13 Protocol & Practicalities In this chapter we will look at some very practical things to remember for your assignment and once you arrive there: – What to doandwho to speakto whenyou arrive at your assignment – What to take with you to a consecutive assignment – more than just a notepad!All the principles of quality interpreting apply, with the additional requirements of the visual dimension and non-verbal performance factors.Before working in consecutive, make sure that you will be interpreting from a position from which you can clearly hear the speakers, and that you have a working surface to support your notepad, documents and micro- phone, which should be fixed in position with a desktop microphone stand.However,IthinkI am on safe groundwhenI say that you should avoid very bright colours, very short skirts and overly revealing tops.Personal hygiene is also part of your general appearance, so try to minimize perceptible odours, be they bodily or perfumes and aftershaves.Male interpreters should never wear T-shirts, shorts, trainers or sandals on an interpreting assignment.EXERCISE – DRESS SMART As students you won't be dressed very smartly for class, so every month recreate a professional atmosphere by arranging to all come in to practise in your work (smart) clothes.It can be a rather harrowing experience trying to support one's notepad with one hand while taking notes with the other while at the same time juggling a hand held microphone on stage in front of hundreds of people, especially when doing long consecutive on a difficult speech.(Ouvrard 2014: 111) 216 Women I have to qualify any dress-code advice that I now give to the many women who will be reading this book by reminding you that I am a man, so please also ask advice from senior female colleagues.Perhaps you could also arrange for a larger number of people to practise together in a larger room, to make the atmosphere a little different – more like the professional reality of interpreting than your normal classes.Dress code Dressing appropriately is a mark of respect to your customer (and colleagues), so if you want to be recruited again, do make an effort.Men With the above in mind, there might be one person in jeans and a T-shirt amongst the clients, and/or one in a three-piece suit and/or bowtie.So some formality is desired even in the most relaxed of circumstances.In a lecture hall situation, if the organizers have arranged a podium for the speaker, make sure that there is a second podium or a table and chair set up for your use.But if most men are going to be wearing straightforward suits and ties, then it will be the same for you.Too smart is better than not smart enough and you can always remove a jacket and tie to dress An interpreter can be forgiven anything, except being late and not being dressed appropriately.That means that tight clothing and high-heels are not very practical for itinerant assignments, for example.Women have the luxury of being able to wear open-toed shoes in hot weather and still look smart.Remember also that you are representing yourself and a profession.Wear clothes and/or colours that won't show up perspiration.In consecutive, it is all the more important to be a good public speaker.A good rule of thumb would be to try to pitch your dress somewhere in the middle of the style that is being worn by your clients and not at the extremes.Be aware also that your clients may well be considerably older than you, something that may affect what is considered appropriate dress.On the other hand, if you are going to work, for example, for a volunteer NGO or a trade union, you may well know that no one will be wearing a suit or office-wear.Whatever you wear – men and women – should be discreet.In a meeting room, sit at the table with the speakers.Don't forget to make eye contact with the audience, and make sure to project poise and confidence with your body language.In this case, men

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can safely go in trousers and a shirt (without a tie or jacket) rather than looking out of place in a suit. If in doubt, a suit and tie is a safe bet. You should be comfortable. High- heels also make your speaking position less stable (see p. 17–20). I leave the details to your common sense. You don't want to be noticed because of your clothing. 225

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