

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR SERVING STAFF MEMBER PROTOCOL

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INTRODUCTION

The loss of a member of staff can be a traumatic and emotionally challenging time. This Protocol is designed to help staff make the necessary arrangements for a memorial service when a serving member of staff passes away. It will assist you to coordinate the memorial service simply and appropriately, allowing more time to support colleagues and friends during this difficult period.

Approval for a Memorial Service for a serving member of staff is generally sought by his or her colleagues within the department, Faculty, Office or unit, and within that area's budget.

The University Events and Protocol team will be the main contact for organisers of a memorial service for serving staff, and can provide event and protocol support and guidance throughout.

E: events@mq.edu.au
P: 9850 1881

In some circumstances, the Chief Operating Officer or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Students & Registrar may request a University-wide memorial service be held. In these circumstances the Office of the Vice-Chancellor may provide additional resources as outlined at the end of this document.

This Protocol is intended for use as a reference point only for the memorial service. Human Resources Staff are available to help any member of the University with support, counselling and any other related matters during this difficult time:

E: ohs@mq.edu.au
P: 9850 9725

APPROVAL TO PROCEED

Only the Chief Operating Officer or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Students & Registrar can approve requests to arrange a University-wide memorial service for a serving staff member on Campus in accordance with the Death of Student or Staff Procedure. The Executive Dean / Dean / Head of Office can approve a local memorial service for a serving staff member together with any budget required for that purpose. Approval must be received before any arrangements are made.

CONTACTING FAMILY MEMBERS

This Protocol will assist with the process for making arrangements for a memorial service for a serving staff member on Campus. However, it is important to remember this memorial service will almost always be in addition to a formal funeral arranged by family and friends outside the University.

It is extremely important at all times to respect the family's wishes, and to treat them with care and respect. It is also important to understand that this may be a very busy time for them as they contact other family, friends and loved ones, and make arrangements for a private funeral or memorial service.

Wherever possible, contact with family members should be from someone who:

- has been close to or with supervisory authority over the staff member
- is known to the family
- has appropriate authority within the University to carry out the family's wishes where required.

Contact with the family should be sympathetic, respectful and unobtrusive. Before contacting the family:

- think about what you will say, and ensure that you have set aside an appropriate amount of time to cover everything in a calm and supportive manner. Do not keep family members for too long, but do not appear rushed either
- ensure you have all the information you will need during the conversation to answer any questions that may arise but also come prepared with your list of questions so that you may limit the number of times you need to contact them. Your questions may include, but not be limited to:
 - date of the service
 - time and length of the service
 - flower choice
 - the guest list
 - program and inclusion of a picture
 - eulogies
 - whether or not they would like photos taken
- be prepared to take notes throughout the conversation. Attention to detail is critical, so ensure you do not miss anything.
- set aside five or ten minutes after the phone call to take time for yourself. It is important to consider your own feelings and wellbeing in difficult times such as these.

PLANNING A MEMORIAL SERVICE

A memorial service is an important opportunity for the University community to come together to remember and celebrate a staff member's life. Thorough planning is essential to ensure the occasion is one remembered for its intended nature. Before starting to plan the service, discuss the scale and tone of the event with your Head of Department / Unit or the Executive Dean / Dean / Head of Office as they may be able to provide further input into who should be involved in the planning and execution of the service.

Date of event

Whilst there will not be a large amount of time to schedule an event date, consider the University key dates, public, religious, school and events calendars to ensure there is no event clash. Also consider whether the event is dependent upon an Executive or key family member being available and whether the proposed venue is available.

Venue choice

The choice of venue is very important. Consider choosing a location that is (or is close to) a favourite spot on Campus of the staff member. Alternatively, use one of the event spaces around the University. The Events and Protocol team will be able to assist in the selection of an appropriate location. At a minimum, memorial services will require:

- a space for the ceremony
- a space to gather before/after the ceremony.

The second space should allow attendees to assemble away from the normal operations of the University to minimise disruption and intrusion before and after the ceremony.

When choosing a venue, please consider:

Access and transportation

How will guests arrive (particularly invited family members)? Will they need to park or are they being driven? Can the venue be easily found? Will a map need to be provided? Can guests pull up at the door? Is the car park easily accessible or do they need directions or access adjustments? Guest and family car parking can be arranged by contacting the Events and Protocol Team.

Budget

It is important that the event is of an appropriate quality. Please carefully consider the available budget in accordance with the Entertainment Policy before beginning your planning. At a minimum it will need to allow for:

- catering
- audio visual requirements
- flowers
- invitations.

Building layout

Can the room/location be easily found from the front door/car park? Will guests need to be met at their transport and escorted to the venue? Is additional signage required? Does the building cater for all accessibility requirements?

Catering and refreshments

At a minimum allow for light refreshments which include tea, coffee, juices and finger food. Consider if there is ample room for refreshments to be served? Where will they

be set up, and what space is available for the caterers? Have all dietary requirements been recorded and catered for accordingly?

Guest facilities

Are there toilets nearby? Are they clearly signposted? Is there a private area for guests who may need time away from the ceremony?

Impact on others

Is this event likely to cause significant disruption for people working in the building? Do alternative arrangements for work to continue need to be made?

Music

Will there be live music or recorded? Is there a sound system and is it adequate and appropriate?

Order of service

The order of service should be planned at the discretion of the organisers and in accordance with the wishes of the family. Who will produce this, including proofreading and printing? How will images (if any) be sourced? Do permissions need to be obtained for any content? Has time been allowed for family approval of the order of service?

Support staff

Consider how many staff/ushers will be needed to ensure the service proceeds smoothly. It is important that they are appropriately dressed for the occasion and easy to identify.

Surrounding noise and sounds

Is the area quiet? Are there building/road/air conditioning works taking place in the building that will impact on the event?

Guest welcome

Is it appropriate to have someone meet the guests in the car park and then escort them to the event? Is there sufficient signage to direct guests to the event location? Has someone been assigned the role of welcoming guests on arrival?

Housekeeping

Has someone walked the path that guests will take to ensure it is clean, tidy and accessible?

Visual aesthetic

Does the venue appropriately reflect the occasion? Does it look clean, pleasant and respectful?

Proximity to other events

Will guests be required to travel from one venue to another? If so, has adequate travel and preparation time been allowed in the schedule? Does transport need to be arranged and provided between venues?

INVITATIONS

Invitations should be sent to guests as early as possible. Depending on the time, nature and tone of the memorial service, invitations may need to be sent by email or in hard copy. Templates for both formats are available from the Events and Protocol Team. They should feature the University logo and logotype to help recipients identify the University, but **they should not be mistaken for branded or promotional material**. If required, a map with the venue clearly identified should be included.

When preparing invitations, please ensure:

- all details are accurate (date, location, time, spelling, guest names, titles, honorifics and post-nominals)
- invitations have been proofread by the protocol team and/or Marketing
- the final invitation has been sighted and approved by the family and service organiser.

The Events and Protocol Team also have a number of preapproved templates for signage, reserved seating cards and programs.

THE MEMORIAL SERVICE VENUE

The entrance

As a mark of respect, attention to detail in all matters is paramount. It is important that everything is just right, and therefore particular attention should be paid to the venue entrance. The following will be needed as a minimum:

- a sign clearly identifying the venue
- doorstops for any doors that cannot stay open by themselves

There should be **no University branding on any signage at a memorial event** on campus. Templates for signage are available.

Inside the venue

The following checklist will help in setting up the room, to ensure protocol is observed throughout. In the room, provide:

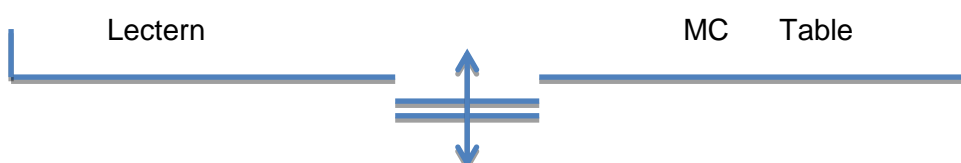
- Stage or other suitable focal point
- Seating for guests
- Lectern for eulogies (microphone if large venue)
- Side table/easel for a photo of the staff member
- Seating for guests/attendees (if required)
- 'Reserved' seating signs for family members in front row
- Ample copies of the order of proceedings for guests
- Guest memorial book (if required)
- Side-table for memorial book (if required)
- Pens for memorial book (if required)
- Floral arrangements (if required)
- Background music

Room layout

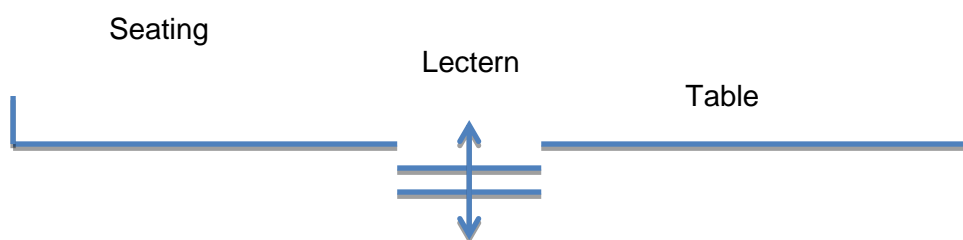
The room should be laid out with enough space to ensure people can move around easily.

Stage, lectern and side-table layout

Where the Master of Ceremonies is the only speaker to remain on stage throughout official proceedings, our suggested layout is:



Where there is more than one person on stage throughout official proceedings, we suggest:



OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY-WIDE MEMORIAL SERVICES

In certain circumstances, a University-wide memorial service for a serving staff member may be considered appropriate. On these occasions, the [Office of the Vice-Chancellor](#) may provide the following additional support to make the necessary arrangements:

Invitations

Printed invitations sent from the Vice-Chancellor. A formal template will be made available for this purpose. The Office of the Vice-Chancellor will proof and approve the invitations before they are sent.

Academic undress

Academic staff members may be invited to attend in 'academic undress': their personal academic gown only, without hat or hood. All other staff should attend in appropriate mourning attire.

Visiting dignitaries

Guests from outside the University may be invited and require additional support. The Office of the Vice-Chancellor may provide resources as necessary.

The University flag

The University flag and the Australian, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Island or other flags (where appropriate) should be raised on flagpoles next to the side table. **No branded items, banners or logos are to be used** without express consent from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor (for example, Faculty-branded banners, CORE logos, research nodes etc). The flags should be displayed in the following order from left to right:

- Australian
- Aboriginal
- Torres Strait Island
- University.

Photographs

The Office of the Vice-Chancellor will arrange for an official photograph of the service to be used in official memorial notices online and in print, with the consent of the family and/or memorial organisers.