

Royal and Select Masters District of West Yorkshire



Helpful Information for Council Officers

www.rsmwyorks.com

Forward.

Companions,

Although the District of West Yorkshire is blessed with many able and experienced Companions, it is still a fact that many have little knowledge of the way our Order is administered. Even the most qualified amongst us will occasionally find a situation he has not met before and will ask the best way forward.

In order to answer some of these questions and to educate and inform, the District Recorder of Lancashire has compiled a handbook which, I am sure you will agree, is most informative and gives lots of information not easily found elsewhere.

If I know the Companions of West Yorkshire, any claim that this work will answer every question for every occasion, would be seen as an irresistible challenge and many hitherto unasked enquiries would suddenly surface.

I do claim, however, that this is a work which will soon prove essential for every Recorder, Treasurer and Director of Ceremonies and be a useful friend for all Cryptic Masons.

No doubt this will be a "work in progress" which will be added to in the coming years. It should also be understood that it is not intended that this volume should overrule or contradict any official publication emanating from Grand Council. Nevertheless, I believe that this new Handbook meets a long felt need and I commend it to you without hesitation.

Companions the description in this forward is from the District Grand Master of Lancashire, slightly amended to suit our own District and I feel no need to alter it in any way but to fully endorse it.

**R.III. Companion Fraser McPherson
District Grand Master, West Yorkshire**

Introduction.

The continuing success of any Royal and Select Masters Council is based upon the impression it makes upon its candidates. This is as true for a Companion being installed into the Chair of a Council as it is for a new member on his entry into the Order; good standards encourage favourable impressions and, ipso facto encourage the maintenance of good standards. As with other Orders in Freemasonry, good teamwork is essential if good standards are to be achieved; this requires an amalgam of those performing ritual to give of their best in addition to the other members of the Council paying attention to the detail laid out in the Ritual book for procedural matters, to enable proceedings to take place with due order and purpose both within the Council and also at the festive board. All of these factors add to the impression we make on our candidates.

It is with this in mind that this Guide has been created, hopefully, to provide answers to many of the questions encountered in the day to day running of your Council/s.

To the experienced Companion of the Order, I hope that you find it a useful 'aide memoire'; to the newly introduced Companion, I sincerely hope that it will prove to be a helpful guide and thereby provide a catalyst to a daily increase in your (Cryptic) Masonic knowledge. Wherever possible throughout the document, reference is made to the 2011 Book of Constitutions and Regulations of the Order (available from the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons) where more detailed information and instruction on the specific item can be found. Where required, references to Rule Numbers are indicated.

Any queries on its content, or further questions on general administration within the Order, should be addressed to your District Grand Recorder on districtrecorder@rsmwyorks.com

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General Information about the Order- 1.

The Order of Royal and Select Masters, often known as the Cryptic Degrees, is open to those Masons who are both Royal Arch and Mark Master Masons and consists of four highly dramatic degrees. These outline the initial steps taken during the building of the Temple to preserve copies of the holy vessels and sacred treasures in a secret vault, the burial of the Word by the two surviving Grand Masters after Hiram's death, the completion and dedication of the Temple and finally the fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar and his army. It can be seen, therefore, that the Cryptic Degrees form a vital and interesting link between the Craft and Royal Arch, making the connection much more logical and completing the legend of King Solomon and his Temple. The Four Degrees are as follows:

Select Master:

The preparations for the building of the Temple having commenced in the Mark Degree, the three Grand Masters are anxious that the form of the sacred treasures, including the Ark of the Covenant, could be lost forever in the event of the Temple being sacked. They therefore arrange for a small number of Select Masons, sworn to secrecy, to construct a secret vault beneath the Holy of Holies and deposit replicas therein.

Royal Master:

The Temple is nearing its completion and certain Overseers are anxious to receive the Master Word and be honoured with the rank of Royal Master before their employment ceases. Shortly before his death Hiram Abif explains to one of these Overseers, Adoniram, that with patience and industry he will, in due time, receive it. This discourse is widely regarded as the most beautiful in any Masonic Degree.

Most Excellent Master:

Hiram Abif has been slain and after a period of mourning, the holy relics are transferred into the completed temple. King Solomon prepares to dedicate it to the Most High and, to celebrate this joyous occasion, confers the Degree of Most Excellent Master on his most trusted and skilful workmen, amongst whom are those who built the secret vault.

Super Excellent Master:

The Temple had stood in all its glory for nearly 400 years but had then fallen to Nebuchadnezzar and his army. The King and his principal citizens were taken into captivity in Babylonia. Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar's puppet King, has rebelled against him and fled, leaving the remaining citizens to defend the Temple and pledge their devotion to God.

General Information about the Order- 2.

In addition, there are two other degrees which are conferred after a Companion has passed through the chair of a Council. These are:

The Degree of Thrice Illustrious Master:

This degree, colloquially known as the Order of the Silver Trowel, has been performed in America for a number of years and was introduced into this country in 2009. A select number of Installed Masters, from each District, receive it on the approval of the Most Illustrious Grand Master. Recipients of this degree are entitled to have a hallmarked silver trowel attached to the flap of their apron. The degree is both extremely interesting and colourful and takes place during the final days of King David and recounts the abortive attempt of Adonijah, the half-brother of Solomon, to assume the throne and then the latter's anointment as King. It concludes with a remarkable discourse between David and Solomon

The Degree of Excellent Master:

This degree is commonly known as the "Passing of the Veils" and is one of the degrees in Freemasonry that can be placed at a specific time in history. The Ceremony of Passing the Veils may be considered as emblematical of the wanderings of the Israelites in the Wilderness and of their return from Babylon to Jerusalem. The Decree of Cyrus, which enabled the Jews to return to Jerusalem and to rebuild their Temple was given in 538 B.C., the year after Cyrus had taken Babylon and is the setting for the Degree of Excellent Master.

This degree is an invitational degree and, at present, will only be available to those members who are already in possession of the Order of the Silver Trowel.

Section A: The Council Summons – I.

(vii) To read the Council By-laws (if required by the Council By-laws).

(viii) To receive the Almoner's Report.

(ix) Propositions for:

- Candidates for Reception and Joining Members
- Changes to Subscriptions
- Amendments to By-laws (See Section 6a for procedure)
- Other matters

(x) Any Other Business.

N.B. It is recommended that the business on the Agenda should be checked with the T.I.M. and D.C. It is also useful to check its contents with the corresponding agenda from the previous year.

3. INFORMATION WHICH MUST BE SHOWN ON THE SUMMONS:

(i) The Agenda item relating to the election of a candidate for Reception or joining must include (**Rule 98**):-

The candidate's full name

Date of birth

Name and number of Craft Lodge, Royal Arch Chapter and of Mark Lodge

[For Joining Candidates, the Name and Number of the Council in which they were chosen, honoured, received and acknowledged should also be entered, along with the Mark Mason's Hall number of the joining member]

Names of Proposer and Seconder

Date of the Proposal in open Lodge **

** A candidate for election must have been proposed and seconded in open Council at a meeting prior to that at which he comes up for election, unless a

'postal notice of proposition' is being made - **see Section D (i) Rule 99.**

The Proposer and Seconder must be subscribing members or

Honorary Members who are past Masters of the Council. **Rule 98 (i).**

4. NOTICES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Notices and announcements should include domestic information regarding the on-going and future business of the Council, plus items which from time to time are requested for inclusion by the District. These may include:

Council meeting dates, Times and dates of Council practice / Committee meetings.

Almoner's notices

Dining arrangements, or when Council Subscriptions are due

Information regarding the next meeting of District Grand Council / Grand Council.

Section A: The Council Summons - 3.

5. DISTRIBUTION:

In order to reduce costs, electronic distribution, if appropriate, is encouraged by the District Executive, but should be in appropriate Microsoft Office Word or Adobe PDF electronic format. After production of the summons, copies should be distributed as follows:

- To every member at least seven clear days before the meeting (essential when a ballot for a candidate is to take place).
- To R&S Masters' Councils in regular communication.
- To candidate(s) whose Reception, or election as a joining member, is an Agenda item.
- To official Installation guests.
- To any Companion named on the summons who is giving a lecture etc. at the meeting.
- To District Grand Council, at the same time as it is dispatched to members of the Lodge, as follows:

District Grand Master

Deputy District Grand Master

District Grand Principal Conductor of Works

District Grand Recorder

N.B. A copy should also be pasted in the Minute Book for future reference and spare copies should be produced for visitors at the meeting

Section B: Council Books and Records – 1.

1. MANDATORY:

Mandatory Records which must be maintained by a Lodge are:

The Council Minute Book - which must contain (**Rule 90**):

The names of all members present in Council

The name, rank and Councils of all visiting Companions

A record of all business transacted or considered

The names of Brethren received or elected for reception or of Companions elected as joining or re-joining members, together with supporting details as shown in **Section A.3 (i)**. These supporting details may be contained in a copy of the appropriate summons permanently attached to the Minute Book.

Minutes must be confirmed at a subsequent regular meeting of the Council and signed by the Thrice Illustrious Master on that occasion. Minutes can only be confirmed at a regular meeting of the Council. Council Minute Books should be carefully preserved in case they are required at a later date to resolve any problems in proving entitlement to a Centenary Warrant or to provide material for a Council etc.

**A Register of Members (see Section C.1(i) -
Lodge By-laws**

**Rule 91.
Rules 80-82.**

Applications for the registration of amendments to Council By-laws must be submitted through the District Grand Recorder-(see **Section F(i)** for the procedure to be adopted). The need to frequent amendments to By-laws to reflect changes in subscriptions and fees can be obviated by a suitably worded amendment that the amounts be such as are approved from time to time in open Lodge following a notice of motion. Reference to Rules in the Constitutions should be avoided in By-laws as rule numbers can change from time to time. Specimen By-laws are available and are down-loadable from the District website- or directly from the District Recorder

Book(s) of Accounts

Rule 96.

These are the responsibility of the Council Treasurer (**Section F**). The Council Treasurer is responsible for ensuring that all accounts are kept and that they are audited and presented in open Council annually.

Section B: Council Books and Records – 2.

2. OPTIONAL:

Optional Records which are recommended to Councils are:

- An attendance register (or sheet) to be signed by all members and visitors
- Attending the Council meeting.
- A dining list, to facilitate the ordering of meals and the collection of dining dues. This may contain details of ‘regular diners’ for which a meal booking will automatically be made , unless they inform otherwise.
- A Council membership directory showing addresses and telephone numbers etc. - to be held by all Council members to facilitate contact between members of the Council.

Section C: Council Returns and Other Forms –1.

1. RETURNS:

The Council Recorder Secretary should ensure that the following Lodge Returns are made in a timely manner, usually immediately following the event for which they are due:

(i) **Installation Return.** This should be sent to the District Grand Recorder (and not directly to Grand Council) immediately after the Installation meeting).

Rule 91(i).

Installation Returns are down-loadable from the Grand Council website (<http://www.gldmm.com> or may be obtained from the District Grand Recorder.

(ii) Registration Forms and Fees in respect of new members. These should be sent to the District Grand Recorder immediately after admission or joining– together with the appropriate fee.

Rule 91(v).

(iii) Annual Returns and Dues - which are required by Grand Council and District Grand Council annually. These are sent out to Councils at the end of August and should be returned to the District Grand Recorder (and not directly to the Grand Council) as soon as possible.

Rules 91(i) and 92.

(iv) Council Accounts. 3 copies (or an e-mailed PDF) to be sent to the District Grand Recorder immediately after they have been adopted in open Council.

Rule 96 (iv).

(v) Other Enquiries - which should be referred to the District Grand Recorder.

(vi) By-law Changes - which should be sent to the Provincial Grand Recorder (3 copies) with the appropriate fee, once they have been adopted in open Lodge - **see Section F (a)** for the procedure to be adopted).

2. DISPENSATIONS:

The Council Recorder should ensure that requests for dispensations, accompanied by the appropriate fee, if required, are made in a timely manner. All requests for dispensations must be submitted to the District Grand Recorder. **Dispensations to be granted by the Grand Master**, on recommendation of the District Grand Master, must be received by the District Grand Recorder at least 4 weeks before the date of the meeting for which they are required. This will enable them to be processed by the District Grand Recorder and submitted to Grand Council at least 3 weeks before the required date. **Dispensations to be granted by the District Grand Master** must be received by the District Grand Recorder at least 2 weeks before the meeting for which they are required.

Section C: Council Returns and Other Forms –2.

Any difficulty in meeting these dates should be discussed with the District Grand Recorder, who can also provide information on current fees payable for dispensations from Grand and District Grand Councils on request.

Dispensations to be granted by the Grand Master include:

1. The Installation of a Companion who has not completed a full year as a Master or Deputy Master or Principal Conductor of the Work in Regular Council of Royal and Select Masters for one complete year and who shall be a Super-Excellent Master. **Rule 64(ii).**
2. The Installation of a Companion who is currently Master of another Council. **Rule 74.**
3. Authority for a Master to serve a third consecutive year. **Rule 74.**

The above dispensations can only be granted by the Grand Master on the recommendation of the District Grand Master. The forms for the above are available on the website.

For 1 to 3, the request for a dispensation should be forwarded on the prescribed form, with the required fee, to the District Grand Recorder, immediately after the meeting at which a Master Elect has been chosen.

Dispensations to be granted by the District Grand Master include:

1. Authority to change the date of a meeting (not exceeding 14 days before or after its scheduled date). **Rules 72(i) & (ii).**
2. Authority to change the venue of a regular meeting. **Rule 84.**
3. Authority for a Brother to hold more than one regular office in the Lodge at the same time. **Rule 63 (iii).**

[The Regular Officers of the Lodge are listed in Section E (iv).

4. Authority to defer a meeting due to inclement weather. **Rule 86 (iv).**

The rescheduled meeting must be held within 14 days. No meeting may be cancelled or held otherwise at the prescribed place and on the prescribed day Rule 87 but if an attempt is made to hold the meeting and a proper quorum is not present, any business other than the election or Installation of a Master may be held over to the next regular meeting with an appropriate entry made in the Lodge books. **Rule 89.**

For the above, the request for dispensation should be submitted by letter to the District Grand Recorder as soon as possible, giving full details and reasons for the requirement. N.B. Most of the aforementioned forms may be downloaded from the Mark Masons' Hall website : <http://www.glmmm.com>. or

The District website:

Section D: Preparation for a Reception of a Candidate or Joining Member - 1.

The following check list identifies considerations which should be made when a candidate is to be advanced or admitted as a joining member of a Council:

When any Master Mason or Brother is a candidate for admission or a Companion is being proposed as a joining member, the particulars listed on **Section A.3.i.** should be sent to all members at least 7 clear days before the meeting at which he is to come up for election.

N.B. A brother shall not be accepted as a candidate for admission or for joining / re-joining unless he has been proposed and seconded in open Lodge at which he comes up for election or a notice that he is to be proposed and seconded has been circulated to all members at least 14 days prior to the meeting at which he is due to join. **Rule 98(i).**

A candidate or proposed joining member, elected by ballot, must be admitted by payment of the usual fees within one year of his election, otherwise his election will be declared void. **Rule 102.**

All necessary information regarding a candidate for ballot must be given in the summons. (See Section A.2.(i) of this Handbook). **Rule 98(i).**

A copy of the summons, together with details of date, time, dress and fees payable, should be sent to the candidate immediately before the meeting at which he is to become a member

A candidate for reception should be asked to bring **(Rule 99(iii)):**

- His Craft Grand Lodge Certificate (or a letter of verification from the Secretary of the Lodge in which he was raised).
- His Grand Lodge Certificate as a Mark Master Mason or Certificate from the Secretary of the Lodge in which he was Advanced.
- His Grand Chapter Certificate as a Royal Arch Mason or a Certificate from the Scribe Ezra of the Chapter in which he was exalted.
- Appropriate clearing certificates

N.B. A Joining Member should also be reminded to bring his Royal and Select Master's apron and jewel plus his Grand Council Certificate or a certificate from the Recorder of the Council of which he was a member.

The appropriate Declaration must be signed (**Rule 100**) and the relevant fees paid before a candidate is advanced or admitted as a joining member.

(Note: a candidate for re-joining should be dealt with in the same way as a candidate for joining).

Section D: Preparation for a Reception of a Candidate or Joining Member - 2.

It is recommended that if a candidate for admission joining Companion is from a Constitution other than the **English Constitution**, then the Recorder of the Council should, prior to the ballot being taken, satisfy himself that the body granting the Certificate is recognised by the United Grand Lodge of England.

In cases of doubt, the Secretary is advised to contact the District Recorder who will verify the case appropriately.

In the case of Joining members, **Rule 100 (ii)** states that if the candidate is from another Constitution under which the degree of Most Excellent Master is not worked, take the following obligation:

Iof..... Council No.... in theConstitution solemnly swear that I will ever keep and conceal the Secrets belonging to the Degree of Most Excellent Master and that I will not communicate them to anyone in the world not lawfully entitled to them. All this I promise on my honour as a Cryptic Mason,
So help me the Supreme Master of the Universe and keep me steadfast in this my solemn Obligation.

Signed by my hand thisday of.... 20... Witnessed by.....

Rule 100 (iii) states that this must be witnessed or certified and signed by a member of the Council and Rule 100 (iv) states that this signed declarations must be carefully preserved by the Council).

N.B. The same applies for a Visitor who is of a Constitution in which the Degree of Most Excellent Master is not worked.

Recorders are required to inform the District Grand Recorder immediately after any Companion has been admitted to the Degrees of Royal Master, Most Excellent Master and Super-Excellent Master, showing the dates and Council(s) at which the respective Degrees were received (Grand Council Certificate Application Form).

N.B. A candidate cannot be honoured as a Royal Master unless he is a Select Master; a candidate cannot be received and acknowledged as a Most Excellent Master unless he is a Royal Master and a candidate cannot be received and honoured as a Super Excellent Master unless he is a Most Excellent Master
Rule 98(i).

*Please remember to Order a Select Master's breast jewel for each candidate and to have a copy of the Book of Constitutions and Regulations plus District and Council By-Laws for each candidate.

Section E: Preparation for the Installation –1.

The following check list identifies aspects which require consideration when preparing for a Lodge installation:

(i) Agenda items for the election of Master, Treasurer and Sentinel must be included in the summons for the meeting immediately before the installation meeting, as determined by Lodge By-laws. **Rules 64(i)**

&75.

(ii) The appointment of Sentinel may, by resolution at the above meeting, be left in the hands of the incoming Master. **Rule 75.**

(iii) Any dispensation(s) required should be applied for immediately after the election of a Master for the ensuing year. **(See Section C).**

iv) Following his election, the Master Elect should be asked to prepare his list of Officers and be advised about any necessary consultation or approval required by the Past Masters or Lodge Committee.

Regular Officers of the Lodge are: Master, Deputy Master, Principal Conductor of the Work, Chaplain, Recorder, Director of Ceremonies, Captain of the Guard, Conductor of the Council, Steward and Sentinel -Rule 36(i)

No Brother shall hold more than one regular Office without dispensation from the Provincial Grand Master. **Rule 63(iii).**

N.B. Although not “Officers” as such, **Rule 96(iv)** states that “Auditors” (examiners of accounts) shall be 2 subscribing members (other than the Treasurer and Secretary) elected to act as such

The following Additional Officers may be appointed, Almoner, an Assistant Director of Ceremonies, an Assistant Recorder an Organist and no more than four Manciples. **Rule 63(ii).**

Up-to-date copies of the Grand Council Year Book/Book of Constitutions, Provincial By-laws and Lodge By-laws should be made available for presentation to the new Master on his installation, as he is responsible for the due observance of these rules and regulation. **Rules 65 and 66.**

(vi) Dates and times of practice meetings should be determined and included in the Lodge summons.

(vii) The installation summons should be prepared and distributed according to **Section A.5.** This should contain an Agenda item to elect Council Auditors for the ensuing year **Rule 96 (iii).**

Section E: Preparation for the Installation – 2.

(viii) Copies of the Council summons for the installation and letters of invitation should be sent to all official guests, including those whose names have been notified to the Council by the District Grand Recorder. Route directions and car parking arrangements should be sent to all ‘first time’ guests.

If any official guest is to be invited to take part in the installation ceremony or at the festive board - e.g. addressing the Companions, presenting the Past Master’s jewel, responding to a toast etc. - this should be clearly indicated in the invitation.

(ix) The installation banquet menu should be selected and the meal cost to members determined. Members should be asked to reserve meals for themselves and their personal guests before a pre-determined date. This is particularly important if a table plan is to be prepared.

(x) A seating plan, Menu/Toast List and table place cards should be organised if necessary and the appropriate number of meals ordered.

(xi) A list of Officers for the ensuing year should be prepared for use by the Master and Director of Ceremonies at the installation; the form listing the Officers for the ensuing year plus a list of Installing Officers and those delivering the addresses should also be handed to the Representative of the District Grand Master, should there be one, prior to the Opening of the Council.

See also Section H.2. of this Handbook for further guidance for the Lodge Director of Ceremonies at installation meetings.

N.B. The Ceremony of Installation s ceremony is only performed in the Degree of Select Master.

Section F: Miscellaneous Procedures - 1.

1. CHANGES TO BY-LAWS:

The procedure to be adopted if a Council wishes to change any of its By-laws is given below: **Rules 80-83.**

- Following discussion on what changes are to be proposed, the Council Recorder should draft such changes to the existing By-laws and submit (or at least discuss the same) with the District Grand Recorder. The correct wording of By-laws is important in order to prevent failure of the process later when they are submitted to Grand Council for approval. It should be remembered that some By-laws will be inter-related, and that changing one may well affect others.
- A Notice of Motion should be made in open Council that at the next regular meeting it will be proposed that the By-laws are changed. It is not necessary to provide full details at this stage, although the Proposer may wish to give a brief description of the proposed changes. This may be done before (i) above if necessary.
- Once the wording of any proposed changes is agreed, the motion must be included on the Agenda of the next regular meeting following the Notice of Motion, detailing the exact wording of the proposed changes. This may be included on the summons itself, or on an addendum distributed to all members with the summons.
- If the motion is successful, the Lodge must submit 3 copies (or an e-mail PDF) of the changes (as a complete new set of By-laws) to the District Grand Recorder.
The appropriate administration fee (details of which may be obtained from the District Grand Recorder) should accompany the submission.
- The District Grand Recorder will then submit the proposed changes to Grand Council for approval (which normally takes 2-3 weeks) and will return one copy of the approved By-laws to the Lodge when approved.

2. HONORARY MEMBERSHIP:

A Companion who is deemed to have “done good service to a Council or to the Order” may be elected as an Honorary Member of the Council. The procedure to be adopted is very important, as a successful election has financial implications for the Lodge and in regard to his future Grand Council/ District Grand Council dues. The following procedures should be adopted:

Rules 102, 103.

Section F: Miscellaneous Procedures - 2.

- (i) His name must be proposed and seconded in open Council.
- (ii) His name and details must appear on the summons for the next regular meeting of the Council for ballot. Details should include his Name, Rank, the Name and Number of a Royal and Select Council of which he is a member, and details of his Proposer and Seconder.
- (iii) He must be successfully balloted for at the regular meeting as in (ii) above. Individual Council By-laws determine the number of ball balls to exclude.
- (iv) If the Companion is a member of the Council concerned, acceptance by him of Honorary Membership shall be deemed to be notice of immediate resignation for all purposes for which annual fees and dues are required.
- (v) Notice of this honour must be submitted to the District Grand Recorder, indicating him as an Honorary Member from the date of his acceptance, or from the date of the ballot if acceptance has been previously indicated. He should also be shown as such on the next Annual Return.
- (vi) An Honorary Member may attend Council meetings but shall not hold any Office, or vote or second any resolution, except that if he is a Past Master of the Lodge he may propose or second a candidate.

3. EMERGENCY MEETINGS:

Emergency meetings may only be called by the Master, or in his absence, the Deputy Master or the Principal Conductor of the Work. Emergency meetings may be called where there is any urgent Council business, including propositions for candidates etc. where the normal Council calendar is deemed unsuitable to make reasonable progress.

Rule 88.

A summons should then be issued for the emergency meeting in the usual way.

The summons should show the following business only:

To read the dispensation

To open the Council

The business as identified on the dispensation

To close the Council. The only business allowed at the emergency meeting is that stated on the dispensation, and minutes of the previous meeting of the Lodge should not be read.

Rule 124.

4. MEMBERS JOINING FROM OTHER CONSTITUTIONS:

This is detailed in **Section D.**

Section G: Accounts and Records.

1. BOOKS OF ACCOUNT

Rule 96 states that separately administered Accounts must be kept for:

The Council Account

The Council Account for Good Causes

The Council Treasurer is responsible for ensuring that these accounts are kept and that they are audited and presented in open Council annually. Although the Good Causes Account(s) may be maintained and managed by the Almoner by agreement of the Councillor, ultimate responsibility for their accounting rests with the Council Treasurer.

Wherever money is collected for Good Causes, by any means from Councilmembers, it must be clearly stated whether the money is to be used for Good Causes.

b) ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Rule 96 (iv).

Council Accounts, including Charity / Good Causes and Alms Accounts, showing the exact financial position of the Council and verified by an audit committee, must be produced annually. They should then be sent to all Lodge members with the summons convening the regular meeting at which they are to be presented in open Council by the Council Treasurer.

For administrative convenience, it is recommended that all Annual Statements of Accounts be made up to 31st August, to coincide with Grand and District Grand Councils accounting periods, but this is up to each Council to determine.

The Examiners of Accounts must consist of at least two subscribing members of the Council, other than the Treasurer and Secretary, elected at the installation meeting.

Rule 96(iv).

Three copies of all Audited Accounts should be passed to the Council Recorder for forwarding to the District Grand Recorder as soon as possible following their adoption.

Rule 96 (iv) .

Section H: Ceremonial Matters - 1.

1. GENERAL:

The Council Director of Ceremonies is responsible for ensuring the smooth Running of the Council, Ceremonial activities and of the Festive Board.

The responsibility for asking Companions to perform various parts of ritual within our ceremonies rests firmly with the Thrice Illustrious Master, but the Council D.C. is thereafter responsible for making sure that the ceremony progresses smoothly and that each participating brother fully understands the part he is to play. A good ceremony adds enjoyment to the meeting for Council members and their guests as well as for those taking part.

Every Companion should be encouraged to attend practice meetings, as the learning process includes appreciation and knowledge of the ritual by watching others perform their duties as well as actually taking part. This is particularly important as a Companion moves up the ladder in a Council. The D.C. should use practice meetings to instruct and give confidence to the individuals taking part, as well as to encourage all the Companions to work together as a team. Well-rehearsed perambulations, as well as basic techniques such as how to execute movements and signs, often add much more to a ceremony than word-perfect ritual.

Before the Council is opened the D.C. should ensure that every office is filled and that guests and visiting dignitaries are seated in the appropriate parts of the Council room. If any officers are to process in, he should also ensure that vacant seats are available for them in the Council. He will then lead the Procession arrangements and after the Council has been opened will lead the necessary salutations. A guide to salutations at installation ceremonies is given in the **Appendix 3**.

At the Festive Board the Council D.C. is in charge of the proceedings on behalf of the Thrice Illustrious Master. The ultimate aim should be to complete the necessary formalities following the meal in a dignified but timely manner, Concluding the proceedings (in a dignified, unhurried manner) in good time will enable most Companions to get home with some of the evening still to spare and is essential for those (such as guests or official representatives at installation meetings) who have longer distances to travel.

Wine taking should be discussed with the Thrice Illustrious Master and kept to a minimum. There should not be a need for any more than 4-5 wine takings.

Section H: Ceremonial Matters - 2.

The D.C. should make sure that he has an up-to-date toast list and that the correct toasts are given and responses received in a dignified way. If the Master has not arranged a responder to the Visitors' Toast, the D.C. should make arrangements for a responder giving the Brother concerned as much notice as possible. It is always good practice for the Master to arrange a responder to this toast at least a few days before the meeting.

2. INSTALLATIONS:

Precedents to be followed for Processions, Salutations and Seating at installation meetings are given in Appendix 3..

Where a Ruler of the District is to attend an installation meeting he may bring with him a District Grand Director of Ceremonies or a Deputy, who will direct the Procession arrangements, lead the salutations to the Ruler and deal with the appropriate toast at the Festive Board. He should be seated at the Festive Board, with the Lodge D.C.

In such cases, the Lodge D.C. should liaise with the District DC before the meeting, in order that there is a full understanding of the role each will be required to play in the proceedings.

3. MISCELLANEOUS:

Collars - Only one collar should be worn by any Officer of the Council and should, where possible, be the collar of his highest Council Office. A Council Officer collar should not be worn over a Grand or District Officer's collar, except where the Council Officer's collar is to be removed during the ceremony, e.g. at an installation.

Section I: Preparing the Council Chamber -1.

The Director of Ceremonies may find it useful to prepare a check list for use by himself and any other Brethren undertaking the preparation of the Council Room. **Rule 89** states that no Council shall be opened unless **six** Companions are present, in addition to a Sentinel and no business shall be transacted unless at least three members of that Council are present.

A Council of Select Masters must always be opened and closed and all routine Council business conducted in the Degree of Select Master

The Furniture required for the 4 Degrees are listed below:

Select Master Degree:

3 Cloaks (as per Royal Arch)

Ark of the Covenant.

A pedestal to the west of the ark on which is a Volume of the Sacred Law, square, compasses and a trowel.

Immediately to the west of the pedestal is a kneeling stool

A small pedestal in front of the Captain of the Guard's station on which is a gavel. Sword and shackles when required for Captain of the Guard

Two wands and stands for DC & ADC.

3 Pedestals in the East with gavel on each plus 3 lighted candles in the form of a triangle with the apex to the east in each of the 3 pedestals and a large candle in the north of each pedestal.

N.B. In In page 20 of the 2011-Amended ritual, it is stated that it is preferable to work this degree by the light of the candles only, to represent the dim light in the Secret Vault.

Other requirements:

Warrant: Appropriately displayed.

Attendance Register: Outside the entrance of the Lodge.

Collars: For all the Officers, on appropriate chairs.

Lists of New Officers: On the TIM.'s pedestal and DC.'s chair at the installation.

Alms Collecting Box: Placed conveniently near the Almoner, or outside the Council if a retiring collection is to be taken.

Royal Master Degree.:

Ark of the Covenant.

A pedestal to the west of the ark on which is a Volume of the Sacred Law, Square and compasses (no trowel is used in this degree). Immediately to the west of the pedestal is a kneeling stool – leave sufficient space between stool and Capt. Guard for 5 short paces.

A small pedestal in front of the Captain of the Guard's station plus gavel.

Section I: Preparing the Council Chamber -2.

Two wands and stands for DC and ADC; two stands to represent a gate, in the South

3 Pedestals in the East with gavel on each plus 2 lighted candles side by side on each of the 3 pedestals.

Holy vessels on PCW's table, golden bowl outside door of Council

Mourning drapery for JW's candlestick.

N.B. Only 2 candidates are permitted to be honoured ; if two candidates are to be honoured, each must take the degree separately up to and including Page 62 of the 2011 Ritual Book No.1), after which they may continue together. Further, a Council of Royal Masters may be adjourned after the admission of 2 candidates and resumed after an appropriate interval, as many times as the circumstances demand, to enable the admission of further candidates, having due regard for both the comfort of those present at the meeting and the decorum of the ceremony.

Rule 79 (viii and ix).

Most Excellent Master Degree:

Ark of the Covenant.

A pedestal to the west of the ark on which is a Volume of the Sacred Law Facing RWM

Square and compasses on RWM's pedestal.

Mourning drapery at the "JW" station

Two wands and stands for the Deacons.

Gavels for WM and SW

Kneeling stool in front of WM's pedestal.

Super-Excellent Master Degree.

As per the Select Masters' degree, except that only the central pedestal is used, without candles (and in the East) is used.

Two small pedestals are required in the south-west for the 1st. and 2nd Keepers of the Temple.

Three Gavels for Gedaliah and 1st. and 2nd. Keepers of the Temple are required.

In those degrees where a trowel is used, the handle of the trowel should face south east.

Section I : Preparing the Council Chamber -3.

The furniture and Equipment for the Degree of Thrice Illustrious Master comprises:

Robes: TIM-Red; SW-Purple; JW- Blue and Steward—white.

Volume of sacred Law, square, compasses and Trowel

Small silver trowel

Bowl of oil

Small white towel or cloth

Scroll with readings from Kings 1, 1-5, 7-13, 15-21 and 29-34.

Candle snuffer and lighter

Card with closing ritual for candidate

Gavel for Thrice Illustrious Master

Small pedestal

Pedestal (for VSL, square , compasses and trowel

Large Pedestal type Candle

Section J: Charities.

Almoner

Role of the Almoner and Responsibilities of all Companion.

The main responsibilities of a Council Almoner are:

- Maintaining regular contact with sick or distressed Council members.
- Contacting members who stop attending lodge meetings and or constantly miss the Council social board
- Keeping in contact with members who have resigned from the Order, to determine whether they require help.
- Maintaining regular contact with Council widows.
- Retaining contact with families of recently deceased Companions
- Being alert to the needs and problems of Council members and their dependants, they may be in need of help or advice.
- Being aware of the Masonic charities and the support they offer.
- Having a basic knowledge of the range of support available from the state and from non-Masonic charities and how potential applicants can obtain specific advice.
- Ensuring that members, partners and dependants are aware of what support may be available from Freemasonry if necessary.

Appendix1. District By-Laws — Page 1.

- 1. The District Grand Council shall meet regularly at least once a year and at such place as the District Grand Master shall appoint. The meeting shall be convened by notice 21 days prior to the date of the meeting.**
- 2. The members of District Grand Council are the Officers and Past Officers thereof, the Masters, Deputy Masters Principal Conductor of the Work and Past Masters of Royal and Select Master Councils within the District. All the other Royal and Select Masters who are subscribing members of any Council under the Constitutions and Regulations may, by authority of the District Grand Master, be permitted to attend District Grand Council, but they cannot vote on any resolution.**
- 3. The Officers of District Grand Council shall take rank in the following order and every Companion, on his appointment to an office, shall pay towards the funds of District Grand Council, the fee of honour which District Grand Council shall from time to time prescribe:**
 - District Grand Master**
 - Deputy District Grand Master**
 - District Grand Principal Conductor of the Work**
 - District Grand Chaplain**
 - District Grand Treasurer**
 - District Grand Recorder**
 - District Grand Director of Ceremonies**
 - District Grand Lecturer**
 - Deputy District Grand Director of Ceremonies**
 - District Grand Captain of the Guard**
 - District Grand Conductor of the Council**
 - Assistant District Grand Director of Ceremonies**
 - District Grand Sword Bearer**
 - District Grand Standard Bearer**
 - Assistant District Grand Recorder**
 - District Grand Organist**
 - District Grand Manciple**
 - District Grand Sentinel**

A Companion promoted to higher rank shall pay the difference between the fee of honour of his current rank and that of his new rank. All such fees of honour shall not exceed 40% of those charged by Grand Council.
- 4. The fee of honour shall be payable on appointment and no Companion shall assume the rank nor wear the regalia of the office until such fee be paid.**
- 5. Each officer shall provide himself with the regalia of the rank.**
- 6. An Officer, Past Officer or member of District Grand Council who ceases to be a member of a Council in the district shall cease to be a member of this District Grand Council, but on again becoming a subscribing member of a Council in the District shall be a member of this District Grand Council.**

Appendix1. District By-Laws—Page 2.

- 7. Every Companion, before entering District Grand Council, shall be properly clothed and shall sign his name in the stationery provided for that purpose.**
- 8. The District Grand Master, Deputy District Grand Master, District Grand Principal Conductor of the Work, District Grand Treasurer, District Grand Recorder, District Grand Director of Ceremonies , together with two Companions who must be subscribing members of a Council in the District and elected annually at the regular meeting of District Grand Council, shall form the Executive Committee.**
- 9. The Executive Committee shall meet at such times and places as the District Grand Master shall appoint and at least once in every year. Three shall form a quorum. The Chair shall be taken by the most senior member present at the opening of the meeting. In the event of equality, the chairman shall give a second or casting vote.**
- 10. The Executive Committee may recommend for the consideration of District Grand Council any matter, subject or question relating to the Order.**
- 11. The Treasurer shall be elected at the annual meeting and nominations must be submitted in writing to the District Grand Recorder 21 days prior to the Annual Meeting. The Accounts of the District Grand Treasurer shall be audited previously to the Annual Meeting by the Companions elected by District Grand Council. The financial year for all dues, and other payments, shall be 31 August.**
- 12. All communications intended for submission to the District Grand Master or District Grand Council shall be forwarded to the District Grand Recorder for presentation.**
- 13. Every motion for a new By-Law or regulation, or a repeal of an old one, or any change or complaint against a Council or a member thereof, or any other proposition intended to be made at a meeting of District Grand Council shall be stated in writing, together with the names of the mover or complainant, his rank in the Order and the name and number of the Council of which he is a subscribing member, and transmitted to the District Grand Recorder not less than four weeks before the day of the meeting of District Grand Council at which it is intended such motion be made and no motion or matter shall be entertained by District Grand Council, or brought into discussion therein, unless the foregoing requirements be completed with or with the express permission of the District Grand Master.**

Appendix1. District By-Laws—Page 3.

14. Twenty-one days' notice of every meeting of District Grand Council appointed to be held shall be given by the District Grand Recorder to District Grand Officers, both present and past, also to the Recorder of each Council in the District who will notify every member of his Council, but if no return of the Officers of any Council has been made, then a note sent to the Master or Recorder of such Council at the last known address shall be deemed sufficient. The said notice shall state the place, day and hour at which the meeting is to be held and a summary of the business to be transacted and of propositions to be made at such meeting.
15. The Master or Recorder of every Council in the District shall , in September in each year, furnish the District Grand Recorder with a return of its numbers, stating the date at which a Companion was Chosen or joined within the previous year, or since the day of the previous return, also a return of all the Officers of such Council. The fees due to District Grand Council shall at the same time be paid. If any Council shall neglect, for the space of four months, to make such returns and payments, its members shall thereby be disqualified from attending District Grand Council, or any Committee thereof, until its arrears or returns and payments shall have been made and, if after due admonition, such returns are not made, the Council so offending shall be reported to Grand Council.
16. Each Council shall pay to the funds of District Grand Council such fees or dues as the District Grand Council shall from time to time prescribe. Such fees shall not exceed 40% of those charged by Grand Council:
 - i. For each subscribing member of a Royal & Select Master Council- amount per person.
 - ii. For registering the By-Laws of a Council
 - iii. For alteration of By-Laws
 - iv. For every Dispensation
17. All fees levied shall be paid to the District Grand Recorder.
18. The Recorder of each Council shall send one copy of each summons to the District Grand Master, Deputy District Grand Master, District Grand Principal Conductor of the Work and the District Grand Recorder.
19. Every application for a Dispensation shall be made in writing to the District Grand Master stating clearly the object thereof and transmitte4d through the District Grand Recorder.
20. Companions desirous of forming a new Royal and Select Master Council in the District shall conform to the rules prescribed in the Constitutions and Regulations. Every petition for a new Council must ne made on the prescribed form to the District Grand Master, whose approval must be obtained before it shall be forwarded to the Most Illustrious Grand Master

Appendix1. District By-Laws—Page 4.

- 21. These By-Laws shall be binding on all the Councils in the District, unless and until the same be altered in a constitutional manner.**
- 22. In all particulars not herein specifically set forth, the District Grand Master, District Grand Council and its Officers shall be governed and regulated by the same laws as those applicable to the Most Illustrious Grand Master and the Grand Council and its Officers.**
- 23. No alteration or addition to these By-Laws shall be valid until, agreed to by the District Grand Council and approved by the Most Illustrious Grand Master.**
- 24. A copy of these By-Laws shall be sent to the Recorder of each Council in the District . A copy shall be presented to the Master on his Installation and to every candidate on being Chosen and to every joining member.**

Approved 2006.

Appendix 2: Key to Council Collar Jewels and Salutations.

Office	Description of Jewel
Master	Square, Compasses and Trowel
Deputy Master	Trowel and Level
Principal Conductor of the Work	Trowel and Plumb
Chaplain	Trowel and Open Book
Treasurer	Trowel and Crossed Keys
Recorder	Trowel and Crossed Pens
Director of Ceremonies	Trowel and Baton
Captain of the Guard	Trowel and Battle-Axe
Conductor of the Council	Trowel
Almoner	Trowel and Scrip-purse
Assistant Director of Ceremonies	Trowel and Baton with “Assistant” inscribed
Assistant Recorder	Trowel and Crossed Pens with “Assistant” inscribed
Organist	Trowel and Lyre
Steward	Trowel and Crossed Swords
Manciple	Trowel and Cornucopia
Past Master	Trowel and Compasses on an Arc of 60 ⁰

Salutations and Salutes:

Most Illustrious Companions (Most Illustrious Companion)	:11
Present and Past Deputy Grand Masters (Right Illustrious Companions)	: 9
Present and Past Principal Conductors of Work (Right Illustrious Companions)	: 9
Present and Past District Grand Masters (and other Right Illustrious Companions)	: 7
Very Illustrious Companions	: 5
Other Present and Past Grand Officers (Illustrious Companions)	: 3
Present and Past Masters of Councils (Illustrious Companions)	: 3
Present and Past Deputy District DGMs & PCWs (if not any of the above)	: 5.

Appendix 3: Page 1.
Officers in the Degrees of Select and Royal Master Degrees.

Select Master (Recipients are said to be “chosen”):

Thrice Illustrious Master
Deputy Master
Principal Conductor of the Work
Chaplain
Treasurer
Recorder
Director of Ceremonies
Captain of the Guard
Conductor of the Council
Assistant Director of Ceremonies
Assistant Recorder
Organist
Steward
Manciple
Sentinel

Royal Master (Recipients are said to be “honoured”):

Thrice Illustrious Master
Deputy Master
Principal Conductor of the Work
Chaplain
Director of Ceremonies
Captain of the Guard
Conductor of the Council
Assistant Director of Ceremonies
Organist
Steward
Sentinel

Appendix 3: Page 2.

Officers in the Degrees of Excellent Master, Super-Excellent Master and Thrice Illustrious Master Degrees.

Most Excellent Master (Recipients are said to be “Received and acknowledged”):

Right Worshipful Master

Senior Warden

Chaplain

Director of Ceremonies

Senior Deacon

Junior Deacon

Assistant Director of Ceremonies

Organist

Inner Guard

Tyler

Immediate Past Master

Super-Excellent Master (Recipients are said to be “Received and acknowledged”):

Gedaliah

The First Keeper of the Temple

The Second Keeper of the Temple

Chaplain

Director of Ceremonies

Captain of the Guard

Herald

The Third Keeper of the Temple

Sentinel

Thrice Illustrious Master or The Order of the Silver Trowel:

Thrice Illustrious Master / King David

Senior Warden / Zadok

Junior Warden / Nathan

Chaplain

Steward / Benaiah

Director of Ceremonies

Recorder

Solomon.

Appendix 4: Useful Addresses & Telephone Numbers.

