



HM Passport  
Office

## **Certificate of Appointment of Authorised Person by Trustee or Governing Body of a Registered Building - Guidance Notes for Applicant**

(Please read these guidance notes before completing the AP1 form)

### **What is an Authorised Person?**

The Marriage Act 1949 makes provision for marriages between a man and a woman to be solemnized in a building which has been registered for that purpose without the need for a registrar to be present. Instead, the trustees or governing body of a registered building may authorise a person to attend marriages and sign the marriage schedule for marriages solemnized in that building. The authorised person's name and address will be certified to the Registrar General and the superintendent registrar of the registration district in which the building is situated. The building must have been registered for at least 12 months before an authorised person may be appointed. The Marriage Act 1949 also makes provision for the marriage of same sex couples to be solemnized in a building registered for that purpose without the presence of a registrar. Authorised persons may now be appointed by the trustees or governing body to attend the marriages between a man and a woman only, marriages of same sex couples only, or both.

### **What are the responsibilities of an Authorised Person?**

An authorised person's responsibilities include:

ensuring that the legal preliminaries of any marriages to be solemnized in the building have been completed by the couple before the marriage takes place

- ensuring that all marriages are solemnized in accordance with legislation and that the details are recorded accurately on the marriage schedule

- returning the signed marriage schedule to the superintendent registrar within the legal timeframe i.e. within 21 days after the marriage.

You should be made aware that failure to comply with these legal requirements may lead to doubts about the validity of the marriage and cause great distress to those concerned. Full details of the responsibilities and duties of an authorised person are contained in the booklet "Guide for Authorised Persons" which is available to download from the [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website at [guidance-for-authorised-persons](http://www.gov.uk/guidance-for-authorised-persons)

Alternatively, you can request a copy by e-mailing GRO at:

GROCasework@gro.gov.uk. A copy of the guide should already be held at the registered building if an authorised person has previously been appointed to the building. The authorised person must acquaint themselves with the guide in order that all the provisions of marriage legislation are carried out completely and accurately.

### **How do I become an Authorised Person?**

An authorised person may only be appointed by the trustees or governing body of a building which has been registered for the solemnization of marriages in accordance

with the provisions of the Marriage Act 1949. They must complete a certificate of appointment (Form AP1), which is available from GRO or which can be downloaded from the [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website at [authorised-persons-certificate-of-appointment](#)

### **Completing the Certificate of Appointment**

The certificate of appointment should be completed by the trustees or members of the governing body of the building. The Marriage Act 1949 requires all appointments of authorised persons to be recorded by the Registrar General. No person should therefore act as an authorised person until the appointment has been certified to the Registrar General and they have been informed by the General Register Office (GRO) that the details of the appointment have been recorded.

Please note that authorised persons who are currently appointed to attend marriages between a man and a woman must not attend or sign the marriage schedule for any marriage of a same sex couple until the building has been registered for that purpose and they have also been appointed by the trustees to do so.

The completed certificate should be sent to GRO by e-mail:

[GROCasework@gro.gov.uk](mailto:GROCasework@gro.gov.uk)

or by post to: General Register Office, PO Box 476, Southport, Merseyside PR8 2WJ.

Please allow 20 working days from receipt of the application at GRO for the process of recording the appointment to take place. Once the appointment has been recorded, the authorised person will be advised in writing and the certificate of appointment will be sent to the superintendent registrar of the registration district in which the building is situated. N.B. - Where applicable, the person being replaced will no longer be able to perform the duties of an authorised person without being reappointed.

### **Section 1 - Registered Building Details**

**1.1 Marriage number** - This can be obtained from the Certificate of Registration.

**1.2 Building name** - Please provide the name of the building as it appears on the Certificate of Registration. If the information given in your application is different to the records held here at GRO, we may have to investigate the change before we can proceed with recording your appointment.

**1.3 Registration district** - Once we have recorded the appointment, the certificate will be sent to the Superintendent Registrar of the registration district in which the building is situated.

### **Section 2 - Trustees/Members of Governing Body**

Please indicate whether you wish to appoint the authorised person for marriages between a man and a woman only, marriages of same sex couples only, or both. You must tick one box (a, b or c) ONLY.

**2.1** The responsible authorised person is responsible for the safe keeping of closed marriage registers and any other marriage related documentation.

**2.2 Date of appointment** - An authorised person must not act until he/she has been duly certified as having been authorised for the purpose by the trustees or governing body of the building and should await notification from GRO before undertaking their duties.

**2.3 Date of any forthcoming marriage** - Please let us know the date of any marriage to be solemnized at the building for which you require the presence of the named authorised person. They should under no circumstances attend and sign a marriage schedule for any marriage until they have received confirmation from GRO that their appointment has been recorded.

**Trustee details and signatures** - The Marriage Act 1949 requires two trustees or members of the building's governing body to sign the certificate of appointment. If the appointment is to a Roman Catholic building, then one signatory must be the Bishop or Vicar General of the Diocese in which the building is situated.

### **Section 3 - Authorised Persons Details**

**3.1** There can only be one Responsible Authorised Person at the registered building at any time. However, there may be more than one authorised person. The "Responsible Authorised Person" will be the first point of contact for GRO.

If an authorised person leaves office, it is a legal requirement for the trustees to inform GRO. If this is the responsible authorised person, the trustees must appoint a successor by completing a new certificate of appointment. The successor may be an existing authorised person or it may be a new appointment. The responsible authorised person does not need to be the minister or priest and may be anyone connected with the registered building.

Please include at least one telephone number for the authorised person in case we need to contact them.

**3.2 E-mail Address** - Please include a valid e-mail address (if applicable). We will only use this for purposes related to the duties of authorised person and it will not be shared with any other organisation. If the authorised person changes their e-mail address or any other contact details, please inform GRO by completing the Change of Contact Details form (Form AP2) which is available to download from the [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) web-site at [authorised-person-change-of-contact-details-form](#).

### **Section 4 - to be completed by the Authorised Person**

The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 does not permit a person to be compelled to be authorised to be present at marriages of same sex couples if they do not wish to do so. The authorised person should therefore indicate whether they agree to perform the duties of authorised person for marriages between a man and a woman only, marriages of same sex couples only, or both. They must tick one box (a, b or c) ONLY and then sign and date the certificate.

### **Section 5 - Authorised Person Declaration**

The authorised person should read these guidance notes before signing and dating the certificate to confirm they are content to be contacted by GRO for purposes relating to their appointment.