



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, [Official Opening of School Buildings](#) policy and advice on the Ministerial Services Unit [website](#).

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.dpc.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, 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 neither 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 Commonwealth Government) may come about:

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

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

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 notify the Ministerial Services Unit, who will notify the appropriate personnel in Central Office.

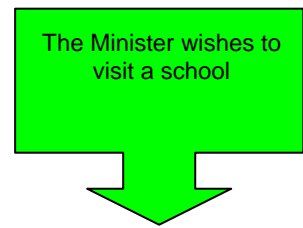
If the Minister for Education plans to visit a school, a Departmental officer will advise the Principal.

CARETAKER PERIOD

Once an election has been called, the Government goes into a "Caretaker Period". At this time, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet publishes specific guidelines 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>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 the name, date and purpose of the visit to the Ministerial Services Unit, who will relay the information to the appropriate staff in Central Office.</i></p>	<p>Principal advised of date and purpose of visit by appropriate staff in Central or 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>INFORMAL</p>	<p>FORMAL</p>	<p>FORMAL</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> School liaises with the Member of Parliament's office directly.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> School awaits advice from the Department before formalising the visit/event.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Central Office confirms details of Minister's attendance.</p>
<p>SUGGESTED EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOLS/OFFICES</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Principal decides when and where the visit takes place.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If the local Member wishes to invite other parties on this visit (e.g. the Leader of the Opposition), the <i>Visitors and Intruders on School Premises</i> policy should be consulted.</p>	<p>Planning should start only once the school has received confirmation from Central Office and all parties have been notified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Guest list <input type="checkbox"/> Invitations (Appendix B) <input type="checkbox"/> Reserved parking for dignitaries <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting of dignitaries and initial introductions (Appendix A) <input type="checkbox"/> Order of proceedings (Appendix D) <input type="checkbox"/> Speech notes for Minister (Appendix A) <input type="checkbox"/> Order of Precedence (Appendix C) <input type="checkbox"/> Media (Appendix A) <input type="checkbox"/> Photography/permission (Appendix A) <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural consideration/Welcome to Country (Appendix A) <input type="checkbox"/> Nametags (Appendix A) <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 coordinates the visit. <input type="checkbox"/> On occasion, refreshments may need to be supplied. <input type="checkbox"/> The Minister requires a briefing note with speech points.

WHEN THE DEPARTMENT MAKES A REQUEST

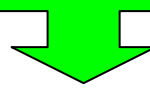
The school invites the local Member to a school event



The school invites the Minister for Education to launch a program



Official school/building opening



<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 the Ministerial Services Unit website for detailed processes and various examples (e.g. inviting the 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 (Appendix B). • Refer to the <i>Visitors and Intruders on School Premises</i> policy for further guidelines on visits by dignitaries. 	<p>Refer to the Official Opening of School Buildings Policy.</p>
<p>FORMAL</p>	<p>FORMAL</p>	<p>FORMAL</p>

SUGGESTED EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOLS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to dva.gov.au for ideas, order of proceedings and protocols. <input type="checkbox"/> Observe the Order of Precedence. 	<p>Planning should start only once the school has received confirmation from Central Office and all parties have been notified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Guest list <input type="checkbox"/> Invitations (Appendix B) <input type="checkbox"/> Reserved parking for dignitaries <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting of dignitaries and initial introductions (Appendix A) <input type="checkbox"/> Order of proceedings (Appendix D) <input type="checkbox"/> Speech notes for Minister (Appendix A) <input type="checkbox"/> Order of Precedence (Appendix C) <input type="checkbox"/> Media (Appendix A) <input type="checkbox"/> Photography/permission (Appendix A) <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural consideration/Welcome to Country (Appendix A) <input type="checkbox"/> Nametags (Appendix A) <input type="checkbox"/> Seating plan (Appendix E) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to policy and liaise with Ministerial Services Unit.
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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.

PREPARING NAMETAGS

Care should be taken when preparing nametags to ensure that they reflect the correct title (Mr, Ms, Dr, etc), name (especially spelling), post nominals (e.g. AO, VC) and organisation of the invitee. Host nametags should clearly show title, name and organisation. Spare blank nametags and a suitable marking pen must be available should a substitute guest arrive or a nametag require alteration.

VICE REGAL

Information describing protocols of functions where the Governor of WA will be in attendance can be found on the Government House website (www.govhouse.wa.gov.au).

PUBLICITY AND MEDIA

Positive publicity/media can usually be built in to 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 Corporate Communications and Marketing. Refer to the media liaison [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.

WRITING SPEECH NOTES

Refer to the [Correspondence Protocols](#).

General guidelines for speeches:

- Write as you would speak and rehearse speech to ensure clarity.
- Keep messages clear, simple and single.
- Give examples.
- Include relevant statistics and figures.
- Each sentence should be no more than 20 words.
- Use simple words rather than long words (e.g. “start” rather than “commence”).
- Include the name of the traditional owners of the land so the speaker can acknowledge them.
- Do not use jargon or acronyms.
- Number each page of the speech.
- Include the pronunciation of names, where applicable.
- Use the word END at the end of the speech.
- Remember, you are writing on behalf of the dignitary.

NEW SCHOOL OPENINGS

Guidance is provided in the [Official Opening of School Buildings](#) policy.

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

***Sample request from a school and sent through
Ministerial Services Unit for Independent Public Schools and through
Regional Executive Director for other public schools***

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

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

BACKGROUND

Floreat Community College recognises students who are completing their final year in the public Education system through a graduation ceremony. The event will be held at the University Club, Hackett Drive, Crawley on 19 September 2013 from 7.30 pm to 9.00 pm.

CURRENT SITUATION

On behalf of the Regional Executive Director, Perth Regional Education 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 the attached 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 between 7.30pm and 9.00pm on Thursday, 19 September 2013 at the University Club, Hackett Drive, Crawley. It would be appreciated if confirmation of the Minister's availability were made via the Ministerial Services Unit.

SHARYN O'NEILL
DIRECTOR GENERAL

Att.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE (SHORTENED VERSION)

An Order of Precedence is used for acknowledgements and seating arrangements. The Order of Precedence for the host of the function would normally be the order used.

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 (refer to the Premier's website, www.premier.wa.gov.au)
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, MHR.
17. Former Australian Ministers
18. Members of other Legislatures (including the Mayor)
19. Senior Officers commanding the Navy, Army 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. Heads of State Government agencies e.g. Director General of the Department of Education; Commissioner for Police; or their representatives in order of rank
22. University heads
23. Recipients of decorations and honours

Department-specific (Recommended)

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

1. Minister for Education
2. Director General
3. Deputy Director General, Schools/Finance and Administration
4. Executive Director
5. Regional Executive Director
6. Director
7. School Principal
8. Chair, School Board or Chair, School Council
9. President, Parents & Citizens' Association
10. Other school administrators
11. 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 the function is 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 advisable to check in order to avoid embarrassment. Telephone the WA Government's Protocols officer on 9222 9621.

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

Example for an Official School Opening

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

OFFICIAL OPENING PERTH SENIOR COLLEGE 27 FEBRUARY 2013

8.50 am	Minister welcomed and introduced to dignitaries in the library
9.00 am	Procession of official guests to assembly area
9.05 am	MC welcomes dignitaries
	National Anthem
	Welcome to Country Ms Marie Taylor
	Response
9.15 am	Guitar Ensemble
	Principal's acknowledgements and speech
9.35 am	Minister's speech
	Choir item
	Director General's speech
	P&C President's speech
	Official opening and ribbon cutting by the Minister
	Clarinet Ensemble
9.55 – 10.30 am	Official guests and parents invited to morning tea in the Performing Arts Theatre and to tour the College
10.00 am	Minister departs

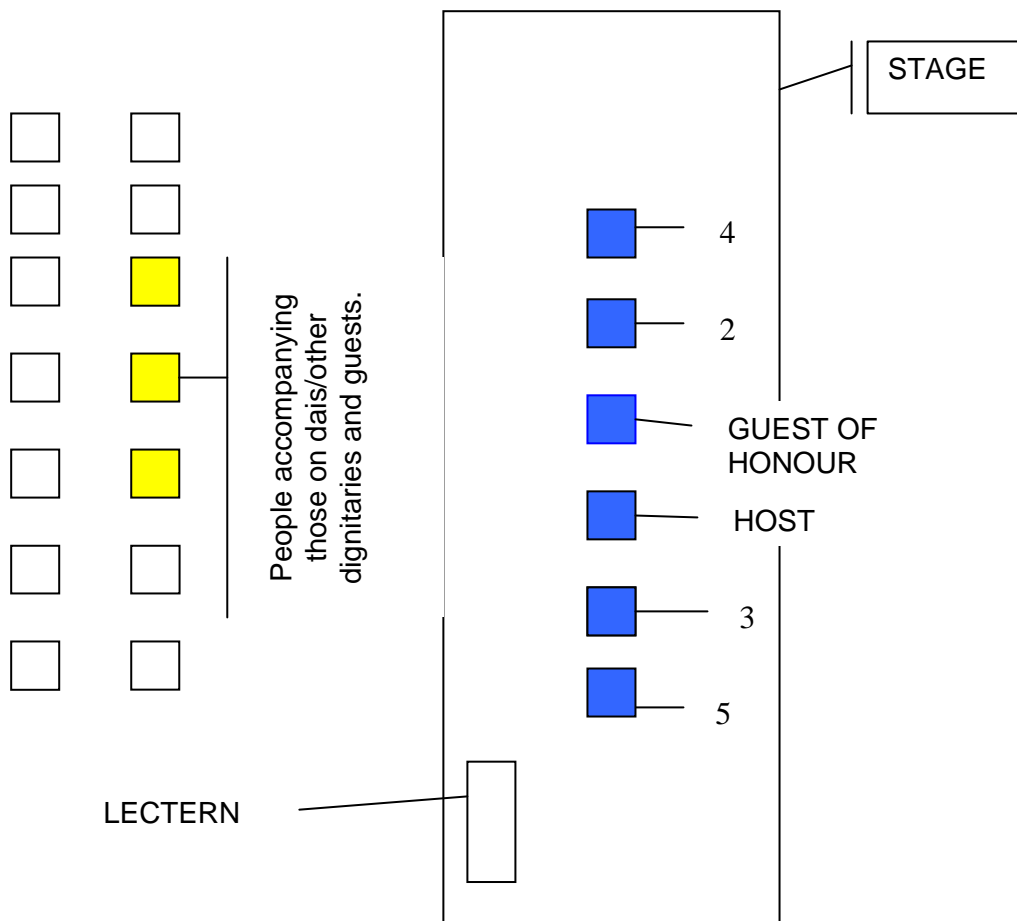
Note the order of precedence. The Minister is usually the most senior guest so **speaks first** after being introduced by the Principal. The Premier, if present, speaks before the Minister.

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 and 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 Government website, *It's an Honour* (www.itsanhonour.gov.au), has detail related to all aspects of the Australian Flag. Schools or organisations wishing to hold a flag-raising ceremony should follow the protocols outlined on this website.

The Commonwealth Flag Network is a subscription service that notifies when to fly the flag at half mast.

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 a delegation or sporting team from another country is being hosted, the Australian National Anthem is always played after the guest's anthem.

ANZAC and REMEMBRANCE DAY

For ceremony protocols and procedures, the Veterans' Affairs website (www.dva.gov.au) has detailed fact sheets.

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

It's an Honour website, www.itsanhonour.gov.au

USEFUL RESOURCES

Ministerial Services Unit (MSU), Central Office

Corporate Communications and Marketing (CCM), Central Office

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 or Dear (Title) (Surname)	Premier	
Prime Minister	The Hon. The Prime Minister of Australia	Dear Prime Minister	Prime Minister or (Title) (Surname)	
Members of the Federal Executive Council	The Hon (Initial) (Surname) MP, Minister for..... or The Hon Minister for.....	Dear Minister or Dear (Title) (Surname)	Minister or (Title) (Surname)	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.
OR	Senator the Hon (Initial) (Surname) Minister for.....	Dear Senator	Senator or Minister (Surname) if in ministerial position	
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 Or Cr (Surname)	Dear Councillor or Cr (Surname)	Councillor (Surname)	