



The Grand Council of the Order of the Royal and Select Masters of England and Wales and its Districts and Council Overseas

Ceremonial Guidance for meeting During Covid-19 restrictions.

Ceremony - Opening a Council of Select Masters

The D.C. states to “form a circle around the Ark of the Covenant”, this should not be done, the Companions remain standing in their places. Principal officers remain in situ.

Ceremony - Closing a Council of Select Masters

No change to the published ritual (2017 edition)

No retiring perambulation. Officers retire informally.

Degree of Select Master

Only one Candidate, who should provide his own VSL.

No robes worn by Principals.

Companions are told to guard the Ark but, remain in their places.

No shackles/chains to used, led by the Capt.Gd. (no Touching/Guiding).

Ahishar should only be woken, move and remain in room (reserved seat identified).

Obligation by Candidate taken standing, sign of fidelity, T.I.M. remains in the East.

Cond.C. takes charge of Candidate

Candidate salutes his personal copy of the VSL brought with him for that purpose.

At the command “Rise Zabud”, Cond.C. instructs Candidate to drop sign.

Secrets and signs given by T.I.M. in the East, Cond.C. being socially distanced helps if needed. Grip shown by Cond.C. at a social distance.

Nine Arches - the Cond.C. leads Candidate to suitable staring point and stands one metre away, facing Candidate, and guides him through steps, Cond.C. walks carefully backwards or distanced by one metre to Candidate’s right.

Cond.C. places Candidate in position to receive history, at conclusion places Candidate one metre from T.I.M. for welcome.

The jewel, tie, books etc. must be placed in an envelope and given to Candidate at the conclusion of the meeting once the council is closed.

Ceremony of Installation

The ceremony of Installation, despite its relative simplicity, poses a number of difficulties of its own because of the conflict between (a) the strong imperative that no object should be touched by more than one person in the course of a meeting and (b) the movement of individual Companions from one chair to another, with its attendant risk of infection.

It is therefore strongly recommended in addition that, whatever the normal practice in the Council, those Companions who will occupy the Principals chairs and act as Steward for the Inner Working should take those offices from the very beginning of the meeting to the very end, so that only the Installing Master and the Master Elect will need to change their seats in the course of the meeting. It is also strongly recommended that the Chair for the Master should have no arms, in order to minimise any risk of the occupant passing or receiving infection from touching them.

T.I.M. elect should move unaccompanied to the west and stand facing east.

D.C. should present T.I.M. elect from his seat.

T.I.M. remains in place while companions withdraw for inner working.

Inner Workings

T.I.M. remains standing in the east, and does not come down to west.

T.I.M. elect remains standing (sign of fidelity), does not kneel.

Installing Officer moves to front of pedestal after the obligation has been sealed.

T.I.M. elect salutes his personal copy of the VSL brought with him for that purpose.

T.I.M. designate, moves unaccompanied to the front of Master's chair, stands facing north, being a suitable distance from it. (1metre+)

Signs and secrets are explained, NOT communicated.

No investiture of apron, robe, collar etc. but the Installing Master indicates to these as being the items of regalia with which he would normally be invested at this point.

No grip given only explained.

T.I.M. assumes his seat unaccompanied by Installing Officer.

Installing Officer moves to a suitable reserved seat.

Perambulations and investiture of Officers etc.

Companions are admitted and return to their seats.

Grand Hailing sign given by members from their seats. (No perambulation)

T.I.M. proclaimed and saluted by companions from their seats.

Warrant should be on show and referred to, BofC in an sealed envelope for the T.I.M. to collect at the conclusion of the meeting.

It is only permitted to conduct the Degree of Select Master and the Ceremony of Installation until further notice.