

## Choosing Your Celebrant

The ceremony is a very important part of your wedding day and can set the tone for the entire occasion. When selecting your celebrant, there are some questions that can assist you to understand what they may be able to offer.

Some couples do not have the luxury of a 'face-to-face' meeting before booking the celebrant. Whether you are contacting them by email or phone, or visiting in person, consider asking the celebrant some of the following questions:-

- Are you available on our chosen date (*if not, who do you recommend?*)
- What is your fee and what services do you offer? (*Decisions should not be based on this factor alone as the cheapest celebrant may not be experienced or provide the best value.*)
- How many meetings do you usually have with marrying couples prior to the wedding?
- What time do you arrive at the venue before the wedding?
- How many weddings do you generally perform on the same day and how closely do you book weddings?
- How do you involve couples in preparing the content of the ceremony?
- Are you a member of a professional organisation or association? (*Celebrants who are members of a professional body are likely to be more in touch with other celebrants, receiving up-to-date news, undertaking learning activities and sharing stories and ideas – all leading to greater awareness and connectedness.*)
- Are there extra costs involved (initial meeting, rehearsal, travel)?
- Are you familiar with the venue chosen for the ceremony?
- Do you have a high quality portable PA system? Does it require power? Can it be used by guests performing readings?
- How do you prepare the marriage certificates, are they hand printed, calligraphy, computer generated?
- Can you share any photos of wedding performed? (*You can tell how the celebrant presents themselves, as well as how much enjoyment is evident in the photos.*)
- Do you have a library or resources available for borrowing?
- Do you have a website that couples can visit?
- What is your cancellation policy?
- Are you able to provide written testimonials from other couples you have married recently?
- Are there satisfied couples you can refer you to, that are prepared to be contacted by telephone? (*This may give you an indication of the level of satisfaction as well as how flexible the celebrant was with regard to planning the ceremony.*)
- What professional activities have you recently undertaken? (*All celebrants are required to undertake 5 hours of professional learning each year and they should be able to talk to you about this.*)

Then ask yourself 'Is this somebody I would like to have at my wedding?' If you feel that the celebrant is warm and confident, and will meet your needs as a couple, well done!