

Forms of address

The British institutions on which Australia's system of government, law, military and imperial honours were based were accompanied by particular titles and forms of address. Over the years, Australian ways of life have tended to become more informal, and although most of the original modes of address still stand, they are now less strictly observed.

The nomenclature of honorifics and titles, however, is firmly established and should be followed both in correspondence and social intercourse; that is, titles of rank and status (Lord, Sir, Doctor, etc.) stand next to a person's name and after honorific terms of address (The Honourable, etc.). Clerical and armed services prefixes usually precede all others. When a person holds appointments at different grades of various orders, the superior grade takes precedence over the lower.

Where a degree of personal relationship exists, informal options are provided for in a number of cases. As an example, after using a person's title for an introduction, or initially during a conversation, it is acceptable to use subsequently 'Sir' or 'Madam'.

The prefix 'Ms', which is accepted as an alternative style, is not substituted for 'Mrs' or 'Miss' unless a preference has been expressed for its use or if marital status is not known. 'Madam' remains the most generally used form of address in letters, covering 'Mrs', 'Miss' or 'Ms', thus: 'Dear Madam', although the use of the form 'Dear Ms Blank' is a common practice.

Although a superscription and commencement for letters addressed to persons of title or holding a particular office are set out here, no conclusion has been set out. This is because ornate and obsequious endings previously used have now been discarded. Such endings have been replaced in formal or business letters with the simple 'Yours faithfully', or for less formal correspondence, 'Yours sincerely'. Variations may be used at the discretion of the writer, depending upon the relationship with the intended recipient, or if the rank of the person being addressed demands a more formal ending.

Ranks of members of the Navy, Army and Air Force and a guide on the forms to be used in addressing them in correspondence and socially have been included in the chapter 'Australian Defence Force'.

On dedication, memorial and commemorative plaques, it is customary to use the full style and title of the person concerned, as well as post-nominals. The guiding principle with all plaques is simplicity and minimal clutter. The focus should be on the key participant(s). Second tier references often only serve to clutter up the plaque and can diminish the dignity of the event.

For convenience of reference, all other honorifics and titles have been listed alphabetically and not in any order of precedence. Only the most prominent dignities in the British peerage have been noted; it is advisable to consult Debrett's guide to forms of address for the peerage.

Administrator

Vice-regal: Refer to Governor-General.

When Administrator of a Territory:

Superscription:	<i>His or Her Honour the Administrator of ...</i>
Commencement:	<i>Your Honour, or less formally, My dear Administrator</i>
Personal address:	<i>Your Honour</i>

Alderman

Superscription:	<i>Alderman John Blank</i>
Commencement:	<i>Alderman</i>
Personal address:	<i>Alderman, Mr Alderman, or Madam Alderman</i>

Ambassador

Superscription:	<i>His Excellency</i> [preceding all other ranks and titles],
-----------------	---------------------------------------------------------------

*Mr John Blank or Her Excellency, Ms Jane Blank
Ambassador of ...*

Commencement: *Your Excellency, or less formally, Dear Ambassador*

Personal address: *Your Excellency, and subsequently Sir or Ma'am*

Ambassador's spouse or partner

An ambassador's spouse or partner is not entitled to the style of *Her* or *His Excellency*, and is referred to and addressed by name.

Archbishop (Anglican)

Superscription: *The Most Rev. The Archbishop of ...*

Commencement: *Dear Archbishop, or Your Grace*

Personal address: *Your Grace, or Archbishop*

Archbishop (Roman Catholic)

Superscription: *His Grace, The Most Reverend J. Blank, Archbishop of ...*

Commencement: *Your Grace, or Dear Archbishop*

Personal address: *Your Grace*

Archbishop (Greek Orthodox)

Superscription: *The Most Reverend Archbishop Blank*

Commencement: *Your Eminence*

Personal address: *Your Grace, or Archbishop*

Archdeacon

Superscription: *The Venerable the Archdeacon of ...*

Commencement: *Dear Archdeacon*

Personal address: *Archdeacon Blank*

Bishop (Anglican)

Superscription: *The Right Rev Blank, the Bishop of ...*

Commencement: *Dear Bishop*

Personal address: *Bishop Blank*

Bishop (Roman Catholic)

Superscription: *The Most Rev. John Blank, Bishop of ...*

Commencement: *Dear Bishop Blank*
Personal address: *My Lord*

Bishop (Greek Orthodox)

Superscription: *The Right Reverend, Bishop Blank*
Commencement: *Your Grace, or less formally, Dear Bishop*
Personal address: *Your Grace, or Bishop*

Canon

Superscription: *The Rev. Canon J. Blank*
Commencement: *Dear Canon Blank*
Personal address: *Canon, or Canon Blank*

Cardinal

Superscription: *His Eminence, Cardinal John Blank, Archbishop of ...*
Commencement: *Your Eminence*
Personal address: *Your Eminence*

Chancellor

Superscription: *The Chancellor of the University of Blank*
Commencement: *Dear Chancellor, or less formally, Dear Professor Blank,
or Dear Mr or Ms Blank*
Personal address: *Chancellor or Professor Blank*

Vice-Chancellor similarly.

Chargé d'affaires

Superscription: *Mr John Blank or Ms Jane Blank, Chargé d'affaires,
Embassy of ...*
Commencement: *Sir or Madam, or less formally, Dear Mr or Ms Blank*

Consul-General

Superscription: *Mr John Blank or Ms Jane Blank, Consul-General of ...*
Commencement: *Sir or Madam, or less formally, My dear Consul-General*
Personal address: *Mr or Ms Blank*

Councillor

Superscription:	<i>Councillor Jane Blank</i>
Commencement:	<i>Councillor</i>
Personal address:	<i>Councillor, Mr Councillor or Madam Councillor</i>

Curate (Anglican)

An assistant clergyman in a parish, and addressed in the same manner as Priest or Deacon.

Deaconess

Superscription:	<i>Deaconess Blank</i>
Commencement:	<i>Dear Deaconess</i>
Personal address:	<i>Deaconess</i>

Dean

Superscription:	<i>The Very Rev. the Dean of ...</i>
Commencement:	<i>Dear Dean Blank</i>
Personal address:	<i>Sir, or Dean Blank</i>

Degrees

Those with doctorates, masters degrees and fellowships may be addressed by the appropriate abbreviations after their names, following those of orders, decorations and medals. *DD* should always be included. The order of letters signifying doctorates and degrees depends on the individual university that confers them. The practice of adding such abbreviations in social correspondence, however, is not generally followed.

Superscription:	<i>Dr Jane Blank</i>
Commencement:	<i>Dear Dr Blank</i>
Personal address:	<i>Dr Blank</i>

Doctor

Superscription:	<i>Dr Jane Blank (add letters signifying particular doctorate)</i>
Commencement:	<i>Dear Sir or Madam, or less formally, Dear Dr Blank</i>

When addressing envelopes or correspondence to medical practitioners (physicians), the general rule is to prefix the name with *Dr*. The initials

MBBS (or other degree) are not used after the name. When surgeons qualified as Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons (FRCS) or Fellows of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (FRACS), they were traditionally addressed as *Mr*. However, many male surgeons nowadays who are entitled to use *Mr* in this way prefer to use *Dr*, as do most female surgeons.

Duchess

Superscription: *Her Grace the Duchess of ... , or socially, The Duchess of ...*
Commencement: *Madam, or socially, Dear Duchess of ... , or Dear Duchess*
Personal address: *Your Grace*

Duke

Superscription: *His Grace the Duke of ... , or socially, The Duke of ...*
Commencement: *My Lord Duke, Dear Duke of ... , or Dear Duke*
Personal address: *Your Grace*

Esquire

Use of the title *Esquire* (*Esq.*) has lapsed in recent years, being replaced by the generally accepted address of untitled men as *Mr*. If, however, it is desired to retain the use of the title, it is placed directly after the person's name and preceding other initials. In such cases, *Mr* must not precede the name of the person concerned.

Governor

Superscription: *His Excellency John Blank or Her Excellency Jane Blank*
Commencement: *Your Excellency, or less formally, My dear Governor*
Personal address: *Your Excellency*

Governor-General (or Administrator, in the absence of the Governor-General)

Superscription: *His Excellency Mr John Blank or Her Excellency Ms Jane Blank, or His or Her Excellency the Governor-General of Australia*
Commencement: *Your Excellency, or less formally, My dear Governor-General*
Personal address: *Your Excellency*

The style of *His* or *Her Excellency* precedes all other titles and ranks.

Governor-General's partner

- Superscription: *Her Excellency Mrs Jane Blank or His Excellency Mr John Blank*
- Commencement: *Your Excellency, or less formally, Dear Mrs or Mr Blank*
- Personal address: *Your Excellency, or less formally, after introduction, Mrs or Mr Blank*

Governor's partner

- Superscription: *Mrs Jane Blank or Mr John Blank*
- Commencement: *Dear Mrs Blank or Mr Blank*
- Personal address: *Mrs Blank or Mr Blank*

The wife or partner of a state Governor is not accorded the title of *Her* or *His Excellency*.

High Commissioner

As for Ambassador.

Honourable

- Superscription: *The Hon. John Blank*
- Commencement: *Dear Sir or Madam, or less formally, Dear Mr or Ms Blank*
- Personal address: *Sir or Madam, or less formally, Mr or Ms Blank*

Mr, Esq., Mrs, Miss, Ms are not used with the title.

Judiciary

Judges, whether male or female, generally prefer to be called *Honourable Justice Blank*, rather than *The Honourable Mr Justice Blank*, for example. If a doubt exists as to how a particular superior court judge should be designated, an inquiry should be addressed to the judge's associate, or to the court registry, concerning the preferred designation. In general, correspondence with the judiciary should be addressed to the particular judge's associate, or to the court registry.

Chief Justice (High Court)

Superscription: *The Hon. Chief Justice Blank*
Commencement: *Dear Chief Justice*
Personal address: *Chief Justice, but when on the bench, Your Honour*

Justice (High Court)

Superscription: *The Hon. Justice Blank*
Commencement: *Dear Judge*
Personal address: *Judge*

Chief Justice (Federal Court of Australia)

Superscription: *The Hon. Chief Justice Blank*
Commencement: *Dear Chief Justice Blank*
Personal address: *Chief Justice, but when on the bench, Your Honour*

Justice (Federal Court of Australia)

Superscription: *The Hon. Justice Blank*
Commencement: *Dear Justice Blank*
Personal address: *Judge*

Chief Justice (Family Court of Australia)

Superscription: *The Hon. Chief Justice Blank*
Commencement: *Dear Chief Justice*
Personal address: *Chief Justice, but when on the bench, Your Honour*

Judge (Family Court of Australia)

Superscription: *The Hon. Justice Blank*
Commencement: *Dear Judge*
Personal address: *Judge*

State Courts

The forms of address of a chief justice and judges of federal courts generally apply also to the judiciary of the various states of Australia. A District or County Court judge is addressed as *His or Her Honour Judge Blank*, and socially as *Judge*.

Judges – retired

Retired judges of superior courts are entitled to retain the prefix *The Honourable*, after approval has been given.

Lord Mayor

Superscription:	<i>The Right Hon. the Lord Mayor of ..., Councillor Jane Blank</i>
Commencement:	<i>My Lord Mayor, or less formally, Dear Lord Mayor</i>
Personal address:	<i>Lord Mayor</i>

The term *Lady Mayoress* has fallen out of use and favour. Both men and women use the same form of address for lord mayors or mayors, although a female occupant of the office may choose to use an alternative form.

Mayor

Superscription:	<i>His or Her Worship the Mayor of ..., Alderman [Councillor] Blank</i>
Commencement:	<i>Mr or Madam Mayor, or less formally, Dear Mayor</i>
Personal address:	<i>Mr Mayor</i>

Members of Parliament

President (Senate)

Superscription:	<i>Senator the Hon. Jane Blank, President of the Senate</i>
Commencement:	<i>Dear Mr or Ms President, or less formally, My dear President</i>
Personal address:	<i>Mr or Ms President</i>

Minister (Senate)

Superscription:	<i>Senator the Hon. John Blank, Minister for ...</i>
Commencement:	<i>Dear Minister, or less formally, Dear Senator Blank</i>
Personal address:	<i>Minister or Senator</i>

Senator (Senate)

Superscription:	<i>Senator [or Senator the Hon.] Jane Blank</i>
Commencement:	<i>Dear Sir or Madam, or less formally, Dear Senator Blank</i>
Personal address:	<i>Senator</i>

Speaker (House of Representatives)

Superscription:	<i>The Hon. John Blank MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives</i>
Commencement:	<i>Dear Mr or Madam Speaker, or less formally, My dear Speaker</i>

Personal address: *Mr or Madam Speaker*

Prime Minister (House of Representatives)

Superscription: *The Hon. the Prime Minister of Australia*

Commencement: *Dear Prime Minister*

Personal address: *Mr or Madam Prime Minister, or Prime Minister*

Minister (House of Representatives)

Superscription: *The Hon. John Blank, MP, Minister for ...*

Commencement: *Dear Minister, or less formally, Dear Mr or Ms Blank*

Personal address: *Minister*

Member (House of Representatives)

Superscription: *Mr [or, if a former minister, The Hon.] Jane Blank, MP*

Commencement: *Dear Sir or Madam, or less formally, Dear Mr or Ms Blank*

Personal address: *Mr or Ms Blank*

Premier (State Parliaments)

Superscription: *The Hon. John Blank, MP, Premier of ...*

Northern Territory/Australian Capital Territory – The Hon. John Blank, MLA, Chief Minister

Commencement: *Dear Mr or Madam Premier, or less formally, My dear Premier*

Northern Territory/Australian Capital Territory – Dear Chief Minister

Personal address: *Premier or Mr Blank*

Minister (State Parliaments)

Superscription: *Hon. John Blank, MP [or MLA or MHA as appropriate], Minister for ...*

Commencement: *Dear Minister, or Dear Mr or Ms Blank*

Personal address: *Minister*

President (Legislative Council)

Superscription: *Hon. Jane Blank, MLC, President of the Legislative Council*

Commencement: *Dear Mr or Madam President, or less formally, My dear President*

Personal address: *Mr or Madam President*

Member (Legislative Council)

Superscription: *Hon. John Blank MLC*

Commencement: *Dear Mr or Ms Blank*

Personal address: *Mr or Ms Blank*

Member (Legislative Assembly or House of Assembly)

Superscription: *Ms Jane Blank, MP [or MLA or MHA, as appropriate]*

Commencement: *Dear Mr or Ms Blank*

Personal address: *Mr or Ms Blank*

Monsignor

Superscription: *The Reverend Monsignor John Blank*

Commencement: *Dear Monsignor*

Personal address: *Monsignor Blank*

Papal Pro-Nuncio (Vatican Diplomat)

Superscription: *His Excellency, the Most Reverend John Blank, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio*

Commencement: *Your Excellency, or Dear Archbishop Blank*

Personal address: *Your Excellency*

Police Commissioner

Superscription: *Commissioner of Police for ...*

Commencement: *Dear Commissioner, or Dear Commissioner Blank*

Personal address: *Commissioner*

For other officers, rank plus name followed by name of appropriate force.

The Pope

Superscription: *His Holiness the Pope*

Commencement: *Your Holiness, or Most Holy Father*

Personal address: *Your Holiness*

Premier

See Members of Parliament.

Priest or Deacon (Anglican)

- Superscription: *The Reverend A.B. Blank*
- Commencement: *Dear Mr Blank (in some dioceses, the title Reverend Father has been retained; in these cases, commencement would be Dear Reverend Father, or less formally, Dear Father Blank)*
- Personal address: *Mr Blank*

Priest (Roman Catholic)

- Superscription: *The Reverend Father John Blank*
- Commencement: *Dear Reverend Father, or Dear Father Blank*
- Personal address: *Father*

Primate of Australia (Anglican)

- Superscription: *The Most Reverend the Bishop of ..., Primate of Australia*
- Commencement: *Your Grace*
- Personal address: *Your Grace*

Prime Minister

See Members of Parliament.

Prince

- Superscription: *His Royal Highness the Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh*
Sons of the Sovereign – His Royal Highness the Prince Charles, Prince of Wales; His Royal Highness the Prince Andrew; His Royal Highness the Prince Edward
Other princes – His Royal Highness Prince John of ... Duke – His Royal Highness the Duke of ...
- Commencement: *Your Royal Highness*
- Personal address: *Your Royal Highness, and subsequently, Sir*

By Warrant dated 1952, The Duke of Edinburgh is granted precedence next to Her Majesty the Queen except as otherwise provided by Act of Parliament.

Princess

- Superscription: *Royal – Her Royal Highness the Princess Anne*
Other princesses – Her Royal Highness Princess Michael of Kent
Duchess – Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent; Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester
- Commencement: *Your Royal Highness*
- Personal address: *Your Royal Highness, and subsequently, Ma'am*

Professor

- Superscription: *Professor Jane Blank, University of ...*
- Commencement: *Dear Sir or Dear Madam, or less formally, Dear Professor Blank*
- Personal address: *Professor Blank*

In conversation, both professors and associate professors are referred to as Professor. In writing, an associate professor is referred to in the address block as Associate Professor and thereafter as Professor (for example, Dear Professor). Professors who have retired may in some cases retain the use of the title. In North America, Professor is a polite form of address for academics generally.

Queen Regnant

- Superscription: *For formal and state documents, The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, otherwise Her Majesty The Queen*
- Commencement: *Madam, or May it please Your Majesty*
- Conclusion: *I have the honour to remain, Madam, Your Majesty's most humble and obedient servant*
- Personal address: *Your Majesty, and subsequently, Ma'am*

Other than for formal or state documents, correspondence to the Queen should be addressed to The Private Secretary to Her Majesty The Queen, and a similar procedure with the Duke of Edinburgh.

Similar forms of address should be used for the reigning queens of European countries such as Denmark and the Netherlands, and suitably modified, for the reigning kings of other European countries.

Rabbi

Superscription: *Rabbi John Blank*
Commencement: *Dear Rabbi Blank*
Personal address: *Rabbi Blank*

Roman Catholic Religious Brother or Sister

Superscription: *Brother or Sister Blank*
Commencement: *Dear Brother or Sister*
Personal address: *Brother or Sister*

Salvation Army Commissioner

Superscription: *Commissioner John Blank*
Commencement: *Dear Commissioner Blank*
Personal address: *Commissioner Blank*

Other ranks include Colonel, Major, Captain and Lieutenant.

Senator

See Members of Parliament.

Shire President

Superscription: *The Shire President, Councillor ...*
Commencement: *Dear Mr or Madam President*
Personal address: *Mr President or Madam President*

Speaker

See Members of Parliament.

Uniting Church in Australia President

Superscription: *The Reverend John Blank*
Commencement: *Dear Mr or Ms Blank*
Personal address: *Mr or Ms Blank*

Uniting Church in Australia Minister

Superscription: *The Reverend Jane Blank*
Commencement: *Dear Mr or Ms Blank*
Personal address: *Mr or Ms Blank*

AUSTRALIAN PROTOCOL PROCEDURES

Third edition

SIR ASHER JOEL
and
HELEN PRINGLE

**UNSW
PRESS**

Handwritten signature



OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

MINISTRY OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET

187 ST. GEORGE'S TERRACE, PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

TELEPHONE: (09) 222 8444, TELEX: AA 585078, FACSIMILE (09) 222 8444

Dr Carmen Lawrence, with her humble duty to the Queen, has the honour of respectfully recommending to Your Majesty that Your Majesty authorise His Excellency the Governor of Western Australia to personally approve the continued use of the title "The Honourable" by the following office holders on retirement from their office, where they have served the specified qualifying periods in that office:

Office	Qualifying Period
Premier	1 year
Minister	3 years
President of Legislative Council and Speaker of Legislative Assembly	3 years
Member of the Legislative Council	10 years continuous service
Chief Justice and Judge of the Supreme Court	No qualifying period

Handwritten signature of Dr Carmen Lawrence

Dr Carmen Lawrence MLA
PREMIER OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

26 September 1990