



## Authentications and Apostilles

Overseas governments sometimes need proof that Australian documents, or the signatures of Australian officials on documents, are genuine before they will accept them. The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (“**DFAT**”) is able to certify that a signature, stamp or seal on a document is genuine by checking it against a specimen held on file, and stamping the document with an Authentication or Apostille.

This is a legal process. DFAT will only issue stamps once they are satisfied the signature, stamp or seal on a document is not fraudulent.

An Apostille is the legalization of a document for international use under the terms of the 1961 *Hague Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents* (“**Hague Convention**”). Documents, which have been notarised by a notary public and then certified with an Apostille by DFAT, are accepted for legal use in all the nations that have signed the Hague Convention.

In countries which are not signatories to the Hague Convention and do not recognize the Apostille, a foreign public document must be notarised, then authenticated by DFAT and finally legalized by a consular officer of the country from which the document is issued.

## Which stamp do I need? An Authentication or an Apostille?

That depends on the country you are dealing with.

- Generally, countries that are party to the *Hague Convention* require an **Apostille** on documents. These countries include the countries set out below:

<i>Albania</i>	<i>Denmark</i>	<i>Kiribati</i>	<i>Reunion</i>
<i>American Samoa</i>	<i>Djibouti</i>	<i>Korea (Republic of)</i>	<i>Romania</i>
<i>Andorra</i>	<i>Dominica</i>	<i>Latvia</i>	<i>Russia</i>
<i>Anguilla</i>	<i>Ecuador</i>	<i>Lesotho</i>	<i>Saint Vincent &amp; Grenadines</i>
<i>Antigua &amp; Barbuda</i>	<i>El Salvador</i>	<i>Liberia</i>	<i>Samoa</i>
<i>Argentina</i>	<i>Estonia</i>	<i>Liechtenstein</i>	<i>San Marino</i>
<i>Armenia</i>	<i>Falkland Islands</i>	<i>Lithuania</i>	<i>Serbia &amp; Montenegro</i>
<i>Aruba</i>	<i>Fiji</i>	<i>Luxembourg</i>	<i>Seychelles</i>
<i>Australia</i>	<i>Finland</i>	<i>Macao</i>	<i>Slovakia</i>
<i>Austria</i>	<i>France</i>	<i>Macedonia</i>	<i>Slovenia</i>
<i>Azerbaijan</i>	<i>French Guiana</i>	<i>Malawi</i>	<i>Solomon Islands</i>
<i>Bahamas</i>	<i>French Polynesia</i>	<i>Malta</i>	<i>South Africa</i>
<i>Barbados</i>	<i>Germany</i>	<i>Marshall Islands</i>	<i>Spain</i>
<i>Belarus</i>	<i>Gibraltar</i>	<i>Mauritius</i>	<i>St Georgia &amp; Sth Sandwich Is</i>
<i>Belgium</i>	<i>Greece</i>	<i>Mexico</i>	<i>St Kitts &amp; Nevis</i>
<i>Belize</i>	<i>Grenada</i>	<i>Moldova</i>	<i>St Lucia</i>
<i>Bermuda</i>	<i>Guadeloupe</i>	<i>Monaco</i>	<i>Suriname</i>
<i>Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina</i>	<i>Guam</i>	<i>Montserrat</i>	<i>Swaziland</i>
<i>Botswana</i>	<i>Guernsey</i>	<i>Mozambique</i>	<i>Sweden</i>
<i>British Antarctic Territory</i>	<i>Honduras</i>	<i>Namibia</i>	<i>Switzerland</i>
<i>British Guyana</i>	<i>Hong Kong</i>	<i>Netherlands Antilles</i>	<i>Tonga</i>
<i>British Virgin Islands</i>	<i>Hungary</i>	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</i>
<i>Brunei</i>	<i>Iceland</i>	<i>New Caledonia</i>	<i>Turkey</i>
<i>Bulgaria</i>	<i>India</i>	<i>New Zealand</i>	<i>Turks &amp; Caicos</i>
<i>Cayman Islands</i>	<i>Ireland</i>	<i>Niue (Savage Island)</i>	<i>Tuvalu</i>
<i>Colombia</i>	<i>Isle of Man</i>	<i>Northern Mariana Islands</i>	<i>Ukraine</i>
<i>Comoros Islands</i>	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Norway</i>	<i>United Kingdom &amp; Nth Ireland</i>
<i>Cook Islands</i>	<i>Italy</i>	<i>Panama</i>	<i>United States of America</i>
<i>Croatia</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>Poland</i>	<i>Venezuela</i>
<i>Cyprus</i>	<i>Jersey</i>	<i>Portugal</i>	<i>Wallis &amp; Futuna</i>
<i>Czech Republic</i>	<i>Kazakhstan</i>	<i>Puerto Rico</i>	

- Documents going to countries that are not party to the Hague Convention generally require an **Authentication**. These countries include Mainland China, Vietnam, most of the Middle East and many others.
- Please check with the embassy or consulate of the country concerned to find out which stamp you need, and which documents (if any) you need to have stamped. The overseas government you are dealing with, or their embassies and consulates in Australia are the only body that can provide this advice.

### How do I get an Authentication or Apostille?

You need to give to DFAT a **notarised copy** of the document. The document (or a copy of it) must be notarised by a Notary Public before you take it to DFAT.

### How much does DFAT charge?

- Apostille - \$80 per document
- Authentication - \$80 per document
- Binding – included in the above fees.

### Where is DFAT?

An Apostille or Authentication may be obtained from

#### The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT)

Level 7  
26 Lee St (near Central Station)  
Sydney NSW 2000

**Phone:** 1300 935 260

**Office hours:** 9:00am – 1:00pm, Monday to Friday (**you must ring for an appointment**)

You can collect your document after three working days or have it posted to you.

### What if I cannot get to the Sydney office of DFAT?

You can send your document into DFAT with a cheque or money order, or with your credit card details, (DFAT accepts Visa, MasterCard or bankcard). Allow three days for cheque clearance.

Send the document/s and payment to:

**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**  
Authentications Section  
GPO Box 9807  
Sydney NSW 2001

documents must It must be accompanied by a payment form  
(see [www.smarttraveller.gov.au/services/legalising-documents/documents/document-legalisation-request-form.pdf](http://www.smarttraveller.gov.au/services/legalising-documents/documents/document-legalisation-request-form.pdf))

They will process the document and mail it back to you. ALL PAYMENT MUST BE IN AUSTRALIAN DOLLARS

### What do I do after DFAT gives me an Apostille or Authentication?

If DFAT gives you an **Apostille** then you do not need to get the document further legalised by the overseas country's embassy or consulate. The document is ready to be sent overseas for use.

If DFAT gives you an **Authentication** then you still need to get the document legalised by the overseas country's embassy or consulate. You should contact the embassy or consulate directly for their requirements.



*The material in this information sheet is not a replacement for legal advice and is only general in nature. No person should act or not act solely based on this information sheet. It is not legal advice and your possession of this information sheet does not create a client/lawyer relationship. If you would like to discuss your particular circumstances please contact **Baldock Stacy & Niven** and we would be pleased to be of assistance to you.*