



Professional Standards For Celebrants

Couples Ceremonies

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR CELEBRANTS – Couples Ceremonies

Introduction

Celebrants who provide Couples Ceremonies (Wedding Celebrations, Renewals of Vows etc.) work in an unregulated industry. There are various Codes of Conduct, but these do not fully describe the competencies, knowledge, understanding and behaviours required to perform this task, over a range of situations, to any standard.

The role of a celebrant is niche. There is nothing with which to compare the activities. The skills, knowledge and understanding required, combined with the aptitude to be involved with people at a time when they want to celebrate an occasion are unique. Celebrants require a demeanour which includes a sense of business and purpose. The undertaking of a ceremony is a trusted position and couples rely solely on them to provide a personalised ceremony for them which reflects their situation, history and others involved in their lives. For this task there is no rehearsal, and no going back. It must be “right first time”.

There are four major components for the work of a celebrant, guiding families on choices (e.g. music and poetry), meeting with the couples to obtain information about them and the occasion, writing a personal ceremony including any symbolic actions and the delivery of the ceremony. Additional standards on health and safety and including people with additional needs have been included to ensure that celebrants understand the wider issues, including an awareness of the legal requirements. The purpose of the standards is to ensure that the couple can be assured that those celebrants working to these standards will provide a professional, individual and fitting ceremony.

The standards can be used widely, openly and publicly on websites and social media sites. They can be provided to ceremony venues and other suppliers and published in industry journals. Importantly they can be made available to couples so that they know what they should expect from a competent celebrant. Similarly, these standards ensure that the celebrant fully understands their role.

Each standard has four parts

Competence – this is what the celebrant must do within the course of their work

Knowledge and Understanding – this is required detail regarding what to do in varying circumstances and includes the legal requirements of ceremonies

Behaviours – this is how the celebrant should perform their duties

Scope and Range – this is the varying situations and locations in which a celebrant will be asked to perform their duties

Health and Safety for Celebrants – Couples Ceremonies

A celebrant will undertake ceremonies in various locations. They are bound by health and safety legislation. Celebrants must adhere to national and local requirements for the health and safety of others as well as for themselves.

<p>Competent to perform</p> <p>1 Work within current legislation, guidelines and procedures relating to health and safety for yourself and others</p> <p>2 Ensure that all equipment that you use complies with current legislation and is safe to use and act to reduce any risks</p> <p>3 Report any malfunction or issues relating to equipment to the appropriate person</p> <p>4 Work within a lone working procedure that ensures your health and safety</p> <p>5 Identify risks at a venue before you conduct a ceremony and act to reduce the risks</p>	<p>Knowledge & Understanding</p> <p>1 The possible risks of lone working</p> <p>2 A procedure that will offer protection when lone working</p> <p>3 The limitations of the role of the celebrant at a ceremony in relation to health and safety</p> <p>4 The risks associated with ceremonies</p> <p>5. Who to report any issues in relation to ceremonies at public venues</p> <p>6. How to check for health and safety issues at all venues ahead of conducting a ceremony</p>	<p>Behaviour</p> <p>1 Be aware of any potential health and safety issues at any location where you are engaged as a celebrant</p> <p>2 Act accordingly, sensibly and proportionately to any health and safety issues that you are aware of</p> <p>3 Consider your own health and safety</p> <p>4 Consider the health and safety of others</p>	<p>Scope & Range</p> <p>1 Locations</p> <p>Public locations Private homes Inside locations Outside locations Lone working</p> <p>2 Equipment</p> <p>Your equipment Equipment provided by others Symbolic action equipment</p> <p>3 Weather</p> <p>Rain Ice and snow Heat Wind</p> <p>4 Additional needs and requirements</p> <p>Mobility Sensory loss Mental health Other special needs</p>
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Advising on, and Managing Ceremony Choices – Couples Ceremonies

A celebrant will be required to guide couples on ceremony choices. They must be aware of their level of responsibility, the legal issues surrounding couples ceremonies, and the choices available in their own geographical area

Competent to perform	Knowledge & Understanding	Behaviour	Scope & Range
<p>1. Inform all couples clearly that the ceremony conducted does not create a legally binding marriage</p> <p>2. Assess available ceremony choices</p> <p>3. Guide couples on the suitability of choices taking into account their beliefs, wishes and culture</p> <p>4. Guide and inform couples on the suitability of poems, readings and music in a ceremony</p> <p>5. Inform the couple when the chosen reading, poem or music might not be appropriate</p> <p>6. Guide and inform couples about the delivery of music, reading and poetry at the ceremony location</p> <p>7. Guide couples on any symbolic actions</p> <p>8. Guide and assist others who may be asked to contribute at the ceremony</p> <p>9. Inform the venue location of any requirements in regard of the ceremony</p>	<p>1. The requirements for legally binding marriage.</p> <p>2. Your role as a celebrant on advising on choices for the ceremony</p> <p>3. Different readings, poems and music to personalise ceremonies</p> <p>4. Where to seek advice and guidance on other choices</p> <p>5. When a specifically religious ceremony might be more appropriate</p> <p>6. The way to incorporate those with additional needs and their supporters at the ceremony</p> <p>7. Offer guidance on health and safety and the inclusion of people with additional needs at a ceremony</p> <p>8. The importance of liaising with the venue staff on the ceremony details</p>	<p>1. Only offer advice where you are totally assured of the facts, the legality and professional expectations</p> <p>2. Offer guidance and help in a professional manner</p> <p>3. Respect the couples preferences, religion, culture and age</p> <p>4. Use language in the ceremony that is easily understood and avoid using professional jargon</p>	<p>1. Locations Public locations Private homes Inside locations Outside locations</p> <p>2. Type of ceremony Wedding celebration Civil partnership celebration Renewal of vows Commitment</p> <p>3. Culture Language Religion Age Gender Identification (LGBTQ+) Sexuality Rituals</p> <p>4. Special needs and requirements Mobility Sensory loss Mental health Other special needs</p>

Communicating with and Meeting with the Couple – Couples Ceremonies

A celebrant will be required to obtain information from the couple to compile a personalised ceremony that meets their wishes, desires and cultural needs. In doing so they must understand the limits of this role and the purpose of the consultation.

Competent to perform	Knowledge & Understanding	Behaviour	Scope & Range
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make initial contact with the couple 2. Confirm meeting arrangements appropriately 3. Use appropriate language in all communications 4. Use empathy, sensitivity and appropriate tone 5. Explain to the couple the purpose of the meeting 6. Obtain information about the couple in an inclusive manner and style 7. Take notes during the meeting 8. Use appropriate questioning style to obtain information 9. Use active listening skills 10. Use suitable body language and facial expressions 11. Close the meeting appropriately 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The process of making arrangements to meet with the couple 2. The reason for explaining to the couple the purpose of the meeting 3. The difficulties that might be encountered during meetings 4. How to use appropriate behaviour in dealing with difficulties 5. Suitable responses to questions 6. Suitable and appropriate language when responding to questions 7. How and when to feedback to the venue on issues arising 8. How to ensure that anyone with special or different needs is identified 9. Limits on the celebrant role in advising the couple on arrangements 10. Lone working issues and safety when conducting meetings 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct yourself in a professional manner at all times 2. Do not take on the role of a counsellor 3. Do not advice or guidance outside of your role as a celebrant 4. Do not suggest or promise changes or make changes to the ceremony that may not be possible 5. Be courteous at all times. 6. Be aware of your safety and take appropriate actions where you feel unsafe 	<p>1. Type of ceremony Wedding celebration Civil partnership celebration Renewal of vows Commitment</p> <p>2. Culture Language Religion Age Gender Identification (LGBTQ+) Sexuality Rituals</p> <p>3. Additional needs and requirements Mobility Sensory loss Mental Health Other special needs</p>

Create a Ceremony Script – Couples Ceremonies

A celebrant will be required to write a ceremony script that will capture the essence of the couple, their history, their wishes and desires, their family background and achievements. The script will be in two forms, one to read at the ceremony and the other to present to the couple, as a souvenir of the ceremony.

Competent to perform	Knowledge & Understanding	Behaviour	Scope & Range
<p>1. Compile a ceremony script that meets the needs of the couple</p> <p>2. Write the ceremony script using the information provided by the couple and others in an order that flows naturally</p> <p>3. Use accurate quotes provided by the couple or others and identify them in the script, where appropriate</p> <p>4. Identify, within the script, the personal elements about the couple that they want to be included</p> <p>5. Use correct names and titles provided by the couple</p> <p>6. Identify family and other relationships within the couples' family and friends</p> <p>7. Check the ceremony script for accuracy and content with the couple and/or others</p> <p>8. Write the ceremony script in a style suitable for delivery with annotations to assist delivery.</p>	<p>1. The importance of the accuracy of the ceremony script</p> <p>2. The reason for capturing the couple's personal details</p> <p>3. The importance of family and other relationships to be referred to in the ceremony script</p> <p>4. The method in which quotes from family members and others can be included in the script</p> <p>5. Annotation methods for the script that aids the delivery at the ceremony</p> <p>6. The importance of checking the ceremony script with the couple and others</p> <p>7. Different methods of checking the ceremony script for accuracy</p>	<p>1. Use language that is respectful to the couple their family or others</p>	<p>1. Type of ceremony Wedding celebration Civil partnership celebration Renewal of vows Commitment</p> <p>2. Culture Language Religion Age Gender Identification (LGBTQ+) Sexuality Rituals</p>

Delivering a Ceremony – Couples Ceremonies

A celebrant will be required to deliver a full ceremony, from a script created by them and agreed with the couple, at a time and place as arranged with the couple.

Competent to perform	Knowledge & Understanding	Behaviour	Scope & Range
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver a whole ceremony according to the wishes of the couple. 2. Arrive at the ceremony location in time to prepare for all eventualities and check any equipment 3. Conduct the ceremony working in partnership with staff at venues 4. Dress appropriately for each individual ceremony 5. Meet the participants at the ceremony before the ceremony before the ceremony starts 6. Introduce the procedure for the ceremony to the guests 7. Speak using sufficient volume so that everyone can hear, using equipment if appropriate 8. Use mannerisms and body language suitable for the occasion 9. Control own emotions 10. Deliver the ceremony script as agreed with the couple and introduce anyone else participating 11. Support other contributors to the ceremony 12. Close the ceremony appropriately 13. Leave the ceremony in a proper manner 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The needs, wishes and aspirations of the couple and others for the ceremony 2. The boundaries of the role of the celebrant at a couple's ceremony 3. The dress code at the ceremony expected by couples and how this might differ 4. The expectations that different venues have of a celebrant 5. The way to incorporate those with additional needs and their supporters at a ceremony 6. How different religions and cultures might prefer different elements within a ceremony 7. How to use sound equipment at different locations 8. How to use visual aids at a ceremony 9. How to use symbolic actions at a ceremony. 10. Health and safety requirements at different ceremony locations 11. How to support participants 12. How and when to feedback to the venue on any issues identified 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Act with respect for the couple, family members and others 2. Dress appropriately 3. Act professionally at all times 4. Not discriminate against anyone 5. Not do anything to bring the profession of celebrancy into disrepute 	<p>1. Type of ceremony Wedding celebration Civil partnership celebration Renewal of vows Commitment</p> <p>2 Locations Public venues Private homes Inside locations Outside locations</p> <p>3. Culture Language Religion Age Gender Identification (LGBTQ+) Sexuality Rituals</p> <p>4. Additional needs and requirements Mobility Sensory loss Mental health Other special needs</p>

Including People with Additional Needs in a Ceremony – Couples Ceremonies

A celebrant will, when undertaking any of the elements of their role, come in to contact with people with additional needs. In doing this they must provide a level of respect, not discriminate and provide where possible advice and guidance on how they might be included in the ceremony.

<p>Competent to perform</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the relevant needs of anyone known to be attending the ceremony 2. Identify any equipment or materials that will ensure that anyone with additional needs is fully included in the ceremony 3. Liaise with others managing ceremony locations, and other suppliers of the additional needs and their requirements 4. Check before the ceremony that any additional equipment is in place and functioning correctly 5. Work collaboratively with others who may be supporting those with additional needs before, at and after the ceremony 6. Feedback to others who are managing the location and other suppliers on any issues arising 	<p>Knowledge & Understanding</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How including people with additional needs can affect and be affected by the ceremony 2. How to ensure that people with additional needs are included appropriately 3. Know the forms and degrees of additional needs and what requirements might be 4. Where to seek advice and guidance on how to include people with additional needs in the ceremony 5. Know how to liaise with those responsible for the ceremony location, the process and those supporting the person with additional needs 6. The way to incorporate those with additional needs and their supporters at the ceremony 7. How health and safety requirements may differ when including people with additional needs at a ceremony 8. How to support guests with additional needs 	<p>Behaviour</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not to discriminate against anyone in actions, language, tone or dress 2. Actively promote and support the inclusion of anyone with additional needs in the ceremony where it is reasonable and safe to do so 	<p>Scope & Range</p> <p>1.Type of ceremony Wedding celebration Civil partnership celebration Renewal of vows Commitment</p> <p>2.Locations Public locations Private homes Inside locations Outside locations</p> <p>3 Culture Language Religion Age Gender Identification (LGBTQ+) Sexuality Rituals</p> <p>4.Additional needs and requirements Mobility Sensory loss(es) Mental health Other special needs</p>
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Business Skills for Celebrants – Couples Ceremonies

Most, but not all, celebrants who offer couples ceremonies, will be self-employed and run their businesses as a commercial enterprise. This standard describes what they should do, what they should know and how they should behave to meet legislation, be competitive and have good business acumen when dealing with couples and suppliers.

Competent to perform	Knowledge & Understanding	Behaviour	Scope & Range
<p>1 Work within current financial legislation, guidelines and procedures</p> <p>2 Be able to use appropriate technology to provide accurate ceremony scripts and records</p> <p>3 Be able to use appropriate technology for research, marketing and producing financial records</p> <p>4. Deal effectively with complaints and compliments</p>	<p>1. Know the current requirements for accurate and up to date record keeping for taxation and other business purposes</p> <p>2 Know how to use appropriate computer software programmes effectively</p> <p>3 The importance of the correct use social and other media</p> <p>4 The importance of good communications</p> <p>5. Understand the relevant requirements of Data Protection (GDPR) and ICO</p> <p>6 How to quote names and titles properly, including referencing and copyright issues</p> <p>7. Who and where to seek advice and support from</p>	<p>1 Communicate in all ways in a manner that is professional and promotes celebrancy</p> <p>2 Maintain all records in line with current taxation requirements and be able to recall easily</p> <p>3. Conduct self within the wider community that promotes a professional image</p> <p>4 Deal appropriately with complaints and compliments</p> <p>5. Use social media platforms responsibly</p>	<p>1 Records including: Invoices Receipts Details of ceremonies</p> <p>2 Information Technology including: Word processing Spreadsheets Email Website Search engines Social media</p> <p>3 Legislation including: Taxation Health and Safety Data Protection (GDPR)/ICO Equality and Diversity</p> <p>4. External support Financial Legal Information technology Other celebrants Celebrant organisations</p>