Matriculation 2026

Remarks by President Tim Vine
Delivered September 22 & 23, 2026

Welcome to your matriculation ceremony at the University of King's College! Thank you for being here!

For anyone who hasn't had the chance to meet me yet, I am President Tim. This is my first year at King's too, so together we'll experience this time-honoured King's tradition for the first time.

I am joined today for this celebration by the other officers of Matriculation, who will guide us through—especially the parts in Latin: The Public Orator, Dr. Peter O'Brien; Vice-President Prof. Tim Currie, Registrar, Ms. Julia Town; and Librarian, Ms. Tracy Lenfesty.

Thanks to our student piper Ryan Strong for leading the academic procession. I want to also welcome the other members of the procession: Emily Pictou Roberts, Indigenous Student Support and Outreach Coordinator; Eunice Abaga (alumni representative/Sept. 22) and Alex Long (alumni representative/Sept. 23); and our very special guest, Catharine Martin.

It is my honour to now call upon her to welcome us to the territory.

Welcome and Introduction

Thank you, Cathy, for your generous welcome today—and for being a part of this tradition that is so special for all new King's students. Thank you for everything you do to support and encourage the vital work of Indigenization and Reconciliation at King's and Dalhousie.

This spirit of living in community is what's at the heart of Matriculation. Although, it may have started out as a clerical necessity.

Matricula is the word for a "register" in Latin. The tradition of formally registering students in a matricula dates to medieval times at universities such as Oxford and Cambridge. Here at King's, this tradition began in the college's early days on the Windsor campus. The first matricula dates back to 1803.

Of course, we at King's know that every book is about so much more than just the letters and numbers on the page. Every book tells a story. And our matriculas contain the story of King's.

Each year, we open this book to start a new chapter for a new academic year—and you are all the main characters. What happens next is up to you!

That's why Matriculation is about so much more than writing names in a book. It's about our history, and our community—and all you bring to it. That's well worth a ceremony and a celebration!

Today's ceremony also includes a Latin oath that encompasses the reciprocal promises we make to each other to live together and learn together in community. It's how we formally welcome you, and embrace you, at King's—not just for the years that you are on campus, but for life.

The addition of the King's oath is more recent, although inspired by the Matriculation oaths from Oxford, Cambridge and the oldest Scottish universities. We have our Public Orator, Dr. Peter O'Brien, to thank for writing it—and it is Peter who will now guide us through it.

Post-ceremony

I'm honoured to be the first to congratulate you! You are now members of the college! I hope this will become a bonding memory for you, with these people and this place.

After all, isn't that what traditions are for? To commemorate a moment together, to celebrate shared moments through ritual and commit them to memory. To be able to tell a good story.

Nobody loves a good story more than a King's student! And it's in this moment together, we're finding our place in the ongoing story of King's. One that grows richer with each of you in it.

The unique perspective that each of you brings, and will share in conversations, in essays, in lectures, makes our community richer. That's essential to the common goal that has brought us here—a desire to learn, to grow and to better understand ourselves and one another.

There's a key aspect of tradition that can sometimes be overlooked—it is something that needs to bend enough to still fit.

Without change, traditions become brittle—and they break.

Consider some ways this very tradition of Matriculation has evolved over the years, by necessity and by desire.

King's original Matricula thankfully survived the fire of 1920 that destroyed the Windsor campus, precipitated our move to Kjipuktuk, and initiated the close association we have grown into with Dalhousie University.

In 2020, another historical event threatened the very nature of this tradition. COVID safety protocols meant that the King's community was unable to gather for the ceremony. The students,

faculty and administrative found creative ways to make it happen anyway—virtual, and live streamed. Not the same, for sure, but it still happened. That year, King's story was all about finding ways to stay together—so very reflective of the promises we make in the Matriculation oath, to serve the precepts of communal life and learning.

In 2021, the tradition resumed in person, and was modified to include second-year students, so that they, too, could experience the ceremony in person—a chapter that illustrated the poignancy of being together. I'm so grateful to be here in person with you today. And I thank everyone who had a hand in bringing us together today.

At the beginning of this gathering, you experienced one of the most significant and meaningful ways this ceremony has evolved—the welcome, not just to King's but to Mi'kma'ki that Elder Ann so graciously offered.

Some of our most important lessons at King's are about what it means to truly be welcomed, and to welcome others in this community. Welcoming, we continue to learn, is not a passive act, but active and ongoing. All the more reason to honour it with a ceremony, as we do today.

I cannot wait to see what each of you brings to the story of King's! Please start by adding your signature to the matricula. Then, all who come after will know that you are a lifetime member of our Collegii Regalis!

You will find the matricula in the foyer of the Arts and Administration Building immediately after this ceremony. If you don't get the opportunity to sign this evening, you can make arrangements with the Registrar's Office for the next two weeks, and after that with library to do so at another time.

Oh, and of course all great traditions and ceremonies must include great food! So please join us, either before or after you've signed the Matricula, for the reception to be held in your honour in the President's Lodge.

The President's Lodge is down the hallway off the foyer of the A and A towards Coburg Road, which will take you through the Senior Common Room and another short hallway that leads to a door with a "President's Lodge" sign on it. You can also get there by going out into the Quad, past Cochran Bay, and up the stairs to the little landing that goes past the Chapel - then through the double doors that will take you to the Lodge's back door.

I look forward to celebrating with you there!