

*Getting Married?*

Would you like your

WEDDING DAY

coordinated for free?

The Wedding Planner School requires engaged couples from across the UK (especially in the South East) who would like either free consultations or free wedding coordination to help our new-graduate wedding and event planners get some hands-on work experience.

In return you get any or all of the following:

Free consultation – At any stage of your planning, you will benefit from an in depth discussion with a wedding planner about how the day will run, what still needs to be organised, inspiration for designs, budgeting before you begin and any other things that you would like to know about. You may be able to ask the planner to help with the planning of certain elements of the event/wedding which you can agree between you.

Free wedding coordination - Peace of mind on your wedding day that the little things will be taken care of, your schedule will run as planned and problems will be sorted promptly. The wedding planners will be as visible or as invisible as you wish and are able to help out in any way apart from the following due to insurance limitations:

Cooking or preparing food

Serving food and drinks

Childminding

Driving guests or clients around

Anything that involves lifting weights of more than 10kgs unless the load can be shared

Any other activities that the trainee deems to be unsafe or beyond their physical capabilities

The trainees will be given guidance and instruction before the wedding and a tutor is at the end of the phone during the planning phase should they have any questions. Please note that in most cases graduates may work in pairs. You are not obliged to pay the graduates while on work experience placements, although we recommend that you offer to make a contribution towards their travel expenses and you are welcome to present gratuities (tips or gifts) if you wish. Trainees are insured under our employer’s liability insurance or their own public liability insurance, however we recommend that all couples obtain wedding insurance for their own protection whether they are having a coordinator or not.

To book your free wedding coordinator we require a refundable deposit of £95. This is because in the past, our planners and admin staff have conducted a lot of work for couples only for one or two couples to disappear or cancel their weddings without a trace leaving the graduates unfulfilled and our staff’s precious time wasted, not to mention wasted insurance fees. Once the placement is completed you will be fully refunded. This refund must be claimed within three calendar months of the wedding. However if you pull out of the arrangement for any reason (other than the planner engaging in gross misconduct) you will lose your money. We cannot guarantee that there will be a graduate available in your area on your required dates, but we will try our best for every couple. All we ask is that you write a testimony for your graduates if they do a good job and that you send a copy to The Wedding Planner School.

If you feel you could benefit from some help from the most enthusiastic and devoted wedding planners in the country, please return the form on page 4&5 to the school office.

**FAQs and helpful guidance**

The only complaints WPS tends to get from the graduates on the scheme is that the bride is being unreasonable in terms of effort and attitude when they are doing planning tasks. This is what we expect from our brides and grooms:

* Agree early on what the workload and man-hours are going to be. Then stick to what you have agreed.
* Offer to pay your graduates if you exceed your original time agreement.
* Agree early on how much communication is likely to occur to between you and be economical in your communication. If you are bombarding the planners with hundreds of emails they are not going to remember everything.
* It’s ok to change your mind about your plans, but be reasonable about how easy that is for a novice planner to handle at late notice and how much time it takes to make changes.
* Above all, be nice! These graduates are giving their time for free and usually incurring significant personal cost too. Show your gratitude, be kind and motivating and they’ll work even harder and you’ll get your £95 back. Intolerable behaviour will lose you your deposit.

No free wedding planner can be found to help me. What can I do?

Normally this is to do with the dates or location of your wedding. Our planners are quite well spread around the country and abroad but there are ‘black spots’ where planners simply aren’t willing or able to travel to. There may also be conflicting dates where they are all already booked up. If you feel it is getting a little too close to the wedding date to hang on any longer just let us know. We will cancel your application and refund your £95 in full. If you think you might have more luck finding a paid planner we can recommend some good ones and paid wedding coordinators tend to be willing to travel a bit further. Expect to pay in the region of £600-£1500 for an on-the-day coordination package.

The contact details of the wedding planner I have been given don’t work

This is probably a typo on our part. Simply email us and we’ll confirm the correct contact information. Remember, the first contact is entirely up to you unless otherwise requested.

I have met/spoken to my wedding planner and I don’t like him/her

If it is just a clash of personalities or class let us know by email or phone how you would like them to conduct themselves in their professional capacity and we can ask the planner to approach you appropriately. Normally this can be resolved without having to change planners.

I have met/spoken to my wedding planner and I don’t think he/she is competent

If you feel they are totally incompetent you must let us know as soon as possible and we will investigate and either offer you another planner or allow you to cancel the arrangement for a full refund of your £95. Please remember that these planners are inexperienced but very keen which is why the service is free to you. So, if they just need a bit of help, let us know what you think they need help with and we’ll contact them to give them extra coaching so that you can get the best out of them. Sometimes it’s just that they have forgotten what they learned in their training or are lacking in confidence. If we know from past experience that they *are* highly competent we will insist that you continue with the placement.

I have met/spoken to my wedding/event planner and he/she is NOT willing to do everything I want him/her to do

The placement is not meant to be an end-to-end planning service as that would take many weeks of work that these fledgling planners simply cannot spare for unpaid work (unless pre-arranged). Generally speaking you **can** ask them to do one or two little extras aside from coordinating on the day, (for example producing a list of photographers etc within your area and budget or other tasks that can be done within about 8 hours) but please don’t expect them to spend days and weeks helping you. Any extra hours can be bought for £15 per hour or £100 per day (8 hours) but check they are insured. It is usually acceptable to ask questions or advice from the planner in the lead up to your wedding/event. **To avoid confusion down the line, make sure you agree clearly in writing between you exactly how much time and commitment you expect from each other.** Every case is different so talk it through.

I want to have our final meeting three months before the wedding/event but my planner says it has to be closer than that. What should we agree on?

Unless it is absolutely impossible to meet close to the wedding we wouldn’t recommend it. Too far in advance just means that lots of things will change and you’ll end up confusing everyone with your changing plans and ideas. Too close to the wedding and you may not have enough time to act on the advice given by the planner or issues that arise during the final meeting. Our recommendation for everybody’s sake is that the final meeting (see below) takes place 2-4 weeks before the wedding or event.

What will happen during our first meeting/conversation?

When you ring the planner for the first time to introduce yourself make sure you give them your contact details and talk a little bit about what you hope to achieve from the placement. Emails are ok, but nothing beats hearing a real voice. You don’t necessarily need to have an early meeting unless you want them to do some pre-planning activities for you. If you do decide to meet choose somewhere public or have a friend/fiancé with you. Have a chat and get to know each other a little bit. Explain now whether you intend to contribute to travel expenses or not and if so, how much. Agree how much time is expected of your planner(s). Finish the conversation by agreeing when you will meet or communicate next.

What will happen during the final meeting?

It should be a face-to-face meeting, preferably in the venue. The planner should have with them a questionnaire that covers every little detail of the day in a logical order. Please let them ask every question and if possible avoid flitting around topics in case important questions are missed. At the end they should ask you what you would like them to wear. Have a think about how smart or casual you want them to look, and whether they should blend in (dress as if they were a guest) or stand out (wear a suit with a name badge) or something in between. If there is anything you absolutely don’t want them to wear make sure you say so at the meeting to avoid disappointment on the day.

Everything went well and I want to give my planner travel expenses, a present, tip or payment

You are welcome and encouraged to do so at your own discretion. It is up to them to declare gifts to the taxman. Whether you give a gift/payment or not, **a thank you letter or testimony is invaluable** to new planners looking to boost their CV or portfolio, so either send one to us to show off on our website or direct to your planner. Please note that any letters of thanks are likely to be used in promotional materials by the planner.

It is common for couples or family members to give a bottle of drink or items from the event/wedding to the planner as a gift, but this can lead to confusion and other family members may mistakenly think that the item has been stolen. Therefore **when giving gifts please do not give them during the wedding or event itself unless publicly presented** during the speeches.

You should keep this information sheet for your reference.

The Wedding Planner School

Booking form to receive FREE wedding planning services

Essential Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Couple’s names: | |
| Tel | Correspondence Address |
| Mobile(s) |
| Email(s) |
| Date and time of wedding | Name & location of wedding ceremony |
| Estimated number of guests  Daytime Evening | Name of reception venue & location |

Provide any further relevant information on the back of this form

**Please answer all that apply:**

How many meetings would you like to have with the planner?

Where will these meetings most likely take place (we recommend at least one meeting to be held at the venue)?

Will the planner need use of a car to help with pre-planning or on the day coordination or both?

What jobs would you like help with in the design or pre-planning stage? E.g. Researching and booking venue, researching suppliers for flowers, catering, suits, table decoration etc.

Have you already decided on theme, colours, décor etc. If so, what are they?

What do you expect from your planner?

Will two meals be provided on the day for the planner?

From roughly what times on the day of the wedding will you require the planner (if known)?

Any special request or requirements? (E.g. experience or knowledge of weddings from your culture, class background etc):

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Booking Agreement

I wish to book the described services for free. I sign below to show that I understand and agree to the following:

* That the free co-ordination placement entitles me to receive assistance on my wedding day from 3 hours before the ceremony until the end of the speeches. Extra hours may be booked if required at a fee of £20 per hour payable directly to the planner.
* I agree to provide full and clear instructions regarding my expectations of the wedding planners during our first meeting. Our final meeting will take place no more than 6 weeks and no less than 7 days before the official set-up day. I will provide accessible and adequate resources in order that the planners can carry out my instructions.
* That I am not obliged to follow any of the suggestions made by the planners (or supervisor) in the free consultation, however if I choose to do so it is at my own risk.
* The Wedding Planner School cannot be held responsible for the failure of any third party suppliers to attend or perform. They are not liable for any payments to suppliers. The Wedding Planner School does not accept any responsibility for loss, injury or damage suffered as a result of the placement.
* Any changes I make to this booking will be in writing.
* Any pictures taken by the co-ordinators may be used in promotional material and the copyright will remain with the person who took the photograph, in line with standard copyright law.
* Students typically work in pairs, one lead planner, one assistant in case of illness. I will direct my correspondence to the lead planner to avoid confusion.
* I enclose/have made my £95 refundable deposit for these services. I have either enclosed a cheque for £95 **or** have already transferred my deposit to Sortcode 55-70-13; Account 78347017; ‘Nova Events and PR Ltd’ (or via http://www.theweddingplannerschool.org.uk/products-services/)
* The deposit will be refunded in full to me subject to successful completion of the placement. This refund **must** be claimed within three calendar months of the wedding day, after which it is forfeited.

Signed on behalf of the wedding party…………………………………

Name………………………………….. Date……………………..

Post this form to: The Wedding Planner School, The Lodge, 23d Beulah Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 2NS

Or email: admin@theweddingplannerschool.org.uk