

Day in the life of a Registration Officer

Registration

The Registration Service whilst being part of Kirklees is also part of the General Register Office (GRO) which is part of the Home Office. We register births, deaths and marriages as well as undertaking a number of other non-statutory services ie: baby namings. We also produce copy certificates for those residents that have had their life event registered in Kirklees and undertake declarations of births and deaths for other local authorities.

Team

We have two teams one based in Huddersfield and one based in Dewsbury. We also have an additional two celebrant teams who mainly undertake the weddings occurring at our external venues and Saturday weddings at each Town Hall. These teams are managed by our ceremonies team managers who work Tue-Sat.

Hours

The team work 9-5pm with an hrs lunch Monday to Friday. Saturday mornings we are open 9-12pm for office enquires and until 5pm for ceremonies. Non annualised hours team members have fixed working patterns.

Rotas are issued for annualised team members 2-4 weeks in advance of a working week. The annualised hours posts are built into the structure to accommodate fluctuations in service demand and planned and unplanned absences. This means that over the school holidays you are more likely to be working full time hours and in the winter less hours. We do try to group working days together ie: Mon/Tue/Wed am/Thurs but on occasion you may be asked to work Mon/Tue/Thurs and on other occasions you might only work your Saturday am.

Working day

Your working day will be extremely varied. A typical registration officer might come in at 8.45am and be registering deaths or be on reception/back office from 9am to 5pm. Appointments each run for 30 mins. After your lunch break you might not be registering and instead be off to perform a wedding or citizenship ceremony from 2 people up to 300.

The rest of your afternoon might be spent generating copy certificates or taking complicated queries over the front desk. If you are in the back office/reception you will also be taking phone calls. When you are working in the back office you are regularly pulled from duties to cover other areas. For example customers attend with complex queries or you might need to accommodate an urgent religious burial request. If you like to be very busy you will love this type of work. If you prefer to finish one task before starting another you will find this role difficult.

On a Saturday am you might be either covering reception or registering births and deaths. Our working day hrs are fluid, whilst we do close to the public at 5pm mid-week and 12pm on Saturdays, occasionally we do have to work after this. For example due to unplanned absence you might be asked to help cover afternoon ceremonies on a Saturday or you might have to work later because of an urgent burial. At the end of the day and the start you will reconcile your certificates and cash up. Stock and security is taken extremely seriously and any breaches no matter how small have to be acted on.

Staff tell us that working in Registration is like working nowhere else. The job is full of highs but also lows. A day of registering deaths can be very draining but rewarding, appointments have to be carefully managed to accommodate the registration within the 30 mins provided. A day of birth registrations or performing ceremonies can be joyful. We have natural lulls in workload when we have opportunity to catch up on non-essential tasks but most days can be highly pressured due to the volumes of workload and front line service elements of the role.

Training

There is an extensive training plan and it will take around 18 months for you to be fully trained. It is likely in the initial months you would work more of a set pattern and on a Saturday morning you would cover the reception until confident at registering.

One of our training officers will support you through your training and you would be assigned a mentor from one of the existing team members as well. Much of the training is self-led and will involve a large amount of reading and on-line learning. Registration requires immense attention to detail because mistakes are difficult and costly to correct. There are regular assessments and we have a detailed performance monitoring structure in place to help to support your ongoing learning. All officers have all register entries checked quarterly by the site managers and we also conduct regular technical assessments in appointments to ensure service standards. Performance is also monitored through customer surveys and appointment timings. Both teams have regular training days in place in order that all aspects of the role can be refreshed.

Environment

Huddersfield office is based on the ground floor of the Town Hall. There is plenty of natural light but accommodation is small. The main office is also the public reception and can be very busy with queries, appointments and wedding customers as the ceremony room is directly opposite. The vault is accessed via the cellar steps from the general office.

Dewsbury office is in the basement of the Town Hall. There is very minimal natural light but accommodation is spacious. The main office is separate to the public reception and so is quieter than Huddersfield. The ceremony room is located on the 1st floor. The vault is accessed next to the main office.