



Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem

Knights Hospitaller

Priory of New South Wales

TITLES, HONOURS

AND FORMS OF ADDRESS



A Guide on general practices governing the presentation of the titles, honours and forms of address in official use in Australia.

Titles and honours.

A title **preceding** a person's name may be a conventional title (such as *Mr* or *Ms*) an honorific title (for example, *Dame* or *Sir*), or a title derived from rank (for example *Commodore* or *Major*), or a title derived from qualification (for example *Doctor*), or from status (for example *The Honourable*). Honorifics and initialisms indicating a rank, qualification or status that are placed after a person's name are called postnominals. Examples are *AM* (Member of the Order of Australia) and *FRACP* (Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians). **Like other initialisms, postnominals are shown without full stops (.)**; commas (,) are used to separate two or more sets of postnominals (for example *AM, MBE, JP*).

Conventional titles.

In English, the conventional titles are *Mr*, *Mrs*, *Ms* and *Miss*. The title *Ms* is becoming common usage when referring to any adult female person, the notation being that, *Ms* like *Mr* does not disclose marital status.

Presentation of postnominals.

Postnominals associated with honours and awards are placed in such order that the higher the honour the closest it is to the person's name. For example:

Dr D J Killem, AC, CBE or *Ms Mary Likesmark, MBE, OAM*.

When a person is promoted within an order, the postnominal associated with the lower rank award or honour is no longer used. Thus, if *Mr Nigel Nobody, AM* is promoted to an Officer of the Order, he becomes:

Mr Nigel Nobody, AO (NOT *Mr Nigel Nobody, AO, AM*).

Postnominals for honours and awards precede those for Queen's Council (QC) or Senior Council (SC) and Justice of the Peace (JP). Other postnominals are given in the following order with diminishing seniority within each group:

- University degrees and diplomas (NOT certificates); then,
- membership of professional associations; then,
- membership of parliament.

Prefixed titles.

Prefixed titles of rank and status go immediately before the person's name and after any honorific forms of address. Vice regal, ecclesiastical and armed services titles precede **ALL** others. Thus:

Her Excellency Dame Kyle Singwell and Cardinal Sir Richard Lionhart and Major The Honourable George Lambert.

Sir and Dame.

If no title of higher rank is more appropriate, the following honours for men entitle the holder to the prefix *Sir*, in addition to the use of the postnominals:

KG KT GCB AK GCMG GCVO GBE KCB KCMG KCVO KBE

The award of *Knight Bachelor* also confers the title *Sir*, **but no postnominal initials are attached to the person's name.**

Similarly, if she holds no higher rank, a woman can use the prefix *Dame* if she has received one or more of the following honours:

GCB AD GCMG GCVO GBE DCB DCMG DCVO DBE

There is no equivalent of *Knight Bachelor* for women.

When addressing a person entitled to dame or Sir, it is customary their preferred given name before their family name:

Dame Judi Bench Sir Francis Drake

The wife of *Sir Francis Drake* is *Lady Drake*; **her given name is NOT used.** In contrast, husbands receive no title from their marriage to a dame; thus, *Dame Judi Bench's husband* is simply *Mr Missedout Bench*.

Armed services.

In formal correspondence, officers in the armed services are addressed by their rank, given name or initials, family name and any postnominals; thus, *Colonel David Sanders, AO*. In informal correspondence, officers of the rank of army lieutenant, navy sub-lieutenant and air force flying officers and below are given the conventional titles (*Mr, Ms, Mrs, and Miss*). Officers of the rank of colonel and above can be addressed by their rank alone, without their names. Non-commissioned officers and other ranks are addressed by their rank and family name, **NOT by their given name**. Postnominals for honours and awards are shown immediately after their family name and before abbreviations that indicate service, corps or regiment – thus, *Trooper Liketofight MM, RAAC*.

Military ranks that consist of more than one word do not take a hyphen – for example, *Lieutenant Colonel*. Military ranks precede other titles. Chaplains wear military rank but **they are addressed with their ecclesiastical title only**.

Judiciary.

In the High Court, the Federal Court and the Family Court in the federal judicature and in the supreme courts of the states and territories, judges are titled *The Honourable* for example:

The Hon. Justice Mary Savethem

In district and county courts, judges bear the title *His/Her Honour* as in:

His Honour Judge Lockthemup

Judges of the High, Federal and Family Courts and presidential members of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission retain for life the title *The Honourable*. Whereas a judge, who has been appointed a member of the Privy Council, retains for life the title *The Right Honourable*. If knighted, they are addressed:

The Hon. Sir Billy Likedalot, AC, KBE

Academics and professionals.

Academics.

The use of postnominals representing tertiary qualifications is usually restricted to correspondence within the academic community or in cases when the qualifications are cited as a warrant of expertise. For example:

Dr Robert J Burns, FRHistS, FASSA

Note that *Doctor* can be abbreviated to *Dr* in this and like situations; **however, it is NEVER abbreviated in the form *Dear Doctor*.**

Medical practitioners, dental surgeons and veterinarians call themselves *Doctor*, whether or not they have earned a doctorate. Male specialist surgeons in Australia are addressed as *Mr*.

If the holder of a doctorate is knighted, *Doctor is no longer used*; the correct form of address shows the detail of the knighthood followed by the details of the doctorate. For example:

Dame Elizabeth Cutstraight, DBE, MD, PhD

The situation differs, however, for a chancellor, vice chancellor or professor who is knighted:

Chancellor Sir Eric Knewsomeone, DD

Postnominals indicating masters and bachelor degrees are not usually shown in official or academic correspondence. Within Australia academic titles are divided into:

- Academic ranks
- Administrative ranks
- Academic and administrative positions

Academic ranks that merit prefixes are:

Professor and Associate Professor

Administrative ranks that merit prefixes are:

Chancellor and Vice Chancellor

Academic and administrative positions include; *Deputy Chancellor; Pro Chancellor; Deputy Vice Chancellor; Dean; Head of School; Clinical Professor; Adjunct Professor; Senior Lecturer; Lecturer; Associate Lecturer; Tutor and Reader*. **These position names are NEVER used to indicate academic rank.**

Professionals

Professionally qualified people in the context of their profession take their prefixed and professional titles. For example:

Dr Bent Penny, CPA or Dr Bent Penny, Certified Practising Accountant

Clergy

A spiritual title always precedes a temporal title.

The Order of Saint John.

Under the *Order of precedence for honours and awards in Australia*, the Order of St John **does NOT qualify for postnominals**. However, within the Order, it is right and proper to indicate rank by a postnominal and as such, that rank should be displayed in its correct position in precedence (see *Order of precedence for honours and awards in Australia*). **It is never used in any other form.**

It is right and proper to include all prefixes and postnominals that have been awarded or gained. However, their use must conform to rules contained in the *Australian Government Style Manual* which in turn bears reference to various military, academic, ecclesiastical and judicial protocols and contained here for your convenience.

This is how it works within the Order using *Australian Government Style Manual*.

The Grand Prior of Southern Australia:

HE Bailiff Victor Techritz, AM, GCSJ

Our Prior:

HE Bailiff E Anthony Rich, GCSJ, MMSJ, JP

First Vice Prior:

LtCol the Chevalier Colin E Horne, KCSJ, RFD, ED, JP, AAIB, RL

Second Vice Prior:

Dame Patricia Thompson, DCSJ

Vice Chancellor:

Chevalier Fred Maestrelli, KCSJ, JP, BA

Judges of the Order:

The Hon. Chevalier John B Kearney, KCSG, KCSJ, QC, LLB, Chevalier Colin J McElhone, KCSJ, LLB, BA and Professor the Chevalier David L A Barker AM, KSJ, MPhil, LLM(Hons)

Knights and Dames of the Realm:

Chevalier Sir Ian McFarlane KCSJ

Our Clergy:

The Reverend and Chevalier Dr. Graham Hardy, AM, KSJ, MA, BD, The Reverend Fr. and Chevalier V Paul Coleman, SJ, KSJ, The Reverend and Chevalier Dr. David G Duchesne, KSJ, MPhil, MA, TH.L and The Reverend Fr. and Chevalier Dr. Kenneth Sargent KSJ, DD.

Our Serving Sisters and Brothers:

They are accorded conventional titles *Mr, Mrs, Ms* or *Miss*; and, have any postnominals recognised, including *SSSJ* and *SBSJ*, as indicated above.