



Department of
Education

**PROTOCOLS FOR
HOSTING DIGNITARIES AND SPECIAL EVENTS**

INTRODUCTION

AN OFFICIAL EVENT

From time to time, Department staff need to organise an official visit, function or event with one or more dignitaries on the guest list.

The information in this document is a reference point when hosting dignitaries or planning official functions and events *typically encountered* by staff.

It is to be used in conjunction with the [Visitors and Intruders on School Premises](#) policy, and advice on Ikon related to [inviting the Minister or dignitaries to your school](#), and [holding an official opening of a new school](#).

Western Australia has a protocol branch to ensure correct protocol is applied at State occasions, visits, ceremonies and official functions. This branch is located within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (www.wa.gov.au).

DEFINITION

DIGNITARY

An important person who should be treated with special courtesy and respect, including, for example, the Governor, Members of Parliament, non-elected local candidates, sports identities, current or former defence force personnel and recipients of honours such as the Order of Australia.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTOCOL

For practical purposes protocol is about following correct procedures to ensure that official (and unofficial) occasions, visits, meetings and functions are planned and conducted in accordance with a set of rules that are formally, socially and culturally accepted and expected by the parties involved. The importance of protocol in fostering positive relations and outcomes should not be underestimated nor overlooked.

VISITS BY THE PREMIER, MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, OTHER MINISTERS OR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

There are two ways in which an official visit by a Minister or Member of Parliament (State or Australian Government) may come about:

1. **The school/office is advised by the Department or the Member's office**
2. **The Department invites the Minister/Member of Parliament**

There are definitive protocols on visits to schools/offices by Members of Parliament.

See [Protocols for Politicians and Candidates for an Election to Visit Public Schools In Western Australia](#).

If any Minister or Member of Parliament contacts the school requesting to visit, the school is required by the [Visitors and Intruders on School Premises](#) policy to follow guidelines set out in Appendix B of the policy.

In summary, for all visits by Members of Parliament except the Minister for Education or local member, principals must advise the member to seek permission for the visit via the office of the Minister for Education, or alternatively the principal should, immediately the request is received, notify the Director of Education, who will in turn notify Ministerial Services.

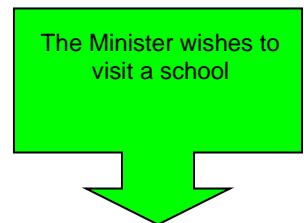
If the Minister for Education plans to visit a school, the principal will be advised by a Departmental

CARETAKER PERIOD

Once an election has been called, the Government goes into a "Caretaker Period". Specific guidelines are published by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet at this time that may deviate from normal procedures.

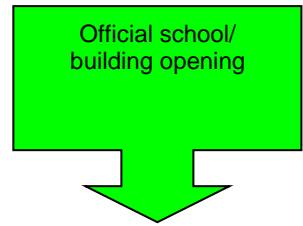
The Department of Education will provide guidelines and advice to all schools when these protocols are in place.

WHEN A REQUEST IS MADE OF A SCHOOL



<p>As per Protocols for Politicians and Candidates for an Election to Visit Public Schools In Western Australia, Members of Parliament may communicate directly with schools located within their electorates.</p> <p>Visits that involve partisan or party political activity are not appropriate.</p>	<p>The Visitors and Intruders on School Premises policy requires schools/offices to follow Appendix B.</p> <p><i>Generally, this requires a school to report immediately to Directors of Education, who will relay the information to the appropriate staff in central office.</i></p> <p>See also Protocols for Politicians and Candidates for an Election to Visit Public Schools In Western Australia.</p>		<p>Principal advised of date and purpose of visit by appropriate staff in central or education regional office.</p> <p><i>The Minister may wish to use the school to launch a specific program. The agenda will be developed around this.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">INFORMAL</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FORMAL</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FORMAL</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FORMAL</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> School liaises with the local Member's office directly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> School awaits advice from the Department before formalising the visit/event. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Central Office confirms details of Minister's attendance.
<p>SUGGESTED EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOLS/OFFICES</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Principal decides when and where the visit takes place. <input type="checkbox"/> If the local Member wishes to invite other parties on this visit (e.g. the Leader of the Opposition), the Visitors and Intruders on School Premises policy should be consulted. 	<p><i>Planning should only start once confirmation from central office has been received by the school and all parties have been notified.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Guest list <input type="checkbox"/> Invitations (Appendix D) <input type="checkbox"/> Reserved parking for dignitaries <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting of dignitaries and initial introductions (Appendix B) <input type="checkbox"/> Order of proceedings <input type="checkbox"/> Speech notes for Minister <input type="checkbox"/> Order of Precedence (Appendix A) <input type="checkbox"/> Media (Appendix C) <input type="checkbox"/> Photography/permission (Appendix C) <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural consideration/Welcome to Country (Appendix C) <input type="checkbox"/> Name tags (Appendix C) <input type="checkbox"/> Seating plan (Appendix E) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Minister's office may have input into the itinerary, otherwise the school to coordinate the visit. <input type="checkbox"/> On occasions, refreshments may need to be supplied. <input type="checkbox"/> A briefing note with speech points is required by the Minister.

WHEN THE DEPARTMENT MAKES A REQUEST



<p>Members of Parliament may communicate directly with schools in their electorates.</p> <p>Visits that involve partisan or party political activity are not appropriate.</p>	<p>Refer to Ikon for detailed processes and various examples (e.g. inviting Premier). Do not contact the Minister’s Office directly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools/offices wishing to invite the Minister to an event need to put their request in writing and submit this through line management to the Director General. Refer to the Visitors and Intruders on School Premises policy for further guidelines on visits by dignitaries. 	<p>Refer to Ikon - Hold an official opening of a new school or school buildings</p>
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FORMAL	FORMAL	FORMAL	FORMAL
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SUGGESTED EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOLS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Ikon - Hold an event at your school for ideas, order of proceedings and protocols. Observe the Order of Precedence. 	<p>Planning should only start once confirmation from central office has been received by the school and all parties have been notified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guest list Invitations (Appendix D) Reserved parking for dignitaries Meeting of dignitaries and initial introductions (Appendix B) Order of proceedings Speech notes for Minister Order of Precedence (Appendix A) Media (Appendix C) Photography/permission (Appendix C) Cultural consideration/Welcome to Country (Appendix C) Name tags (Appendix C) Seating plan (Appendix E) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Ikon and liaise with Ministerial Services Unit.
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WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE (SHORTENED VERSION)

An Order of Precedence is used for acknowledgements, the order of speakers and seating arrangements.

1. The Governor General of Australia
2. The Governor of Western Australia
3. The Premier of Western Australia
4. The Prime Minister of Australia
5. Chief Justice of Western Australia
6. Western Australian Ministers (*in order of precedence*)
7. President of Legislative Council
8. Speaker of Legislative Assembly
9. Former Governors, Premiers, State Ministers and Justices
10. Federal Executive Council members
11. State Leader of the Opposition
12. Justices of the Supreme Court of Western Australia according to seniority
13. Justices of the High Court of Australia
14. The Lord Mayor of Perth if in the city
15. WA Members of Parliament in order – MLC, MLA
16. Australian Members of Parliament in order – Senator, MP
17. Former Australian Ministers
18. Members of other legislatures (including Mayor)
19. Senior officers commanding the Naval, Military and Air Forces according to seniority of rank and date of appointment
20. Heads of churches and religious communities according to date they attained office
21. Permanent Heads of State Government agencies *e.g. Director General of Department Education; Commissioner for Police (or their representatives in rank order)*
22. University heads
23. Recipients of decorations and honours

Department specific (Recommended)

As a general rule, acknowledge the most senior Departmental employee only.

1. Premier
2. Minister for Education
3. Director General
4. Deputy Director General Schools/Education Business Services/Student Achievement
5. Executive Director
6. Director of Education
7. Director
8. School Principal
9. Chair, School Board or Council
10. President, Parents & Citizens' Association
11. Other school administrators
12. Community guests

Not all office holders are listed in the tables of precedence. These would be counted as "Special Guests". The Order of Precedence is not always fixed. All office holders mentioned in the table know where they fall in seniority and are also aware that honorary precedence is inevitably applied at almost every function. As an example, if attending a function at a University, the Dean/Chancellor would probably move up the list as a courtesy.

If you are unsure about the order of precedence of the guest list, it is best to ask first to avoid embarrassment. Contact Ministerial Services on 9264 8181.

A PROTOCOL GUIDE TO FORMS OF ADDRESS

Title	How referred to in correspondence	Salutation in correspondence	How addressed in person	Notes and Variations
The Governor General	His/Her Excellency The Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia	Your Excellency	Your Excellency (title), (Surname)	First and last meeting of the day "Your Excellency", otherwise "Sir" or "Ma'am"
The Governor General's Partner	His/Her Excellency or (Title), (Surname)	Your Excellency or Dear (Title) (Surname)	Your Excellency (title) (Surname)	First and last meeting of the day "Your Excellency", otherwise "Sir" or "Ma'am"
Governor	Your Excellency	Your Excellency	Your Excellency	First and last meeting of the day "Your Excellency", otherwise "Sir" or "Ma'am"
Governor's Partner	(Title) (Surname)	Dear (Title) (Surname)	(Title) (Surname)	No official title
Premier	The Honourable Premier of Western Australia	Dear Premier	Premier	
Prime Minister	The Hon The Prime Minister of Australia	Dear Prime Minister	Prime Minister or (Title) (Surname)	
Members of the Federal Executive Council OR	The Hon (Initial). (Surname) MP, Minister for..... Or The Hon Minister for..... Senator the Hon (Initial). (Surname) Minister for.....	Dear Minister or Dear (Title) (Surname) Dear Senator	Minister or (Title) (Surname) Senator or Minister (Surname) if in ministerial position)	Some Ministers prefer to be called by their first name or (Title) (Surname). As a general rule <u>always</u> start by using <i>Minister</i> until told otherwise.
Members of Cabinet (State Ministers)	The Hon (Dr?) (Name) (Surname) (MLA/MLC), Minister for..... Or The Hon Minister for	Dear Minister	Minister	
Members of Parliament	(Title) (Name) (Surname) (MLA/MLC/MP)	Dear (Title) (Surname)	(Title) (Surname)	
Local Councillor	Councillor (Surname) Or Cr (Surname)	Dear Councillor or Cr (Surname)	Councillor (Surname)	

POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN HOSTING DIGNITARIES OR SPECIAL EVENTS

INTRODUCTIONS – Who and how?

A decision on who will make the introductions needs to be made.

The standard protocol for introducing people is for the person of a junior station to be introduced to the person of a more senior station, stating the senior person's appropriate title first. For example, "*Premier, may I introduce Mr John Smith*".

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Cultural backgrounds should be taken into account. This could impact on day, time, venue, seating plan, food and drinks served.

An [*Acknowledgement of Country or Welcome to Country*](#) should be included at the beginning of *most* proceedings.

VICE REGAL

Information describing protocols of functions where the Governor of WA will be in attendance can be found at www.govhouse.wa.gov.au/The-governor/protocol-guidelines/

PREPARING NAME TAGS

Care should be taken when preparing name tags to ensure that the tag reflects the correct title (Mr, Ms, etc), name (especially spelling), post-nominals and organisation of the invitee. Host name tags should clearly show title, name and organisation. Spare blank name tags and a suitable marking pen must be available should a substitute guest arrive or a name tag require alteration.

PUBLICITY AND MEDIA

Positive publicity/media can usually be built into key events or visits; however they should always be with prior agreement. When Ministers are involved, Ministerial media advisors ascertain the suitability of publicity and issue appropriate media statements in liaison with Communications. Refer to the media [guidelines](#).

PHOTOGRAPHY

Due care must be taken to ensure all students photographed with the official party have the **relevant permission** from their caregivers to have pictures published.

NEW SCHOOL OPENINGS

Guidance is provided on [ikon](#)

**INVITING THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION TO AN EVENT/FUNCTION
(NOT A SCHOOL OPENING)**

Sample request from a school and sent through Director of Education.

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

**INVITATION FOR THE MINISTER TO ATTEND PERTH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
GRADUATION CEREMONY**

BACKGROUND

Perth Community College recognises students who are completing their final year in the public education system through a graduation ceremony. The event will be held on 19 September 2023 at the University Club, Hackett Drive from 7.30 pm to 9.00 pm.

CURRENT SITUATION

On behalf of the Director of Education, North Metropolitan Education Regional Office, it would be appreciated if the Minister would accept an invitation to speak to students and invited guests for approximately five minutes and present the Dux and Citizenship awards. Please see attached the official invitation and details of the event for further information about the awards.

ACTION REQUIRED

That the Minister for Education consider the invitation to present and deliver a short speech to graduates at a ceremony to be held at the University Club, Crawley on Friday 19 September 2023 between 7.30 pm to 9.00 pm. It would be appreciated if confirmation of availability is made via the Ministerial Services Unit.

LISA RODGERS
DIRECTOR GENERAL

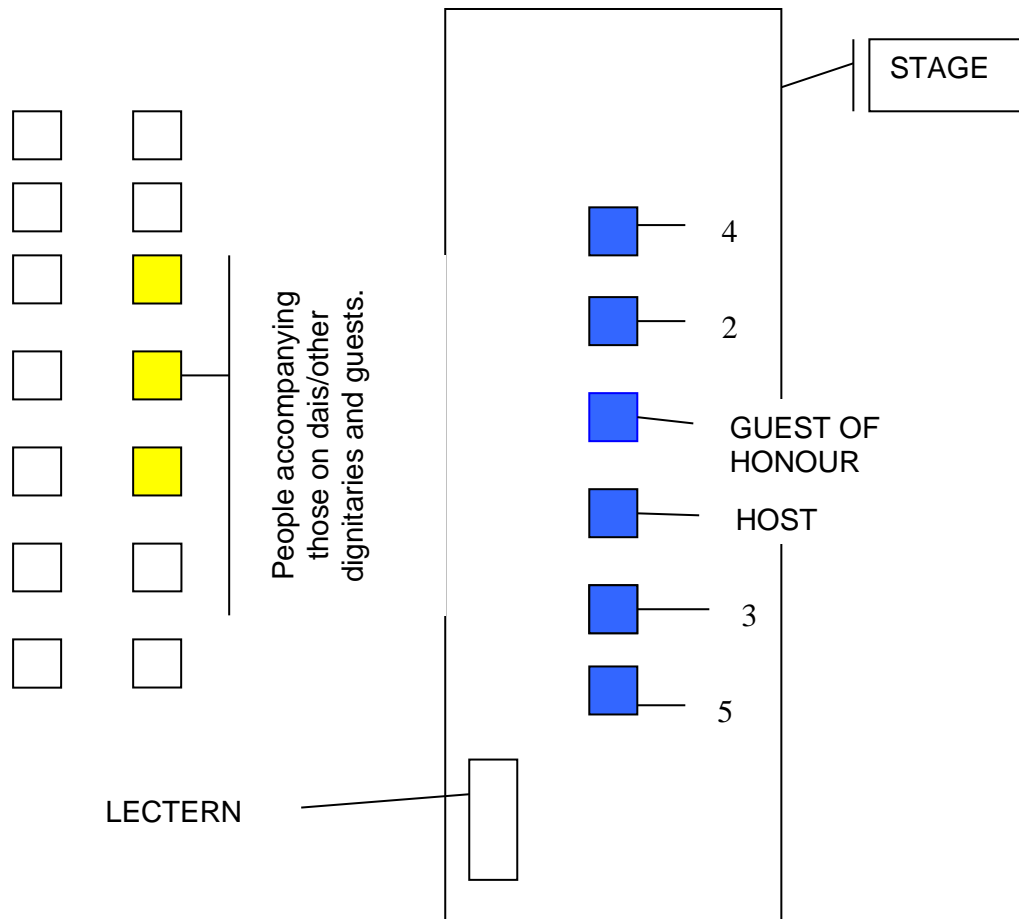
Att.

SEATING PLANS

Seating plans are generally required for formal occasions where guests are to be seated. Plans may also be required for less formal occasions where there is an official table at which dignitaries will be seated for the function, such as a presentation ceremony where the presenters and the official party will be seated on a dais or platform in front of an audience.

Ministers should always be seated with their guests.

SEATING AT OFFICIAL CEREMONIES



USEFUL LINKS

THE AUSTRALIAN FLAG

As the nation's foremost symbol, the Australian National Flag should be used with respect and dignity.

The Australian Government Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet website has detail related to all aspects of the Australian Flag: www.pmc.gov.au/honours-and-symbols/australian-national-symbols/australian-national-flag/australian-national-flag

Schools or organisations wishing to hold a flag-raising ceremony should follow the protocols outlined.

The Commonwealth Flag Network offers a subscription service that [provides](http://www.pmc.gov.au/honours-and-symbols/australian-national-symbols/australian-national-flag/flag-network) advice on how to fly the flag on special occasions: www.pmc.gov.au/honours-and-symbols/australian-national-symbols/australian-national-flag/flag-network

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Anthems are normally played at the beginning of the formal proceedings, after all of the official guests have assembled. Typically, this will be after the official party has arrived at the function, or immediately prior to the commencement of formal activities such as presentations and sporting contests.

If you are hosting a delegation or sporting team from another country, the Australian National Anthem is always played after the guest's anthem.

ANZAC DAY and REMEMBRANCE DAY

For ceremony protocols and procedures, the Veterans Affairs website has detailed fact sheets: <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/commemoration/event-planning/order-of-service>

REFERENCES

Ford, D. (2001) *Who's Who Guide to Protocol*, Melbourne, Crown Content Pty Ltd.

Protocol Handbook, Queensland Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet, May 2009

Joel, A, Sir and Pringle, H. (2007) *Australian Protocols and Procedures*, University of New South Wales

govhouse.wa.gov.au/the-governor/protocol-guidelines/

www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/western-australian-government-guide-titles-and-forms-of-address

www.parliament.wa.gov.au/WebCMS/webcms.nsf/content/members-addressing-a-member

www.stylemanual.gov.au/grammar-punctuation-and-conventions/titles-honours-forms-address

www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Guidelines_for_Contacting_Senators_and_Members/How_to_address_Senators_and_Members

guides.dtwd.wa.gov.au/nmtafe-events/protocols

www.pmc.gov.au/honours-and-symbols/australian-national-symbols/australian-national-flag/australian-national-flag

anzacportal.dva.gov.au/commemoration/event-planning/order-of-service

USEFUL RESOURCES

Ministerial Services Unit (MSU), Central Office

Communications, Central Office