

Colchester Islamic Cultural Association

Colchester Central Mosque • Serving the community since 1985

Nikah (Islamic Marriage) Policy

Approved by the CICA Committee

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the requirements and process for couples wishing to have their Nikah (Islamic marriage) conducted at Colchester Central Mosque. It applies to all Nikah ceremonies solemnised under the authority of the Colchester Islamic Cultural Association (CICA).

2. Eligibility

- Both the bridegroom and the bride must be at least 18 years of age. No exceptions will be made.
- Both parties must be free to marry (i.e. not already married, and any previous marriage legally and religiously dissolved).
- Both parties must enter into the marriage with full, free consent.

3. ID Verification

To confirm the identity, age, and marital status of both parties, CICA requires the following to be produced at the time of application. This check is carried out by the mosque for our own verification and safeguarding purposes only.

- Bridegroom and Bride: valid photo ID (passport or UK driving licence) confirming full name and date of birth.
- Evidence of the legal and religious dissolution of any previous marriage, where applicable (e.g. decree absolute, khula certificate, or death certificate).
- Wali: ID confirming identity, together with information on their relationship to the Bride.
- As part of our safeguarding practice, the Bride will be spoken to privately, separately from her family, to confirm she is entering the marriage of her own free will.
- ID checks and the private conversation with the Bride will be recorded on the mosque's internal checklist and retained with the application form.

4. The Wali (Guardian)

Colchester Central Mosque is managed according to the Hanafi school of Islamic jurisprudence. We are also mindful that the Shafi'i, Maliki and Hanbali schools hold the presence of a Wali to be a condition for the validity of a woman's marriage contract.

To accommodate all four schools of thought and ensure every Nikah conducted at the mosque is recognised as valid regardless of the parties' madhab, the following applies as standard mosque policy:

- A Wali (guardian) is required for the bride at every Nikah conducted at the mosque, irrespective of the school of thought followed by the couple.
- The Wali should normally be the bride's father, or in his absence, another appropriate male relative in accordance with the recognised order of guardianship.

- Where the bride has no available family Wali (for example, a convert to Islam with no Muslim male relative, or in cases of estrangement), the Imam or a committee member formally delegated by the Imam may act as Wali for the purposes of that Nikah.
- The Wali must be at least 18 years of age, of sound mind, and Muslim.

5. Witnesses

- At least two witnesses are required for the Nikah to be conducted, in accordance with Islamic requirements.
- Witnesses must be Muslim, of sound mind, and at least 18 years of age.
- Witnesses' full names and addresses will be recorded on the Certificate of Islamic Marriage.

6. Mahr (Dowry)

The Mahr must be agreed between the bridegroom and bride prior to the Nikah, and full details (whether monetary, goods, property, or other) must be recorded on the application form, including any amount given immediately (Mu'ajjal (مُعْجَل)) and any amount deferred (Mu'akhkhar (مُؤَخَّر)).

7. Application Process

- Couples must download and complete the Nikah application form in full.
- The completed form should be returned by email to nikah@colchestermosque.co.uk.
- A minimum of two weeks' notice is required before the proposed date of the Nikah. Applications submitted with less notice may not be accommodated.

8. Legal Status of the Nikah

A Nikah conducted at the mosque is a religious ceremony only. It is not, on its own, a legally recognised marriage under UK law. Couples are strongly advised to also register their marriage through the civil (register office) process to ensure their marriage is legally recognised in the UK.

9. Liability

CICA provides the religious (Nikah) ceremony only. CICA does not organise, and accepts no liability for, any other wedding arrangements made by the couple or their families, including but not limited to venue, catering, guests, or transport. Any such arrangements are made entirely at the couple's own risk and discretion.

10. Contact

For any questions about this policy or the Nikah process, please contact us at nikah@colchestermosque.co.uk.
