

GUIDELINES FOR THE GRANTING OF SPECIAL LICENCES

General

- A.** Special licences will not be used ...
- to facilitate illegal or undesirable marriages, *or*
 - to secure privacy or secrecy for a marriage, *or*
 - to relax or modify generally the statutory restrictions on marriage after banns or by ordinary licence.
- B.** Special licences may be used to facilitate a marriage in church which might otherwise be difficult or impossible.
- C.** Clergy must ensure that couples who are married by special licence should be prepared for marriage, and assured of the support of the Church in their family life thereafter.
- D.** Due regard will be had to the extra burden which special licences impose on the parochial clergy. No application will be considered unless the cleric who is to officiate is identified.

Sickness

- E.** Special consideration will be given to the granting of a special licence for the marriage of a party who is chronically sick or dying.

Unconsecrated places

- F.** Special licences will not be granted for marriages ...
- at 'approved premises', *or*
 - at any other unconsecrated place, except in the case of a party who is chronically sick or dying, or in exceptional circumstances.

Consecrated buildings

- G.** Marriage in a consecrated building which is not the parish church or usual place of worship of either party will not be permitted without reasonable justification, which should normally be a genuine personal or family connection, determined in accordance with paragraphs **I** to **O** below.
- H.** Wedding tourism is discouraged. The fact that a church or chapel is an attractive location cannot be regarded as a sufficient justification.

Parish churches and licensed chapels

- I.** Marriage at a parish church or licensed chapel which is not the parish church or usual place of worship of either party will not be permitted unless ...
- the parish can be regarded as the 'home' of either party or of either party's family in accordance with paragraphs **J** and **K** below, or
 - the church or chapel can be regarded as the party's church or their family's church in accordance with paragraphs **L** and **M** below, or
 - the parties wish to be married by the incumbent because of a strong family or other personal connection with him as an individual.

- J. For a parish to be regarded as a party's home, he or she must have resided there for a considerable time:
- at least six months in all cases, **and**
 - if the period of residence was ten years or more ago, the residence should have been for at least twelve months.

Alternatively, he or she must be an active member of the parish community by reason of his or her working in the parish.

- K. For a parish to be regarded as the home of a party's family, at least one parent must normally ...
- be residing there, **or**
 - have resided there for a substantial period in the past (applying the same criteria as in J above).

Exceptionally, a known connection with a parish over at least two generations may be sufficient.

- L. For a church or chapel to be regarded as a party's church ...
- he or she must have habitually attended it for at least six months, **or**
 - if the period of attendance was ten years or more ago, he or she should have habitually attended the church for a period of at least twelve months, **or**
 - he or she was prepared and presented for confirmation there.

- M. For a church or chapel to be regarded as the church of a party's family ...
- at least one parent must have habitually attended it for at least six months to the date of the application, **or**
 - if the period of attendance was ten years or more ago, at least one parent should have habitually attended the church for a period of at least twelve months.

Exceptionally, a known connection with the church over at least two generations may be sufficient.

Unlicensed churches and chapels

- N. A person who is an habitual worshipper at an unlicensed former parish church or chapel of ease should normally be permitted to marry there. Otherwise, the same criteria should be applied as for parish churches and licensed chapels.

King William's College Chapel

- O. A special licence may be granted for a marriage in King William's College Chapel of a former pupil or a present or former member of staff of the College, provided that the incumbent of Castletown is consulted and counter-signs Form SL2, and that care is taken to ensure that preparation and pastoral support is provided.

Note to the Clergy

When a marriage by Special Licence has been solemnised, the minister may give the licence to the couple providing that he/she endorses it at the bottom in permanent ink, as follows: ***This marriage solemnised by me, [your name], on [the date]. [Signature.]***

The Bishop will keep a black-and-white copy of the licence in his files and the Registrar will keep a colour copy of it in his files.