

Getting your passport application countersigned

A countersignature will need to fill in section 8 and to sign one photo if you are applying:

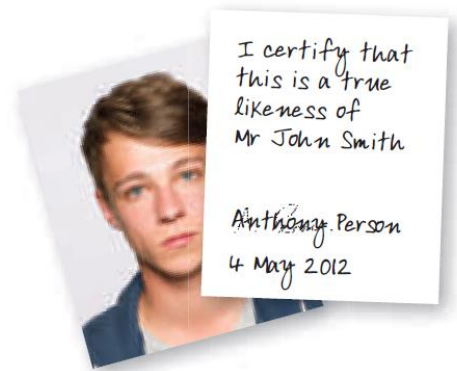
- For a first British passport
- To replace a lost, stolen or damaged passport
- To renew a child's passport if the child is aged 11 or under
- To renew a passport if you cannot be recognised from the photograph in your current passport
- To extend a passport

Countersignatories

- A countersignatory is someone who can confirm your identity. They need to confirm that, to the best of their knowledge, the details you have given in your application are correct, and they must also confirm that the photograph is of you.
- For child applications (aged under 16) it is also to confirm that they have known, for at least two years, the adult who signed the declaration in section 7 of the application form. They must also confirm that the person has parental responsibility for the child and confirm the child's photo.

The countersignatory must:

- be a professional person (including those who are retired) for example, bank or building-society officials, police officers, civil servants, ministers of religion and people with professional qualifications like teachers, accountants, engineers and solicitors. A comprehensive list can be found at the bottom of this document.
- Have known you personally for at least two years (for example, a friend, neighbour or colleague, not someone who knows you professionally).
- Hold a valid (not expired) British or Irish passport.



The countersignatory needs to:

- Read through the completed application form to make sure the information is accurate.
- Fill in section 8 of the form, giving their passport number, and then sign the box
- give their full address and contact details. This can be a business address or home address, but should be one that we can contact them at.
- for an adult application, 'certify' one (not both) of your photographs - signing and dating one of the photographs as shown in the example below.
- for a child application under 16, confirm that they have known the adult who signed the declaration in section 7 of the application form for at least two years, and certify the photograph (giving the child's full name), signing and dating it as shown in the example below, **and**
- put their initials next to any mistakes they may make in section 8.

The countersignatory must not:

- Be related to you by birth of marriage (including in-laws or partners of family members)
- Be in a personal relationship with you
- Live at your address or
- Work for HM Passport Office

What we do with the details of the countersignatory:

As part of our work we will check with the countersignatory is genuine. This may include checking their passport and other records to confirm their identity and their profession or professional qualification. Please make sure that your countersignatory knows that we may contact them and carry out these checks. We may ask you to provide another application form with a different countersignatory if we are not satisfied with your choice of countersignatory or if we cannot contact them.

Accepted occupations for countersignatories

Your countersignatory must either:

- work in (or be retired from) a recognised profession
- be 'a person of good standing in their community'
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Examples of recognised professions include:

- accountant
- airline pilot
- articulated clerk of a limited company
- assurance agent of recognised company
- bank/building society official
- barrister
- chairman/director of limited company
- chiropodist
- commissioner for oaths
- councillor, eg local or county
- civil servant (permanent)
- dentist
- director/manager/personnel officer of a VAT-registered company
- engineer - with professional qualifications
- financial services intermediary, eg a stockbroker or insurance broker
- fire service official
- funeral director
- insurance agent (full time) of a recognised company
- journalist
- Justice of the Peace
- legal secretary - fellow or associate member of the Institute of Legal Secretaries and PAs
- licensee of public house
- local government officer
- manager/personnel officer of a limited company
- member, associate or fellow of a professional body
- Member of Parliament
- Merchant Navy officer
- minister of a recognised religion - including Christian Science
- nurse - RGN or RMN
- officer of the armed services
- optician
- paralegal - certified paralegal, qualified paralegal or associate member of the Institute of Paralegals
- person with honours, eg an OBE or MBE
- pharmacist
- photographer - professional
- police officer
- Post Office official
- president/secretary of a recognised organisation
- Salvation Army officer
- social worker
- solicitor
- surveyor
- teacher, lecturer
- trade union officer
- travel agent - qualified
- valuer or auctioneer - fellows and associate members of the incorporated society
- Warrant Officers and Chief Petty Officers

Your countersignatory can't:

- work for HM Passport Office
- be a doctor, unless they state that they know you well (eg good friend) and that they recognise you easily from your photo