

# N.L. Oakes

## NOTARY PUBLIC



### LEGALISATION PROCEDURES — UK QUALIFICATIONS

PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY - IT WILL SAVE TIME LATER

Many employers or higher education institutions overseas require notarially certified copies of degree certificates or other qualifications. Often these notarised certified copies will also need to be legalised in order to be accepted as authentic in the receiving jurisdiction .

#### **The Legalisation Process**

“The process of legalisation provides the final link in the hierarchical chain of authentication. It is the official confirmation by which the state authority of one country satisfies the state authority of another country that the signature of a notary is genuine. It does not authenticate the content of the document.” (*Dunford, “The Notary”*). In the UK the “state authority” is the Legalisation Office of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (“the FCO”) in Milton Keynes.

In the majority of cases legalisation is achieved by affixing a certificate called an Apostille to the notary’s own certificate. The document is then suitable for sending to the receiving jurisdiction where it will be recognised as authentic. This procedure was approved by the Hague Convention of 1961. Sometimes documents need to be sent to a country which is not a party to the Hague Convention; or which is a party but has its own additional rules which have to be observed. In such a case the legalisation process is different.

For example, documents that are to be sent to France will be accepted if they have an Apostille attached to the notary’s certificate. Documents that are to be sent to Qatar need an Apostille, but then have to be submitted to the Embassy of the State of Qatar in London to complete the legalisation process.

Sometimes the recipient of the notarised degree certificate will agree to accept a “plain” certificate even though strictly speaking it ought to be legalised.

All of this can be quite confusing to the lay person, but I can deal with legalisation for you provided I have the following information.

#### **What you need to find out from the person who has requested the notarised certificate.**

1. Does the recipient require the notary’s certificate to be legalised?
2. If there is more than one certificate, do they have to be legalised individually or can they all be attached to one notarial certificate and legalised as a batch?

Once you have this information pass it on to me and I will do the rest.

#### **Fees**

I make a charge of £25 for legalisation at the FCO. In order to make matters fair for those clients who pay for this service I am unable to offer any advice as to the legalisation procedure to those clients who decide to deal with legalisation themselves.

The FCO legalises a document by affixing an Apostille to the notary’s certificate. The FCO charges £30 per document.

I engage an agent who will attend at the Legalisation Office of the FCO in Milton Keynes to deal with legalisation. He charges £18.

I prefer to send documents using Royal Mail Special Delivery post. This has the advantage of offering up to £500 in compensation if items are lost or damaged. The cost of this is £11.80 for return post. I will, at your request and entirely at your risk, use ordinary first class post at no extra charge, but will not accept any liability for loss of or damage to your document.

If further legalisation at an Embassy is required I charge a further £25 plus whatever fees are payable to the Embassy in question, plus Royal Mail Special Delivery postage. I will, at your request and entirely at your risk, use ordinary first class post at no extra charge, but will not accept any liability for loss of or damage to your document. Due to the numerous different procedures adopted by various countries you will need to email me with your requirements and I will calculate the exact fee that will be payable to have your document(s) legalised.