

How to apply for a correction to a marriage registration

1. General Information

A correction can only be made when the information in the marriage register is wrong. The entry cannot be corrected to show new information if your circumstances change after the date of marriage.

To establish if the error is in the original entry and not just on the certificate you will need to contact either:

- The register office who conducted your civil marriage, or
- The incumbent, authorised person, or registering officer who registered your religious marriage.

2. How do I apply for a correction?

If your marriage was according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England or Church of Wales please contact the church where your marriage took place. For every other circumstance once you have established that the error is in the register and not just a copying error you will then need to complete an application form and send it to GRO.

3. Where can I get an application form?

- by downloading it from www.direct.gov.uk
- your local register office may be able to supply you with one
- you can get one from GRO by ringing **0300 123 1837**

4. Who can apply for a correction?

- Bride or Groom. However both will need to be aware of the correction to the marriage entry.

If both parties are no longer alive then we will not be able to correct the entry.

5. What does a correction look like?

The original information will always be shown as it was first given, but a note will be written against the registration explaining what the correct information should be and the date when the correction was made. All certificates issued from that point on will include the note in the margin.

6. Do I need to prove that the information in my marriage certificate is wrong?

You will need to show that the information originally given at the time of your marriage was wrong. You will have to produce document(s) that clearly shows what the correct information should have been and these document(s) should be valid or dated around the date of your marriage.

It is not possible to list every example of what will be acceptable but it should be an official document which shows the correct information. Typical examples will include:

- passport
- identity card
- photocard driving licence
- letter from a government department
- bank/building society statement
- utility bill
- credit card statement
- letter from a hospital/doctor

If you cannot send us any proof, then normally a correction will not be possible. Further advice can be obtained by ringing **0300 123 1837**

7. Do I need to send in original documents?

You should only send in photocopies of documents certified as true copies by a professional person or a person of good standing in the community. A list giving examples of the type of person that would be suitable can be found at: http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/TravelAndTransport/Passports/Applicationinformation/DG_174151

Acceptable certifiers are listed in the section 'Who can countersign your application'.

The person should not be related by birth or marriage to the applicant(s), be in a personal relationship with the applicant or live at the same address.

The person certifying documents should :

- include the words -

"Certified to be a true copy of the original seen by me"

- sign
- print their name
- confirm their occupation
- add their address and telephone number

However, the General Register Office reserves the right to ask you to submit the original document if requested.

8. Do I have to be there when the registration is corrected?

A correction to a marriage entry always has to be witnessed. This will be by either:

- both parties to the marriage, or
- 2 witnesses nominated by the parties to the marriage.

The witnesses do not need to have been present at the marriage but do need to be aware of the information that is being corrected.

9. How long will it take for my entry to be corrected?

If there are no problems with your application, you can expect the paperwork authorising the correction to be sent out within **5 working days**.

If GRO ask you for more information or you need to send in more paperwork, each further reply may take up to **20 working days**.

However, you should be aware that in exceptional circumstances, it may not always be possible to meet these targets.

You will then need to liaise with the register holder to find a mutually convenient time for the correction to be made. We therefore cannot give precise timescales.

10. Where can I find out more?

You can either contact the religious building or register office in the area where the marriage took place. They will be happy to explain what you need to do.

Alternatively, you can telephone GRO who will advise you on your individual circumstances and how to apply for a correction.

Our contact details are :

Address: GRO Casework Team, PO Box 476, Southport, PR8 2WJ

Phone: 0300 123 1837 Option 2

E-mail: corrections.re-reg@ips.gsi.gov.uk

Internet: Go to <http://www.direct.gov.uk> and search for *Registering life events* to find forms for downloading.

The information contained in this leaflet is based on the **Marriage Act 1949** but is not a full statement of the law.