*, published by Phillimore in Chichester.

13 The [s1] shape, using the Groves classification system; in Dr Moore's book on the University's formative years he incorrectly recalls this being the Oxford full shape hood, which is [f5]; there is no evidence to suggest this.

14 Though the Bath scheme specifies 9" sleeve cuffs.

15 The Oxford ladies' cap [h5].

16 The first graduation was initially planned for April 1966, as per Dr Hardie's letter dated 10 May 1965.

for £96 (which includes fitting and non-slip underlay).¹⁷ It is assumed that their range of colours did not extend to olive-green. Quite why the Committee decided upon green and blue we may never know. However, influence can be linked from the University's location being a greenfield site in Bath, Norwood playing fields possibly providing an influence for the green. The site's elevation being one of the highest points in Bath, the blue sky was the primary outlook from the University's vantage point, or maybe the blue was to symbolize the natural hot springs that drew the Romans and later Georgians to the city.

It is worth noting at this point that whilst the University regulations state that the hoods are to be in a simple Oxford shape [s1] they had in fact settled on what we now know as the Leeds hood [s7], in which the cowl edge is permanently turned out by 2" which leads through to the neckband, which is a V shape, by which the taffeta lining is visible.¹⁸ This is the same across all the hoods. For simplicity the article uses the Groves classification for Leeds, [s7], to describe the Bath hoods.

2.2 Development of Bath gowns

The conversation is continued with Dr Shaw's reply dated 22 March 1965,¹⁹ in which he commends the University on their design of hoods and that it 'appears to be very sensible'. He further takes the time to correct them on the fact that a Cambridge gown without the slit is in fact an Oxford BA.²⁰ He continues to suggest that the University should consider creating specific gowns for the bachelors, masters and doctors undress and that they should be specific to the University. He encloses the diagram in Figure 2, which has fortunately survived in the University's Archives.

As it demonstrates, Dr Shaw's design suggested the use of the Oxford bachelors'

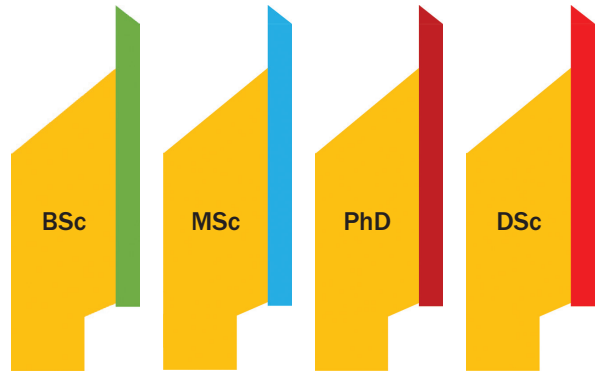


Fig. 1. The initial designs for the University of Bath hoods [s7]. Note they all maintain the University's identity via the shell of the hood being made of old gold grosgrain which represents the Bath stone of which the city is built. The permanent outturn of the hood displays the lining and therefore the level of the qualification, the colours of crimson for PhD and scarlet for higher doctorate (DSc) echoes that seen in other universities. (See Appendix A for the scheme at 2020 and Appendix C for photos of the first three hoods.)

¹⁷ Academic Ceremonies and Dress Committee's submission to Senate, October 1966.

¹⁸ Some hoods in the author's collection actually flare out slightly from the neckband to around 3" wide at the end. This would only constitute artistic licence by the robe manufacturer and does not detract from the overall scheme.

¹⁹ Burgon Archives SHAW.

²⁰ At this point in the letter Dr Shaw stresses the point by underlining the Oxford BA description, omitting there is, in fact, a difference between the sleeves on the Oxford and Cambridge bachelors' gowns.

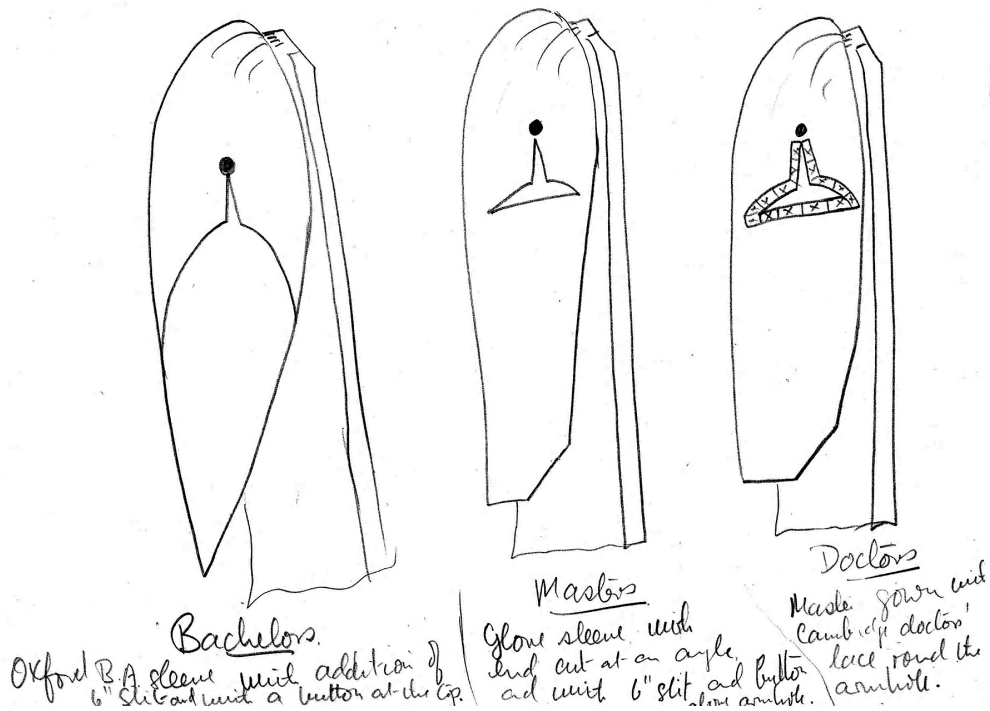


Fig. 2. George Shaw's suggestions for the University of Bath's academic gowns, which would be unique to the University with the 6" slit and button on the sleeves. Image courtesy of the University Archives. This image accompanies George Shaw's letter dated 22 March 1965, of which a copy is also in the Archives.

gown,²¹ however with a 6" slit with a button at the top covered in the same material as the gown. This was later to be allocated the [b7] pattern code in the Groves classification system. The masters' gown would follow the usual pattern but have a square base to the sleeve, with an oblique angle cut at 45° to the front corner. The opening for the arm would again have a 6" vertical slit finished with a button covered in the same material as the gown [m16]. The doctors' undress gown would be the same as the masters' but with the arm opening surrounded by Cambridge lace. Dr Shaw concludes that he is happy to send the College sample gowns.²² Dr Hardie agrees with the concerns over the uniformity of the gowns,²³ but explains that 'the uniform undress was suggested because of the limited occasions when undress is required; and without fairly close scrutiny of a black gown the distinctions are by no means obvious.' He further accepts Dr Shaw's offer for sample gowns on the condition that they are already made, not wanting to have them specially made, for the review of the Committee. He

21 Though the drawing and examples of the gown suggest it is more like a basic bachelor's gown [b1] that was used as the basis for the design.

22 I am grateful for Dr Nicholas Groves for alerting me to the fact that George Shaw had previously proposed these gowns to the University of Sussex, which would account for these being readily available to send on.

23 Hardie, Letter dated 30 March 1965, Burgon Archives SHAW.

also states that at this point the University is committed to using the services of Messrs Ede & Ravenscroft as the official gown supplier. In Dr Shaw's response²⁴ he informs the Vice-Principal that he has the gowns already made up. However, he also warns that 'I have no doubt that your official robe makers will try and persuade you to stick to the simple gown—it is a simple matter for them, but not in the interest of the University'.

Fortunately for the course of academic dress at the University, Dr Hardie is impressed with the designs and he now believes that the Committee may turn to differentiation at this point after all.²⁵ It is at this point there is indication that the doctors' undress gown design additionally has a braided flap collar, but Dr Hardie states that he feels only the braiding on the arm hole will be retained. He also goes on to state that the official robemakers were 'surprised by our uniformity and I have no doubt they will welcome any change'. As mentioned above, the minutes of this Committee are lost. The next indication of the change in direction is a response from Ede & Ravenscroft dated the 26 April 1965: 'Having considered the matter, we now agree with the suggestions of Dr Shaw and have now revised our records.'²⁶ The letter continues to stipulate the specifications, which do not need to be repeated here, though it is worthwhile to point out that the template for the bachelors' gown here is specified as similar to a Cambridge gown and not the original Oxford suggestion. This formal change is communicated back to Dr Shaw along with the return of the samples on the 4 May 1965 by Dr Hardie.²⁷

Dr Shaw follows this up with a series of questions, to which Dr Hardie has the following responses.²⁸ 'The DSc undress gown shall retain the flap collar edged in lace, along with the lace on the arm holes, the PhD gown will be identical apart from having no flap collar.' Presumably this ties in with his earlier comments about one black gown looking much like another and not wanting to drastically stray from the original masters' gown. The issue of undergraduate gowns is still to be settled, especially in formal situations as 'laxity in dress is increasing' and the Committee was also thinking of using the Oxford undergraduate gown, as Dr Shaw suggested, and that a slit and button can be introduced easily. There is, however, no evidence to confirm a distinct undergraduate gown being adopted. The letter finishes with Dr Hardie extending an invitation to the first graduation ceremony as per Dr Shaw's request. It is at this point the correspondence stops.

2.3 Officers' robes

In Dr Moore's memoirs²⁹ he recalls that Ede & Ravenscroft were asked to advise on the design and to supply the formal robes for the Chancellor, Pro-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Treasurer of the traditional black and gold style. Again, this displays the University's sense of wanting to be traditional with its designs in academic dress. One wonders what a set created from old gold damask might have looked

24 Shaw, Letter dated 6 April 1965, BS Archives, SHAW.

25 Hardie, Letter dated 8 April 1965, BS Archives, SHAW.

26 Ede & Ravenscroft, letter dated 26 April 1965, University of Bath Archives.

27 Hardie, letter dated 4 May 1965, BS Archives, SHAW.

28 Shaw, letter dated 6 April 1965; Hardie, letter dated 10 May 1965, BS Archives, SHAW.

29 Moore, p. 66. Dr Moore was also to serve as the University's first Vice-Chancellor, having been the Principal of BCST.

like. Whilst the initial letters are again sadly lost, along with the drawings, we have the final invoice from Ede & Ravenscroft dated 29 July 1965 for the above gowns, which provides some details on design and also the final costs for the items.³⁰ For example, the Chancellor's robe costing £690. 3. 0., with the mortar-board costing £10. 12. 6. As can be appreciated, the Chancellor's robe was the most expensive; with complexity and price decreasing, by the time one reaches the Treasurer's gown it cost £79. 11. 0. The entire order totalled £1,329. 9. 6. Clearer designs can, however, be drawn from Smith and Sheard's *Academic Dress and Insignia of the World*, which are summarized below.³¹

The Chancellor wears a gown of black silk satin damask and having facings and a square collar edged in gold lace, which continues round to the bottom of the gown. The sleeves are long and closed with an inverted T opening at the elbow, edged in gold lace. Each sleeve has embroidered gold leaves at the shoulder, the bottom of the sleeve has a horizontal band of gold lace, the remainder of the sleeve is taken up with gold ornaments of the traditional pattern.

The Pro-Chancellor wears a gown similar to the Chancellor's, which, however, differs in that the shoulder ornaments are of black silk satin damask and edged in narrow gold lace and also has fewer gold ornaments.

The Vice-Chancellor wears a gown similar to the Chancellor's, which, however, differs in that the shoulder ornament is of old gold silk edged in narrow gold lace and having a circular gold embroidery in the centre. The sleeves have three horizontal bands of gold lace below the arm opening, which is also edged in gold lace.

The Treasurer and Pro-Vice-Chancellor wear a gown of black ottoman silk trimmed with gold lace, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " and $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide respectively.

Other organic developments were implemented with the creation of positions at the University. In 1982, the **Registrar**³² was given robes of black ottoman silk with gold lace edging of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " with the sleeves³³ trimmed in $\frac{1}{2}$ " gold lace.³³ From 2008, the **Marshal** wears a traditional master's gown [m2] with facings and yoke edged in 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " gold ribbon.³⁴ In addition, the **Deputy Vice-Chancellor** wears a gown identical to that of the Pro-Vice-Chancellors.

The official dress for officers has remained fairly static over the years with the designs that have been created. Minor changes have occurred in the gold lace edging (e.g., the Treasurer's lace changed from 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " in the initial designs to 1 $\frac{5}{8}$ " in the 2008 specification, and so visually little change.

2.4 Early updates to the system, 1967–97

Early changes to the system can be identified from Dr Moore's memoirs on the early years of the University 1949 to 1969.³⁵ 'There would be no distinction as between schools [as transferred from the Bristol College of Science and Technology, see above] for the hoods for bachelor degrees [which] would be old gold lined with olive green taffeta and, for all master degrees, old gold lined with pale blue taffeta.' This agrees with what we already understand based on the correspondence above. Dr Moore then

30 Ede & Ravenscroft, Letter dated 29 July 1965, University of Bath Archives.

31 H. Smith and K. Sheard, 3 vols (Cape Town: A. A. Balkema, 1970), Vol. I, pp. 587, 589.

32 Changed to the University's Secretary in 2008.

33 University of Bath, Senate Paper S82/83 – 171, 6 December 1982.

34 University of Bath, Senate Paper S07/08 – 242, 11 June 2008.

35 Moore, p. 65.

mentions one of the first amendments to the scheme post 1966: ‘the hoods for bachelor and master’s degrees in architecture however were to have a three-quarter inch dark red edging’. This demonstrated the versatility of the hoods, which we shall see later. In the instance of Bath hoods the edging is placed in the middle of the turnout and has increased to 1” in width, with 0.5” either side. The edging is only applied to the turnout of the hood and not to the neckband component, which matches the colour and material of the lining (see Appendix A for a diagram and Appendix C for photos). We know that this could not have occurred in 1966 as the ceremony’s booklet held in the University Archives only mentions the awards of science degrees. Next his attention turns to the PhD and DSc hoods, which are identical to the designs mentioned by Dr Hardie and those still in existence today, also shown in Figure 1.³⁶ ‘For the LLD (only awarded *honoris causa*) the hood would be as for the DSc but with white edging, and for the DLt the edging would be yellow.’ The doctoral gowns were also further differentiated by a matching edging applied to the outer edges of the facings of the gown and to the upper edge of the sleeve facings. The first usage of the LLD design can be traced back to 1966 when Sir Philip Morris (1901–79) was awarded his honorary degree.³⁷ We know no DLitts were awarded in 1966, again from the first degree ceremony booklet held in the Archives, and the first reference to one being awarded was in 1970 to Sir James Pitman (1901–85) *honoris causa*.³⁸ He was also to serve as the University’s Pro-Chancellor. However, it would appear that the introduction of a specific DLitt gown was not immediate, as it is omitted from Haycraft’s *Degrees and Hoods of the World’s Universities and Colleges*.³⁹ This suggests that the robes were not approved until the early 1970s, leading to the conclusion that it may have shared either the DSc or the LLD gown. The majority of honorary degrees awarded by the University during this period were DScs, accounting for 78 per cent of such awards.

The next record of updates to the academic dress of the institution come from the University Regulations of 1971,⁴⁰ which is the first published set the University produced. In this the number of awards (and subsequent designs) has increased to include:

- BSc and BPharm**⁴¹— old gold grosgrain lined olive-green taffeta
- BArch** — as for the BSc but with a mid-crimson edging (as above)
- BEd** — as for the BSc but with orange edging
- BA** — as for the BSc but with pale yellow edging

These were complemented by a set of masters’ hoods, of the standard MSc hood with matching edging applied.

³⁶ This echoes the specification as outlined in Smith and Sheard, which includes the BSc/MSc (including BPharm/MPharm); BArch/MArch; PhD; DSc; and LLD.

³⁷ Royal College of Surgeons of England, Plarr’s *Lives of the Fellows*, RCS: E006773. The designs for the LLD can also be confirmed in Smith and Sheard.

³⁸ Bath University, Honorary Graduates 1966–69.

³⁹ F. W. Haycraft, *The Degrees and Hoods of the World’s Universities and Colleges*, 5th edn, revised and enlarged by Frederick R. S. Rogers, Charles A. H. Franklyn, George W. Shaw and Hugh Alexander Boyd (Lewes: privately printed by W. E. Baxter, Ltd, 1972), p. 6.

⁴⁰ University Archives, University Press, 1971.

⁴¹ Linking back in with the history of the Technology College taking over the Old Bath School of Pharmacy and Chemistry in 1929.

Further additions can be traced through the subsequent regulations:

MEng – as for the MSc but with purple edging (introduced in 1980)⁴²

MPhil – as for the MSc but with red edging (introduced in 1984)⁴³

MBA – as for the MSc but with dark blue edging (introduced in 1987)⁴⁴

BMus – as for the BSc but with cream damask edging (introduced in 1992)⁴⁵

DMus – Oxford shape gown of cream damask with old gold facings and sleeves; the hood being of the simple shape made of old gold lined with cream damask (introduced in 1992 also)

The introduction of the DMus was born out of necessity with the University wishing to grant an honorary degree⁴⁶ to Amelia Freedman, MBE, FRAM, for her work with Bath International Festival, for which she was director from 1986 to 1993. The design of the academic dress was influenced by universities such as Oxford, Cambridge and Durham which have the main component being a cream damask. The DMus adopted an Oxford doctoral [d2] gown of cream damask with old gold grosgrain facings and cuffs. The BMus hood was also created at this time to complement the existing bachelor hood designs. It is worth noting that the University possesses no music department; therefore, the only route to the award is via *honoris causa*. In the history of the University, nine DMus degrees have been awarded, the most recent being in 2016. There is no record of the BMus ever being awarded.⁴⁷

Another item of note which was changed relatively early on can be found in the 1982 Senate papers:⁴⁸ on the recommendation of the Ceremonies Committee (note that the ‘and Academic Dress’ was dropped at some point prior to this) that women are to be allowed to wear mortar-boards. This request was received from the Students Union and noted that ‘there had been demand from women over a number of years for this’. No mention is made of the headgear for female doctors, however, and indeed as recently as 2008⁴⁹ women were still prescribed a partially soft black velvet square [h5], though this has now been updated to allow only bonnets for both sexes.⁵⁰ Consideration was also given at the time (1982) to the removal of regulation 19.13, which laid down the general provision for formal wear for men and women to be worn at graduations. Fortunately the Committee decided at this point it ‘need not be revised.’

In the 1997 regulations,⁵¹ the specific gowns for Bath [b7] and [m16] were quietly dropped from the regulations to be replaced with standard gowns. For bachelors it became the basic bachelor gown [b1], or in the University’s language a Cambridge bachelor gown with a plain sleeve and the masters’ becoming a Cambridge masters’ gown

42 University Regulations 1980.

43 University Regulations 1984.

44 University Regulations 1987.

45 University Regulations 1992.

46 University of Bath, Honorary Graduates 1990–99.

47 University of Bath, Honorary Graduates 1966–69; 1970–79; 1980–89; 1990–99; 2000–09; 2010–2019; 2020–present.

48 Senate Paper S82-83 171, 6 December 1982, University Archives.

49 Senate Paper S07/08 – 242, 11 June 2008, University Archives.

50 University of Bath Official Academic Dress, 2021.

51 University Regulations 1997, University Press, University Archives.

[m2]. Curiously, however, the designs for the doctors' undress gown had remained in the regulations as being 'a gown of black stuff of traditional masters shape, with upright sleeve cut of 6", surmounted by a black cover button with black braid round the sleeve cut; bottom of hanging sleeve cut on the oblique'. One can assume this was overlooked in the update given that the necessity for undress gowns in the University was minimal and, in the words of Dr Hardie thirty-two years previously, that 'without fairly close scrutiny of a black gown the distinctions are by no means obvious'.⁵² It can only be assumed that the change was driven by the desire to keep costs down, either from the robemakers whilst updating their stock or from students who would be purchasing and renting gowns, or indeed both. The student population had also exceeded the initial estimate of 5,000⁵³ to just tipping over 7,000 come the end of the 1997,⁵⁴ which may have caused the review of prices and stock. This was followed shortly with the removal of academic dress from the regulations in 1998,⁵⁵ to the academic Registry office, which will be discussed later.

2.5 *Developments in academic dress between 1998 and 2008*

On 11 June 2008 the Registrar's office presented paper S07/08 – 242 to 'seek retrospective approval by the Senate of amendments to the Official Academic Dress which have occurred since 1998, when as part of the regulations they were last formally revised'.⁵⁶ The report also dealt with a number of other issues, such as changing the academic dress of the professional doctorate degree awards and also seeking delegation of approval of academic dress to the Academic Registrar, with only reports submitted to the Senate.⁵⁷

2.5.1 *First-degree/undergraduate masters*⁵⁸

This was to take the form of the standard MSc hood ([s7], old gold lined with pale blue taffeta) with the addition of olive-green edging. This is a good compromise between the schemes as it is considered halfway between a bachelor's and master's degree. This hood was created as a result of the effects of the 2001 Quality Assurance Agencies, Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, which categorized the learning outcomes for a masters' level qualification.⁵⁹ As a result of this the University's MEng, MArch, and MPharm degrees were given the status of an undergraduate masters', though the University retains the MEng and

52 Hardie, letter dated 30 March 1965, Burgon Archives SHAW.

53 Moore, p. 50.

54 University of Bath, Annual Report 1997/8, Bath University Press.

55 University Regulations 1997, University Press, University Archives.

56 University Archives.

57 This corresponds with the removal of academic dress from the regulations, which are controlled by Senate.

58 These are traditionally called first-degree masters; however, the University has consistently referred to them throughout as undergraduate masters; the author will retain the institution's nomenclature.

59 This specified learning outcomes for M-level (master's) degrees and advised that the title 'Master' should only be used for qualifications that met those learning outcomes in full.

MArch hoods in principle. Additional degrees were also pulled into the undergraduate masters pool in addition to those above. These had all been introduced since 1980 and whilst no official record exists of what hood design they would have worn it is reasonable to assume they would have had the MSc hood, all being of a science nature. These are: MBiochem, MBiol, MChem, MMath, MPharmacol, and MPhys. The undergraduate masters wear the Cambridge MA gown [m2].

2.5.2 MRes and Foundation degrees

The MRes award was introduced in 2006 and at one point had adopted a gold edging onto the MSc design, as described in Shaw III.⁶⁰ However, this design would prove to be short-lived as it was changed to the MSc hood design in 2008. In 2006 the University also introduced the Foundation degree, for which none of the existing hoods would be suitable, given that the scheme started at a bachelors' degree as the lowest qualification. The problem was solved by creating a hood that is old gold grosgrain lined with old gold grosgrain in the standard shape [s7].

2.5.3 Doctors

In 1998 the University introduced its first professional doctorate, the EdD. The gown would follow that of the PhD, 'being of lightweight medium crimson cloth of the Oxford shape, however with olive green edging (of 1") on the outer edges of the facings and the upper edges of the cuffs of the gown'. The hood [s7] would be similar again to a PhD made of old gold grosgrain lined with medium crimson taffeta, however with olive-green edging applied to the out turn. Quite why it was chosen to be olive-green edging and not orange edging is not known, though it would prove fortuitous⁶¹ in the future, as we shall see.

In 2005 the University created the DBA; as with the EdD the basis of the gown was the PhD gown and hood but with blue edging, which complemented the MBA hood colours.

By 2008 the University had four professional doctorates, the EdD, DBA and also the DHealth and DEng; it is unknown when the latter two were introduced, though it is reasonable to assume it was in 2008, given no mention of other designs.⁶² It was decided that all professional doctorates should wear the same academic dress, as it was not considered important to distinguish between the awards, but identifiable as not being a PhD (or vice versa).⁶³ The approach proposed was to continue to use the EdD gown and hood, being the first to be designed, going forward. This was also agreed with Ede & Ravenscroft, who noted that it was a similar approach to that at other universities and could also be easily expanded to new degrees. Students who had the previous DBA academic dress were entitled to continue to wear it. It is also worth noting that the University chose the same olive-green edging on both its undergraduate

60 N. Groves (ed.), *Shaw's Academical Dress of Great Britain and Ireland*, 3rd edn, 2 vols (London: Burgon Society, 2011–14), Vol. I, p. 73.

61 In that a degree-specific colour was chosen, but that the olive-green was chosen (which has unofficially become the second colour of the University).

62 Though it is possible that the DEng shared the PhD academic dress prior to this, given the University's history of engineering qualifications.

63 University of Bath, Senate Paper S07/08 – 242, 11 June 2008, University Archives.

masters' hoods and its professional doctorates' hoods, which is the main colour seen on all bachelors' hoods.

2.5.4 *Medicine and Surgery*

Two other changes were brought about in the annotated proposed regulations,⁶⁴ though not specifically mentioned in the covering report. The MD gown would be updated to have pink edging as opposed to deep crimson edging as originally designed.⁶⁵ Evidence of this update can be seen in a design made by Ede & Ravenscroft in 2007, with its first use *honoris causa* recorded in 2008. A further curiosity is added with the MSurg⁶⁶ gown and hood, which are of the PhD design but with pale blue edging applied (the same shade as the shell of the masters' hood, again showing the versatility of the designs and standard colours to represent levels); again designs can be traced back to Ede & Ravenscroft in 2007, but existed in the 1998 regulations too. As with Music, the University possesses no school of medicine so it is understood that these are only awarded as an honorary degree. As of 2021 no MSurg honorary degrees have been awarded.⁶⁷ This also helps to explain why the MSurg robes are based on the PhD set and not a master's set.

Additional consideration was given to honorary degree gowns. The 2008 paper also sought to allow honorary DEng degrees the right to wear the DSc robes, the first honorary degree being awarded in 2000 to James Dyson, again tying back in with the University's past of being a science and technology college, along with science and engineering being closely aligned. Additionally, in 2008 the University assigned the academic dress of the DLitt (yellow edging) to the DArt degree also, again Arts and Letters being aligned. Records indicate this was first awarded in 1996 to Nick Park, though curiously it does not appear in the 1998 regulations at all.

2.6 *2008 to the present*

After the consolidation efforts of 2008 the University's academic dress has had only a few changes made to it.⁶⁸ As predicted by Ede & Ravenscroft, indeed the University has added two additional professional doctorates to the group who are entitled to that design, these are the DPRP (Doctor of Public Research and Policy) and the DClInPsy. An additional higher doctorate has also been created, a DUniv. The design for its academic dress is based on the DSc design. However, it has 1" black edging applied to both the gown's facings and cuffs and to the hood. It is assumed black was chosen because it is one of the few colours remaining at this point not associated with a previous hood or faculty (see Appendix A). The DUniv appears to be the most recent update to the reg-

⁶⁴ These were the 1998 academic dress paper, which the Senate Paper S07/08 was seeking to update [changes made are represented in bold italic text within the paper presented to the Senate].

⁶⁵ It is unknown why deep crimson was chosen given that the gown is of crimson and it would not have stood out well at a distance.

⁶⁶ MSurg is noted in the designs of Ede & Ravenscroft, 2007; this abbreviation is also a deviation from the usual MCh/ChM designation.

⁶⁷ University of Bath, Honorary Graduates 1966–69; 1970–79; 1980–89; 1990–99; 2000–09; 2010–2019; 2020–present. Some universities with Medical faculties award the MD and MSurg (ChM/MCh) together, it is not clear from the records whether Bath does this.

⁶⁸ University of Bath, Senate Paper S07/08 – 242, 11 June 2008, University Archives.

ulations, the first three new doctorates having been awarded in 2018.⁶⁹ There has also been the removal of partially soft square caps [h5] for women, as discussed above.⁷⁰

3. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that several parties influenced the design of the University's academic dress. In particular, original documents in the University's and Burgon Society's Archives and quoted in this article disprove the claim that the robes for Bath 'were designed by George Shaw'.⁷¹ Whilst the origins of the hood designs and full-dress robes remain elusive, it is highly likely that the Ceremonies and Academic Dress Committee, and Dr A. M. Hardie in particular, were responsible for them. George Shaw did propose the designs adopted for the bachelors', masters' and doctoral undress gowns, and Ede & Ravenscroft designed the officers' robes along with offering advice to the University.

It appears that the system of academic dress has now settled, with new degrees being easily added to existing schemes and indeed being removed and consolidated elsewhere (e.g., the MRes and future professional doctors). The scheme itself is not complex and weathered the first fifty-four years of the University well, without straying far from its initial designs. It has also maintained the University colour of old gold and additionally unofficially adopted the olive-green as its secondary colour—appearing on all bachelors' hoods, the first degree masters' hood and indeed all professional doctorates' dress. The only outlier to the original scheme is the DMus gown. It could arguably be scarlet with edging of cream damask, which would be considerably cheaper than the full damask gown. However, the cream damask gown is again proof of Bath's strong links to the past and also a nice re-establishment of the traditional design. It is a shame that the University has moved away from its unique gowns designed by Dr Shaw, the [b7] and [m16] patterns, which live in their unique coding as per the Groves classification system. Perhaps some day the University will return to its roots and readopt these as part of its lost identity.

69 University of Bath, Honorary Graduates 2000-09; 2010-2019.

70 University of Bath, Official Academic Dress, 18 November 2020.

71 Groves, *Shaw's Academical Dress*, p. 72.

Appendix A: Bath hoods

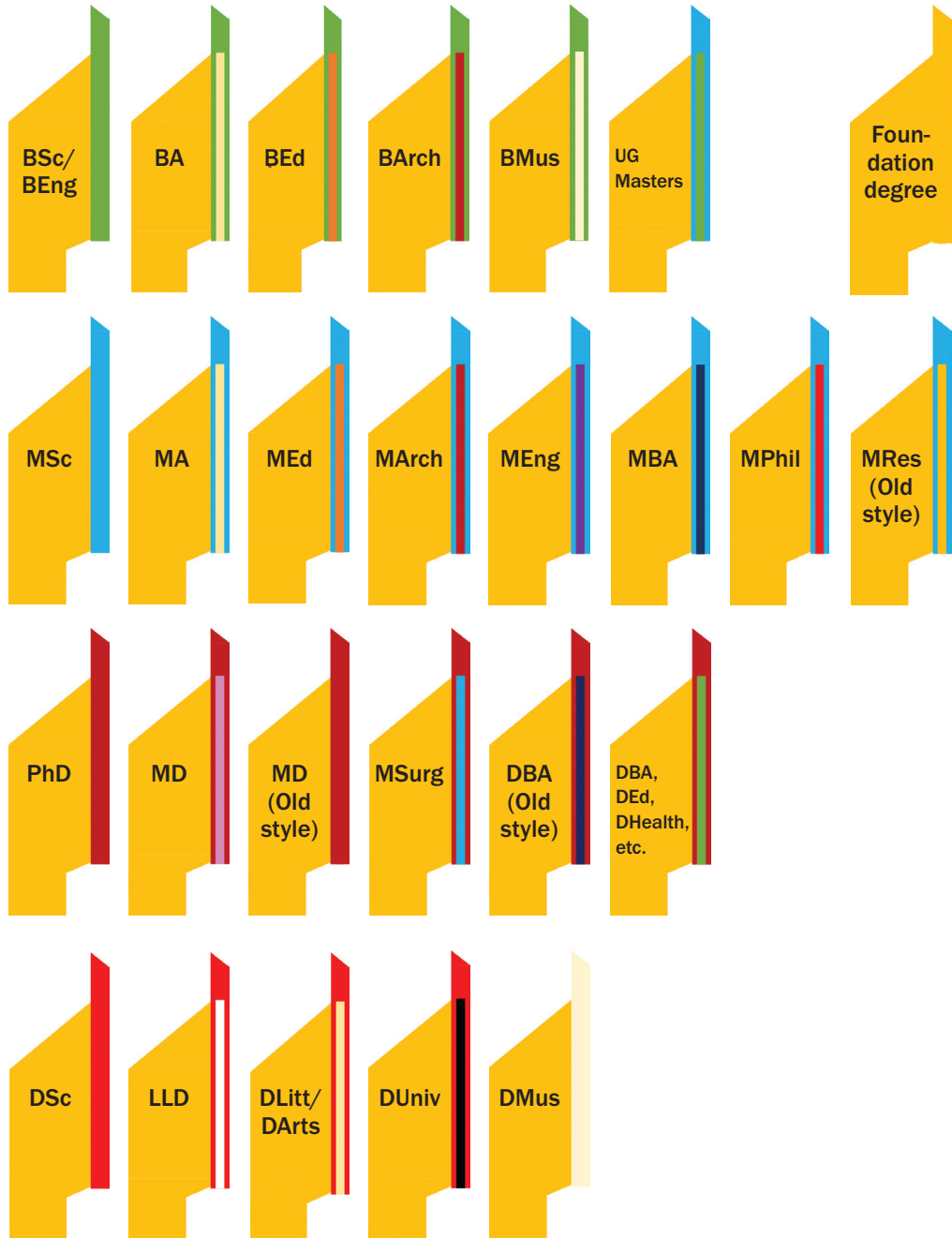


Illustration by the author

Appendix B: Current University of Bath, official academic dress (2020)

The below current academic dress has been taken from the University's current scheme, the author has added in references to the Groves classification system to aid the reader.⁷²

1. The Chancellor The official dress of the Chancellor shall be a robe of black all-silk satin damask with 3" wide gold lace facings and gold ornamentation; a black velvet square cap [h1] trimmed with gold lace and gold bullion button and tassel.

2. The Pro-Chancellors The official dress of the Pro-Chancellors shall be a robe of black all-silk satin damask with 1" wide gold lace facings and gold ornamentation; a black velvet square cap [h1] with gold bullion button and tassel.

3. The Vice-Chancellor The official dress of the Vice-Chancellor shall be a robe of black all-silk satin damask with 1¾" wide gold lace facings and gold ornamentation; a black velvet square cap [h1] trimmed with gold lace and gold button with gold tassel.

4. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor The official dress of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor shall be a robe of black silk ottoman with ½" wide gold lace; a black velvet mortar-board with gold button and black tassel.

5. The Treasurer The official dress of the Treasurer shall be a robe of black silk ottoman trimmed with 1⅝" wide gold lace; a black velvet square cap [h1] with gold button and black tassel.

6. The Pro-Vice-Chancellors The official dress of the Pro-Vice-Chancellors shall be a robe of black silk ottoman with ½" wide gold lace; a black velvet square cap [h1] with gold button and black tassel.

7. The Marshal The official dress of the Marshal shall be a gown of black stuff of traditional Master shape; facings and yoke trimmed with 1" gold ribbon; a black cloth square cap [h1] trimmed with gold ribbon and gold button with gold tassel.

8. The Chair of Council The official dress of the Chair of Council shall be a robe of black silk ottoman, trimmed with 1" wide gold lace; a black square cap [h1] with black button and gold tassel.

9. Doctors of Science, Doctors of Letters and the honorary degrees of Doctors of Arts, Doctors of Engineering, Doctors of Laws, Doctors of Music and Doctors of the University:

(a) A gown

⁷² Official Academic Dress of the University of Bath, 2020. available at <www.bath.ac.uk/publications/official-academic-dress/attachments/official-academic-dress-summary.pdf> [accessed 4 August 2021].

- (i) in the case of Doctor of Science and Doctor of Engineering, of lightweight scarlet cloth, Oxford shape [d2], with gold grosgrain facings 5” wide and 9” cuffs
- (ii) in the case of Doctor of Laws, as for the Doctor of Science but with 1” wide white silk edging on facings and cuffs
- (iii) in the case of Doctor of Letters and Doctor of Arts, as for Doctor of Science but with 1” wide yellow silk edging on facings and cuffs
- (iv) in the case of Doctor of Music, lightweight cream damask, Oxford shape, with old gold grosgrain facings 5” wide and” cuffs.
- (v) in the case of Doctor of the University, as for Doctor of Science but with 1 inch wide black edging on facings and cuffs.
- (b) A hood of old gold grosgrain of the Oxford ‘simple’ [s7] pattern; lined:
 - (i) in the case of Doctor of Science and Doctor of Engineering with scarlet taffeta
 - (ii) in the case of Doctor of Laws, with scarlet taffeta with white edging
 - (iii) in the case of Doctor of Letters and Doctor of Arts, with scarlet taffeta with yellow edging
 - (iv) in the case of Doctor of Music, with cream damask.
 - (v) in the case of Doctor of the University, with scarlet taffeta with black edging.
- (c) A black velvet bonnet [h2] with gold cord and tassel.

10. Doctors of Philosophy, Doctors of Medicine, Masters of Surgery and the professional doctorates — Doctors of Business Administration, Doctors of Clinical Psychology, Doctors of Education, Doctors of Engineering, Doctors of Health and Doctors of Policy Research and Practice:

- (a) A gown of lightweight medium crimson cloth, Oxford shape [d2]:
 - (i) in the case of Doctor of Philosophy, with old gold grosgrain facings 5” wide and 9” cuffs
 - (ii) in the cases of Doctor of Business Administration, Doctor of Clinical Psychology, Doctor of Education, Doctor of Engineering, and Doctor of Health and Doctor of Policy Research and Practice as for Doctor of Philosophy but with 1” wide olive-green silk edging on facings and cuffs
 - (iii) in the case of Doctor of Medicine, as for Doctor of Philosophy but with 1” wide pink silk edging on facings and cuffs
 - (iv) in the case of Master of Surgery, as for Doctor of Philosophy but with 1” wide pale blue silk edging on facings and cuffs.
- (b) A hood of old gold grosgrain of the Oxford ‘simple’ [s7] pattern; lined:
 - (i) in the case of Doctor of Philosophy with medium crimson taffeta
 - (ii) in the cases of Doctor of Business Administration, Doctor of Clinical Psychology, Doctor of Education, Doctor of Engineering, and Doctor of Health and Doctor of Policy Research and Practice with medium crimson taffeta with olive-green edging
 - (iii) in the case of Doctor of Medicine with medium crimson taffeta with pink edging
 - (iv) in the case of Master of Surgery with medium crimson taffeta with pale blue edging.
- (c) A black velvet bonnet [h2] with silver cord and tassel

11. Academic Undress of Doctors, and Master of Surgery:

- (a) A gown of black stuff of traditional masters shape, with upright sleeve cut of 6”, surmounted by a black cover button with black braid round sleeve cut; bottom of

hanging sleeve cut on the oblique [m16].

(b) A black square cap [h1]

12. Masters (other than Masters of Surgery and Undergraduate Masters' Degrees):

(a) A gown of black stuff of traditional Cambridge Master shape [m2]

(b) A hood of old gold grosgrain of the Oxford 'simple' [s7] pattern; lined

(i) in the case of Master of Science and Master of Research with pale blue taffeta

(ii) in the case of Master of Architecture with pale blue taffeta with medium crimson edging

(iii) in the case of Master of Arts with pale blue taffeta with yellow edging

(iv) in the case of Master of Education with pale blue taffeta with orange edging

(v) in the case of Master of Engineering with pale blue taffeta with purple edging

(vi) in the case of Master of Philosophy with pale blue taffeta with red edging

(vii) in the case of Master of Business Administration with pale blue taffeta with dark blue edging.

(c) A black square cap [h1]

13. Undergraduate Masters:

(a) A gown of black stuff of traditional Cambridge Master shape [m2]

(b) A hood of old gold grosgrain of the Oxford 'simple' [s7] pattern; lined with pale blue taffeta with olive-green edging

(c) A black square cap [h1]

14. Bachelors:

(a) A gown of black stuff, Cambridge shape [b1], with plain sleeve⁷³

(b) A hood of old gold grosgrain, Oxford 'simple' [s7] pattern; lined

(i) in the case of Bachelor of Engineering/Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Pharmacy, with light olive-green taffeta

(ii) in the case of Bachelor of Architecture, with light olive-green taffeta with medium crimson edging

(iii) in the case of Bachelor of Arts with light olive-green taffeta with yellow edging

(iv) in the case of Bachelor of Education with light olive-green taffeta with orange edging

(v) in the case of Bachelor of Music, with light olive-green taffeta with cream damask edging

(c) A black square cap [h1]

15. Foundation Degrees:

(a) A gown of black stuff, Cambridge [b1] shape, with plain sleeve

(b) A hood of old gold grosgrain, Oxford 'simple' [s7] pattern

(c) A black square cap [h1]

⁷³ As mentioned above, the bachelors' gown is a basic gown [b1] omitting the slit above the opening which is characteristic of the Cambridge bachelors' gown [b2]. The author has retained the University's nomenclature.

16. Undergraduates:

(a) A gown of black stuff, Oxford scholar's pattern [u2], knee-length with short sleeves

(b) A black square cap [h1]

17. Bedell:

(a) A gown of dark blue cloth trimmed with ½" gold lace.

(b) A dark blue cloth bonnet [b2] with gold cord and tassel.

18. General Provisions

When wearing academic dress, members of the University, including graduating students, should wear a dark suit, trousers or skirt, with a collared white shirt or blouse. If a shirt is worn this should be fastened at the neck with a tie. Dark shoes should be worn. Alternatively, traditional national costume or services uniform may be worn.

Appendix C: Examples of Bath academic dress *From the Author's Collection*



BSc



BA



BArch



Foundation



MSc



MA



MEng



MPhil



PhD



MSurg



MD



MD



DSc



LLD



DMus

Front of the gown,
demonstrating the
positioning of the
ribbons.