

Dowry (Mahr) agreement

Dowry or *Mahr* is the amount to be paid by the groom to the bride at the time of marriage [nikah]. It is one of the conditions of marriage which are: consent of both parties, two witnesses, wali [guardian], and dowry. It is a gift for her to spend as she wishes. There is no specific amount of the dowry. It should be given in line with the capability and capacity of the groom and within Islamic guidelines. It can be cash, jewellery, or any other valuable gift. The *Mahr* is the right of the wife, and it is not permitted for anyone else to take it except with her approval. If the bride later seeks a divorce which the husband does not wish for, she is allowed to return him the *Mahr* and seek what is known as a *khula* [divorce]. Normally, if a divorce takes place under normal practices and procedures, the bride would be entitled to keep the *Mahr*.

Cultural practices may sometimes mean that a bride [or her family] demand an enormous *Mahr*. Our Beloved Prophet [peace and blessings be upon him] set the example of modest sums of which the husband can afford, and many Muslim women generously use their money to support their husbands and families in some way, although they are not obliged to do so.

If a woman has money of her own, she is not obliged to spend it on her husband or family, but a Muslim husband has the obligation to be able to keep and support his wife and children himself, at his own expense. If a wife goes out to work, or donates money, this is to her credit and is regarded as an act of *charity* [Sadaqah]

Similarly, if the wife foregoes any part of the *Mahr*, the husband is permitted to take it, as Allah says: "... but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it, take it, and enjoy it without fear of any harm [as Allah has made it lawful]." [4:4]

There are two ways of presenting the *Mahr* to the bride. One is to hand it over at the time of the marriage, in which case it is known as *Mahr Mu'ajjal* [promptly given], the other one is called *Mu'akhar* [delayed].

Both of us have agreed that *Mahr* [dowry] shall be – £

METHOD	DETAILS		
PROMPT	AMOUNT		
DELAYED	AMOUNT	<u>ON THE DATE</u>	

	GROOM	BRIDE
<u>SIGNATURE</u>		
<u>PRINT NAME</u>		
<u>DATE</u>		