



Foreign, Commonwealth  
& Development Office

# United Kingdom Legalisation Office

**13<sup>th</sup> International Forum  
on the electronic Apostille programme (e-APP)  
October 2024**

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## Introduction & Key Stats

- The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office is the only designated Competent Authority authorised to issue apostilles in the United Kingdom
- Four service streams delivered from one central office
- 586'160 total apostilles issued in 2023



## e-APP – Our experience so far

- e-Register component live since 2014
- e-Apostille launched to public in September 2022
- Continued growth and increasing acceptance

 GOV.UK
Verify an apostille

### e-Apostille verified

<b>Apostille number</b>	APO-A2FM-UTI6-7I01-Z20X
<b>Date of issue</b>	8 December 2022
<b>Has been signed by</b>	Michael Lightowler
<b>Acting in the capacity of</b>	Notary Public
<b>Bears the stamp / seal of</b>	Not applicable
<b>Issued by</b>	D. Smith

All electronic Apostilles (e-Apostilles) issued by the Legalisation Office will be in PDF format. The PDF file will bear a digital signature of 'Legalisation Office'. It will contain a cover sheet with two PDF files attached.

The first PDF attachment will be the Apostille (legalisation certificate) and will bear the same digital signature of 'Legalisation Office'. The details shown on the Apostille will match those shown above.

The second PDF attachment will be the public document the Apostille relates to and will be digitally signed by the person shown in the 'Has been signed by' section above.

Print

[Verify another Apostille](#)



## e-APP – Our experience so far

- Understanding of digital signature technology is lacking
- Doubts still exist with users who want the familiarity of a hard copy document
- Acceptance levels can vary, even within the same country



## e-APP – Our experience so far

- Working closely with key stakeholders has been pivotal to increasing uptake
- Seeking feedback from customers and monitoring where guidance could be improved
- Celebrating successes and building confidence
- Signposting and supporting customers



## e-APP – The future

- Continue to promote ourselves as a flagship digital service across UK government
- Supporting other interested Competent Authorities with their own development journey
- Refine guidance to improve customer journey



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# Application Process



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Placeholder – Video demo of e-Apostille application process





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# Processing



## e-APP – Processing

- System extracts the digital certificate and looks for any matches on our database
- If match found, processing officer will approve match and pass to a second officer for quality assurance
- If no match found, signatory is contacted and asked to provide a sample signed document whose certificate can be matched against
- Signatures must be Advanced/Qualified following eIDAS regulation



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# The e-Apostille pdf



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Placeholder – Video demo of e-Apostille file



## e-APP – Legalised Document

- Coversheet is digitally signed and has 2 attachments
- Customers document is attached, with digital signature intact
- e-Apostille certificate is attached, digitally signed and confirms the name of the signatory



### Legalisation Office United Kingdom (UK)

08 December 2022


### e-Apostille cover sheet


This file has been electronically signed by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) Legalisation Office in the UK.

#### View attachments in Adobe Reader

This file contains PDF attachments and electronic signatures that are only accessible in Adobe Reader (free software)

1. Open this file in **Adobe Reader**
2. **Double-click the Paperclip icon** (only visible in Adobe) for each file:

 Document the Apostille certificate relates to  
(public\_document.pdf)

 e-Apostille certificate, reference: APO-A2FM-UTI6-7101-Z2OX  
(apostille.pdf)

You can also select the Paperclip icon in the menu bar to view the attachments.

#### Verifying an Apostille Certificate

Overseas authorities and others who have requested an Apostille can verify the certificate at: [www.verifyapostille.service.gov.uk](http://www.verifyapostille.service.gov.uk)

#### About UK document legalisation

Find out more at: [www.gov.uk/get-document-legalised](http://www.gov.uk/get-document-legalised)



## e-APP – Successes

- Authorities in Italy/Spain now requesting e-Apostille by default
- Over 200 different digital signatories have registered a sample with us
- Have been able to complete the legalisation chain within a few hours



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# Any Questions?

Please feel free to contact us at:  
[LegalisationEApostille@FCDO.gov.uk](mailto:LegalisationEApostille@FCDO.gov.uk)