

Job description

Job title: Ceremony Officer

Grade: 8

Job evaluation reference: CS711

Job family: Legal and Political

Purpose and impact

- To conduct or register legal civil marriages and civil partnership ceremonies at office locations, approved premises registered buildings and churches.
- To conduct other discretionary celebratory ceremonies provided by Registration Services at locations in Dorset or neighbouring areas.
- To ensure couples receive a personalised service to meet their requirements and ensure the success of their ceremony.

Key responsibilities

- To liaise with ceremony couples in advance of their ceremony to confirm ceremony arrangements, make any last-minute changes to ceremony script and give couples reassurance regarding their ceremony.
- To collect from and return to the office the ceremony file, marriage or civil partnership schedule.
- Conducting a ceremony involves;
 - Working in partnership with Approved Premises staff to ensure the ceremony is conducted legally and incorporates the couples wishes.
 - Dealing with any legal issues or suspicions arising; resolving the issues wherever possible or making arrangements for alternative courses of action. This may involve the removal of some members of the bridal party to a place of safety in the event of 'forced marriages'.
 - Ensuring the ceremony is conducted legally.
 - Liaising with interested parties' i.e. bridal party, photographers, venue staff and resolving any problems arising.
- Registering a ceremony involves:
 - Undertaking separate pre-ceremony marriage / civil partnership interviews with the customer and checking the information from the interview questioning matches the marriage/civil partnership schedule.
 - Checking documentary evidence as required.
 - Resolving any differences arising, providing statutory advice where required.
 - Updating the marriage schedule information where permissible.
 - Completing the electronic registration record on the national database.
- To conduct and 'stage-manage' statutory ceremonies (marriages and civil partnerships) at Approved Premises in Dorset and Registration Services Ceremony Rooms. This includes both indoor and outdoor locations.
- To conduct and 'stage-manage' discretionary ceremonies (welcoming, renewal of vows, celebration) at any premises at any location (including outside of Dorset). This includes both indoor and outdoor locations.



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- To conduct or register housebound, Registrar General Licence and Prison ceremonies.
- To attend and register marriages at religious buildings.
- To undertake the associated administrative duties in relation to the functions of this post.
- In an emergency to implement Dorset Registration Service emergency procedure to ensure ceremony proceeds as planned.
- Any other lesser or comparable duties as required.
- The post holder is a statutory 'Deputy Superintendent Registrar' and Deputy Registrar' for marriage purposes and is personally responsible (by statute) for the performance of their duties as set out in the Registration and Marriage Acts.
- The post holder is a statutory 'Civil Partnership Registrar' as designated by the Civil Partnership Act.
- Responsible for continuous professional development, maintaining up to date knowledge of legislation and registration practices.

NB: The duties and responsibilities of this post are not restrictive and the post holder may be required on occasion to undertake other duties. This will not substantially change the nature of the post.

Supervision and management

Reporting to: Registrar Area Manager

Responsibility for: n/a

Other factors

Resources

- Responsible for ensuring data quality and as such the integrity of management information through the proper use and safekeeping of data and record systems both manual and computerised.
- Responsible for receiving, processing, recording and safe keeping of financial transactions in accordance with the Council's financial procedures.
- The post holder is a key holder and accountable for the security and operation of premises including:
 - Unlocking/locking premises and deactivating/activating premises alarm.
 - Following office procedures including lone working procedure at end of session (if applicable).
- Responsible for the usage and security of designated 'controlled stock', marriage schedules and safe keys.
- Responsible for a mobile phone / tablet.



Working Environment

- The post holder will, for the majority of their work, be at either the office or at a licensed Approved Premise. A small proportion of their work (discretionary ceremonies) will be undertaken at any suitable place and location following a risk assessment. Occasionally the officer may have to conduct a prison ceremony or a hospital 'death-bed' ceremony.
- Ceremonies can be conducted indoors or outdoors, at any time of the day / night and at any time of the year.
- Post holders must be of a smart and professional appearance as befits their role at ceremonies.

Contacts and relationships

- Contacts are a key element of the post. This ranges from the ceremony party and their guests, venue staff, photographers, wedding planners and general members of the public.
- The post holder must be a good communicator and work in partnership with staff from the ceremony location to ensure the ceremony is conducted legally and in accordance with the customers' requirements.
- Conducting the ceremony requires the post holder to diplomatically 'stage-manage' people involved in the ceremony; both before and during, and resolving any issues that arise with the premises, ceremony arrangements, ceremony participants or their guests, such that the ceremony proceeds calmly and professionally in accordance with legal requirements and the customers' requirements.
- The post holder is an important ambassador of the Council and Registration Services; the reputation of the Service will be judged from different perspectives by many different people at each ceremony. The ceremony is a 'paid for' event by the customer and the long-term sustainability of Registration Services is dependent upon this income generation.

Work demands

- The post holder has no discretion to vary their ceremony workload which is customer led and pre-determined, but the post holder does have discretion to schedule their own pre-ceremony contact with the customer within service guidelines.
- Some ceremonies are held outdoors and access to the site from the parking location may not be straight forward.
- The post holder must be confident, resilient and capable of multi-tasking at ceremonies and requires imaginative resolutions for handling unplanned customer issues arising on the day.
- The post holder must work with no management support at the time of the ceremony and will be under constant public scrutiny whilst performing ceremonies.



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- The post holder must follow consistent practice as there is a possibility that the post holder will have to provide legal statements and appear in Court in connection with any marriage or civil partnership at which they have officiated.

Our behaviours

Dorset Council has developed and embedded a set of behaviours that will form part of everything you do and you will need to be able to demonstrate them through the way you work, regardless of your role or grade within the organisation.

Full details can be found on our website: [Our values, behaviours and principles - Dorset Council](#)



Person specification

Applicants will be shortlisted on the basis of demonstrating that they fulfil the following criteria in their application form and should include clear examples of how they meet these criteria. You will be assessed in some or all of the specific areas over the course of the selection process.

Essential

Essential criteria are the minimum requirement for the above post.

Qualifications/ training/registrations
Required by law, and/or essential to the performance of the role
1. Educated to A level standard or proven track record of equivalent ability.
2. GCSE's (or equivalent) (Grade C / Level 4 or above) in English and Maths or equivalent ability evidenced from testing.
Experience
3. Relevant and transferrable frontline experience of working in a customer demand led environment.
4. Previous experience of working with computerised systems.
5. Previous experience of working under pressure.
6. Previous experience of participating in a public performance role.
7. Previous experience of regularly using own initiative without reference to others and being accountable for the outcome.
Skills, abilities & knowledge
8. Good interpersonal and oral communication skills; confident in dealing with people.
9. Excellent presentation skills.
10. Excellent organisation and time management skills.
11. Ability to use own initiative and work with minimal supervision.
12. Practical and creative approach to design work.
13. Good written communication skills.
14. Neat writing skills.
15. Accurate and attentive to detail.
16. Excellent customer perspective.
17. Competent in the use of standard IT applications including Word, Excel, Internet and communication channels.
18. Good understanding of a range of office practices.
19. Basic understanding of the registration service.
20. Good understanding of customer perspective.
Behaviours
21. Responsibility
22. Respect
23. Recognition
24. One Team: Collaboration
Other
25. Positive or growth mind-set, showing willingness to commit to continuous learning.
26. Proven track record of positive working relationships with colleagues.
27. Capable and willing to follow principles and procedures consistently.



28. Proactive and responsive.
29. Ability to adapt to new ways of working and changing technology.
30. Able to fulfil the travel requirements of the post.

Approval			
Manager	Kirsty Riglar	Date	January 2022

