

## Policy on Observers at Meetings of the Citizens' Assembly of Scotland

The overarching principles underpinning the Citizens' Assembly of Scotland include the principles of transparency and accessibility. In accordance with those principles and recognising the public interest in the Assembly it will be possible for observers to attend meetings of the Assembly.

The arrangements for applying to attend as an observer and the rules which observers must comply with are set out below. The rules aim to protect the privacy of individual members of the Assembly and the facilitated table discussions between them. On a practical basis it is necessary to limit numbers to ensure the room is not overcrowded and to have some processes in place to ensure the safety of everyone in the room is not compromised.

Individuals may apply to observe the Assembly in half day slots on the Saturday and Sunday of each weekend. Priority will be given to those individuals who have not previously observed an Assembly meeting. The Secretariat to the Assembly also reserve the right to prioritise or restrict access for any particular individuals or groups on the basis of level of interest. The maximum number of observers will depend on the capacity of the room.

### Rules for Observers

- Observers are only allowed to sit in on plenary sessions, which is where the proceedings of the Assembly are taking place as a whole room, rather than separate discussions at individual tables.
- Observers are not permitted to listen to discussions at individual tables.
- On occasion Observers may be asked to leave the room where the Assembly is meeting to ensure the privacy of discussions.
- Observers are not allowed to participate in Assembly proceedings in any way.
- During the Assembly meetings Observers must stay within the area designated for them. They must not speak to or distract the members or staff of the Assembly during the meeting. A liaison officer will be identified to assist with any queries Observers have.
- Observers must agree to respect the privacy of members and not disclose any personal information which they become party to without express permission. This applies to all Observers, including any representatives of the media.
- Observers must not attempt to influence any members' views on the topics under discussion either directly or indirectly.



- Observers and members of the media must ensure their identifying badges are worn and able to be seen at all times.
- Observers are not permitted to take photographs during Assembly meetings.
- Observers are asked to consider carefully before commenting on social media about the Assembly, in particular they must respect the privacy of Assembly members and Assembly staff, comment accurately and truthfully on Assembly proceedings and not make any comments that could undermine the Assembly process.
- Observers failing to comply with these rules will be required to leave the Assembly meeting.

## How can I apply to observe?

Individuals may apply by emailing the Assembly ([info@citizensassembly.scot](mailto:info@citizensassembly.scot)) and indicating which day they would like to attend and whether they wish to observe in the morning or afternoon – depending on capacity it may be possible to offer more than one slot to an individual. They should include their full name, a contact telephone number and if relevant the capacity in which they are attending, for example the organisation which they represent.

Members of the media should contact 3x1 the Assembly's PR agency [citizensassembly@3x1.com](mailto:citizensassembly@3x1.com).

If you have any additional support needs which you think it would be helpful for us to be aware of to ensure your comfort at meetings of the Assembly, please just let us know.

## Where and when is the Citizens' Assembly of Scotland meeting?

The Assembly will meet on Saturday 30 November and Sunday 1 December; Saturday 18 January and Sunday 19 January; Saturday 22 February and Sunday 23 February; Saturday 28 March and Sunday 29 March; and Saturday 25 April and Sunday 26 April. All meetings will take place in the Golden Jubilee Hotel in Clydebank, Glasgow. The meeting venue is fully accessible.