

## **M18 Registration**

### **Summary of Learning Points**

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

	<b>Paragraph</b>
<b>1      How and when a registration must be made including</b>	<b>1 - 9</b>
(i)      what to do if an entry needs to be cancelled	5
<b>2      Which register must be used and how the heading and</b>	<b>10 - 12</b>
each of the following must be completed	
(i)      date of marriage	13
(ii)     name and surname	14 -16
(iii)    age	17
(iv)    condition	18
(v)    occupation	19 -20
(vi)    place of residence	21
(vii)   father's name and surname	22 - 25
(viii)  father's occupation	26 - 27
(ix)    attestation	28 - 30
<b>3      What to do if a column is left blank</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>4      The importance of ensuring the entry is correct</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>5      Who should sign the register, in what order and where</b>	<b>33 - 36</b>
they should sign	
<b>6      What to record on the superintendent registrar's</b>	<b>38</b>
certificate for marriage and how long they must be kept	
<b>7      When to put the registration onto RON</b>	<b>39</b>

**Examples of register entries – see list at the end of the chapter**

# **M18 Registration**

## **General**

1. When making a registration, and for all signatures, each entry must be made using an ink approved for the purpose by the Registrar General. The registrar's handwriting must be distinct and bold and without flourishes. All names and surnames should be written clearly so that there is no risk of similar names being mistaken for each other. Surnames should be written in block capitals. The registrar should take care that the particulars to be entered in any one space of an entry do not extend into an adjoining space.
2. All entry places in the register must be accounted for. They must form an unbroken numerical sequence so that, for instance, the removal of a page from the register does not pass undetected, or a fictitious entry cannot be fabricated in an unused entry place.
3. Before making the first entry in a register, the registrar must enter on the title page the names of the district and the administrative area. Marriage registers will be numbered consecutively with one series of numbers, in the order in which they are deposited with the superintendent registrar, unless an annual index is compiled.
4. The first entry in each new register must be in the first place of entry. Every subsequent entry must follow the previous entry. A registrar should never leave a blank entry between the last entry made and the entry he is about to make. Before starting the entry he should note that the entry number immediately follows that of the last filled entry. The printed numbers in the bound marriage registers must never be altered.
5. In no circumstances may a marriage entry, whether incomplete or otherwise, be cancelled except by the special direction of the Registrar General. Where a registrar is unable to complete a marriage entry, for whatever reason, he should report the facts and circumstances to the General Register Office.
6. Where the registrar considers that any signature may be difficult to decipher at some later date, he should note, in pencil, the name represented by the signature in the margin of the entry.
7. Procedures for the correction of errors are given in Chapter M20.
8. A marriage in the district register office, an approved premises or in a registered building must be registered immediately after the solemnization at the place of marriage.

## **Completion of register entry**

9. The registrar must use his own register book; if the registrar is required to attend and register a marriage in a registered building for which an authorised person has been appointed, he must not use the register book belonging to the building nor may an authorised person make any entry in a register used by a registrar. Examples of register entries are given at the end of this section.

## Heading

10. The registrar must enter in the appropriate places in the heading of the entry the year, the place of marriage (name of the registered building, approved premises or the words 'Register Office', as the case may be), the name of the registration district and of the London borough, metropolitan district or non-metropolitan county.

11. The register office for any district is deemed to be within that district although it may not be situated in it.

12. The name of the approved premises or registered building must be entered as it is described in the Registrar General's Official List, Part I, Part III or IV. If there is another registered building in that district with the same name and belonging to the same denomination or body, the registrar must enter the address, as shown in the Official List, of the registered building where the marriage was solemnized. Similarly, where the name of an approved premises does not itself sufficiently identify the venue, the address as shown in the Registrar General's list should also be recorded. However, where the name and address of a building or approved premises is lengthy, it is acceptable to record a shortened version of the address. Where a couple are marrying in a registered building which is their usual place of worship, then these words should not be recorded in the registration.

## Date of marriage

13. In column 1 the registrar must enter the date of the marriage. The day of the month and the month must be written in words, and the year in figures. Entering the date in this format will ensure that the registration can be easily located when the record has been entered onto < Redacted >.

## Name and surname

14. In column 2 the registrar must enter the name(s) and surname of each of the parties to the marriage. It is irrelevant which of the parties appears on the first or second line. The surname for each party should be recorded in upper case.

15. The name and surname to be recorded in the entry are those used by the party at the solemnization of the marriage. Normally they will be those entered in the notice and in the superintendent registrar's certificates. That is not to say, however, that the registrar should copy the particulars into the register from the certificates: the particulars of each party must be entered in accordance with the information given by that party.

16. The registrar will already have questioned the parties about their names and surnames in accordance with M17.12(e) and will have noted any discrepancies on the back of the certificates in accordance with M17.9. He should now ask each party to supply the information to be recorded in the register and enter it in the same manner as is provided in M6 for the entry of the particulars in the notice. Where a party has changed gender no reference to the former identity name should be made in the register.

## **Age**

17. In column 3 the registrar must enter the ages of each of the parties to the marriage. Both should be expressed in completed years.

## **Condition**

18. The registrar must enter in column 4 the condition of the parties using one of the following terms as appropriate (see M6.12):

Single

Widower, Widow

Surviving civil partner

Previous marriage dissolved

Previous civil partnership dissolved

Previous marriage annulled

Previous civil partnership annulled

Previously married at ..... on ..... Marriage dissolved on .....

Previously formed a civil partnership at .... on..... Civil Partnership dissolved on.....

Previously married at ..... on ..... Marriage annulled on .....

Previously formed a civil partnership at .... on.... Civil Partnership annulled on.....

Previously went through a form of marriage at ..... on .....

## **Occupation**

19. In column 5 the registrar must enter the occupation of each of the parties to the marriage. Where either party has no occupation a line should be drawn through the column.

20. The registrar must agree with the parties' descriptions of their occupations, which are accurate but simple. He must not enter a description that the parties consider inappropriate. Some guidance on the appropriate way to record occupations is given in Appendix 4. Where for security reasons, an occupation has been recorded on the Superintendent's Registrar's authority as "Government Official" (or similar), the registrar, with the agreement of the parties, should seek to obtain more precise information to record in the marriage register. If this is not forthcoming, the matter should not be pressed.

## **Place of residence**

21. In column 6 the registrar must enter the full address of each of the parties to the marriage.

## **Father's name and surname**

22. In column 7 the registrar must enter the full name and surname of the father of each of the parties to the marriage. If the father of either party is deceased, the word "deceased" should be entered.

23. Normally the name and surname to be entered are those of the natural father of the party, whether or not the father was married to the mother. The name of an

adoptive father may be entered where the adoption was by order of a Court in the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man, or of the Channel Islands or any of the countries or territories listed in Appendix 3 and in such cases the name and surname of the adoptive father should generally be entered without qualification. But if a party is known by a surname different from that of his adoptive father, the words 'Adoptive parent' in brackets may be entered after the surname if the party wishes. Where a woman was authorised by a Court to be the sole adopter the name and surname of that woman may, at the request of the party, be entered in this column, in which case the party concerned may think it desirable for the avoidance of future questions for the words 'Adoptive Parent' in brackets to be added after her surname.

24. There may be occasions where a party wishes to show the name of a step-father instead. The registrar should point out the difficulties that might arise in future concerning a link with the birth certificate, but if they still wish to have the name of a step-father in the marriage entry then the registrar should comply with the request, provided that the step-father is, or has been, married to the natural or adoptive mother. The name should be qualified by entering (Step-father) after the name.

25. If the party shows any reluctance to give particulars for this column or column 8 the registrar need not press his enquiries, but should draw a line through the column to show that the information was not supplied. He must not in any circumstances insert any words, such as 'Not known', 'illegitimate', etc, in explanation of the omission of the particulars.

### **Father's occupation**

26. In column 8 the registrar must enter the occupation of the father, adoptive father or step-father of each of the parties.

27. The description of the occupation should be accurate but simple. Some guidance on the appropriate way to record occupations is given in Appendix 4.

### **Attestation**

28. The attestation must be completed according to the circumstances of the marriage, to give the following details:

*Place of marriage* - use 'Register Office' or the name of the approved premises or registered building. It is not necessary in the attestation to state the address of the approved premises or registered building even though it may need to be stated in the heading of the entry.

*Type of ceremony* for a marriage in a registered building - use the words 'according to the rites and ceremonies of the' before the title of the religious body.

The correct title of the religious body or denomination, if any, whose rites and ceremonies were adopted at the marriage, should be ascertained from the person by or before whom the marriage was solemnized.

*Type of authority* - use 'Certificate'. Where one party is resident in Scotland and a certificate of no impediment from Scotland is produced as the authority for the marriage of that party, authority for the marriage should be described simply as 'by certificate' or by Registrar General's Licence where appropriate.

29. For a civil marriage in the presence of the superintendent registrar, the words 'by me' should be altered to read 'before me'.

30. If the marriage was in a registered building and there was, for some exceptional reason, no person by or before whom the marriage was solemnized other than the registrar in whose presence it was required to take place and the marriage was solemnized without the religious ceremony of any particular denomination, the first line of the attestation should be completed by inserting only the name of the registered building and the word 'certificate' and by altering the words 'by me' to read 'before me'.

### **Signing the register**

31. No column should be left blank. The registrar should draw a line in ink through any column where he cannot enter the particulars required.

32. Once the particulars have been entered into the register the registrar must ask the parties married to verify them. Errors can only be corrected before the registrar signs the entry and the registrar should refer to the instructions in chapter M20. [It is important at this stage that the registrar explains to the parties that if an error is identified after the entry has been signed by the registrar, it can only be corrected by the addition of a note in the margin and a fee will be payable. If the parties are unable to read the entry themselves, the registrar must read the particulars in the entry to them. A full list of fees can be found in the \*\*Table of Fees\*\* on the Registrars website.](#)

33. When the parties have verified the particulars they must sign their names in their usual manner - not necessarily in full - on the lines following the words 'This marriage was solemnized between us'. Both parties should sign in the surname by which they were each known immediately prior to the marriage.

34. The witnesses should then sign the register. There is no lower age limit for witnesses but they must be old enough to understand what is taking place and be able to testify to what they have seen and heard should this be necessary. In cases of doubt, it is advisable to have an additional adult witness. If an interpreter has been used during the ceremony, he should sign the register as one of the witnesses.

35. The registrar should next call upon the minister or other person, if any, or the superintendent registrar by or before whom the marriage was solemnized to sign the register in the space provided and to add his official designation or description. If the person by or before whom the marriage is solemnized objects to adding his designation after his signature he cannot be compelled to insert it.

36. Where a person signs the register by way of a mark or signs in characters of a foreign language, the registrar should write against the mark or signature the words "The mark (or signature) of ....." and insert the forenames and surname of that person.

37. The registrar shall then sign the register in the space provided and add his official description.

38. The registrar must make a note on every certificate, delivered to him as authority for a marriage, of the relevant entry number in the marriage register. All authorities must be kept for at least 2 years after the date of the marriage. The

authorities must be kept together in strict numerical order so that Account Managers can easily refer to them.

39. Once a marriage has been registered The Registration of Marriage etc. (Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage) Order 2009 states that a registrar (or their deputy) must put the quarterly return (i.e. the record) on  
<Redacted>

## **M18 Registration**

### **Examples of register entries**

#### **Example 1.**

Marriage solemnized in a register office

Groom's name has changed name by deed poll and his marital condition is previous marriage dissolved

Groom's father is deceased

#### **Example 2.**

Marriage solemnized at a register office

Parties previously married to each other and that marriage dissolved by divorce, where neither party has since been through another marriage/civil partnership

The Bride's step-father is recorded in column 7

#### **Example 3.**

Marriage solemnised at a register office

Parties have previously been through a form of marriage in France

The bride is known by two names which are both different from the name recorded in her birth entry

#### **Example 4.**

Marriage solemnized at a registered building according to the rites and ceremonies of the Roman Catholics

Groom's marital condition is shown as Widower

Bride's marital condition is shown as Previous marriage annulled

The marriage was solemnised by a Priest and registered by a registrar

#### **Example 5.**

Marriage solemnised in registered building of one denomination (Methodists) and registered according to the rites and ceremonies of another (Baptists)

The marriage was solemnised by a Minister and registered by a registrar

Bride is shown as a Widow

#### **Example 6.**

Marriage by Registrar General's Licence

Groom previous marriage dissolved, bride shown as Widow

Bride's father's name and occupation unknown



## **M18 (Welsh) - Manner and form of marriage registration**

10a Where particulars are to be registered in English only, the registrar must enter in the heading to the entry in the appropriate places the name of the registered building as shown in the Registrar General's Official List, or the words "Register Office" as the case may be, and the name of the registration district as it appears in the registration scheme. No English or Welsh variants may be used either in respect of the name of the registered building or of the registration district. The administrative area should always be completed in English and Welsh. The Welsh version of counties can be found in Appendix 8 (Welsh).

10(b) Where the marriage is to be registered in English and Welsh, the conditions in Part M5 (Welsh) of the Handbook having been met, the heading to the entry shall be completed as at (a) above except that the words "y Swyddfa Gofrestru" should be entered below the words "Register Office" where appropriate.

10(c) Whilst there is no recommendation on whose details are recorded on which line it is essential that the correct information is recorded for each person. Where the particulars are to be registered in Welsh as well as in English the Welsh version should be entered immediately below the corresponding English particulars in each column. (See examples).

13(a) When entering the date of the marriage in bilingual form the English version of the day and month should be entered first in accordance with M18..13. This should be followed by the Welsh version, in which the month precedes the day of the month.

For examples 'April the first', Ebrill y cyntaf'. The year should then be entered in the space provided. The Welsh translations of the dates and months can be found in Appendix 8 (Welsh).

14(a) The names of the parties should be entered in the register in the same manner as is provided in M18. 14-16 as extended by M6 (Welsh).

15(a) The parties must themselves provide the particulars required to be registered in both English and Welsh where the marriage is to be registered bilingually.

17(a) Where the particulars are to be entered bilingually, "about 30" should be shown in the Welsh part of the entry as "oddeutu 30".

22(a) Where the particulars are to be entered bilingually, "(Adoptive parent)" should be shown as "(Rhiant trwy fabwysiad)".

The Welsh versions of the English forms of words contained in paragraphs 18 to 26 and not shown above, are shown in Appendix 7 (Welsh). These versions are prescribed by regulation and must always be used as appropriate where particulars are to be entered bilingually.

28(a) Where the particulars are to be entered bilingually the words "according to the rites and ceremonies of the ....." should be shown in the Welsh part of the entry as "yn unol â defodau a seremonïau ....."

28(b) Where the particulars are to be entered bilingually the words by "certificate" should be shown in the Welsh part of the entry as " drwy dystysgrif". "Gennyf fi" should be altered to read "ger fy mron" if the marriage was by civil ceremony.

28(c) If the marriage is celebrated in a superintendent registrar's office and is to be registered bilingually, the words "Register Office" and "certificate" should be shown in the Welsh part of the entry as "Swyddfa Gofrestru" and "tystysgrif". "Gennyf fi" should be altered to read "ger fy mron" if the marriage was by civil ceremony.

28(d) The description of the registered building should be that shown in the Registrar General's Official List and no English or Welsh variant should be used.

28(e) The correct title of the religious body or denomination should be recorded in English and in Welsh where the marriage is to be registered bilingually.

32(a) The procedure for the correction of errors before the completion of the entry is described at M20.

35 and 37(a) Where the entry is bilingual the registrar should insert his official description in English and Welsh, as should the person by, or before whom, the marriage was solemnized.

### **Welsh Examples of register entries**

#### **Example 1**

Bi-lingual – Bride formerly known as a different name and previous marriage dissolved

#### **Example 2**

Bi-lingual – Groom name changed by deed poll and previous marriage annulled, Bride formerly known as and a widow, step-father shown

## **M18 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** How must the date of marriage be entered in the marriage register entry?
- Q2** When completing column 2 a bride states her name is 'Ann' rather than 'Anne' which has been recorded on the superintendent registrar's certificate. Explain what name should be entered in the entry and what action should be taken.
- Q3** If a party wishes to record the name of their step-father in column 7, what information should be checked and what advice given to them?
- Q4** When signing the marriage register, a bride signs her name in Chinese characters. What additional information should the registrar add to the entry and where?
- Q5** At a marriage ceremony the registrar notices that entry number 21 has been left blank in error and entry 22 has been completed. What action should they take to cancel the blank entry?