

Countersignatory & Photograph Guidance

All applications must include two identical recent photographs and be a true likeness of you. One photograph must be certified by someone who has known the applicant personally for at least two years. 'I certify that this is a true likeness of [Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms or other title followed by your full name].'

They must then sign and date the Form of Endorsement as well. It is not enough just to sign and date the photograph.

The person providing the countersignature must not be related to you by birth or marriage. Neither should they be in a personal relationship with you (this includes a same sex relationship) nor live at the same address.

Acceptable countersignatures:

- Accountant
- Airline Pilots
- Articled clerk of a limited company
- Assurance agent of recognised company
- Bank/building society official
- Barrister
- British Computer Society (BCS) - Professional grades which are Associate (AMBCS), Member (MBCS), Fellow (FBCS) (PN 25/2003)
- Broker
- Chairman/director of limited company
- Chemist
- Chiropodist
- Christian Science practitioner
- Commissioner of oaths
- Councillor: local or county
- Civil servant (permanent)
- Dentist
- Designated Premises Supervisors
- Director/Manager of a VAT registered Charity
- Director/Manager/Personnel Officer of a VAT registered Company
- Engineer (with professional qualifications)
- Fire service official
- Funeral director
- Insurance agent (full time) of a recognised company
- Journalist
- Justice of the Peace
- Legal secretary (members and fellows of the Institute of legal secretaries)
- Local government officer
- Manager/Personnel officer (of limited company)
- Member of Parliament
- Merchant Navy officer
- Minister of a recognised religion
- Nurse (RGN and RMN)
- Officer of the armed services (active or retired)
- Optician
- Person with honours (e.g. OBE MBE etc.)
- Personal Licensee Holders

- 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 agency (qualified)
- Valuers and auctioneers (fellow and associate members of the incorporated society)
- Warrant officers and Chief Petty Officers

The standards for passport photos

The photographs must be:

- in colour, not black and white;
- identical;
- recent (taken within the last month);
- 45 millimetres (mm) high x 35 millimetres (mm) wide (please do not trim your photographs to meet this condition);
- taken against a cream or light grey plain background so that your features are clearly distinguishable against the background;
- printed on low-gloss, plain white photo-quality paper (with no watermarks, embossing or printing on the back);
- undamaged, for example, by creases from paperclips;
- of you on your own (no toys, dummies or other people visible);
- a close-up of your head and shoulders so that your head, from the bottom of your chin to your crown is between 29mm and 34mm high; and
- clear of writing on the front and back.

The photographs must also:

- be in sharp focus and clear;
- have a strong definition between the face and background; and
- be printed professionally. Photographs printed at home are not likely to be of an acceptable quality.

The photographs must show:

- no shadows;
- you facing forwards, looking straight towards the camera;
- a neutral expression, with your mouth closed;
- your eyes open and clearly visible (with no sunglasses or heavily tinted glasses, and no hair across your eyes);
- no reflection or glare on your glasses, and the frames should not cover your eyes (you may find it easier to remove your glasses);
- your full head, without any head covering, unless it is worn for religious beliefs or medical reasons; and
- nothing covering your face. Please make sure nothing covers the outline of your eyes, nose or mouth.

Please note that photographs become part of our official records and we will not return them.