Video transcript: Accessibility at convocation

On convocation day, all graduands follow eight steps from check-in to graduation.

SFU ceremony organizers do their best to ensure everyone’s experience is special, and offer this video to help you prepare to attend.

Students who would like assistance with the convocation process are encouraged to fill in the request form, downloadable from www.sfu.ca/convocation/accessibility, or register through the Centre for Accessible Learning.

Please submit the form one week prior to your ceremony to receive information about the graduand route and to have the option to get your regalia in advance.

Now, on to the eight stages.

In Stage 1, bring your student ID with you to pick up your parchment in the Academic Quadrangle, east concourse near Renaissance coffee. The parchment is your degree certificate.

A small white card with your full name and a bar code on it will be given to you as well. Do not lose it. Present it to the announcer when you’re about to cross the stage.

Next, in stage 2, take the stairs down to Saywell Hall Atrium, or make your way to the elevator that will take you down to get your gown, hood, and cap, which is known as the regalia. Depending on your needs, an usher may be assigned to you for the event, provided that the Registrar’s Office or the Centre for Accessible Learning has received your request form.

At this time please explain any particular assistance you may require.

At stage three, volunteers are ready to help you pin the academic hood to your gown. Placement of the hood is particular, so please welcome assistance from the volunteers who will use safety pins to keep it in place.

The tassel on your cap should hang to your left.

In stage four, all of the graduands waiting in the AQ north concourse will be directed over a loud speaker to form lines in alphabetical order by degree and by last name. Expect the concourse to be crowded, noisy, and a bit chaotic as the lines form.

Depending on the procession route, two or more flights of stairs will be taken. If taking an elevator is the best option for you, your usher will introduce you to the graduand ahead of you
in line and give that student a red card to visibly carry. Later, the usher will watch for the red card when it’s time to help you rejoin the procession.

In stage five, the procession will pause at the top of the stairs overlooking Convocation Mall to wait for the ceremony to begin. Your usher will guide you to the next elevator to rejoin the procession at Convocation Mall level.

Graduands will be led across the stage and through the gathering of family and friends and will be seated in a special area.

If using a wheelchair, you’ll be positioned at the end of a row. You’ll resume your regular position in the line in the next step.

In stage six, when it’s time to line up to cross the stage, a portrait photo will be taken of each graduand by a professional photographer. A marker on the ground will show where to position yourself. Hold your parchment with the embossment facing toward the camera.

Now, in stage seven, it’s time to cross the stage. If it’s your preference the usher will remain with you. As you approach, hand the announcer the name card given to you at check-in. The announcer will read out your name as you cross the stage.

You may now flip your tassel from the left to the right.

Leave the stage via the ramp and return to your seat.

After the ceremony has concluded, graduands are free to find their loved ones in the crowd. It may take some time to find each other, so decide in advance if you’ll find them or they find you.

In the final stage, stage 8, please return your regalia to the north AQ – follow the signs to “Regalia Return”.

Remember, keep your cap!

Congratulations on your achievement. All of the convocation organizers and volunteers wish you the very best in your next endeavor.