

The Provincial Grand Lodge of Linlithgowshire



Education Subcommittee, 3th October 2015

Chairman: Bro Robert J. Potter, PG Chaplain

“Points for consideration on the Role and Responsibilities of a Master, before, during and after the chair”

Before taking the chair

Preparation is key to all brethren before being installed, both: Mentally, Physically and can be addressed by a series of questions. Record your answers in a notebook, which will become a great source of reference and planning.

- What do you want to achieve?
- What do you want to be known for?
- Do you know the roles of a master?
- Do you have a working knowledge of the Constitution and Laws?
- Do you know what a trustee is?
- Do you have the backing of your family?
- Have you endeavoured to get to know the Masters of your year?
- Personal targets and objectives
- Installing Masters
- Lodge traditions and protocols
- Toasts and replies

Role and Responsibilities as a Reigning Master:-

There are many duties and responsibilities that a Brother as Master should undertake, some of which will be obvious and, with this in mind, below are some thoughts and suggestions that might assist a Brother to carry out his duties during his term as Master. Principally, he will have knowledge of the following:-

- Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, Provincial Grand Lodge Bye-Laws and Lodge Bye-Laws.
- Master as Chairman.
- Membership of Grand Lodge and Provincial Grand Lodge.
- Receiving Deputations from Grand Lodge, Provincial Grand Lodge and visiting Lodges.
- Conferring a Degree as a favour.
- Conduct of business in the Lodge and voting thereon.

Additionally, as a Master:--

1. Any Brother who is installed as Master should be in possession of his own personal copy of the current Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, of a copy of the current Bye-Laws of the Provincial Grand Lodge and of a copy of the current Lodge Bye-Laws.
2. The Master during his Installation is presented with the Constitution and Laws and the Bye-Laws referred to above and it is drawn to his attention that an exact and intimate knowledge of these is essential to enable him to govern his Lodge aright in all questions that may arise etc. The only way that this is possible is for the Master to read the Constitution and Laws, particularly that part relating to Daughter Lodges, thereby ensuring that he is aware of the Laws that govern his Lodge and Freemasonry in general.
3. The Master shall preside at all Meetings of the Lodge. However, it shall be competent for the Master to permit another Installed Master to temporarily occupy the Chair in accordance with Law 158 of the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Scotland.
4. The Master shall preside at all Meetings of the General Committee. However, as the General Committee does have the power to appoint a Special Sub-Committee(s) for a specific purpose it will be competent for the Chairman of the Special Sub-Committee to be a Brother other than the Master. It should also be noted that such a Special Sub-Committee must report directly to the General Committee and any business that requires to be approved by the Lodge must first of all be considered by the General Committee and the recommendations of the General Committee would thereafter be considered by the Lodge.
5. The Master is by virtue of his Office, a member of the Provincial Grand Lodge and of the Grand Lodge of Scotland during his term of office and, this being the case, he should attend the Regular and any Special Communications of the Grand Lodge of Scotland and of the Provincial Grand Lodge.
6. If, however, it should be noted that if the Master, or the Wardens who are also members of the Grand Lodge are unable to attend the Regular Communications of Grand Lodge, the Lodge may appoint a Qualified Member who must be a Master Mason to represent the Lodge as Proxy Master or Proxy Warden of the Grand Lodge of Scotland at the Annual Meeting. Formal notification of such an appointment must be made to Grand Secretary with the appropriate Fee, being currently £25.00, such Fee being payable by the Lodge.
7. The Master shall, on receiving a Deputation from the Grand Lodge of Scotland and the Provincial Grand Lodge, tender the gavel to the Brother heading the Deputation in accordance with Law 205 of the Constitution and Laws.

8. The Master may invite another Lodge to visit his Lodge and on occasions invite the visiting Lodge to confer a Degree. Law 207 of the Constitution and Laws clearly sets out the protocol to be observed when visiting Lodges within the same Province, different Provinces and Lodges of another Constitution. The Master must ensure that the necessary approval has been obtained prior to the visit taking place. It should also be noted that whilst a visiting Lodge may confer a Degree within another Lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, a Lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Scotland visiting a Lodge under the jurisdiction of a Sister Constitution and “vice versa” the visiting Lodge can only demonstrate the working of a Degree. This demonstration must be carried out whilst the Lodge is adjourned.
9. The Master should be aware that a Lodge cannot Pass, Raise or confer the Mark on a Brother, who is not a member of the Lodge, without first affiliating him unless the Lodge has received a formal request, as a favour, in accordance with Law 178 of the Constitution and Laws. However it should be noted that whilst it in order to Pass or Raise a Brother from another Constitution provided the necessary approval has been obtained from the respective Grand Secretaries, a Brother from a Sister Constitution cannot be advanced in the Ceremony of the Mark without first affiliating to the Lodge.
10. In all business brought before the Lodge that shall be decided by a majority of the Qualified Members present and participating in the voting, The Master or the Chairman does have a casting vote in addition to a deliberate vote in all business that comes before the Lodge or General Committee and, this being the case, the Master is advised to exercise his right to cast his deliberate vote in any such business thus ensuring that both his casting vote and deliberate vote are the same.
11. The Master should ensure that all votes are carried out by a show of hands and that only Qualified Members are eligible to vote, the only exception being the Ballot for a Candidate that is conducted through the Ballot Box.
12. Once approved the Master must sign the Minute of the Lodge Meetings, Law 190.
13. The Master must ensure that all Business of the Lodge must be conducted in accordance with the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Scotland and of the Bye-Laws on the Lodge.
14. The Master must ensure that any Qualified Member wishing to speak on any item of business within the Lodge that such a Brother must make his comments “through the Chair”.

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15. The Master should be aware that he, as Master and the Wardens and Secretary are by virtue of their office, Trustees of the Lodge. Law 182 of the Constitution and Laws refers.
16. The Master should ensure that his conduct as Master, as a member of the Scottish Craft and as a member of the Community is such as to bring credit to himself, to his Lodge and Freemasonry in general.
17. The Master has a responsibility to ensure that, he, the Office-bearers and Brethren of the Lodge, having all been given the opportunity to further progress the ideals of Freemasonry both within and outwith the Lodge, the Lodge is passed on to their successors knowing that they all have maintained or further developed the standards inherited from their predecessors.

The Role of a Master – “after he leaves the chair”

The role of a Master after he leaves the chair, is primarily one of support and advice. He has an invaluable role to play in offering his talent and experience to his successors in the governance of the Lodge. This is why Past Masters are often referred to, as the backbone of the Lodge. Support to the new RWM, Support to the wardens (future masters) Support to his Lodge and advice where required.

In particular:-

- To attend all meetings of the Lodge to offer support and advice to the new RWM.
- To attend all meetings of the Lodge to offer support and advice to the new members.
- At all times, to be a first point of reference for the new RWM.
- To represent his Lodge at and continue supporting Provincial Grand Lodge.
- To take a Post in the lodge where his experience could be best used, e.g Secretary, Director of Ceremonies or Instruction Class Master.
- To be an active member of all Committee's.
- To be a Lodge Trustee – where applicable.
- To lead by example in doing more ritual on the floor.
- To promote Masonic Education within his own Lodge

Reference to the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Scotland shall take precedence over all the notes in this booklet.

Please send me your comments, views, suggestions. Many thanks
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