

Frequently asked Questions

Can one of us be late?

The simple answer is no. You must arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the ceremony time to have an interview with the registrar to ensure all the legal formalities are adhered to before the ceremony can commence.

We will most likely have another ceremony to conduct after and we will not be late for another couple's ceremony.

If you do arrive late, your ceremony may not be able to take place so please make sure you plan enough time to get ready and the route to the venue, allowing for traffic delays, to arrive in plenty of time.

If you are having a ceremony at a venue, we suggest you both arrive 30 minutes before hand.

What if I do not want to see my partner before the ceremony?

The law requires that the registrar has a confidential interview with the couple immediately before the ceremony, but we can conduct the pre ceremony interview separately. It would be helpful if you let the registrar know this before your special day. Make sure you arrive at least 30 minutes before and your partner 15 minutes before to ensure you don't see each other.

Can my father walk me down the aisle?

Yes, he can or you could choose another family member or friend to escort you down the aisle. It would be helpful if you inform the registrar before the day of your ceremony.

Can we have readings at our ceremony?

Yes, of course – up to 2 non-religious readings. All readings must be submitted for approval at least 6 weeks before the ceremony date. They must not include any religious connotations. You will also need to inform us who will be reading it.

All items for inclusion in your ceremony must have prior agreement from the Superintendent Registrar

Can we choose our own music?

We have cd players in all our ceremony rooms at Feltham Lodge. You cannot have any hymns or religious music, but you can choose classical or popular songs. All music and CDs must be submitted for approval at least 6 weeks before the ceremony date. Also, we will confirm they play on our music system. If you choose not to have any personal music, we will play some classical music when signing the register.

Please check with approved venue regarding equipment.

All items for inclusion in your ceremony must have prior agreement from the Superintendent Registrar

Can we write our own vows?

Yes, you are welcome to exchange short, non-religious personal vows during your ceremony. Please note, for a marriage ceremony, you must still repeat the legal contractual and declarative vows by law.

For a Civil Partnership, the words can be repeated if couple choose to.

Alternatively, the Registrar may include their additional promises to your ceremony whilst you are exchanging rings.

Personal vows must be submitted for approval at least 6 weeks before the ceremony date.

We recommend printing them on paper or card and give to the registrar on the day of your ceremony. They will be handed to you at appropriate time during the ceremony.

All items for inclusion in your ceremony must have prior agreement from the Superintendent Registrar

Number of guests

This number must include everyone who will be present in the room at the time of the ceremony including the couple, the registration staff, the photographer and any singers or musicians. If you are unsure of how a licensed room capacity affects your ceremony, please discuss this with your venue.

Guest numbers are limited to the number stated by the Register Office or venue. Please note this cannot be exceeded in any circumstances. Extra guests will not be permitted in the ceremony room and will have to wait outside.

Do we have to exchange rings?

No, they are traditional but are not legally required.

Who can be our witnesses?

Two witnesses are required. They can be relatives or friends, but they must be able to speak and understand English.

Can we have photographs and video during the ceremony?

Photos can be taken before and after the ceremony. If you would like pictures to be taken during the ceremony, you will need to discuss with the registrar. Video recordings are permitted. The registrar will direct the person to the most appropriate position.

Names

The full names shown on the ceremony paperwork must be used during the formal parts of the ceremony but if either of you is known by a shortened or alternative name and you would like us to use this in the "informal" parts of the ceremony, please tell us.

What about if I'm nervous and forget the words?

Emotions can do funny things. Laughing or crying is common. We will give you time to compose yourself before carrying on. Don't worry if you make a mistake. You repeat the words after the registrar. We go slowly and it's just a few words at a time.

In what name do I sign the schedule?

The name you contract the ceremony in and you will be asked to sign your usual signature. For example, a bride will sign her name prior to her marriage as she is not yet able to use the married name.

Signing of the Legal documents

We would ask you to please check the recorded details very carefully before signing. We appreciate that in the excitement of the moment it may be difficult to concentrate but any mistake that may have been made can be corrected at this stage. Errors found once the documentation has been completed and signed are formal corrections and may involve considerable time and expense to effect.

Can we throw confetti?

Although we do not allow confetti within the building, there is a large lawn and gardens to the rear of our beautiful building where bio-degradable confetti can be thrown. If you are marrying at an approved venue you will need to check with them if confetti is permitted.

Can we bring food and drink?

No food or drink is permitted on the premises.

Younger guests

We recognise that ceremonies are a family event, and you are welcome to bring younger members of the family to the ceremony. However, we would ask that children are always supervised by a responsible adult, who can if necessary, take them from the ceremony room should they become distressed or are disruptive. We regret but pushchairs, prams and buggies are not allowed in any of the Ceremony Rooms at Feltham Lodge. Any guests bringing small children to a ceremony at Feltham Lodge must be prepared to remove their child from the pushchair, pram or buggy.

Dogs

If your ceremony is taking place at Feltham Lodge, local byelaws do not permit any animals on the premises. However, registered Guide Dogs are permitted. Please inform us if a guide dog will attend your ceremony.

What if I have to cancel/reschedule my ceremony?

Cancellation of your ceremony must be given in writing. We have a detailed cancellation policy listed on our terms and conditions; a copy was given to you. Depending on when you cancel - how far in advance you cancel before your ceremony date - determines whether you are entitled to a refund.

Can I change my name on my passport before my ceremony?

You can apply to change your name on your passport three months prior to your ceremony date by applying to the passport office and completing a form PD2 form. The person conducting your ceremony must sign the form. The fee is £25.00 for the Superintendent Registrar to sign it. Please ensure that the name on your passport and flights/travel bookings are the same if you are travelling after your ceremony.

How do I get a certificate?

A certificate can only be issued after the details have been entered on to the electronic register. This means that you will not be able to obtain a certificate on the day of your ceremony.

Certificates can be ordered online at www.hounslow.gov.uk/registration. They cost £12.50 each.

If you have a further questions, please contact us by email registeroffice@hounslow.gov.uk

Hounslow Register Office
Feltham Lodge
38-40 Harlington Road West
Feltham
TW14 0JJ

When using a sat nav, house number must be used with postcode to locate us.