2. Relationships between Adults: Marriage, Civil Partnerships, and Cohabitation

This chapter explores the historical development and modern statutory framework applicable to adult formalised and non-formalised relationships. It attempts to instil a thorough understanding of the key principles applicable to the formation and subsequent regulation of these relationships. Owing to the rapid change in family forms and the growing legal recognition of same-sex relationships, the statutory framework has evolved. The chapter assess how far these frameworks have successfully accommodated modern family forms and whether further reform is required. Topics discussed include the evolution of marriage; the formal recognition of same-sex relationships; legal consequences and formalities for entry into marriage; the legal consequences of nullity; civil partnerships; and cohabitation.
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