

Register Office marriage

_____ and _____

Thank you for choosing to hold your ceremony in Cheshire West and Chester.

Your marriage has been arranged to take place:

In _____

On _____

At _____

These guidance notes are designed to help your day run smoothly. There is also a sample ceremony, including a number of options which the registrar will discuss with you on the day. Please note that for legal reasons we are unable to include any religious words or music in your ceremony.

The Ceremony Room

These are seats for up to 50 guests in the ceremony room and there is always a fresh flower arrangement on display.

Arrival

Please aim to arrive at least 15 minutes before your ceremony is due to start. If you are late it may not be possible for us to marry you.

The registrar will see you both before the ceremony begins to check the details which will be entered in the marriage register.

Car parking

If there is space, you may park two cars outside the register office for the duration of your ceremony and we will provide two parking slips on the day to be displayed on the dashboards.

Music

We have a programmable CD system and a range of background music. If you would like to provide your own CD it is a good idea to check before the day that it will play on the register office system.

Witnesses

Two people must be present to witness your marriage and sign the marriage register. They can be friends or family, over the age of 16 and able to speak and understand English.

Confetti

Please ask your guests not to throw confetti in the register office. It would be very helpful if they waited until they are outside the building.



Contact us

Address: Chester Register Office
Goldsmith House
Goss Street
Chester
CH1 2BG

Telephone: 0300 123 7037

Email: chesterregisteroffice@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Map of Chester Register Office





The ceremony

A register office marriage ceremony usually lasts about twenty minutes, including the signing of the marriage register.

It is not necessary for you to memorise any words as the registrar will lead you through the ceremony and ask you to repeat the words a few at a time.

Registrar's welcome and Introduction

The Conducting Registrar will begin by welcoming everyone to your marriage.

My name is ... and I have the pleasure of conducting this ceremony.

My colleague ... has the important task of registering the marriage and producing the marriage certificate at the end of the ceremony.

You are here to witness and celebrate the marriage of ... and We trust this day is the start of a very happy life together for them.

... and ... , before you are married I have to tell you that this place in which we are met has been duly sanctioned, according to law, for the celebration of marriages. And I should also remind you both of the solemn and binding character of the vows you are about to make.

Marriage, according to the law of this country, is the union of two people voluntarily entered into for life, to the exclusion of all others.

(As an optional addition the Registrar may also say)

Option 1

The purpose of marriage is that you may love, care and support each other through your life together, and that you may be fulfilled in a relationship of permanent and continuing commitment. We trust that these things may come true for you both.

Now at this point, I am required to ask that if any person here knows of any legal reason why ... and ... should not be married, they should declare it now.

The Registrar may ask the guests to sit at this point

The Legal declarations

The Registrar will now ask you to make the two legal declarations which form the main part of the ceremony

..... and, I am going to ask each of you to make a declaration to the effect that you know of no legal reason why you should not be married to each other. I shall then ask you to exchange the words by which you enter into the union of marriage.

.....would you begin by stating your full name. Now please repeat the words of the first declaration:

The First declaration

I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I, ... (full name) may not be joined in matrimony to ... (full name)

(This will be repeated for both of you)

Any union which you enter into has to be voluntary and therefore I will ask each of you this question:

...do you, by your own choice, freely enter into the union of marriage with ... (Answer Yes or I do)

(This will be repeated for both of you)

I am now going to ask each of you to make the second of the two legal declarations.

This is a declaration you make to one another by which you formally enter into the union of marriage

The Second declaration

I call upon these persons here present to witness that I ... (full name) do take thee ...(full name) to be my lawful wedded wife/ husband

(This will be repeated for both of you)

(As an optional addition the Registrar may also say)

Option 2

To live together in love and harmony, to cherish and care for you whatever the future may bring.

The exchange of the ring(s)

(Please Note - although it is traditional for couples to exchange one or two rings, this is not a legal requirement and does not have to be included)

Now we will have the exchange of the wedding ring(s), which is the traditional way of sealing the marriage contract.

(As an optional addition the Registrar may also say)

Option 3

A wedding ring is a symbol of the unbroken circle of love. May these rings always remind you of the vows you have taken and that marriage is a commitment for life.

(The ring is usually placed on the third finger of the left hand)

I give you this ring as a token of our marriage, an outward sign of the commitment we are making to each other and a symbol of all that we share.

(Repeat for bride/groom if two rings are exchanged. Or if only one ring is exchanged)

I accept this ring as a token of our marriage, an outward sign of the commitment we are making to each other and a symbol of all that we share.

Conclusion and signing

... and ... you have both consented to be married. And you have made the declarations which are required by law in the presence of your witnesses, family and friends. Therefore it gives me great pleasure to declare that you are now legally married to one another.

At the end of the ceremony you and your witnesses will now be invited to sign the register.

It is very important that you check the information in the register extremely carefully.

If a correction to the entry has to be made later, there will be a charge of £90, so it is very important that all details shown are correct. After signing, the Registrar will issue you with your marriage certificate.

Extra certificates

It is possible to order additional marriage certificates before the day of your ceremony. Please visit our website www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/registration and click 'make a payment'. Please use the drop down list and select 'additional certificates'.

Alternative Brochure formats

This information is also available in audio, braille, large print or other formats. Please email us at: equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Telephone : 0300 123 8123 Textphone: 18001 01606 867 670

READINGS

You may like to ask a family member or friend to read one of these during or after the ceremony.

Marriage Is

Marriage is a dynamic process of discovery.
Marriage is a journey, not an arrival.
In marriage, being the right person,
is as important as finding the right person.
Marriage is starting to love, over and over again.
Marriage is a life's work.
Marriage is an art and like any creative process,
it requires active thought and effort.
We have to learn how to share on many different levels.
We need to practice talking from the heart
and understanding attitudes as well as words.
Giving generously and receiving graciously
are talents that are available to anyone.
But all these skills need to be developed,
if the marriage picture that we paint is to be
anything approaching the masterpiece intended.

American Indian Ceremony

Now we will feel no rain,
For each of us will be shelter for the other.
Now we will feel no cold,
For each of us will be warmth to the other.
Now there will be no more loneliness,
For each of us will be companion to the other.
We are two bodies,
But there are three lives before us:
My life, your life and our life together.
When evening falls, I will look up and there you'll be.
I'll take your hand and you'll take mine
And we'll turn together to look at the road we travelled to reach
This the hour of our happiness
It stretches behind us as the future lies ahead,
a long and winding road
whose every turning means discovery.
Old hopes, new laughter and shared tears.
The adventure has just begun.