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# THE COURT OF THE LORD LYON

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## About Coats of Arms

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## Applying for a Coat of Arms

### Applying for a Coat of Arms

Any person who wishes to use Arms must petition for a Grant of Arms or – if they can trace their ancestry back to an ancestor who had a grant of Arms – for a “matriculation” showing their place within the family. When a grant or matriculation is obtained, an illuminated parchment, narrating the pedigree as proved, is supplied to the Petitioner, and a duplicate is recorded in the Public Register of All Arms and Bearings in Scotland.



Apart from the requirement that the petitioner should be, in terms of the Lyon King of Arms Act 1672, a “virtuous and well-deserving person”, in general the governing factor in the case of an original Grant of Arms is the domicile of the petitioner rather than the ownership of property in Scotland. Does the petitioner have a Scottish domicile of origin? If not, has he acquired a Scottish domicile of choice? In cases where the petitioner’s claim to fall within the jurisdiction of the Lord Lyon rests on the ownership of property the key question is whether the petitioner is able to reside on the land. A dwelling house of whatever size presents no problem, but the ownership of forestry land or “amenity” land on which there is no house and for which planning permission for a house would not be obtainable would not necessarily be sufficient to bring the owner into the Lord Lyon’s jurisdiction. The ownership of “souvenir” plots of land of a few square feet or thereby such as are marketed from time to time, is insufficient to bring anyone within the jurisdiction of the Lord Lyon King of Arms.

Where the petitioner is seeking to matriculate off a previous Grant of Arms he or she will have to prove his relationship to the original grantee and show that he comes within the destination of the original Grant of Arms.

Those domiciled in England, Wales or Northern Ireland should approach the College of Arms in London, while those domiciled in the Republic of Ireland should approach the Chief Herald of Ireland in Dublin. Commonwealth citizens, in particular those of Scottish descent - save for Canada and South Africa which have their own heraldic authorities - can apply to the Lord Lyon King of Arms.

**Foreign Countries.** While it is not generally possible for non-British citizens to be granted Scottish Arms it is possible for non-British citizens who descend from a Scottish armigerous ancestor bearing the same surname to apply for a cadet matriculation, as above described. It is also sometimes possible for a cousin who is domiciled in Scotland to seek a Grant of Arms with a destination which includes the other descendants of a common ancestor, provided that ancestor had also been domiciled in Scotland.

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