

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT NOTARY SERVICES

Our work

Notarisation is not just “witnessing a signature”. Notaries are public officials, authorised by the State to confirm the authenticity and validity of acts and documents for international purposes. Documents prepared or certified by notaries may be relied on by governments, courts, embassies, companies, lawyers and individuals anywhere in the world. We therefore have a strict legal duty to make sure that what is being done is legitimate and that the people coming to see us have the capacity and authority to sign the document. As well as signing, sealing, stamping and securing the documents, we have to register and keep a permanent record of every document we deal with and may be called on by officials to produce copies at any time in the future.

ID check and formalities

We are required by law to verify your identity, and record the methods of identification. If you are a private client we will need to verify your personal identity and see one form of photographic identification (i.e. a passport or driving licence), and one proof of address (i.e. a bank statement or utility bill).

If you are a business client, we will also need to verify your company’s identity and if you are signing on behalf of that company your authority to do so. This is usually evidenced by a board resolution, the Articles of Association, or by confirming your status as a sole director.

Translations

In order to sufficiently verify your document, we need to be able to understand what the document is, and be certain that you understand the content. As such documents not in English should usually be accompanied by a full and accurate English translation. If you need assistance to obtain the translation, we can assist and advise on the extra fee to be paid.

Certifying copy documents

When certifying copies of original documents the notary must see the original first. The certification of copy documents can take as long as other notarial work and sometimes longer.

Legalisation

Legalisation is a term that covers authentication by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) And/or the Consulate of the country the document is to be used in. For documents intended for countries that have ratified the Hague Convention of 1961, legalisation by the FCO is usually the only extra authentication that is needed. This is known as an “Apostille”.

The FCO currently charges £30.00 (Standard service) and £75.00 (Express service) per Apostille.

We will advise if consular legalisation is also required. Each consulate charges different fees, and procedures and time scales will vary. Please note that the notarisation may be ineffective if the receiving country requires legalisation but it is not done. You should therefore check with the person who will be receiving the finished documents from you.

Appointments

We can often see clients on short notice, but as our notaries may be out of the office on business it is best to telephone the office to make a suitable appointment.

Mobile Visits

If you are unable to attend our office, we will be able to come to you. Our notaries visit clients all across London, including after hours and at weekends.

Our charges

We charge £80 plus VAT for notarising a single standard document. Any additional documents notarized at the same time will be charged at a reduced rate.

We personally hand deliver documents to the FCO and consulates for legalisation, and charge a fixed fee for these services irrespective of how many documents we take. Additional fees set by the FCO and individual consulates will also apply.

For more complex matters, our hourly rate of £250 plus VAT will apply.

Additional disbursements may also apply depending on the nature of the instruction.

Payment

All major debit and credit cards accepted except for American Express. Payment must be made in Pounds Sterling, and may also be made by bank transfer or cash.

Unless otherwise agreed, disbursements must be paid up front and full payment made on completion of the instruction, or within seven days of receiving our invoice.