



Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013

2013 CHAPTER 30

PART 1

MARRIAGE OF SAME SEX COUPLES IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Extension of marriage

1 Extension of marriage to same sex couples

- (1) Marriage of same sex couples is lawful.
- (2) The marriage of a same sex couple may only be solemnized in accordance with—
 - (a) Part 3 of the Marriage Act 1949,
 - (b) Part 5 of the Marriage Act 1949,
 - (c) the Marriage (Registrar General's Licence) Act 1970, or
 - (d) an Order in Council made under Part 1 or 3 of Schedule 6.
- (3) No Canon of the Church of England is contrary to section 3 of the Submission of the Clergy Act 1533 (which provides that no Canons shall be contrary to the Royal Prerogative or the customs, laws or statutes of this realm) by virtue of its making provision about marriage being the union of one man with one woman.
- (4) Any duty of a member of the clergy to solemnize marriages (and any corresponding right of persons to have their marriages solemnized by members of the clergy) is not extended by this Act to marriages of same sex couples.
- (5) A “member of the clergy” is—
 - (a) a clerk in Holy Orders of the Church of England, or
 - (b) a clerk in Holy Orders of the Church in Wales.

Commencement Information

II [S. 1](#) in force at 13.3.2014 by [S.I. 2014/93](#), [art. 3\(a\)](#)

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

Religious protection

2 Marriage according to religious rites: no compulsion to solemnize etc

- (1) A person may not be compelled by any means (including by the enforcement of a contract or a statutory or other legal requirement) to—
- (a) undertake an opt-in activity, or
 - (b) refrain from undertaking an opt-out activity.
- (2) A person may not be compelled by any means (including by the enforcement of a contract or a statutory or other legal requirement)—
- (a) to conduct a relevant marriage,
 - (b) to be present at, carry out, or otherwise participate in, a relevant marriage, or
 - (c) to consent to a relevant marriage being conducted,

where the reason for the person not doing that thing is that the relevant marriage concerns a same sex couple.

- (3) In this section—

“opt-in activity” means an activity of the kind specified in an entry in the first column of the following table which falls to be undertaken for the purposes of any enactment specified in the corresponding entry in the second column;

“opt-out activity” means an activity which reverses, or otherwise modifies, the effect of an opt-in activity.

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Enactment</i>
Giving consent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Any of these provisions of the 1949 Act: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) section 26A(3); (b) section 26B(2), (4) or (6); (c) section 44A(6); (d) section 46(1C) — Regulations under section 70A(5) of the 1949 Act (as mentioned in section 70A(6) (c) of that Act) relating to an application for registration — Section 1(3) of the Marriage (Registrar General's Licence) Act 1970 — An armed forces overseas marriage Order in its application to marriages of same sex couples (as mentioned in paragraph 9(5) of Schedule 6)
Applying for the registration of a building	Section 43A of the 1949 Act
Authorising a person to be present at the solemnization of marriages of same sex couples in a building registered under section 43A of the 1949 Act	Section 43B of the 1949 Act
Being authorised to be present at the solemnization of marriages of same	Section 43B of the 1949 Act

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

sex couples in a building registered
under section 43A of the 1949 Act

Giving a certificate, giving a copy of a consent, or certifying any matter

Any of these provisions of the 1949 Act:
(a) section 43A(3);
(b) section 43B(2);
(c) section 44A(7)

(4) In this section—

“1949 Act” means the Marriage Act 1949;

“armed forces overseas marriage Order” means an Order in Council under Part 3 of Schedule 6;

“person”—

- (a) includes a religious organisation;
- (b) does not include a registrar, a superintendent registrar or the Registrar General;

“relevant marriage” means—

- (a) a marriage of a same sex couple solemnized in accordance with—
 - (i) section 26A or 26B of the 1949 Act (marriage in a place of worship or in another place according to religious rites or usages),
 - (ii) Part 5 of the 1949 Act (marriage in a naval, military or air force chapel),
 - (iii) section 1 of the Marriage (Registrar General's Licence) Act 1970 (deathbed marriage), where the marriage is according to religious rites or usages, or
 - (iv) an armed forces overseas marriage Order, where the marriage is according to religious rites or usages,

including any ceremony forming part of, or connected with, the solemnization of such a marriage; and

- (b) a marriage ceremony read or celebrated in accordance with section 46 of the 1949 Act in respect of a same sex couple (religious ceremony after registrar's marriage of same sex couple);

and a reference to conducting a relevant marriage is to be read accordingly.

(5) In section 110 of the Equality Act 2010 (liability of employees and agents), after subsection (5) insert—

“(5A) A does not contravene this section if A—

- (a) does not conduct a relevant marriage,
- (b) is not present at, does not carry out, or does not otherwise participate in, a relevant marriage, or
- (c) does not consent to a relevant marriage being conducted,

for the reason that the marriage is the marriage of a same sex couple.

(5B) Subsection (5A) applies to A only if A is within the meaning of “person” for the purposes of section 2 of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013; and other expressions used in subsection (5A) and section 2 of that Act have the same meanings in that subsection as in that section.”.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

- (6) In Schedule 3 to the Equality Act 2010 (services and public functions: exceptions), after Part 6 insert—

“PART 6A

MARRIAGE OF SAME SEX COUPLES IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Marriage according to religious rites: no compulsion to solemnize etc

- 25A (1) A person does not contravene section 29 only because the person—
- (a) does not conduct a relevant marriage,
 - (b) is not present at, does not carry out, or does not otherwise participate in, a relevant marriage, or
 - (c) does not consent to a relevant marriage being conducted,
- for the reason that the marriage is the marriage of a same sex couple.
- (2) Expressions used in this paragraph and in section 2 of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 have the same meanings in this paragraph as in that section.”.

Extent Information

- E1** S. 2(1)-(4) (so far as relating to Orders in Council under Sch. 6 Pt. 3) extended to N.I. (1.9.2020) by s. 20(3)(za) and [The Marriage and Civil Partnership \(Northern Ireland\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/742\)](#), regs. 1(2), **13(1)**

Commencement Information

- I2** S. 2 in force at 13.3.2014 by [S.I. 2014/93](#), **art. 3(a)**

Part 3 of the Marriage Act 1949

3 Marriage for which no opt-in necessary

In Part 3 of the Marriage Act 1949, for section 26 substitute—

“26 Marriage of a man and a woman; marriage of same sex couples for which no opt-in necessary

- (1) The following marriages may be solemnized on the authority of two certificates of a superintendent registrar—
- “(a) a marriage of a man and a woman, in a building registered under section 41, according to such form and ceremony as the persons to be married see fit to adopt;
 - (b) a marriage of any couple in the office of a superintendent registrar;
 - (bb) a marriage of any couple on approved premises;
 - (c) a marriage of a man and a woman according to the usages of the Society of Friends (commonly called Quakers);

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

- (d) a marriage between a man and a woman professing the Jewish religion according to the usages of the Jews;
 - (dd) a qualifying residential marriage;
 - (e) a marriage of a man and a woman according to the rites of the Church of England in any church or chapel in which banns of matrimony may be published.”
- (2) In this section “qualifying residential marriage” means—
- (a) the marriage of a man and a woman (other than a marriage in pursuance of subsection (1)(c) or (d) above), one or each of whom is house-bound or a detained person, at the usual place of residence of the house-bound or detained person or persons, or
 - (b) the marriage of a same sex couple (other than a marriage according to the rites of the Church of England or other religious rites or usages), one or each of whom is house-bound or a detained person, at the usual place of residence of the house-bound or detained person or persons.”.

Commencement Information

I3 S. 3 in force at 13.3.2014 by S.I. 2014/93, art. 3(a)

4 Opt-in: marriage in places of worship

- (1) After section 26 of the Marriage Act 1949 insert—

“26A Opt-in to marriage of same sex couples: places of worship

- (1) A marriage of a same sex couple in an appropriately registered building according to such form and ceremony as the persons to be married see fit to adopt may be solemnized on the authority of two certificates of a superintendent registrar.
- (2) For the purposes of this section “appropriately registered building” means a building which has been registered under section 43A.
- (3) An application for registration of a building under section 43A may not be made unless the relevant governing authority has given written consent to marriages of same sex couples.
- (4) For that purpose, in relation to a building—
 - “relevant governing authority” means the person or persons recognised by the members of the relevant religious organisation as competent for the purpose of giving consent for the purposes of this section;
 - “relevant religious organisation” means the religious organisation for whose religious purposes the building is used.
- (5) Nothing in this section is to be taken to relate or have any reference to marriages solemnized according to the rites of the Church of England.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

(6) This section is subject (in particular) to sections 44A to 44C (registration of shared buildings for marriage of same sex couples) and regulations made under any of those sections.”.

(2) Schedule 1 (registration of buildings etc) has effect.

Commencement Information

I4 S. 4 in force at 31.10.2013 for specified purposes by S.I. 2013/2789, art. 2(a)

I5 S. 4 in force at 13.3.2014 in so far as not already in force by S.I. 2014/93, art. 3(b)

5 Opt-in: other religious ceremonies

After section 26A of the Marriage Act 1949 insert—

“26B Opt-in to marriage of same sex couples: other religious ceremonies

- (1) A marriage may, in any of the following cases, be solemnized on the authority of two certificates of a superintendent registrar.
- (2) Case A is where—
 - (a) the marriage is of a same sex couple according to the usages of the Society of Friends (commonly called Quakers), and
 - (b) the relevant governing authority has given written consent to such marriages of same sex couples.
- (3) For that purpose “relevant governing authority” means the recording clerk for the time being of the Society of Friends in London.
- (4) Case B is where—
 - (a) the marriage is of a same sex couple professing the Jewish religion according to the usages of the Jews, and
 - (b) the relevant governing authority has given written consent to such marriages of same sex couples.
- (5) For that purpose the meaning of “relevant governing authority” is to be determined in accordance with this table—

<i>The “relevant governing authority” is...</i>	<i>...if the marriage falls to be registered by...</i>
the Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth	the secretary of a synagogue certified under paragraph (a) of the relevant definition (certification by the President of the Board of Deputies)
the person or persons duly recognised by the members of— <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the West London Synagogue of British Jews (“the West London Synagogue”), and 	— either the secretary of the West London Synagogue, as certified under paragraph (b) of the relevant definition — or the secretary of another synagogue in a case where: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the secretary is certified under paragraph (d) of the relevant

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(ii) the other synagogues that are constituents of or affiliated to the Movement for Reform Judaism	definition by the secretary of the West London Synagogue, and (ii) the synagogue is one of those which are constituents of or affiliated to the Movement for Reform Judaism
the person or persons duly recognised by the members of— (i) the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, St. John's Wood (“the St. John's Wood Synagogue”), and (ii) the other synagogues that are constituents of or affiliated to Liberal Judaism	— either the secretary of the St. John's Wood Synagogue, as certified under paragraph (c) of the relevant definition — or the secretary of another synagogue in a case where: (i) the secretary is certified under paragraph (d) of the relevant definition by the secretary of the St. John's Wood Synagogue, and (ii) the synagogue is one of those which are constituents of or affiliated to Liberal Judaism
the person or persons duly recognised by the members of the synagogue by whose secretary the marriage falls to be registered	the secretary of a synagogue certified under paragraph (d) of the relevant definition (certification by the secretary of the West London Synagogue or the secretary of the St. John's Wood Synagogue) in a case where the synagogue is not one of those which are constituents of or affiliated to: (i) the Movement for Reform Judaism, or (ii) Liberal Judaism

In that table—

- (a) “relevant definition” means the definition of “secretary of a synagogue” in section 67;
- (b) a reference to a person or persons being duly recognised is a reference to the person or persons being recognised for the purpose of giving consent for the purposes of this section.

(6) Case C is where—

- (a) the marriage is of a same sex couple according to religious rites or usages (other than the rites of the Church of England),
- (b) one or each of the couple is house-bound or a detained person,
- (c) the marriage is at the usual place of residence of the house-bound or detained person or persons, and
- (d) the relevant governing authority has given written consent to marriages of same sex couples according to those religious rites or usages.

(7) For that purpose—

“relevant governing authority” means the person or persons recognised by the members of the relevant religious organisation as competent for the purpose of giving consent for the purposes of this section;

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

“relevant religious organisation” means the religious organisation according to whose rites or usages the marriage is to be solemnized.

- (8) Subsection (6) does not authorise a marriage that may be solemnized under subsection (2) or (4).”.

Commencement Information

I6 S. 5 in force at 13.3.2014 by S.I. 2014/93, art. 3(c)

Part 5 of the Marriage Act 1949

6 Armed forces chapels

- (1) Part 5 of the Marriage Act 1949 is amended as follows.
- (2) Section 68 (solemnization of marriages in naval, military and air force chapels): after subsection (1) insert—
- “(1A) Nothing in this Part of this Act which applies to the marriage of same sex couples applies to marriage according to the rites of the Church of England.”.
- (3) Section 70 (registration of chapels for marriages otherwise than according to rites of Church of England): after subsection (3) insert—
- “(4) This section does not apply to the marriage of same sex couples.”.
- (4) After section 70 insert—

“70A Registration of chapels for marriages of same sex couples otherwise than according to rites of Church of England

- (1) The Secretary of State may apply to the Registrar General for a chapel to which this Part applies to be registered for the solemnization of marriages of same sex couples.
- (2) Where an application is made under this section, subsections (1) to (3) of section 70 apply to the application as if it had been made under section 70.
- (3) Where a chapel is registered on an application under this section, subsections (1) to (3) of section 70 apply in relation to the chapel as if it had been registered on an application under section 70.
- (4) Any application for the cancellation of a registration is to be made by the Secretary of State.
- (5) The Secretary of State may by statutory instrument make regulations about—
- (a) the registration of chapels under this section, and
 - (b) the cancellation of registrations.
- (6) The regulations may, in particular, make provision—
- (a) as to the procedures to be followed by the Secretary of State in making an application for registration or an application for cancellation of a registration;

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

- (b) as to the procedures to be followed by the Registrar General on an application for registration or an application for cancellation of a registration;
 - (c) as to consents required before an application for registration may be made (including such provision amending section 2 of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 as the Secretary of State considers appropriate to secure that the giving of such a consent is an opt-in activity under that section).
- (7) A statutory instrument containing regulations under this section may not be made unless a draft of the instrument has been laid before, and approved by resolution of, each House of Parliament.
- (8) In this section a reference to the cancellation of a registration is a reference to the cancellation, under section 70(2) (as applied by this section), of a registration under this section.”.

Commencement Information

I7 S. 6 in force at 21.1.2014 for specified purposes by [S.I. 2014/93](#), **art. 2(a)**

I8 S. 6 in force at 3.6.2014 in so far as not already in force by [S.I. 2014/93](#), **art. 5(a)**

The Marriage (Registrar General's Licence) Act 1970

7 Opt-in: “deathbed marriages”

In section 1 of the Marriage (Registrar General's Licence) Act 1970 (marriages which may be solemnized by Registrar General's Licence), after subsection (2) insert—

“(3) A marriage of a same sex couple according to religious rites or usages may not be solemnized in accordance with this Act unless the relevant governing authority has given written consent to marriages of same sex couples according to those religious rites or usages.

(4) For that purpose—

“relevant governing authority” means the person or persons recognised by the members of the relevant religious organisation as competent for the purpose of giving consent for the purposes of this section;

“relevant religious organisation” means the religious organisation according to whose rites or usages the marriage is to be solemnized.”.

Commencement Information

I9 S. 7 in force at 13.3.2014 by [S.I. 2014/93](#), **art. 3(d)**

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

The Church in Wales

8 Power to allow for marriage of same sex couples in Church in Wales

- (1) This section applies if the Lord Chancellor is satisfied that the Governing Body of the Church in Wales has resolved that the law of England and Wales should be changed to allow for the marriage of same sex couples according to the rites of the Church in Wales.
- (2) The Lord Chancellor must, by order, make such provision as the Lord Chancellor considers appropriate to allow for the marriage of same sex couples according to the rites of the Church in Wales.
- (3) The provision that may be made by an order under this section includes provision amending England and Wales legislation.
- (4) In making an order under this section, the Lord Chancellor must have regard to the terms of the resolution of the Governing Body mentioned in subsection (1).
- (5) If it appears to the Lord Chancellor—
 - (a) that a reference in this section to the Governing Body has ceased to be appropriate by reason of a change in the governance arrangements of the Church in Wales, the reference has effect as a reference to such person or persons as the Lord Chancellor thinks appropriate; or
 - (b) that a reference in this section to a resolution has ceased to be appropriate for that reason, the reference has effect as a reference to such decision or decisions as the Lord Chancellor thinks appropriate.
- (6) In Schedule 7 to the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 (functions of the Lord Chancellor which may not be transferred under the Ministers of the Crown Act 1975), in paragraph 4, at the end of Part A insert—

“Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013
 Section 8”.

Commencement Information

I10 S. 8 in force at 13.3.2014 by S.I. 2014/93, art. 3(d)

Other provisions relating to marriages of same sex couples

9 Conversion of civil partnership into marriage

- (1) The parties to an England and Wales civil partnership may convert their civil partnership into a marriage under a procedure established by regulations made by the Secretary of State.
- (2) The parties to a civil partnership within subsection (3) may convert their civil partnership into a marriage under a procedure established by regulations made by the Secretary of State.

[^{F1}(2A) Subsections (1) and (2) apply only where both parties to the civil partnership are of the same sex.]

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

- (3) A civil partnership is within this subsection if—
- (a) it was formed outside the United Kingdom under an Order in Council made under Chapter 1 of Part 5 of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 (registration at British consulates etc or by armed forces personnel), and
 - (b) the part of the United Kingdom that was relevant for the purposes of section 210(2)(b) or (as the case may be) section 211(2)(b) of that Act was England and Wales.
- (4) Regulations under this section may in particular make—
- (a) provision about the making by the parties to a civil partnership of an application to convert their civil partnership into a marriage;
 - (b) provision about the information to be provided in support of an application to convert;
 - (c) provision about the making of declarations in support of an application to convert;
 - (d) provision for persons who have made an application to convert to appear before any person or attend at any place;
 - (e) provision conferring functions in connection with applications to convert on relevant officials, relevant armed forces personnel, the Secretary of State, or any other persons;
 - (f) provision for fees, of such amounts as are specified in or determined in accordance with the regulations, to be payable in respect of—
 - (i) the making of an application to convert;
 - (ii) the exercise of any function conferred by virtue of paragraph (e).
- (5) Functions conferred by virtue of paragraph (e) of subsection (4) may include functions relating to—
- (a) the recording of information on the conversion of civil partnerships;
 - (b) the issuing of certified copies of any information recorded;
 - [^{F2}(ba) the carrying out, on request, of searches of any information recorded and the provision, on request, of records of any information recorded (otherwise than in the form of certified copies);]
 - (c) the conducting of services or ceremonies (other than religious services or ceremonies) following the conversion of a civil partnership.
- [^{F3}(5A) Subsection (5B) applies where regulations under this section provide for a fee to be payable to a superintendent registrar or registrar.
- (5B) The regulations may provide for such part of the fee as may be specified in or determined in accordance with the regulations to be payable by the superintendent registrar or registrar to the Registrar General in such circumstances as may be set out in the regulations.
- (5C) The regulations may provide for the reduction, waiver or refund of part or all of a fee whether by conferring a discretion or otherwise.]
- (6) Where a civil partnership is converted into a marriage under this section—
- (a) the civil partnership ends on the conversion, and
 - (b) the resulting marriage is to be treated as having subsisted since the date the civil partnership was formed.
- (7) In this section—

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

“England and Wales civil partnership” means a civil partnership which is formed by two people registering as civil partners of each other in England or Wales (see Part 2 of the Civil Partnership Act 2004);

“relevant armed forces personnel” means—

- (a) a member of Her Majesty's forces;
- (b) a civilian subject to service discipline (within the meaning of the Armed Forces Act 2006);

and for this purpose “ Her Majesty's forces ” has the same meaning as in the Armed Forces Act 2006;

“relevant official” means—

- (a) the Registrar General;
- (b) a superintendent registrar;
- (c) a registrar;
- (d) a consular officer in the service of Her Majesty's government in the United Kingdom;
- (e) a person authorised by the Secretary of State in respect of the solemnization of marriages or formation of civil partnerships in a country or territory in which Her Majesty's government in the United Kingdom has for the time being no consular representative.

Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 9(2A) inserted (2.12.2019) by [The Civil Partnership \(Opposite-sex Couples\) Regulations 2019 \(S.I. 2019/1458\)](#), regs. 1(2), **37(1)**
- F2** S. 9(5)(ba) inserted (26.5.2015) by [Deregulation Act 2015 \(c. 20\)](#), **ss. 99(3)**, 115(3)(k)
- F3** S. 9(5A)-(5C) inserted (12.7.2016) by [Immigration Act 2016 \(c. 19\)](#), s. 94(1), **Sch. 15 para. 5**; S.I. 2016/603, reg. 3(w)

Commencement Information

- I11** S. 9(1)-(5) (7) in force at 30.6.2014 for specified purposes by [S.I. 2014/1662](#), **art. 2(a)**
- I12** S. 9(1)-(5) (7) in force at 10.12.2014 in so far as not already in force by [S.I. 2014/3169](#), **art. 2**
- I13** S. 9(6) in force at 10.12.2014 by [S.I. 2014/3169](#), **art. 2**

10 Extra-territorial matters

- (1) A marriage under—
 - (a) the law of any part of the United Kingdom (other than England and Wales), or
 - (b) the law of any country or territory outside the United Kingdom,
 is not prevented from being recognised under the law of England and Wales only because it is the marriage of a same sex couple.
- (2) For the purposes of this section it is irrelevant whether the law of a particular part of the United Kingdom, or a particular country or territory outside the United Kingdom—
 - (a) already provides for marriage of same sex couples at the time when this section comes into force, or
 - (b) provides for marriage of same sex couples from a later time.
- (3) Schedule 2 (extra-territorial matters) has effect.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

Commencement Information

- I14** S. 10(1)(2) in force at 13.3.2014 by S.I. 2014/93, **art. 3(e)** (with **art. 4**)
I15 S. 10(3) in force at 31.10.2013 for specified purposes by S.I. 2013/2789, **art. 3(d)**
I16 S. 10(3) in force at 13.3.2014 for specified purposes by S.I. 2014/93, **art. 3(h)**

Effect of extension of marriage

11 Effect of extension of marriage

- (1) In the law of England and Wales, marriage has the same effect in relation to same sex couples as it has in relation to opposite sex couples.
- (2) The law of England and Wales (including all England and Wales legislation whenever passed or made) has effect in accordance with subsection (1).
- (3) Schedule 3 (interpretation of legislation) has effect.
- (4) Schedule 4 (effect of extension of marriage: further provision) has effect.
- (5) For provision about limitations on the effects of subsections (1) and (2) and Schedule 3, see Part 7 of Schedule 4.
- (6) Subsections (1) and (2) and Schedule 3 do not have any effect in relation to—
 - (a) Measures and Canons of the Church of England (whenever passed or made),
 - (b) subordinate legislation (whenever made) made under a Measure or Canon of the Church of England, or
 - (c) other ecclesiastical law (whether or not contained in England and Wales legislation, and, if contained in England and Wales legislation, whenever passed or made).
- (7) In Schedules 3 and 4—

“existing England and Wales legislation” means—

 - (a) in the case of England and Wales legislation that is primary legislation, legislation passed before the end of the Session in which this Act is passed (excluding this Act), or
 - (b) in the case of England and Wales legislation that is subordinate legislation, legislation made on or before the day on which this Act is passed (excluding legislation made under this Act);

“new England and Wales legislation” means—

 - (a) in the case of England and Wales legislation that is primary legislation, legislation passed after the end of the Session in which this Act is passed, or
 - (b) in the case of England and Wales legislation that is subordinate legislation, legislation made after the day on which this Act is passed.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 11(1)(2) excluded (13.3.2014) by The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 (Consequential and Contrary Provisions and Scotland) Order 2014 (S.I. 2014/560), art. 1(2), **Sch. 2 para. 2**

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

- C2** S. 11(1)(2) modified by SI 2010/990, regs. 2A(5), 2B(5) (as inserted (13.3.2014) by [The Marriage \(Same Sex Couples\) Act 2013 \(Consequential and Contrary Provisions and Scotland\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/560\)](#), art. 1(2), **Sch. 3 para. 17**)
- C3** S. 11(1)(2) modified by SI 1992/129, Sch. 2 Scheme, Sch. 1 Pt. 3, rules 1(5), 2(5) (as inserted (13.3.2014) by [The Marriage \(Same Sex Couples\) Act 2013 \(Consequential and Contrary Provisions and Scotland\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/560\)](#), art. 1(2), **Sch. 3 para. 17**)
- C4** S. 11(1)(2) excluded (13.3.2014) by [The Marriage \(Same Sex Couples\) Act 2013 \(Consequential and Contrary Provisions and Scotland\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/560\)](#), art. 1(2), **Sch. 2 para. 1**
- C5** S. 11(1)(2) modified (13.3.2014) by [The Marriage \(Same Sex Couples\) Act 2013 \(Consequential and Contrary Provisions and Scotland\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/560\)](#), art. 1(2), **Sch. 2 para. 4**
- C6** S. 11(1)(2) excluded (13.3.2014) by [The Marriage \(Same Sex Couples\) Act 2013 \(Consequential and Contrary Provisions and Scotland\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/560\)](#), art. 1(2), **Sch. 2 para. 3**
- C7** S. 11(1)(2) modified by SI 1992/1612, regs. 42B(5), 42C(5) (as inserted (13.3.2014) by [The Marriage \(Same Sex Couples\) Act 2013 \(Consequential and Contrary Provisions and Scotland\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/560\)](#), art. 1(2), **Sch. 3 para. 17**)
- C8** S. 11(1)(2) modified by SI 2006/3432, rules 4(4), 5(5) (as inserted (13.3.2014) by [The Marriage \(Same Sex Couples\) Act 2013 \(Consequential and Contrary Provisions and Scotland\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/560\)](#), art. 1(2), **Sch. 3 para. 17**)
- C9** S. 11(1)(2) excluded (13.3.2014) by [The Marriage \(Same Sex Couples\) Act 2013 \(Consequential and Contrary Provisions and Scotland\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/560\)](#), art. 1(2), **Sch. 2 para. 5**
- C10** S. 11(1)(2) modified by SI 2012/687, rules 2A(5), 2B(5) (as inserted (13.3.2014) by [The Marriage \(Same Sex Couples\) Act 2013 \(Consequential and Contrary Provisions and Scotland\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/560\)](#), art. 1(2), **Sch. 3 para. 17**)

Commencement Information

- I17** S. 11(1)-(3)(5)-(7) in force at 13.3.2014 by [S.I. 2014/93](#), **art. 3(f)**
- I18** S. 11(4) in force at 31.10.2013 for specified purposes by [S.I. 2013/2789](#), **art. 3(e)**
- I19** S. 11(4) in force at 31.10.2013 for specified purposes by [S.I. 2013/2789](#), **art. 2(b)**
- I20** S. 11(4) in force at 13.3.2014 for specified purposes by [S.I. 2014/93](#), **art. 3(j)**
- I21** S. 11(4) in force at 30.6.2014 for specified purposes by [S.I. 2014/1662](#), **art. 3(c)**
- I22** S. 11(4) in force at 10.12.2014 for specified purposes by [S.I. 2014/3169](#), **art. 2**

PART 2

OTHER PROVISIONS RELATING TO MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

12 Change of gender of married persons or civil partners

Schedule 5 (change of gender of married persons or civil partners) has effect.

Commencement Information

- I23** [S. 12](#) in force at 30.6.2014 for specified purposes by [S.I. 2014/1662](#), **art. 2(b)**
- I24** [S. 12](#) in force at 10.12.2014 in so far as not already in force by [S.I. 2014/3169](#), **art. 2**

13 Marriage overseas

- (1) Schedule 6 (marriage overseas) has effect.
- (2) The Foreign Marriage Act 1892 is repealed.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

Commencement Information

- I25** S. 13(1) in force at 21.1.2014 for specified purposes by S.I. 2014/93, **art. 2(b)**
I26 S. 13(1) in force at 3.6.2014 in so far as not already in force by S.I. 2014/93, **art. 5(b)**
I27 S. 13(2) in force at 3.6.2014 by S.I. 2014/93, **art. 5(b)**

14 Marriage according to the usages of belief organisations

- (1) The Secretary of State must arrange for a review of—
 - (a) whether an order under subsection (4) should be made permitting marriages according to the usages of belief organisations to be solemnized on the authority of [^{F4}a marriage schedule], and
 - (b) if so, what provision should be included in the order.
- (2) The arrangements made by the Secretary of State under subsection (1) must provide for the review to include a full public consultation.
- (3) The Secretary of State must arrange for a report on the outcome of the review to be produced and published before 1 January 2015.
- (4) The Secretary of State may by order make provision for and in connection with permitting marriages according to the usages of belief organisations to be solemnized on the authority of [^{F5}a marriage schedule].
- (5) An order under subsection (4) may—
 - (a) amend any England and Wales legislation;
 - (b) make provision for the charging of fees.
- (6) An order under subsection (4) must provide that no religious service may be used at a marriage which is solemnized in pursuance of the order.
- (7) In this section “belief organisation” means an organisation whose principal or sole purpose is the advancement of a system of non-religious beliefs which relate to morality or ethics.

Textual Amendments

- F4** Words in s. 14(1)(a) substituted (4.5.2021) by [The Registration of Marriages Regulations 2021 \(S.I. 2021/411\)](#), [reg. 1\(2\)](#), **Sch. 1 para. 61** (with [Sch. 2](#))
F5 Words in s. 14(4) substituted (4.5.2021) by [The Registration of Marriages Regulations 2021 \(S.I. 2021/411\)](#), [reg. 1\(2\)](#), **Sch. 1 para. 61** (with [Sch. 2](#))

Commencement Information

- I28** S. 14 in force at 31.10.2013 by S.I. 2013/2789, **art. 3(a)**

15 Review of civil partnership

- (1) The Secretary of State must arrange—
 - (a) for the operation and future of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 in England and Wales to be reviewed, and
 - (b) for a report on the outcome of the review to be produced and published.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

- (2) Subsection (1) does not prevent the review from also dealing with other matters relating to civil partnership.
- (3) The arrangements made by the Secretary of State must provide for the review to begin as soon as practicable and include a full public consultation.

16 Survivor benefits under occupational pension schemes

- (1) The Secretary of State must arrange for a review of the following matters relating to occupational pension schemes—
 - (a) relevant differences in survivor benefits;
 - (b) the costs, and other effects, of securing that relevant differences in survivor benefits are eliminated by the equalisation of survivor benefits.
- (2) For the purposes of this section, each of the following are relevant differences in survivor benefits—
 - (a) differences between—
 - (i) same sex survivor benefits, and
 - (ii) opposite sex survivor benefits provided to widows;
 - (b) differences between—
 - (i) same sex survivor benefits, and
 - (ii) opposite sex survivor benefits provided to widowers;
 - (c) differences between—
 - (i) opposite sex survivor benefits provided to widows, and
 - (ii) opposite sex survivor benefits provided to widowers.
- (3) The review must, in particular, consider these issues—
 - (a) the extent to which same sex survivor benefits are provided in reliance on paragraph 18 of Schedule 9 to the Equality Act 2010;
 - (b) the extent to which—
 - (i) same sex survivor benefits, and
 - (ii) opposite sex survivor benefits,
 are calculated by reference to different periods of pensionable service.
- (4) The arrangements made by the Secretary of State must provide for the person or persons conducting the review to consult such other persons as the Secretary of State considers appropriate.
- (5) The Secretary of State must arrange for a report on the outcome of the review to be produced and published before 1 July 2014.
- (6) If the Secretary of State, having considered the outcome of the review, thinks that the law of England and Wales and Scotland should be changed for the purpose of eliminating or reducing relevant differences in survivor benefits, the Secretary of State may, by order, make such provision as the Secretary of State considers appropriate for that purpose.
- (7) An order under subsection (6) may amend—
 - (a) England and Wales legislation;
 - (b) Scottish legislation.
- (8) In this section—

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

“occupational pension scheme” has the same meaning as in the Pension Schemes Act 1993 (see section 1 of that Act);

“opposite sex survivor benefits” means survivor benefits provided to surviving spouses of marriages of opposite sex couples;

“same sex survivor benefits” means survivor benefits provided to—

- (a) surviving civil partners, and
- (b) surviving spouses of marriages of same sex couples;

“survivor benefits” means survivor benefits provided under occupational pension schemes.

PART 3

FINAL PROVISIONS

17 Transitional and consequential provision

- (1) The Secretary of State or Lord Chancellor may, by order, make such transitional, transitory or saving provision as the Secretary of State or Lord Chancellor considers appropriate in connection with the coming into force of any provision of this Act.
- (2) The Secretary of State or Lord Chancellor may, by order, make such provision as the Secretary of State or Lord Chancellor considers appropriate in consequence of this Act.
- (3) The provision that may be made by an order under subsection (1) or (2) includes provision amending UK legislation.
- (4) Schedule 7 (transitional and consequential provision etc) has effect.

Commencement Information

- I29** S. 17(1)-(3) in force at 31.10.2013 by S.I. 2013/2789, **art. 3(b)**
- I30** S. 17(4) in force at 13.3.2014 for specified purposes by S.I. 2014/93, **art. 3(k)**
- I31** S. 17(4) in force at 3.6.2014 for specified purposes by S.I. 2014/93, **art. 5(d)**
- I32** S. 17(4) in force at 10.12.2014 in so far as not already in force by S.I. 2014/3169, **art. 2**

18 Orders and regulations

- (1) Any power of the Secretary of State or Lord Chancellor to make an order or regulations under this Act is exercisable by statutory instrument.
- (2) The following subordinate legislation may not be made by the Secretary of State or Lord Chancellor unless a draft of the statutory instrument containing the legislation has been laid before, and approved by resolution of, each House of Parliament—
 - (a) an order under section 8;
 - (b) the first regulations under section 9(1);
 - (c) the first regulations under section 9(2);
 - (d) an order under section 14;
 - (e) an order under section 16;
 - (f) an order under section 17(1) or (2) which amends an Act of Parliament;

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

- (g) an order under paragraph 1 of Schedule 2;
 - (h) an order under paragraph 2 of Schedule 2;
 - (i) an order under paragraph 27 of Schedule 4;
 - (j) an order under paragraph 9(8) of Schedule 6.
- (3) The following subordinate legislation made by the Secretary of State or Lord Chancellor is subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament—
- (a) regulations under section 9(1) (except for the first such regulations);
 - (b) regulations under section 9(2) (except for the first such regulations);
 - (c) an order under section 17(1) or (2) (unless it amends an Act of Parliament).
- (4) An order or regulations made under this Act may—
- (a) make different provision for different purposes,
 - (b) make transitional, transitory or saving provision, or
 - (c) make consequential provision.
- (5) The provision that the Secretary of State may make in any relevant instrument includes provision enabling the Registrar General to make regulations by statutory instrument (with or without the consent of a minister of the Crown).
- (6) But the Secretary of State—
- (a) may not make enabling provision which gives the Registrar General power to require a fee to be paid or power to set the amount of a fee; and
 - (b) may not make other enabling provision unless the Secretary of State is satisfied that the provision is necessary in connection with administrative matters relating to functions of the Registrar General or functions of superintendent registrars or registrars.
- (7) Regulations made by the Registrar General under any enabling provision are subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.
- (8) But that is subject to any provision in a relevant instrument about the kind of Parliamentary scrutiny, if any, to which the regulations are to be subject.
- (9) In subsections (5) to (8)—
- “enabling provision” means provision made under subsection (5) enabling the Registrar General to make regulations;
 - “relevant instrument” means—
 - (a) regulations under section 9(1) or (2), or
 - (b) an order under section 14(4).
- (10) Any power of the Secretary of State or Lord Chancellor under this Act to amend legislation by subordinate legislation includes power to repeal or revoke legislation (and any reference to the amendment of legislation by such an order or regulations is to be read accordingly).
- (11) The Secretary of State or Lord Chancellor must—
- (a) obtain the consent of the Scottish Ministers before making any order or regulations under this Act, except an order under section 21(3), containing provision which would (if contained in an Act of the Scottish Parliament) be within the legislative competence of that Parliament;

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

- (b) obtain the consent of the Department of Finance and Personnel before making any order or regulations under this Act, except an order under section 21(3), containing provision which would (if contained in an Act of the Northern Ireland Assembly) be within the legislative competence of that Assembly.

Commencement Information

I33 S. 18 in force at 31.10.2013 by S.I. 2013/2789, art. 3(c)

19 Interpretation

- (1) In this Act, an expression set out in an entry in the first column of this table has the meaning given in the corresponding entry in the second column.

<i>Expression</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
primary legislation	— an Act of Parliament — an Act of the National Assembly for Wales — a Measure of the National Assembly for Wales — an Act of the Scottish Parliament — an Act of the Northern Ireland Assembly — a Measure of the Church of England
subordinate legislation	— a Canon of the Church of England — any Order in Council, order, rules, regulations, schemes, warrants, byelaws and other instruments made under primary legislation or under a Canon of the Church of England
England and Wales legislation	primary legislation and subordinate legislation which forms part of the law of England and Wales (whether or not it also forms part of the law of another jurisdiction)
Northern Ireland legislation	primary legislation and subordinate legislation which forms part of the law of Northern Ireland (whether or not it also forms part of the law of another jurisdiction)
Scottish legislation	primary legislation and subordinate legislation which forms part of the law of Scotland (whether or not it also forms part of the law of another jurisdiction)
UK legislation	— England and Wales legislation — Scottish legislation — Northern Ireland legislation

- (2) In this Act—

“existing England and Wales legislation” has the meaning given in section 11;
“new England and Wales legislation” has the meaning given in section 11;
“registrar” means a registrar of births, deaths and marriages;
“Registrar General” means the Registrar General of England and Wales;
“superintendent registrar” means a superintendent registrar of births, deaths and marriages.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

(3) For further interpretation provision relating to this Act, see paragraph 5 of Schedule 3.

Commencement Information

I34 S. 19 in force at 31.10.2013 by S.I. 2013/2789, art. 3(c)

20 Extent

- (1) This Act extends to England and Wales.
- (2) These provisions of this Act also extend to Scotland—
 - (a) in Part 1, section 10(3) and Schedule 2;
 - (b) Part 2, except for sections 14 and 15;
 - (c) Part 3.
- (3) These provisions of this Act also extend to Northern Ireland—
 - [^{F6}(za) in Part 1, section 2(1) to (4) so far as relating to Orders in Council under Part 3 of Schedule 6;]
 - (a) in Part 1, section 10(3) and Schedule 2;
 - (b) Part 2, except for sections 14 to 16 ^{F7}...;
 - (c) Part 3.
- (4) Subsections (1) to (3) do not apply to an amendment or repeal or revocation made by this Act.
- (5) An amendment or repeal or revocation made by this Act has the same extent as the provision amended or repealed or revoked.
- (6) Subsection (5) is subject to subsections (7) to (9).
- (7) Any amendment of the following Acts extends to England and Wales only—
 - (a) the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992;
 - (b) the Pension Schemes Act 1993;
 - (c) the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008.
- (8) The repeal of the Foreign Marriage Act 1892 made by section 13(2) does not extend to Northern Ireland [^{F8}(but see regulations 2 and 11 of the Marriage (Same-sex Couples) and Civil Partnership (Opposite-sex Couples) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2019)].
- (9) Any amendment made by Part 2 of Schedule 5 does not extend to Northern Ireland [^{F9}(but see regulation 42(1) of the Marriage (Same-sex Couples) and Civil Partnership (Opposite-sex Couples) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2019)].

Textual Amendments

- F6** S. 20(3)(za) inserted (1.9.2020) by [The Marriage and Civil Partnership \(Northern Ireland\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/742\)](#), regs. 1(2), **13(2)**
- F7** Words in s. 20(3)(b) omitted (13.1.2020) by virtue of [The Marriage \(Same-sex Couples\) and Civil Partnership \(Opposite-sex Couples\) \(Northern Ireland\) Regulations 2019 \(S.I. 2019/1514\)](#), regs. 1(2), **11(3)(a)** (with regs. 6-9)

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. (See end of Document for details)

F8 Words in s. 20(8) inserted (13.1.2020) by [The Marriage \(Same-sex Couples\) and Civil Partnership \(Opposite-sex Couples\) \(Northern Ireland\) Regulations 2019 \(S.I. 2019/1514\)](#), regs. 1(2), **11(3)(b)** (with regs. 6-9)

F9 Words in s. 20(9) inserted (13.1.2020) by [The Marriage \(Same-sex Couples\) and Civil Partnership \(Opposite-sex Couples\) \(Northern Ireland\) Regulations 2019 \(S.I. 2019/1514\)](#), regs. 1(2), **51** (with regs. 6-9)

Commencement Information

I35 S. 20 in force at 31.10.2013 by [S.I. 2013/2789](#), **art. 3(c)**

21 Short title and commencement

- (1) This Act may be cited as the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013.
- (2) This section and sections 15 and 16 come into force on the day on which this Act is passed.
- (3) Subject to that, this Act comes into force on such day as the Secretary of State may by order appoint; and different days may be appointed for different purposes.

Changes to legislation:

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013.