

M4 Place of Marriage

Summary of Learning Points

When you have read this Chapter you will have learnt the following:

	Paragraph
1. Where marriages in England and Wales may take place	1 - 4
2. How a couple may marry in a register office or approved premise including-	5 - 14
(i) how to establish a venue is approved	6 - 7
(ii) how to operate an advanced booking system	8 - 9
(iii) how the approved premise register is maintained	10 - 14
3. How a couple may marry in a registered building and	
(i) how to establish a building is registered	15 - 16
(ii) who must register the marriage	17 - 18
(iii) how a couple may marry in a registered building outside their district of residence	19 - 24
4. How a couple may marry in a church or chapel of the Church of England/Church in Wales	
(i) General guidance and legislation on marriage in Church of England/Church in Wales	25 - 29
(ii) by superintendent registrar's certificate with the incumbents consent and	30 - 34
(iii) 'Qualifying connections' to a building	35 - 36
(iv) Marriage of non-EEA nationals with a qualifying connection	37 - 38
5. What is a shared building	39 - 44
6. How a couple may marry in a Jewish Synagogue or private house if professing the Jewish religion	45 - 46
7. How a couple may marry in a Quakers meeting house	47 - 49
8. How a couple may marry in a naval, military or air force chapel when it is a	50 - 60
(i) Licensed chapel	55 - 57
(ii) Registered chapel	58 - 60
Annex A: Taking notice for a marriage in church or chapel of the Church of England/ Church in Wales	

M4 Place of Marriage

General

1. Marriages in England and Wales may take place in
 - a. a register office;
 - b. approved premises;
 - c. a registered building;
 - d. a church or chapel of the Church of England or Church in Wales in which marriages may lawfully be solemnized;
 - e. a naval, military or air force chapel duly registered for marriage;
 - f. at the residence of a house-bound or detained person (see M.10).
2. A marriage authorised by Registrar General's licence may take place anywhere except in a register office, approved premises or registered building (see M11). There is no restriction as to place of marriage when it is solemnized according to the usages of the Jews or the Society of Friends. A marriage according to the usages of the Society of Friends will normally take place in a meeting house or other place at which their meetings for worship are regularly held.
3. Where the marriage venue is not the register office where notice of marriage is given, the parties to the marriage are responsible for arranging the date and the time for the marriage with the appropriate person(s). These are:
 - a. in a register office - the superintendent registrar of that office;
 - b. on approved premises - the holder of the approval for the premises and the superintendent registrar of the district in which the premises are situated;
 - c. in a registered building where an authorised person is appointed - the minister or a trustee, owner, deacon or manager of the building and the authorised person.
 - d. in a registered building where an authorised person has not been appointed - the minister or a trustee, owner, deacon or manager of the building and a registrar from the district in which the registered building is situated.
 - e. in a church or chapel of the Church of England or Church in Wales - the incumbent.

Couples who choose to give notice without having first made these arrangements for their ceremony should be informed that any subsequent change of venue will necessitate a fresh notice for which a further fee will be payable.

4. When attesting a notice, the registration officer should ensure that every marriage will take place in a venue lawfully authorised for the solemnization of marriages and in the presence of a person whose attendance is required by law by paying particular attention to the following points:

- a. he must be satisfied that the building or premises in which a marriage is intended to take place is one in which marriages may lawfully be solemnized;
- b. the parties to an intended marriage must always be informed if further arrangements are necessary;
- c. where the marriage is to take place in the presence of an authorised person, the officer attesting the notice should establish which authorised person is going to attend. This is so that he can verify that such person has been duly certified to the Registrar General and the superintendent registrar as an authorised person for the building in which the marriage is to take place, or for some other building in the same registration district;
- d. where there are two buildings or premises of similar description he should be certain in which building the marriage is to take place and the exact description of that building or premises as registered should be entered in the notice; and
- e. a marriage according to the rites of the Church of England or the Church in Wales can only take place in a registered building in the following circumstances:
 - (i) where the building is a naval, military or air force chapel licensed by the Bishop under Part V of the Marriage Act and appears in the first section of the Official List Part IV;
 - (ii) where the building is the subject of a sharing agreement under the sharing of Church Buildings Act 1969 (marked SB in the Official List, Part II);
 - (iii) where the marriage is solemnized on the authority of the Archbishop's special licence.

Register offices and approved premises

5. Couples are able to marry in any register office or approved premises of their choice in England and Wales provided they have the necessary residential qualification to give notice in their own registration district(s). The notice must be given at the register office for the district of residence, unless one or both parties to the marriage are subject to immigration control when both notices will have to be given in a specified registration district also known as designated register offices and will be described as such throughout this chapter (See M3:2 for further guidance). The marriage must be by civil ceremony.

6. Before accepting a notice for a marriage at approved premises, the superintendent registrar should check the current status of the venue in the List of Approved Premises. If the venue chosen does not appear on the list, the superintendent registrar should make further enquiries to determine whether the premises are approved or are likely to be so by the intended date of the marriage. If the venue does appear in the list but it appears the current approval is due to expire before the intended marriage date, or the local authority has proposed to revoke an approval, the superintendent registrar should advise the couple accordingly. In either of these cases, notice may still be taken if the couple wish to proceed, but they must be advised that if an approval is not in force by that date the marriage will not be able to proceed at that venue and a fresh notice would be required for a different venue.

7. When a registration officer attests a notice of marriage, they should confirm the date and time of the event with the couple. If the marriage is to take place outside the district, an information copy of the notice(s) is sent automatically to the registration district in which the marriage is to be solemnized. < REDACTED > The registration officer attesting the notice should also confirm with the couple that the place of marriage is correctly stated on the notice as the marriage can only take place in the venue shown in the notices and on the superintendent registrar's certificates. This is particularly important when the marriage is to take place on approved premises that used to be part of the register office. When the superintendent registrar of the district where the marriage is to take place receives notification that the notices have been given, they must be checked to ensure that the name of the venue is shown correctly on both. They should also check the current status of the venue as described in M4.6. If the approval is due to expire before the proposed marriage, or the local authority has proposed to revoke an approval, the superintendent registrar should notify the Proper Officer and the superintendent registrar(s) who took the notice(s).

Advanced booking system

8. Superintendent registrars may wish to operate an advance booking system, or consider one for use in those circumstances where the couple are not able to give notice of their intention to marry or wish to be sure of the date, time and place of their marriage before doing so. It is for the superintendent registrar to decide how such a system should operate in their district, but it is recommended that any advanced booking system ensures that the couple is given written notification of the date, time and exact description of the venue booked. It should include a clear indication of the last date on which notice can be given for that marriage date and, if appropriate, an indication of a date by which the provisional booking will be cancelled if the couple do not give notice of marriage.

9. When arrangements for a marriage have been made many months prior to the ceremony, the superintendent registrar of the district where the marriage is to take place, may wish to consider sending a reminder to the parties, to confirm that the marriage is still to take place on the date and time specified. Where appropriate, the couple can be reminded of the need to fulfil the residency requirements, and to give notice of marriage in sufficient time for the 28 day waiting period; which in certain circumstance may be extended to 70 days (see M3:5 for further guidance on the referral scheme) to be completed, enabling the issue of the superintendent registrar's certificates prior to the intended date of marriage.

Registers of approved premises

10. Premises are approved by the local authority for the solemnization of marriage and for the registration of civil partnerships. It is not possible for a register office to also be approved premises. The Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005 allow a separate part of a building that houses the register office (e.g. the Town Hall) to be approved premises. However, any room shown on the plan of the register office approved by the Registrar General cannot be shown on the plan of the approved premises for any approval granted under the 2005 Regulations.

11. Each local authority must maintain a register of approved premises in their area. The register is required to contain a record of the following details:

- a. the name and full postal address of the approved premises;
- b. the description of the room or rooms in which the proceedings (marriage or civil partnership) are to take place;
- c. the name and address of the holder of the approval;

- d. the date of grant of the approval;
- e. the due date of expiry of that approval;
- f. if the approval is renewed, the date of renewal;
- g. if the approval is revoked, the date on which the revocation takes effect;
- h. the name, address and qualification of the responsible person; and
- i. where the premises are religious premises a note to indicate this.

12. The Proper Officer is required to notify the Registrar General and the superintendent registrar of the district where the premises are situated of any changes to the register as soon as they occur. If it is planned to 'decommission' a register office ceremony room so that it will be approved premises, it is important that the room be formally removed from the plan of the register office by the local authority and Registrar General.

13. The period of the grant of approval of the premises will be determined by the local authority and will normally last for a minimum of three years but may be revoked by the local authority before that time. When a local authority propose to revoke an approval, it will advise the superintendent registrar for the district in which the premises are situated. When an application for the renewal of an approval is made at any time in the twelve months before the expiry of the approval or within one month after the expiry, the validity of the existing approval will be reinstated until the application has been finally determined or withdrawn.

14. The names and addresses of approved premises will be made available to every superintendent registrar by the Registrar General.

Registered buildings

15. A marriage by certificate may take place in a registered building according to religious rites other than those of the Church of England, providing consent has been given by the minister or a trustee, owner, deacon or manager of the building. A list of registered buildings is made available by the Registrar General. A marriage of a same sex couple in a registered building may only take place if the building is registered for the marriage of same sex couples. < REDACTED > GRO can be contacted to check that the building is registered for the marriage of same sex couples.

16. Notice must not be attested for a purely civil marriage to be solemnized in a registered building. If the parties do not wish to have any ceremony except the exchange of the statutory words of declaration and contract, they should arrange to be married either in a register office or on approved premises. Where the couple choose to marry by civil ceremony it is open to them to add a religious marriage (non-statutory) ceremony in a church or chapel afterwards (see M2.17-19).

Authorised person or registrar to be present

17. A registration officer attesting a notice for a marriage in a registered building for which an authorised person has been certified to the Registrar General must establish with the couple whether the marriage will be registered by an authorised person for that

building or another building within the district, or whether they wish a registrar of marriages to attend and register the marriage. No pressure should be put on the couple to adopt one procedure or the other.

If the attendance of a registrar of marriages is required at a church for which an authorised person has been appointed, the registration officer attesting the notice must ensure that the person giving notice has completed the special request or “declaration” on the back of the notice form. < REDACTED >

For a marriage in a registered building that have opted in to marry same sex couples it is essential to check that the AP is authorised to register the marriage which is to take place. There may be instances where an authorised person appointed for the marriage of opposite sex couples but not for the marriage of same sex couples or vice versa. In such cases then the registrar must attend.

18. When the attendance of a registrar of marriages is requested, the party giving the notice should be told of the importance of ensuring (if not already done) that the minister, trustees or governing body of the building will not object to the registrar’s attendance. If he attends to register such a marriage, the registrar is entitled to statutory fees.

Marriage outside district of residence

19. A marriage must normally take place in a registered building in the district where the required period of residence has been completed. A marriage in a registered building may however, take place in a different district in the circumstances set out in paragraphs 20-22 below.

20. A marriage may take place in a registered building situated in a district in which neither party lives if it is the usual place of worship of one or both of the parties. Although there may be a registered building of the same denomination as the building proposed for the marriage, within the district(s) of residence, the parties have the right to be married in their usual place of worship.

21. A superintendent registrar does not need to see evidence that the building is the usual place of worship of either party but should question the party giving notice and be satisfied of the truth of the statement. Care should be taken if the building is so far away from the person’s place of residence that it appears unlikely to be the usual place of worship.

22. Under Section 35(1) of the Marriage Act 1949 a marriage may also take place in a registered building in a district where neither party lives when all the following apply:

- a. the parties want to marry according to the specified rite or ceremony of a body or denomination who meets for religious worship, and to which either or both of them belongs;
- b. there is no registered building where marriage is solemnized according to the ceremony which the parties wish to use within the district of residence of one party. (Although there may be a registered building of the desired denomination in the district of one of the parties the right to go to a third district still exists if there is no such building in the district of the other party); and,
- c. the marriage must take place in the district which has a building of the required denomination and is nearest to the residence of the party who lives in a district where there is no such building. For the marriage of a same sex couple, the registered building must also be the nearest building registered for the marriage of same sex couples. The additional form of declaration printed on the back of the notice must be completed by the person giving the notice. < REDACTED >

23. If the parties wish to marry outside the district(s) of residence in a registered building which is the usual place of worship of one or both of them, notice should be taken in accordance with paragraphs 20 & 21, even if the circumstances set out in paragraph 22 may also apply.

24. Whenever a superintendent registrar enters on < REDACTED >

Church or chapel of the Church of England/Church in Wales (Anglican)

General

25. Marriage in a church or chapel of the Church of England/Church in Wales can take place with the consent of the incumbent, either after ecclesiastical preliminaries e.g. by banns or common licence or civil preliminaries, i.e. by superintendent registrar's certificate.

26. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 does not extend to the Church of England or the Church in Wales. Although the 2013 Act contains a power to allow for the marriage of same sex couples in a chapel or Church of the Church in Wales if the governing body of the Church in Wales has resolved to allow such marriages.

27. The Immigration Act 2014 provides that non-EEA nationals marrying in any church or chapel of the church of England/Church in Wales must now complete civil preliminaries. Information as to where notice should be given is in M3.3 – 4.

28. When the couple attend at the register office to give notice a superintendent registrar should ask if the consent of the incumbent has been obtained to marry at the church. They should be advised that if it hasn't been obtained they may not be able to marry at that church and they may need to give another notice of marriage; for which a further notice fee will be payable.

29. A notice should be given within 3 months of the date of marriage unless the couple advise that the incumbent is willing to marry them following a longer period i.e. preliminaries completed up to 12 month prior to the marriage.

A flowchart showing the different processes of taking notice for a marriage in a church or chapel of the Church of England/ Church in Wales can be found in Annex A at the end of this chapter.

Marriage by superintendent registrar's certificate

30. A marriage by superintendent registrar's certificate may take place, subject to the consent of the incumbent, in any church or chapel of the Church of England or the Church in Wales in which banns of matrimony may be published. If the required consent has not been obtained when notice is given, it should be made clear to the party giving notice that it must be obtained before the marriage can take place.

Where it is a naval, military or air force chapel (see M4.44-52) this will be a parish church, a parish centre of worship (only in England), an ancient chapel or a chapel licensed for marriages by the bishop and will be shown in Part II of the Official List. If a couple wish to marry in a church or chapel which is not shown in the Official List, the superintendent registrar should find out from the General Register Office <REDACTED>, before the notice is attested or accepted, whether marriages may be solemnized there.

31. One of the couple must also have the same seven days residential qualification in the area served by the church. With a parish church or parish centre of worship this will

be the parish, and with an ancient chapel or a building licensed by the bishop the ecclesiastical district either attached to the chapel or specified in the licence.

32. However, a person may be married in his or her usual place of worship, even if neither party live in the parish or the district in which the church is situated, provided he or she is on the church electoral roll.

33. A church or chapel of the Church of England or the Church in Wales can only be accepted as a person's usual place of worship if he or she is enrolled on the church electoral roll of the area in which that church or chapel is situated. Where a person is enrolled on the church electoral roll of an area in which he or she does not reside, his or her usual place of worship is deemed to be a parish church or authorised chapel in that area. An extra parochial place cannot have a church electoral roll so the usual place of worship provisions cannot apply.

34. A person who lives in a parish where the normal place of Anglican marriage is closed for repair or rebuilding may marry:

- a. if there is a building licensed for public worship within the same parish or ecclesiastical district, in that building;
- b. if there is no such building but there is a consecrated church in the parish or ecclesiastical district not licensed for public worship, in that building if the bishop so directs; or,
- c. if no building has been licensed or no direction given, in the parish church of any immediately adjoining parish or in a church or chapel in an immediately adjoining ecclesiastical district.

Where a superintendent registrar is unable to accept a notice for marriage in a church or chapel of the Church of England or the Church in Wales the couple should be advised to consult the member of the clergy by whom they wish to be married.

'Qualifying connection' to marry

35. The Church of England/Church in Wales Marriage Measure 2008 No1 and the Marriage (Wales) Act 2010 allows a Church of England/Church in Wales marriage to take place after banns or by common licence in a parish with which one of the couple has a qualifying connection. A qualifying connection which allows a marriage to be preceded by ecclesiastical preliminaries in any church of the Church of England/Church in Wales is entirely a matter for the Church of England/Church in Wales and any enquiries should be referred to the incumbent of the church where the couple wish to marry.

36. Where both of the parties to the marriage are British/EEA or Swiss nationals and have a qualifying connection to a particular church the marriage can only be preceded by ecclesiastical preliminaries. Where one or both of the parties to the proposed marriage is a non-EEA national then the couple must follow civil preliminaries; as per the guidance set out below.

Marriage of non-EEA nationals with a qualifying connection.

37. Where the couple are giving notice to marry based on a qualifying connection with the church, notice can be taken to marry in the church subject to the following;

- a. the consent of the incumbent has been obtained for the marriage to take place at the Church/Chapel, and

- b. confirmation received from the incumbent that the marriage could have taken place by banns or common licence if the couple were not excluded by the Immigration Act 2014.

However, in such cases, the superintendent registrar attesting the notice is not obliged to enquire into the nature of the qualifying connection, although they will need to be satisfied of the consent/confirmation detailed above. This could be written or verbal confirmation from the incumbent.

38. The superintendent registrar should follow the procedures for taking a notice in M6.28 and is required to state on the notice the following wording -

‘This marriage could be solemnised in this church/chapel after banns/common licence if section 5(3) were disregarded’

This wording will also be reproduced on the superintendent registrar’s certificate.

Superintendent registrar’s should note that the conditions around residency and usual place of worship which apply for marriage by superintendent registrar’s certificate as detailed in paragraphs (M4 29 - 34) do **not** apply in these circumstances.

Shared Buildings

39. A church or chapel of the Church of England which is the subject of a formal sharing agreement between two or more churches (one of them being the Church of England) to which the Sharing of Church Buildings Act 1969 applies may be certified as a place of meeting for religious worship under the provisions of the Places of Worship Registration Act 1855 and registered for the solemnization of non-conformist marriages under the provisions of Section 41 of the Marriage Act 1949.

40. Similarly a registered building which is the subject of a formal sharing agreement, and to which the Church of England is one of the signatories, may be licensed by the Bishop for the publication of banns and the solemnisation of marriages according to the rites of the Church of England.

41. It is also possible for two or more non-conformist churches to which the Act applies to enter into a formal sharing agreement in respect of a building which is not a church or chapel of the Church of England.

42. A shared building which has been registered for the solemnization of non-conformist marriages and licensed by the Bishop for the publication of banns and the solemnization of marriages according to the rites of the Church of England is denoted “SB” in Parts II and III of the Official List.

43. Section 43 of the Marriage Act 1949 is modified if a building is subject to a formal sharing agreement made under the provisions of the Sharing of Church Buildings Act 1969. The proviso to Section 43(1) which prescribes a period of 12 months after registration before an authorised person may be appointed does not apply. An authorised person may be appointed immediately after the registration of the building.

44. A superintendent registrar who receives an enquiry about the application of the Sharing of Church Buildings Act 1969 is advised to contact the General Register Office
<REDACTED>

A marriage of a same sex couple in a shared building may only take place if the building is registered for the marriage of same sex couples. < REDACTED> GRO <REDACTED>

can be contacted to check that the building is registered for the marriage of same sex couples.

Jewish synagogues/private houses

45. A marriage may take place according to the usages of the Jews, where both parties profess the Jewish religion, in any Jewish synagogue or in any private house or other place (including approved premises), whether within or outside the district(s) of residence of the parties. Before accepting notice of any marriage according to the usages of the Jews, the superintendent registrar must ascertain that both parties are persons professing the Jewish religion.

46. The superintendent registrar should be satisfied that the marriage will be duly registered by a Secretary (for Marriages) in the register books supplied for the purpose by the Registrar General. The parties to any proposed Jewish marriage should be told that it can be registered as follows;

- (i) where the parties to the marriage are both members of the same synagogue, the marriage shall be registered by the secretary of that synagogue; and
- (ii) where the parties to the marriage are members of different synagogues, the marriage shall be registered by the secretary of whichever of those synagogues the parties to the marriage nominate.

Additionally where the parties are of the same sex then the registration officer should be satisfied that the relevant governing authority has given their consent. The officer may initially wish to contact GRO who will hold a list of relevant governing authorities who have given their consent. If they are not on the list, then the officer will need to ask the couple to obtain this written confirmation from the relevant governing authority, possibly via the secretary.

Quakers' meeting houses (Society of Friends)

47. Where a marriage is to be solemnized according to the usages of the Society of Friends the marriage will normally take place in a meeting house of the Society in England or Wales, or other place at which their meetings for worship are regularly held, whether within or outside the district(s) of residence of the parties. No person who is not a member of the Society of Friends may be married according to the usages of the Society unless he/she is authorised to be so married by or in pursuance of any general rule of the Society. Each party giving the notice must be asked to declare verbally that each party is a member of the Society, or is in profession with, or of the persuasion of the Society. If he/she is unable to make this declaration, each party giving the notice must, before notice is given, produce in respect of the party who is not a member of the Society, or in profession with or the persuasion of the Society a certificate from a registering officer of the Society showing that the party is authorised to be married according to its usages. If neither is a member of the Society, then both must produce at the time of giving notice certificates from the registering officers showing that they have been so authorised.

48. The form of registering officer's certificate to be produced is as follows:

Certificate

< REDACTED >

49. The marriage must be registered by the registering officer of the Society appointed to act for the area where the meeting house in which the marriage takes place is situated.

Additionally, where the parties are of the same sex then the registration officer should be satisfied that the recording clerk of the Society of Friends in London has given their

consent. The officer may initially wish to contact GRO who will hold a list of relevant governing authorities who have given their consent. If the recording clerk is not on the list, then the registration officer will need to ask the couple to obtain this written confirmation from the recording clerk, possibly via the registering officer. To expedite matters the registration officer may wish to view and download the "Marriage Equality letter" which can be found on the Society of Friends website at the following link:-

<http://quaker.org.uk/ro>

Naval, military and air force chapels

50. Under Part V of the Marriage Act, naval, military and air force chapels may be licensed for the solemnization of marriages according to the rites of the Church of England or the Church in Wales and registered for marriages otherwise than according to those rites. A list of the chapels so licensed or registered appears in Part IV of the Official List.

51. If a party wishes to give notice of a marriage to be solemnized in a chapel which does not appear in the lists of buildings licensed or registered for marriages in Part IV of the Official List, notice may not be accepted until confirmation has been obtained from the General Register Office that the building has been registered or licensed for marriages.

52. As well as meeting all the usual requirements for giving notice for marriage in a registered or licensed building, which may also mean attending at a designated register office if one of the parties is subject to immigration control, one of the parties at least must be a qualified person, that is to say, a person who, at the date when notice is given:

- a. is a man or woman serving in any of the regular armed forces of the Crown; or
- b. has served in any force included in a. otherwise than with a commission granted or under an engagement entered into only for the purpose of a war or other national emergency; or
- c. is, as a member of a reserve of officers, a reserve force, the Territorial Army or the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, called out on actual or permanent service, or embodied; or
- d. is a son or daughter, including an adopted son or adopted daughter, step-son or step-daughter of a person qualified under any of the foregoing paragraphs ("Adopted" means adopted under the Adoption Acts of the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man, any of the Channel Islands, or any of the countries or territories listed in Appendix 3); or
- e. is a member of the forces of one of the following countries stationed in England and Wales or the daughter of a member of any such forces:

Australia
Bangladesh
Barbados
Belgium
Botswana
Canada
Cyprus
Denmark
Fiji

India
Italy
Jamaica
Kenya
Lesotho
Luxembourg
Malawi
Malaysia
Malta

Portugal
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Sri Lanka
Swaziland
Tanzania
Tonga
Trinidad and Tobago
Turkey

France
Gambia
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Guyana

Mauritius
Netherlands
New Zealand
Nigeria
Norway

Uganda
United States
of America
Zambia
Zimbabwe

or military member (or his daughter) of any of the following headquarters and defence organisations; or a civilian member (or his daughter) of any of those headquarters or organisations who is not a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies:

The Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE)
The Headquarters of the Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT)

The Channel Committee (CHANCOMTEE)

The Headquarters of the Allied Commander in Chief Channel (CINCHAN)

The Headquarters of the Commander of the Allied Maritime Air Force, Channel Committee (COMMAIRCHAN)

The Headquarters of the Commander in Chief of the Eastern Atlantic Area (CINCEASTLANT)

The Headquarters of the Commander of the Maritime Air Eastern Area (COMMAIRESTLANT)

53 < REDACTED >

54. Every notice of a marriage to take place in a naval, military or air force chapel must contain a declaration that at least one of the parties to the intended marriage is a qualified person within the meaning of the Act and must specify the party so qualified and the nature of his qualification < REDACTED >

Licensed chapels

55. Notice may be given to a superintendent registrar for a marriage to take place by certificate, according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, in a naval, military or air force chapel licensed by the Bishop for the purpose. The notice cannot be accepted, however, unless one of the parties has resided for a period of seven days immediately before notice is given in the ecclesiastical parish or district in which the chapel is situated and the chapel and the place of residence are within the district of the superintendent registrar or one of the superintendent registrars to whom notice is given.

56. Instructions in M4.29-30 relating to marriage in the usual place of worship do not apply to a marriage in a naval, military or air force chapel licensed by the Bishop.

57. When a chapel is licensed, the Secretary of State for Defence or any person authorised by him must appoint one or more members of the clergy to register marriages solemnized in the chapel according to the rites of the Church of England and such a marriage may be solemnized only in the presence of a member of the clergy so appointed. The provisions of the Act and of the Marriage (Authorised Persons) Regulations 1952 relating to the registration of marriages by authorised person apply to marriages solemnized according to the rites of the Church of England in a licensed naval, military or air force chapel as if:

- a. for any reference to an authorised person there were substituted a reference to a member of the clergy so appointed and
- b. for any reference to the trustees or governing body of a registered building there were substituted a reference to the Secretary of State for Defence or any person authorised by him.

Registered chapels

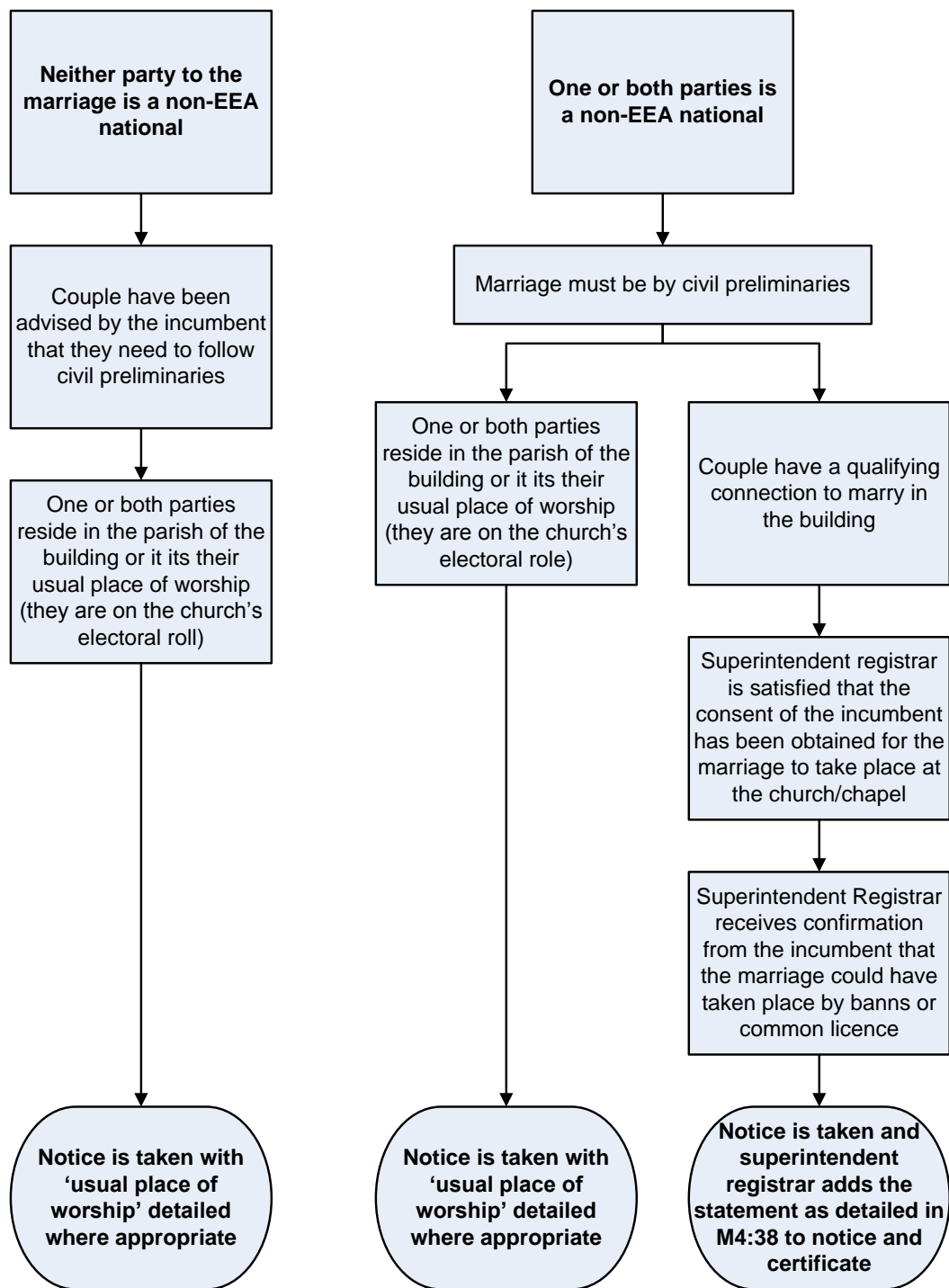
58. Any marriage which could lawfully be solemnized in a registered building may be solemnized in a naval, military or air force chapel which is registered for marriages, provided of course that one of the parties is a qualified person. Notice of marriage in such a chapel may be accepted in the same way as if the chapel were a registered building, and a superintendent registrar may accept notice and issue his certificate for a marriage in such a chapel which is the usual place of worship of one or both the parties although it is not within a registration district in which either of them resides (see M4.21).

59. If a chapel is registered for marriages otherwise than according to the rites of the Church of England, the provisions of the Act apply to the certification to the Registrar General and the superintendent registrar of a person authorised to be present at marriages solemnized there, as if any reference to the trustees or governing body of a building there were substituted a reference to the Secretary of State for Defence or any person authorised by him. Unless a person who has been so certified is to be present at the marriage, a registrar must attend the marriage and register it.

60. Where the marriage is to take place in a chapel registered for the marriage of same sex couples<REDACTED> Where the marriage is to be solemnised in the presence of an authorised person in accordance with paragraph 52 then there will be no need to enquire further. However, in the event that a registrar is required to attend to register the marriage then the registration officer attesting the notice should check with the couple the religious rites to be used and then telephone GRO to confirm whether the building is registered for those particular rites and ceremonies for the marriage of same sex couples.

Annex A:

Taking notice for a marriage in church or chapel of the Church of England / Church in Wales



In all instances notice should be taken within 3 months of date of marriage unless the incumbent confirms 12 month notice period is acceptable

M4 Evaluation of Learning

When you have finished reading this Chapter you may wish to evaluate what you have learnt by answering the following questions. The answers to these questions are at the end of the Handbook.

- Q1.** Where may marriages in England and Wales take place?
- Q2.** A couple attend to give notice of marriage for a venue not listed on the approved premises list? Can notice be taken and what advice would you give?
- Q3.** How long does an approved premises approval last?
- Q4.** In what circumstances may a Church of England/Church in Wales marriage take place in a registered building?
- Q5.** A couple attend to give notice of marriage for a Mosque in a neighbouring registration district that is their usual place of worship and neither of them reside in the registration district where the building is. Explain if notice can be taken.
- Q6.** A Swedish couple attend to give notice of their intention to marry in the Swedish Church in London. This is the only Swedish Church registered for marriages in England and Wales. They both reside in Lancashire and do not worship in the Church, but they wish to marry according to the rites and ceremonies of the Swedish Church. Explain if notice can be taken and if so under what provisions.
- Q7.** A British couple attend to give notice of marriage to marry in a Church of England building in a neighbouring registration district. They have been advised by the incumbent that he will marry them by superintendent registrar's certificate. Can notice be taken?
- Q8.** A couple wish to marry according to the usages of the Jews in a private house. In addition to the usual requirements, what other information must you establish before taking notice?
- Q9.** If a same sex couple wish to marry according to the usages of the Society of Friends advise you that only one of them is a member of the Society, explain if notice can be taken.
- Q10.** A British couple attend to give notice of marriage to marry in a military chapel by the rites and ceremonies of the Catholic church. Explain what would need to be established before notice can be taken.