

# Funeral Celebrant Training

## The Course

The nationally approved courses that are included in this training are:

**SIFFNL009A Plan and conduct a funeral ceremony**

**SIFIND001A Work effectively in the funeral services industry**

**CHCCS426A Provide support and care relating to loss and grief**



They are aimed at preparing a celebrant to design and perform a funeral ceremony with the needs of the client family in mind, and in a professional and respectful manner.

Whilst the funeral celebrant training is not designated by a government department as being compulsory to enter the profession of funeral celebrancy, there has been a growing trend over the last 5 years of Funeral Directors selecting graduates of this course.

The unit *SIFFNL009A Plan and conduct a funeral ceremony* supersedes the original qualification *WFSFNL407A General Funeral Celebrancy*.

The first two units of study are taken from the Cert IV in Funeral Services, and the third one from a Cert IV in one of the following qualifications, Community Services Work, Disability, or Aged Care.

For people who may be studying or considering the Cert IV in Celebrancy these are three of the electives from that qualification. Australian Celebrations Training has also the Cert IV in Celebrancy qualification available.

The unit *SIFFNL003A Arrange Funerals* is an extra elective that is stated in the Cert IV in Celebrancy. We have not included that unit of study in this course as it is not suitable for funeral celebrants. It is aimed at Funeral Directors arranging funerals (eg funeral arrangements, embalming, viewing, burial and cremation, coffin or casket arrangements).



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## Funerals in Australia

As reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics approximately 60% of Australian funeral services are performed by civil funeral celebrants. Originally in Australia the majority of people followed a Christian derived faith, however Australia is a country that has moved steadily towards secular views on funerals. Many people still have spiritual views but have also moved away from Church attendance.

As a result there have been dynamic changes in funeral services. The outcome has been families' desire to move away from a church funeral to a celebrant service which places more emphasis on the unique personality and life of the deceased.

## Funeral Celebrancy

This course has been written over a period of 5 years with experienced funeral directors, crematoria staff, and experienced funeral celebrants. The curriculum designers, funeral celebrants, funeral celebrant trainers, funeral directors and crematoria staff have extensive years of expertise in the field, some up to 25 years.

Australian Celebrations Training's Company Director, Beth O'Brien is an internationally certified funeral celebrant and brings expansive knowledge to this course, in very practical ways. Beth is the first Australian to receive this international certificate. In Beth's current post graduate research in funeral rites she has also been designing "living funerals" which are a new trend in the community for people who wish to be part of the celebration of their own life before they die.

Included in the training team's expertise are also ceremonies such Mother's Day and Father's Day services, Christmas Services, Animal Companion Funerals, Thanksgiving for Donation of bodies to medical faculties, memorial services for community grieving, Cancer Fund Relay for Life services. For more information on the diverse experience of our team you can read their profiles on our webpage at [www.australiancelebrations.com.au](http://www.australiancelebrations.com.au)



## **Some of the topics that will be covered are as follows:**

- Client Communication techniques – sensitive communication with the bereaved. The ability to take accurate written and verbal instructions. Adherence to privacy of the client family.
- Public presentation and effective public speaking.
- Order of service, and designing a ceremony that reflects the wishes of the family, with required elements of ritual and symbolism. Including writing and selecting appropriate material for presentation. Writing the service and preparing a eulogy.
- Appropriate resource selection – words, poems, symbols, music, and power point presentations.
- Ability to work with diverse cultural backgrounds and belief systems.
- Understanding of secular humanism
- Adherence to ethical use of material and copyright.
- Interpersonal skills to relate to people from a range of social, cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds, and a range of physical and mental abilities.
- Planning and time management skills
- Working with Funeral Directors, and other associated professionals within the required protocols.
- Adherence to professional dress standards. Ability to display dignity and solemnity.
- Introduction to green funerals and this emerging trend
- Stress management skills and the ability to manage emotions.
- Dual ceremonies – Chapel/Home and graveside.
- Understanding funeral services industry protocols, health and safety and workplace procedures and policies

## **Student Material and Assessment**

### **A word of advice**

Working with families to design meaningful ceremonies is very rewarding. We have found over the years that some students of this course once they begin this career realise that they have some of their own personal un-resolved issues of grief. To be a successful funeral celebrant you would need to resolve those issues before continuing to be fair on yourself, your family and your potential clients.

### **Classroom courses**

These courses are limited to 12 students to give people an opportunity to have all their questions answered and build a solid knowledge base for their professional lives as funeral celebrants. The course times are 9.00am to 4.30pm daily for 3 consecutive days. There is also home study to complete.

## **Student Resources**

The Student manual and resources include 2 texts, a variety of funeral ceremonies, and template documents that will support your role as a funeral celebrant. Our company Director, Beth Obrien has post-graduate qualifications in Marketing and has designed a comprehensive section on how to build your business as a funeral celebrant, and how to approach funeral directors to seek bookings.

Australian Celebrations Training also has an online Student Resource Centre which supports the ongoing work and questions of colleagues in the field, and is included in your enrolment with this course.

## **Assessment**

Role plays by the instructor will include taking the call from the Funeral Director, family interview, and a funeral ceremony. Each student will be given a case study family to write a ceremony for, and then will be required to perform that ceremony for assessment. Distance Education students will be required to have their ceremony filmed and send in a DVD/VHS for assessment.

The classroom course also includes field trips escorted by the Trainer and may include usually a Funeral Home, a crematorium, a graveyard or lawn cemetery.

## **Fees**

Course fees for distance education training is \$450.

Course fees for classroom course is \$595.

## **Completing the course**

On enrolment a student has 9 months to complete the course. Distance Education students have a personal tutor to assist their studies, and classroom students have access to a personal tutor after the course to assist them in finalising any assessments.

On successful completion of all requirements students will be given a Statement of Attainment with the three nationally accredited units of competency.

Upon graduation we highly recommend funeral celebrants joining the Funeral Celebrants Association Australia ([www.funeralcelebrants.org.au](http://www.funeralcelebrants.org.au))