



HM Passport
Office

Secretary for Marriages Newsletter

General Register Office

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Issue 11: July 2021

Introduction

Hello and welcome to the 11th edition of the Secretary for Marriages newsletter.

In this issue you will find an introduction and background to the forthcoming changes regarding immigration laws resulting from the UK's exit from the EU which come into effect from the 1 July 2020.

In addition following on from enquiries received at GRO you will also find some hints and tips in relation to the completion of a Marriage Schedule.

The Training and Business Improvement Team, General Register Office

BACKGROUND

Immigration laws for EEA nationals will change from the 1 July to reflect the changes brought about following EU Exit. These changes will impact EEA citizens who wish to marry in the England and Wales as the definition of a relevant national has changed.

A relevant national, from the 1 July 2021, will be classed as:

- A British Citizen
- An Irish Citizen
- An EEA National who has been granted Settled or Pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) or those with a pending application submitted before the 30 June 2021.

Currently couples who are subject to immigration control must make an appointment at one of 75 Designated Register Offices within England and Wales to give notice to marry. From the 1 July 2021, all register offices will be designated for the purposes of taking a marriage or civil partnership notice for these couples.

An EEA national who does not hold a status under the EUSS will be treated as all other foreign nationals and will have to give notice of their intention to marry (together with their partner) at a register office in the registration district where either resides and be issued with a Marriage Schedule.

The Guidebook for Secretaries

Will be updated to reflect the changes as a result of The Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (EU Withdrawal) Act 2020 (Consequential, Saving, Transitional and Transitory Provisions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020. These regulations amend the Marriage Act 1949 to provide a new definition of “relevant national”.

Once finalised the updated version will be uploaded on to the usual page on GOV.UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidebook-for-secretaries-for-marriages-of-synagogues>

COMPLETION OF A MARRIAGE SCHEDULE

Since the implementation of the Marriage Schedule System GRO have received a number of enquiries where clarification is being sought as to the completion of the various boxes. To aid Secretaries we thought it would be useful to highlight some of the frequently asked questions or issues that have been identified:-

The Heading

Can we amend a typographical error in the heading of the marriage schedule? Yes, you may, e.g if the Register Office has typed Northhamptonshire instead of Northamptonshire then this may be amended and initialled by the couple

Space 1 (date and place of marriage)

In space 1 if the terminology “TBA” (To Be Arranged) has been used to the date of marriage please ensure the the actual date of the ceremony is added. Please also check the format is recorded correctly ie First July 2021.

Space 7 (Mother/Father/Parent name surname and occupation)

Can incorrect parent details be corrected after the religious ceremony? No, any errors should be identified at the pre-ceremony checks. If the couple find that something is wrong after the marriage has taken place they may need to apply for a correction which would incur a £90 fee. It is very important that the document is thoroughly checked prior to the marriage.

NB: there is no need to add a designation for parent unless they are a step-parent. There is also no required order of preference, the couple should decide how their parents are recorded in this space.

Space 8 (Attestation)

My Synagogue is not in a Parish what do I insert in Space 8? In space 8 please remember to strike through/delete “in the parish of” as this is not appropriate.

Space 9 (Signature of the Parties)

The bride has signed in her new married name, what should I do? The name that should be recorded in the name and surname area of the form is the name in use on the day of the marriage. However, if the bride/groom decides to sign in their new name they can.

Should I add the full names of the parties the reverse of the marriage schedule? If space is limited and you cannot fit everything into the box on the front of the form then we would recommend that you use the reverse, making clear what space it should be shown in. If you do note anything on the reverse of the form then you should ensure you indicate this on the front of the form. Including as much information as possible in the note on the reverse will reduce the need for the LRS to contact you to clarify the data.

Space 10 (Name and Witnesses)

Should I add the full names of the witnesses the reverse of the marriage schedule? If space is limited and you cannot fit everything into the box on the front of the form then yes, we would recommend that this is done as it will reduce telephone calls from the Local Registration Service clarifying details ahead of the completion of the marriage registration.

Should the witnesses add their surnames in block capitals? It is not necessary for them to do this, though this is not an error and does not need amending.

Space 11 (Signature of person authorised to sign the schedule)

In space 11 what do I add for my designation? If you are the Secretary for the Synagogue, then that is what you should add.

Additionally, we have been made aware that when some schedules have been sent in the post, there is insufficient postage to cover the postage cost. Therefore, if you are posting a marriage schedule, then please ensure that the postage paid is sufficient to cover the cost of returning the schedule to the local register office.