

'CLEARANCE' CERTIFICATE

A so-called 'Clearance' Certificate is inappropriately named as it can actually indicate that a Brother or Companion is not 'clear' on the books of the Lodge or Chapter.

[A] Except in the serious and important circumstances explained in section [B] below, a Secretary/Scribe E **MUST** issue a Brother/Companion with a certificate indicating his status, upon request. He cannot refuse to do so on the grounds that the Brother or Companion is in arrears. Such requests can be made when an existing member wishes to join another Lodge/Chapter or when a member resigns (from his lodge or chapter rather than from the Craft as a whole – see [B] below) or is excluded (Rule 181) or ceased (Rule 148) from the lodge or chapter. If he is currently suspended from the Craft, it must also state that.

The certificate (which can simply take the form of a letter 'To whom it may concern') should state the details of the member's joining (and leaving) of the Lodge or Chapter and his status with regard to subscription. In particular it should state if and when arrears were paid. Remember that a current member can be in arrears.

The certificate should be handed to the member or, if it is posted, must go by recorded post and clearly labelled 'Private and Confidential'.

[B] HOWEVER, a Certificate **MUST NOT** be issued to a brother or companion who has been **EXPELLED** from the Craft, or who has **VOLUNTARILY RESIGNED** from the Craft as a whole, (rather than just from his lodge), as they are no longer Freemasons.

In both cases (expulsion and resignation from the Craft as a whole) the lodge (and chapter if appropriate) will have been informed by the Province that the former member is so placed, and that information should be properly recorded against the name of the member in the books of record of the lodge/chapter *for permanent reference*.

Expulsion, and voluntary resignation from the Craft as a whole, automatically include the Royal Arch.