

# ATS Grad Handbook



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## Grad Council

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The grad council is made up of student representatives that have gone through an application and selection process. Students are asked to write a letter of intent outlining their interests and potential contributions to the council. They also need to ask one of their teachers to submit a teacher reference form. The selection process takes place in June, and the Grad Sponsor Teachers will announce the names of the 7-9 successful candidates. The Grad Council members will be responsible for the following:

- Meeting once a week to participate in planning activities
- Working with teacher sponsors to plan each of the grad events
- Communicating information to the grad class through posters, announcements and social media
- Checking in on a regular basis with sponsor teachers to ensure all tasks are completed
- Coordinating volunteers to assist with various events throughout the year

## Grad Sponsor Teachers

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Grad Sponsor Teachers are teachers who have volunteered their time to oversee Grad Events. If you are interested in helping them out, please contact them directly.

### Convocation

Rebecca Toews                      rebecca.toews@abbyschools.ca

### Dry Grad

Stan Wiebe                              stan.wiebe@abbyschools.ca

### Prom

Ashley Dueckman                      ashley.dueckman@abbyschools.ca

### Grad Cruise

Rebecca Toews                      rebecca.toews@abbyschools.ca

### Grand March

This is an optional parent organized / run event.

## Counsellor Assemblies/Forms

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### Counselling

If you need help or just need someone to talk to in regard to any of the life challenges that can come our way, please drop into the counselling center or make an appointment simply by emailing your counsellor. This works the same for questions in regard to courses, career planning, post-secondary applications, and scholarships.

### TVR Form and Graduation Credits

During your Grade 12 year it is important for you to know your graduation status and whether or not you have enough credits to graduate. Please drop by the counselling center at an appropriate time and ask for your "credit sheet". During the year your counsellors will be meeting with all grade 12's to inform you of a variety of important items including your credits, career choices and scholarship opportunities. Your TVR is a Ministry of Education document and is a list of all the courses you have taken and completed in the Grad Program (Grades 10-12).

### PSI Form

In March your counsellors will direct you to complete your Post Secondary Institutions Choices Form online during homeroom. This form allows the Ministry of Education to send your transcript to the university/college of your choice. If you are absent, you may complete it online anytime before June. Please see the counsellors for more information.

### Scholarships

Those interested in applying for a scholarship or bursary please see your counsellor in September. For most students the greatest chance to receive financial help is through the Abbotsford Community Foundation Awards Program. In Feb/March there will be information meetings and the Awards Booklet will be given to each Grade 12 student. Please listen for announcements regarding the dates.

## Yearbook

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**Grad Message:** This is a chance to leave your mark in the yearbook! You have approximately 50 words (may change depending on size of grad class) to include thank you's to parents/friends/teachers, quotes, favourite memories, etc.

**Baby Photo:** Your baby photo will appear beside your grad photo – please email the Yearbook teacher your baby photo or bring it in to be scanned. *(Note: you will also need three photos spanning your life to date for the slideshow that will play as you cross the stage to receive your diploma! So while you are sifting through baby photos you may want to keep this in mind.)*

## **Grad Activities Form**

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Students will receive the Grad Activities Form in September. This will be posted on the Grad Google Classroom. The form will ask questions about what events each grad would like to attend, how many guest tickets will be purchased, and grad gown sizes so that we can budget for space, food, etc. **It is important that you fill it out and submit it ASAP.** If you decide to change your mind about any of your choices please let Mrs. Toews know right away and have her change the “master list”. Keep in mind that most grads participate in all the events so get your form in so that you do not miss out!

## **Grad Photos**

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Grad photos will be separate from the regular school photos and will occur in January. Sign-up for a sitting will be in December or early January, keep your eyes open for the sign-up sheet! Retakes will be available.

## **Grad Song**

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Grads can, if they wish, choose a song which will capture the moment for them. This song may be played at grad events. Your grad council will set up a vote toward the beginning of the year.

## **Graduation Status**

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**If you have any questions about your graduation status, please see your counsellor immediately** to ensure you have all the credits necessary to graduate. Information on credits and graduation requirements is available on the Student Services section of the ATS website.

NOTE: Students who do not have the required credits for graduation may be excluded from Convocation.

## **Message to Parents**

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We know that you, as parents of graduating students, are very proud and excited about this important milestone! We strongly encourage you to get involved and help out with the Grad Activities. There are lots of places help is needed and your input is always appreciated.

It is helpful for the Grad Sponsor Teachers to have an up-to-date list of parent email addresses in order to communicate important grad announcements to parents in a timely

manner. Grad announcements are also made in the school newsletters, in the school announcements, on Instagram and on the Grad Microsoft Teams.

**Important Note:** We expect our grad class to be leaders in the school and set a good example with the choices they make. Grade 12 students who choose, in their final year, to attend school or a school event having consumed drugs or alcohol or participate in other such inappropriate behaviours may not be allowed to take part in the school-based grad events including Convocation and Prom.

## Valedictorian

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### Choosing a Valedictorian

Students may nominate themselves or may be nominated by other students. Nomination forms will be distributed in January, and the successful candidate will be announced shortly after.

### What does it mean to be the Valedictorian at our school?

A Valedictorian is a representative of the graduating class who speaks on behalf of the graduates at Convocation. This honour is bestowed on an outstanding member of the graduating class who is nominated by his or her peers and approved by staff.

## Convocation

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Students who have completed the requirements necessary to graduate will participate in Convocation. Please see the counsellors if you have any questions about graduation requirements.

**Date: TBD**

**Time: TBD**

**Place: TBD**

### Things to know:

1. You will pick up your gown at school a day or two before the event, so take pictures with your friends and family before you come as it will be dark after the ceremony.
2. Come to the venue already dressed in your cap and gown with clothes underneath.
3. When arriving at the venue grads should go straight to the gowning room.

### Childhood Photos and Write-Up

A slideshow will be playing that will display a series of childhood photos as each graduate crosses the stage. Each graduate must give the school three childhood photos in January. This must be done before they are given their Dry Grad ticket.

A message, written by the student, will be read out as each graduate crosses the stage. The write up is limited to 30 words. This write up (as opposed to the yearbook write up) tends to be a bit more formal. It should be written in third person (so refer to yourself either by name or by She/He - not I). Most people like to include a thank you to parents and teachers. The write-up should be submitted to Mrs. Toews. Students who have not submitted a convocation write-up by the assigned due date will have a generic message read out as they cross the stage to maintain the continuity of the ceremony.

**NOTE:** Students will not receive their tickets to the Prom and Convocation until they have submitted their Convocation Photos write up.

**Guest Tickets:**

Due to limited space, family and friends will require tickets to watch the grads cross the stage. Each student will receive **two tickets – with extras being available for purchase.**

Here is the procedure for obtaining tickets:

1. The tickets will be distributed by Mrs. Toews a week before Convocation.
2. In order to receive your tickets, you must have handed-in the following:
  - a. Grad fees
  - b. School fees
  - c. Computer fees
  - d. Outstanding library/text books
  - e. Convocation Write-up/Photos

**Caps & Gowns:**

To cross the stage for this formal ceremony, we need to order you a cap and gown. To do this, you need to fill out the Grad Activity Form which was discussed earlier in this handbook. The form must be submitted to Mrs. Toews via Microsoft Teams at the beginning of the school year so that the appropriately-sized gown can be ordered for you. **You will be given your cap and gown at school a day or two before Convocation.**

**Convocation Rehearsal:**

A mandatory rehearsal will take place a day or two before convocation. Please make sure you are available for this rehearsal. If you have a part-time job, you may need to get your shift at work covered that day.

*Why do you need to be there?*

1. You need to see where to go, what line-up you are in and who you are standing beside. We also need all the bodies there so we can see how you will fit in the pews.
2. You will also have to learn the procedure for crossing the stage and accepting awards. You will be nervous enough as it is so let's practice!

**Convocation Timeline:**

TBD – depending on date and venue



# Prom

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**Place: Newlands Golf & Country Club**

**Date: Thursday, June 6th**

**Meeting Location: ATS**

Prom (the grad dinner and dance) is a formal event where students get to dress up and spend a very memorable evening together. Grads will share in a beautiful buffet dinner, there will be a few speeches and then grads will dance the night away! ALL grads and their dates are bussed to and from the event. There are no exceptions. Grad Fees must be paid in full before the event, and before table seating requests can be made.

## Timeline

3:45 – Arrive at ATS for Grand March photo opportunities

5:00 – Group Photo in back field

5:30 – Bus leaves for venue with all grads and their dates (no exceptions)

6:00 – Arrive at venue – photo opportunity

7:00 – Sit down for dinner

7:30 – Speeches and presentations

8:00 – Dancing!

10:00 pm – Bus leaves with all grads and their dates for ATS (no exceptions)

10:30 pm Bus arrives at ATS (grads should have cars/rides waiting)



## Prom Tickets:

1. Students may pick-up their tickets if they have submitted the following:
  - a. Convocation Write-up/Photos
  - b. Grad fees
  - c. School fees
  - d. Computer fees
  - e. Outstanding library/text books
2. There is an application process for guest tickets:
  - o **Dinner Date Tickets:** A guest refers to anyone not currently in grade 12 at ASS. Prom Date Request Forms will be by Mrs. Toews approximately one month prior to the event. All Prom Date Request Forms will be submitted to administration for approval before tickets will be issued. Invited guests must be grade 11 or older (younger guests will not be approved by administration).

**Dinner/Dance Guest Tickets cost \$250 per person for dates.**

## Group Photos:

Grads, if you wish to order 8x10 Prom Group Photos please obtain order envelopes from the school and return them with money by the middle of May.

## Grad Fees

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Grad fees cover the cost of the two main grad events: Convocation and prom as well as smaller in-school grad activities throughout the year. Below is a general breakdown of costs to give you an idea of where your money is going!

### **Convocation (\$60)**

- Venue rental
- Sound and video services
- Certificates
- Programs
- Decorations
- Cap & Gown
- Refreshments for dignitaries

### **Prom (Approx. \$250)**

- Rental of venue
- DJ services
- Tickets
- Transportation (will likely need a charter bus again)
- Most Likely To trophies
- Grand March decorations

### **Incidentals (Approx. \$30)**

- Supplies for Grad Week
- Buses for Grad Traditional March
- Grad Legacy
- Other events planned by Grad Council

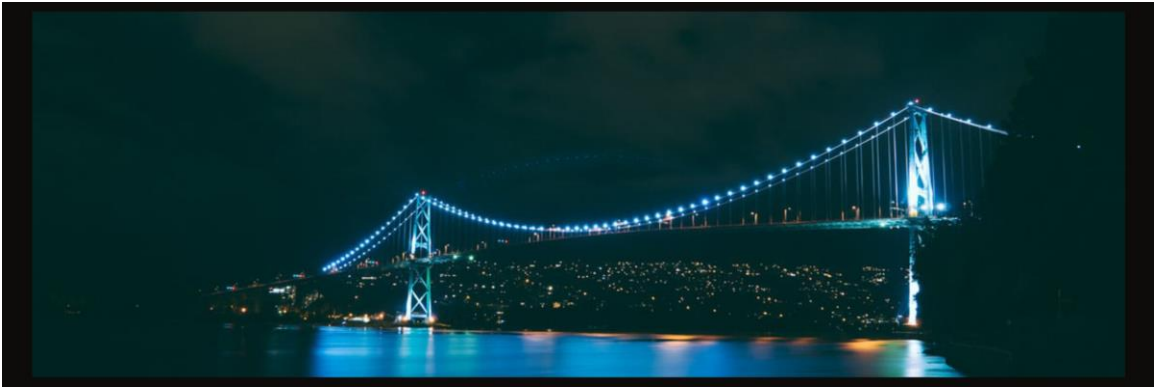
## Optional Grad Events

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Grad Fees cover the two major grad events: convocation and prom. Grads will need to purchase a ticket to participate in any additional grad related activities.

### Grad Cruise

Tickets will be sold for a Vancouver Harbour cruise on a first-come-first-serve basis as there is limited space on the boat. No outside guests are allowed so that as many ATS grads as possible will have the opportunity to attend this optional grad event.



### Dry Grad

Tickets will be sold for the Dry Grad each year. No outside guests are allowed at this optional grad event. This is an evening event filled with fun activities and food. This year it will be held at the school and include a catered meal.



# Grad Checklist

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## September

- ✗ Grad Council Members will meet weekly to plan events.
- ✗ Download and read through the Grad Handbook.
- ✗ Grad wear logo design competition
- ✗ Order your grad wear! Keep your eyes open for order forms and deadlines.
- ✗ Start digging out three photos of yourself at different ages for the slideshow that will play while you cross the stage at Convocation, and a baby photo for the yearbook.
- ✗ Check your graduation status with the counsellor.
- ✗ Fill out the Grad Activities Form on Microsoft Teams.
- ✗ Check out the Grad 2024 Teams for information on grad events, scholarships, etc.



## October

- ✗ Baby photo & yearbook write-up due to Mrs Solomatenko
- ✗ Grad Cruise – first come first serve! Buy your ticket early!

## November

- ✗ Fill in the Transcript Verification Form for the counsellors (assembly)

## January

- ✗ Assessment week for Semester one
- ✗ Nominate your class Valedictorian/Historians
- ✗ Submit your 3 childhood photos and convocation write up
- ✗ Dry Grad

## February

- ✗ Grad photo retakes

## March

- ✗ Spring break!

## April

- ✗ Submit your Prom Date Request Form and Family Guest Request Form
- ✗ Vote for your Grad Song

## May

- ✗ Submit convocation write-ups (to be read as you cross the stage) to Mrs. Toews
- ✗ Pick up Dinner/Dance tickets
- ✗ If you wish to order 8x10 Prom group photos please obtain order envelopes from school and return them with money by the middle of May.

## June

- ✘ Attend Prom (This event is traditionally where students dress up in evening gowns and tuxedos or suits).
- ✘ Pick up Convocation tickets – your grad fees must have been paid in full! Attend the Convocation Rehearsal
- ✘ Participate in Convocation  
This is the event where students dress in caps and gowns and receive their diplomas.
- ✘ Final exams/assessments

