

FREE GUIDE · 2026 EDITION

The UK Visa Document Translation Guide

How to get your documents translated, certified and accepted the first time



COMPLIMENTS OF

VisaDocTranslation



VisaDocTranslation

About us

VisaDocTranslation translates documents into English for people applying to the UK Home Office: visas, family applications, appeals, citizenship and first British passports.

We work in more than 120 languages. Every translation comes back as a certified PDF carrying a signed statement of accuracy, the date, and our name and contact details. Those are the things the Immigration Rules ask for, and this guide shows you where they say so. Each one also carries our stamp.

We are a member of the Association of Translation Companies (ATC). Our standard service takes 24 business hours, Monday to Friday. Our rush service takes 8 hours from payment.

We wrote this guide because the same questions reach our inbox every week, usually from people with a deadline. If it saves you one anxious afternoon, it has done its job.

120+ languages	24 hours standard, business hours Monday to Friday	8 hours rush, from payment	Refund if an authority rejects it
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Quantum Cognition Ltd



Member of the Association of Translation Companies
and of the EUATC network. Our membership number is
on the badge, and you can check it with the ATC.

visadoctranslation.co.uk · hello@visadoctranslation.co.uk

WhatsApp +44 7404 034873



The UK Visa Document Translation Guide

How to get your documents translated, certified and accepted the first time

Written by the team at



VisaDocTranslation

The UK Visa Document Translation Guide

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You are welcome to share this guide, unaltered and free of charge, with anyone it might help. Please don't sell it or republish parts of it without asking us first.

This guide is general information, not legal or immigration advice. We are translators, not immigration advisers. We can tell you what a translation needs in order to be accepted. We can't tell you which documents your application needs, or whether it will succeed. For that, read the official guidance for your route or speak to a regulated immigration adviser or solicitor.

Rules change. Every rule quoted here was checked against its official source on 2 October 2026. Each one is linked so you can check it again on the day you apply. Prices and turnaround times are correct at the time of writing.

The customer stories in this guide are based on real enquiries. Names and identifying details have been changed or removed.

Illustrations and design by VisaDocTranslation.

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Introduction



IN THIS CHAPTER

- Who this guide is for
- What it covers, and what it leaves to others
- How to find your answer quickly

Somewhere in your application there is a document that isn't in English. A birth certificate. A marriage certificate. Six months of bank statements. A folder of messages between you and your partner.

Before the Home Office will read it, it has to be translated, and translated in a particular way. Most of the time that is simple. The trouble is when it arrives: late in the process, close to a deadline, after you have already spent weeks gathering everything else.

We wrote this guide so that the translation is the one part of your application that doesn't keep you awake.

Who this guide is for

We've assumed a few things about you.

- You are applying for a UK visa, an extension, settlement, citizenship or a first British passport, or you are helping someone who is.

- Some of your documents are in a language other than English.
- You have never ordered a certified translation before, and nobody has explained what one is.
- You would rather get it right once than fix it twice.

If you are an immigration adviser or a solicitor, most of this will be familiar. Chapter 8 is written for you.

What this guide covers

It explains what the rules ask of a translation, and it quotes the rules so you can see for yourself. It shows you how to prepare your documents, how to avoid the corrections we're asked for most often, and what you will receive at the end.

It doesn't tell you which documents your application needs. That depends on your route and your circumstances, and it is a question for the official guidance or for a regulated adviser. Where we mention the documents people usually send us, that is all it is: what we see, not what you must provide.

Four signposts

You will see these four boxes throughout the guide.

TIP Something practical that saves you time, money or a second email.

WATCH OUT A mistake we see often enough to warn you about.

REMEMBER The one thing to take away if you only skim the page.

FOR ADVISERS A note for solicitors, immigration advisers and anyone preparing documents for a client.

Where to start

IF YOU...	GO TO
are ordering today	Chapter 3, then the checklist at the back
want to know what "certified" means	Chapter 2
have a particular document in your hand	Chapter 4
want the rule for your visa route	Chapter 5
are wondering about price and timing	Chapter 6
were hoping to translate it yourself	Chapter 7

Do I need a certified translation?



IN THIS CHAPTER

- When the Home Office asks for a translation
- What happens to a document that arrives without one
- Documents you don't need to translate at all

The short answer is yes, if the document isn't in English or Welsh and you want the Home Office to take it into account.

The longer answer is worth five minutes, because it tells you what to send, what you can leave out, and why a translation from a helpful cousin isn't enough.

What the rules say

The Immigration Rules have a general paragraph about documents in other languages. The guidance for individual routes echoes it, and it is short enough to quote:

"Where any specified documents provided are not in English or Welsh, the applicant must provide the version in the original language and a full

translation that can be independently verified by the Entry Clearance Officer, Immigration Officer or the Secretary of State."

Source: Immigration Rules, Part 1, paragraph 39B(f). The family rules repeat it in Appendix FM-SE.

Three phrases in that sentence do most of the work.

- **"The version in the original language."** You send both: your document and its translation. The translation doesn't replace the original.
- **"A full translation."** Not a summary, and not just the parts that seem important.
- **"Independently verified."** The caseworker must be able to find out who translated it and contact them. That is what the certificate is for, and Chapter 2 takes it apart line by line.

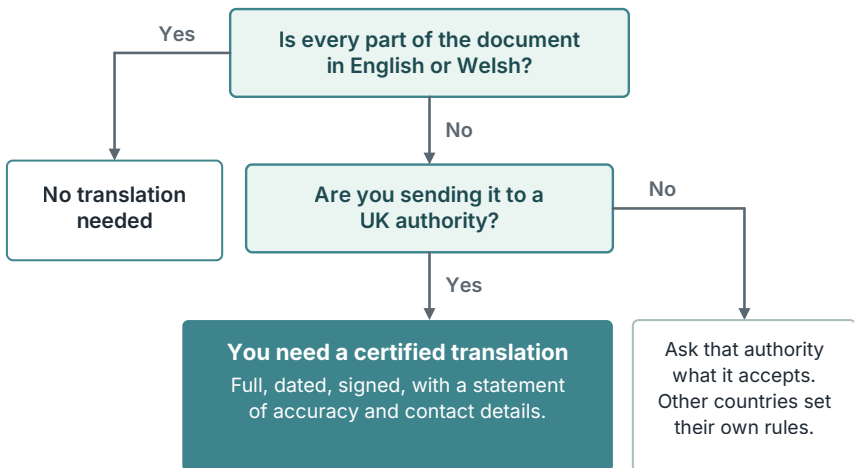


Figure 1. *Do you need a certified translation? Start at the top.*

What happens if you leave it out

Home Office guidance for caseworkers on the Skilled Worker route spells it out. If no translation is supplied, the caseworker should ask for one. After that:

"If the applicant still does not provide a translation or if you are unable to verify the translation, the document will not be accepted. You must continue to process the application as if the applicant had not provided the document."

Source: Skilled Worker caseworker guidance, "Translating documents".

Think about what that means for the document in your hand. If it is the bank statement that shows your savings, the application is decided as if you had sent no bank statement. If it is your marriage certificate, it is decided as if you had sent no marriage certificate.

That guidance is written for one route, and other routes have their own. You may get a request and a second chance, at the cost of time you might not have. But it shows how a caseworker is told to think: a document they can't read, or a translation they can't check, doesn't count.

REMEMBER A missing or unverifiable translation doesn't get marked down. The document it belongs to stops counting.

Documents you don't need to translate

We would rather you didn't pay for pages you don't need. You can leave out:

- **Anything already in English or Welsh.** Many banks, universities and employers will issue an English version if you ask. It is worth one phone call before you order.

- **Bilingual documents** where every part appears in English as well as the original language. Some newer certificates and some apostille pages are printed this way.
- **Pages you aren't going to submit.** If you are submitting three months of statements, we only need those three months.

WATCH OUT A page that is mostly in English but carries a stamp, a seal or a handwritten note in another language is not fully in English. The rule asks for a full translation, so we translate those too. Look at the margins and the back before you decide a page can be skipped.

Not only visas

The same kind of translation is asked for in other places you may meet on the way.

WHERE	WHAT THE OFFICIAL WORDING SAYS
First British passport	"If your documents are not in English or Welsh, you need to send a certified translation." gov.uk
EU Settlement Scheme	"You might be asked to provide the original document or a certified English translation of any document that is not in English." gov.uk
Immigration tribunal appeals	"If a document provided to the Tribunal is not written in English, it must be accompanied by an English translation." Tribunal Procedure Rules, rule 12

Chapter 5 sets out the wording for each route side by side.

WATCH OUT We don't translate for UK divorce court proceedings. For a divorce application, the [family court rules](#) ask for a translation "certified by a notary public or authenticated by a statement of truth", which is a different service from ours. If your document is for a divorce case, please tell us before you order so we can say so straight away.

What "certified" means



IN THIS CHAPTER

- The four things every certified translation carries
- Certified, notarised, sworn and apostille, untangled
- Who is allowed to certify a translation
- Three myths we hear every week

"Certified translation" sounds like something issued by an office with a crest on the door. In the UK it is simpler than that.

A certified translation is a translation that comes with a signed statement from the translator or the translation company. The statement says the translation is accurate, and it says who they are. That's all. There is no government stamp and no licence number.

What matters is that the statement contains the right things. The rules list them.

The four things the rules ask for

The same paragraph of the Immigration Rules that asks for a translation goes on to say what it must include. The translation must be dated, and it must carry:

1. "confirmation that it is an accurate translation of the original document";
2. "the full name and signature of the translator or an authorised official of the translation company";
3. "the translator or translation company's contact details".

Source: Immigration Rules, Part 1, [paragraph 39B\(f\)](#). The Home Office's [guide for visitors](#) sets out a similar list in plainer words.

Count the date and you have four: a statement of accuracy, a date, a name and signature, and contact details. Every certificate we issue has all four, on every translation.

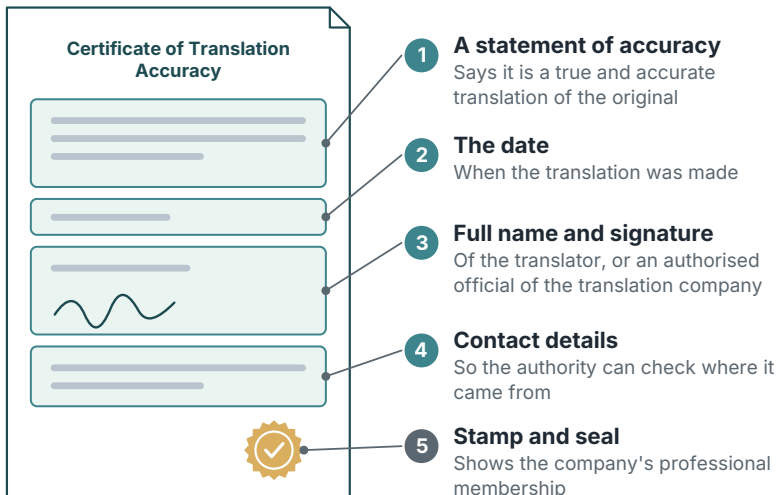


Figure 2. What a certificate of accuracy carries. Items 1 to 4 are in the Immigration Rules. Item 5 is extra.

One more, if you are applying from inside the UK

The rule has a final line that catches people out:

"if the applicant is applying for leave to remain or indefinite leave to remain, certification by a qualified translator and details of the translator or translation company's credentials."

"Leave to remain" covers extensions and switching from one visa to another while you are in the UK. "Indefinite leave to remain" is settlement. If that is you, the certificate needs to show credentials as well as contact details. Ours shows our membership of the Association of Translation Companies. Tell us when you order that you are applying from inside the UK, so we can make sure the certificate says what it should.

Certified, notarised, sworn, apostille

These four words get used as if they meant the same thing. They don't, and three of them are not what the Home Office asks for.

Certified A translator or translation company signs a statement that the translation is accurate. Asked for by: the Home Office, the Passport Office, universities and most UK bodies.	Notarised A notary public, a specialist lawyer, adds their own certificate and seal. Asked for by: some authorities abroad. Rare for UK use.
Sworn Made by a translator appointed by a court or ministry in countries that have that system. The UK has no sworn translators, so no UK authority asks for this.	Apostille A certificate from the Legalisation Office confirming that a UK document's signature or seal is genuine. Asked for when a UK document is going to be used abroad.

Figure 3. Four kinds of official translation. The Immigration Rules describe the first.

Sworn translation is the one that causes most confusion, because in much of Europe it is the normal kind. A sworn translator is appointed by a court or a ministry. The UK has no such system. The three UK professional bodies put it bluntly in their joint guidance:

"The figure of the sworn translator does not exist in the UK, and therefore, no UK authority will request a sworn translation."

Source: ATC, CIOL and ITI, *Certified Translation: Getting It Right*.

An apostille has nothing to do with translation quality. It is a certificate that a country's authorities attach to one of their own documents, confirming that a signature or seal on it is genuine, so the document can be used abroad. In the UK the Legalisation Office does this for UK documents. If your foreign certificate arrived with an apostille page from its own country, that page is part of the document, and if it isn't in English it needs translating like the rest.

Notarisation means a notary public adds their own certificate. It is sometimes asked for by authorities abroad. We don't offer it, and the Immigration Rules don't ask for it.

TIP If a form, a relative or an adviser abroad has told you the translation must be "sworn" or "notarised", they are probably describing the rule in their own country. For a UK visa application, the rule is the one quoted above.

Who can certify

The rules name two possibilities: "the translator" or "an authorised official of the translation company". The Skilled Worker guidance describes the translation as coming "from a professional translator or translation company".

There is no government register of approved translators. What exists instead are professional bodies, and it helps to know which is which.

BODY WHO BELONGS TO IT

ATC Association of Translation Companies. A trade association for translation companies. We are a member.

CIOL Chartered Institute of Linguists. A membership body for individual translators and linguists.

ITI Institute of Translation and Interpreting. A membership body for individual translators and interpreters, with some corporate members.

Three myths we hear every week

"The translator has to be approved by the Home Office"

The rules don't mention an approved list. They say what the translation must contain. A translation that carries the four items, from a translator or company the caseworker can contact, is what the rule describes.

"It has to be an original on special paper"

You receive a PDF. Most applications are uploaded online, so that is what you need. The rules themselves say that "specified documents may be originals or copies". If you are asked to bring or post paper, print the PDF on ordinary paper.

"A notary's stamp makes it more official"

It makes it more expensive. A notary's seal is the right thing for some purposes abroad. It isn't one of the things the Immigration Rules list, and adding it doesn't make up for one of the four that is missing.

Before you order



IN THIS CHAPTER

- Why most corrections are about names and dates
- The spelling list to send with your order
- Which pages to send, and how to photograph them
- A five-minute check

One customer wrote to us a few hours before she was due to submit her application. The surname on her translated birth certificate was spelt one way. Her passport spelt it another.

Nothing had been mistranslated. Her name is written in Arabic, and there is more than one correct way to put an Arabic name into English letters. The translator had chosen one. Years earlier, her passport office had chosen the other.

It was a small fix. It was also an afternoon of worry she didn't need. Most of the corrections we're asked for look like hers, and nearly all of them can be avoided in the five minutes before you order.

Names: more than one right spelling

If your documents are in Arabic, Urdu, Farsi, Russian, Ukrainian, Chinese or any script that isn't the Latin alphabet, each name has to be converted into English letters. This is called transliteration, and it rarely has a single right answer.

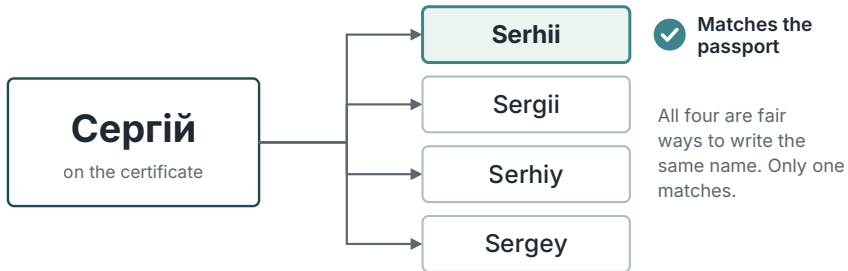


Figure 4. One Ukrainian first name, four fair spellings. The translator can't know which one your passport uses unless you say.

Mohammed, Muhammad and Mohamed are the same name. A Ukrainian surname and its Russian-style spelling can differ by several letters. A Chinese name is written one way in Pinyin and another way on a passport from Taiwan or Hong Kong.

Your translation will sit next to your passport in the application. So the spelling that counts is the passport's, for every person the document names: you, your partner, your parents, your witnesses.

The spelling that counts is the passport's, for every person the document names.

Fill this in and paste it into the order notes, or email it to us with your documents.

PERSON NAMED IN THE DOCUMENT	SPELLING IN THEIR PASSPORT OR ID	ANYTHING WE SHOULD KNOW
You		
Your partner or spouse		
Your father		
Your mother		
Anyone else (witness, child, sponsor)		

TIP If someone has no passport, give us the spelling you used on your application form. What matters is that the name matches everywhere it appears. And if you are sending several documents, use the same spelling for all of them.

WATCH OUT We can follow the spelling you give us. We can't change a fact. If the certificate shows a different name, date or place from the one you expected, the translation has to say what the certificate says.

Dates and numbers

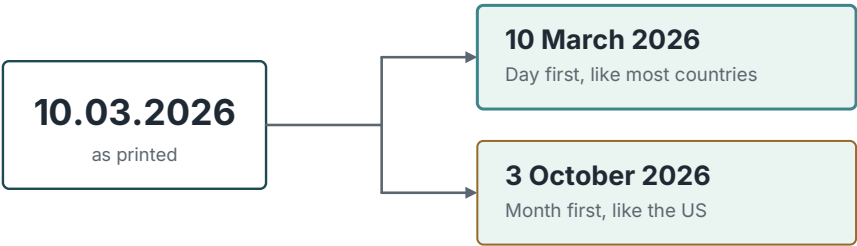


Figure 5. One printed date, two possible readings.

A date printed as 10.03.2026 means 10 March in most countries and 3 October in the United States. Dates are the second most common thing we're asked to correct. Day and month get swapped, a handwritten year is misread, or the original uses a calendar that has to be converted.

Numbers go wrong in quieter ways. A passport number loses a digit. A deposit on a bank statement lands in the withdrawals column. A case reference has a letter that looks like a number.

When your translation arrives, check every date and every number against the original before you submit. It takes two minutes, and nobody is better placed than you to spot a wrong birthday.

Which pages to send

The Home Office asks for a full translation of each document you submit. "Full" includes the stamps, the seals, the handwritten notes, and the back of the page if anything is printed there.

- Send every page you plan to submit, both sides.
- Leave out any page you don't need translated. Every page you send us is translated and charged, even one that carries nothing but a small stamp.
- If you are only submitting some pages of a long document, such as a bank statement, tell us which ones.

REMEMBER We can't tell you which documents your application needs. That is a question for the guidance on your visa route, or for your adviser.

Photos and scans

You don't need a scanner. A phone photo is fine if every word is sharp. What matters is that we can see the whole page.

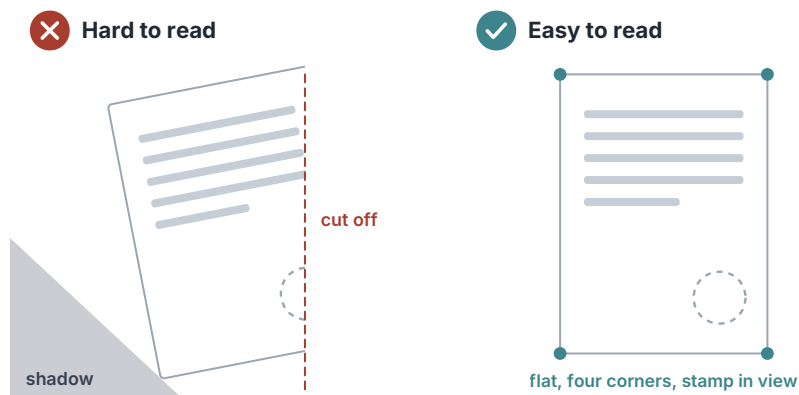


Figure 6. The same page photographed twice. The stamp in the corner is part of the document.

- Lay the page flat in daylight, with all four corners in the picture.
- Take one photo per page.
- Keep the margins. Stamps and handwritten notes often sit at the edge.
- For handwritten documents, type out the names, places and dates for us.

If the website can't read your file, email it to us at hello@visadoctranslation.co.uk and we'll send you a quote by hand.

The five-minute check

- ☐ Passport spellings listed for everyone the document names
 - ☐ Every page included, both sides
 - ☐ Only the pages I want translated are included
 - ☐ Photos flat, sharp and uncropped
 - ☐ Handwritten names and dates typed out
 - ☐ You've told us what the translation is for, and when you need it
-

Your documents, one by one



IN THIS CHAPTER

- What to send for each kind of document
- The details that most often need correcting
- Screenshots, voice notes and handwriting

Every kind of document has its own way of going wrong. A birth certificate goes wrong on names. A bank statement goes wrong on columns. A chat screenshot goes wrong before it even reaches us, in the way it was captured.

This chapter takes the documents we translate most often and tells you two things for each: what to send, and what to look at when it comes back.

REMEMBER Whatever the document, the translation says what the original says. We don't tidy it, summarise it or improve it.

Certificates

Birth certificates

The document we translate more than any other. It names at least three people, so it has at least three chances for a spelling to differ from a passport.

SEND US

- Both sides, even if the back looks empty
- Passport spellings for the child and both parents
- Any later amendments or annotations

CHECK WHEN IT ARRIVES

- Each parent's name, letter by letter
 - Date and place of birth
 - The registration number
-

Marriage certificates

These come in more shapes than any other document: a single page, a nikah nama on a printed form, a booklet of a dozen pages. Send the pages you are going to submit and we translate all of them in full.

SEND US

- Every page of a booklet you plan to submit
- Spellings for both spouses and the witnesses
- Maiden and married names, if both appear

CHECK WHEN IT ARRIVES

- The date of marriage, especially if two calendars are shown
 - Handwritten entries
 - The names of the registrar and the place
-

Divorce and death certificates

A certificate issued abroad, showing that an earlier marriage ended, is ordinary work for us. A translation for a divorce case in a UK court is not: see the note in Chapter 1.

SEND US

- The final certificate or decree, all pages
- Spellings for both former spouses

CHECK WHEN IT ARRIVES

- The date the divorce became final
- The court or registry name

Money and work

Bank statements

The longest documents we see, and the ones where page count matters most. One customer came to us with 45 pages of French statements for a visitor visa. Before you order that many, ask your bank whether it can issue the statements in English. Many can.

SEND US

- Only the months you plan to submit
- The pages in order, complete
- The account holder's passport spelling

CHECK WHEN IT ARRIVES

- Money in and money out are in the right columns
- The closing balance on each page
- Dates, particularly day and month

Payslips, employment letters and tax documents

Short documents, usually one page each. The risk here is the title. A "letter of employment" and a "certificate of employment" are different documents to the person reading your application, and the translation should call yours what it is.

SEND US

- Each payslip as its own page
- The employer's name as it appears in English, if it has one

CHECK WHEN IT ARRIVES

- The document's title
- Gross and net figures
- Your job title

Identity and study

ID cards, residence permits and registry extracts

A card has two sides, and each side is a page. If one side is already in English, tell us and send only the other.

SEND US

- Front and back as separate photos
- The full extract, including the issuing stamp

CHECK WHEN IT ARRIVES

- The document number, character by character
- Issue and expiry dates

Degrees, diplomas and transcripts

We reproduce grades and marks exactly as they are written. We don't convert them into UK equivalents, because that is an assessment, not a translation. If you need a statement of how your qualification compares, that comes from UK ENIC, which reads some languages without any translation at all. Check its Translation Waiver Service before you order.

SEND US

- The certificate and every page of the transcript
- The official English name of your university, if it has one

CHECK WHEN IT ARRIVES

- The title of your qualification
- Every row of the marks table

Official and medical papers

Police certificates, court papers and reports

These carry more stamps, reference numbers and marginal notes than anything else, and all of them are part of the document. We translate the stamps as well as the text.

SEND US

- Every page, with stamps fully in view
- Names of everyone mentioned, as on their ID

CHECK WHEN IT ARRIVES

- Case and reference numbers
- Dates of events and of issue
- That each stamp has been accounted for

Medical letters and records

Often handwritten, often abbreviated. If we can't read a word, we mark it as illegible. We don't guess at a diagnosis or a dose.

SEND US

- The clearest copy you can get
- A typed note of names, dates and medicines, if the writing is hard to read

CHECK WHEN IT ARRIVES

- Patient name and date of birth
- Dates of treatment

Messages, recordings and handwriting

Chat screenshots and social media

Each screenshot is one page, however few lines it holds. That surprises people, so choose what you send with care.

SEND US

- Screenshots with the contact name and the date in view
- Whole messages, in order
- Only the screenshots that contain another language

AVOID

- Long scrolling captures: they count as several pages and are hard to read
- Messages cut off at the edge of the screen

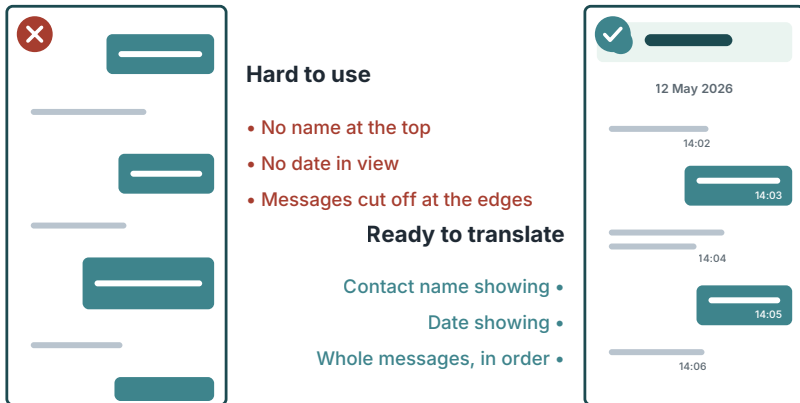


Figure 7. Two ways to capture the same conversation.

Voice notes and video

We transcribe what is said and translate it. Because the price depends on the length of the recording, email it to us for a quote.

SEND US

- The recording itself, not a recording of it playing
- Who is speaking, and the date if you know it

GOOD TO KNOW

- Background noise and overlapping voices make some words impossible to hear. We mark those, and don't fill them in.

Handwritten documents

We translate these every week. They take more care, and they are where a typed list from you helps most.

SEND US

- A high-resolution photo, taken straight on
- Names, places and dates typed out

CHECK WHEN IT ARRIVES

- Anything marked as illegible. If you can read it, tell us and we will correct it.

Your route



IN THIS CHAPTER

- What the official wording says for each route
- What applicants on each route usually send us
- The extra line for applications made inside the UK

Most people who write to us say the translation is "for my UK visa" and leave it there. That is fine. The translation rule is nearly the same on every route.

Nearly, but not quite. This chapter shows you the official wording for each route side by side, and then says a little about what applicants on each one tend to send us.

REMEMBER "What people send us" is not a list of what you must provide. For that, read the official guidance for your route or ask a regulated adviser.

The wording, route by route

ROUTE	WHAT THE OFFICIAL TEXT SAYS
The general rule	The original plus "a full translation that can be independently verified", dated, with confirmation of accuracy, a name and signature, and contact details. Part 1, para 39B(f)
Partner, parent, child	Almost the same wording, repeated for family applications. Appendix FM-SE, para 1(j)
Visitor	"It must be accompanied by a full translation that can be independently verified by the Home Office." Visitor guide
Skilled Worker	"A fully certified translation from a professional translator or translation company that can be independently verified by the Home Office." Caseworker guidance
Student	"The applicant must provide a certified translation." Caseworker guidance
EU Settlement Scheme	"You might be asked to provide the original document or a certified English translation." gov.uk
First British passport	"You need to send a certified translation." gov.uk
Tribunal appeal	"It must be accompanied by an English translation." Procedure Rules, rule 12

Partner and family

Family applications bring us the widest mix of documents: marriage certificates, children's birth certificates, an earlier divorce certificate, payslips and bank statements, and often a long run of messages between two people.

Two things matter more here than on any other route.

Consistency across the set. Your name will appear on five or six documents. If it is spelt three ways, a caseworker has to decide whether

they all refer to you. Give us one spelling list (Chapter 3) and we apply it to everything.

Choosing your screenshots. Each screenshot is a page, so a long conversation quickly becomes a long order. Which messages to submit is your decision, or your adviser's. Whichever you pick, capture them the way Figure 7 shows, and leave out any that are already in English.

Visitor

Visitor applications are mostly about money and ties: bank statements, payslips, a letter from an employer, sometimes property or residence papers.

Because bank statements run to many pages, this is the route where it most pays to ask for English originals first. If your bank can't provide them, send us only the months you intend to submit, and tell us if any pages repeat.

Asylum and appeals

The documents here are the hardest to replace and often the hardest to read: police reports, court papers, letters from community organisations, social media posts, voice notes. Stamps, reference numbers and handwritten notes carry weight, so we translate every one of them.

For an appeal, the First-tier Tribunal's rules ask that a document not in English "must be accompanied by an English translation". An older practice direction, which the First-tier Tribunal replaced in November 2024 and which remains in place for the Upper Tribunal, goes further. It asks for a translation "signed by the translator, and certifying that the translation is accurate", together with "details of the identity and qualifications of the translator".

Source: [Practice Directions of the Immigration and Asylum Chambers](#), paragraph 8.2(b).

Our standard certificate is signed by an authorised official of the company. If your representative needs the individual translator's signature and qualifications on it, tell us before you order, so that we can say whether we can provide that.

FOR ADVISERS If you are preparing a tribunal bundle, tell us before you order what you need the certificate to show. It is easier to settle at the start than the night before a hearing.

Citizenship and first British passports

These bring us foreign birth certificates, usually a child's, and the parents' marriage certificate.

HM Passport Office's guidance booklet is more specific than the visa rules. It asks for an official translation that is

"signed and stamped by a translator who is a member of a recognised professional organisation to prove it is genuine."

Source: HM Passport Office, [Guidance for paper passport applications](#).

Our certificates are signed and stamped, and we are a member of the Association of Translation Companies. In our experience they are accepted for passport applications. Those applications often go by post, with your original documents. Print the certified PDF on ordinary paper and put it in the envelope. You don't need to pay anyone for a posted copy.

Student

Students send us transcripts and degree certificates, bank statements, and sometimes a parent's letter of consent or sponsorship. Remember that we reproduce grades exactly as written (Chapter 4), and that your university may already hold an English transcript you can ask for.

Work routes and settlement

We see fewer documents from work routes, because so much of the evidence comes from the employer in English. When we do, it is usually a qualification, a police certificate from another country, or a dependant's marriage or birth certificate.

WATCH OUT If you are applying from **inside the UK**, to extend, switch or settle, the rules ask for one thing more: "certification by a qualified translator and details of the translator or translation company's credentials". Tell us you are applying from inside the UK when you order.

Ordering, price and delivery



IN THIS CHAPTER

- How pages are counted, and how to keep the count down
- Standard or rush, and what "24 business hours" means
- What arrives in your inbox
- Uploading it, printing it and posting it

"Is it really £12.99 for a screenshot with five lines on it?" We are asked this most weeks, and the answer is yes. This chapter explains why, and how to avoid paying for pages you don't need.

How pages are counted

We charge per page, not per word. At the time of writing, a page costs £12.99 on the standard service and £24.99 on rush. You see the exact total before you pay.

A page is a page whether it holds a paragraph or a single line, because each one is translated, checked against the original and certified on its own. That includes a page with almost nothing on it. If you send it for

translation and all it carries is a small stamp, the stamp has to be translated, so the page is charged.

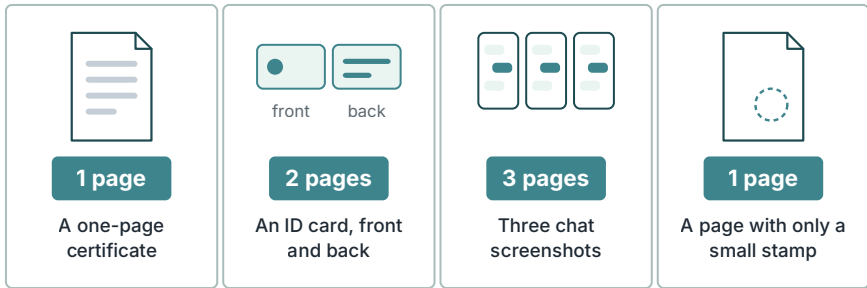


Figure 8. What counts as a page.

Keeping the count down

- **Leave out what you don't need translated.** Take those pages out before you upload. Every page you send counts.
- **Ask for English originals.** Banks, universities and employers can often issue one.
- **Send only what you will submit.** If you are submitting three months of statements, don't send us twelve.
- **Don't send your own draft alongside the original.** The website may count both. If you have a draft you'd like us to see for name spellings, email it separately and say so.
- **Take ordinary screenshots.** One long scrolling capture is counted as the several screens it really is.

TIP If the website can't read your file, or shows a price that looks wrong, don't struggle with it. Email the documents to hello@visadoctranslation.co.uk. We will count the pages ourselves and send you a quote with a payment link.

Standard or rush

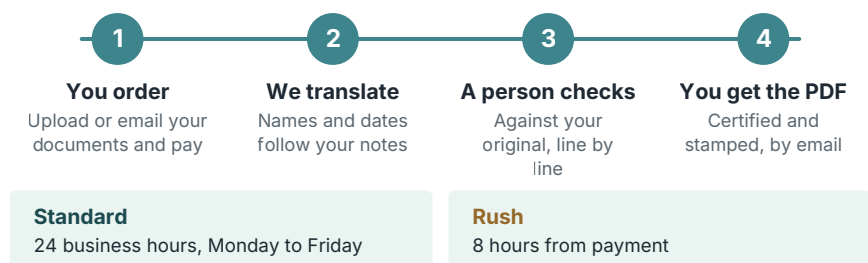


Figure 9. From order to certified PDF.

Standard is 24 business hours from the moment you pay. Business hours run Monday to Friday, and the clock pauses at the weekend. So an order paid at three on a Thursday afternoon is due by three on Friday. An order paid at three on a Friday is due by three on Monday.

Rush is 8 hours from payment.

TIP If you have a biometrics appointment or a submission deadline, put the date and time in your order notes. It tells us which orders can't slip.

What arrives

You receive an email with a PDF attached. Inside it are the certificate of accuracy, signed, dated and stamped, with our name and contact details, and the translation itself, laid out to follow your original.

If the email hasn't arrived when you expect it, look in your spam or junk folder first. If you are using a work address, a company firewall may be holding it. Then write to us and we will send it again.

Uploading to the visa portal

Upload the PDF as you received it. Please don't edit it, split it or pull pages out of it yourself. A certified file that has been altered is no longer the file we certified.

If the portal wants your evidence under separate headings, or a file is too large, or it is refused for any reason, tell us what the portal said. We will send you a version it accepts, whether that means separate files or a smaller one.

When someone wants paper

We deliver by email only. We don't post hard copies, and we don't need you to post anything to us: a clear photo or scan is enough.

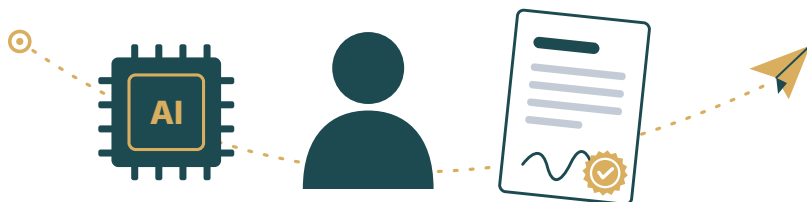
Some applications still travel by post, a first British passport among them. To avoid any unnecessary cost, print the certified PDF yourself on ordinary paper and send it with your original documents.

If something isn't right

Tell us what needs changing, by replying to the delivery email. Spelling corrections are quick. If you gave us a spelling list and we missed it, that is our mistake and we fix it first.

If an official authority rejects a translation we certified, we refund it in full. Send us what the authority said, because the wording usually shows what they wanted.

DIY, friends and AI



IN THIS CHAPTER

- Why your own translation isn't enough
- What to do with a translation you already have
- Translations made abroad
- Where AI helps, and where it stops

"My father is a native speaker and has already translated it. I just need someone to sign it off."

We get a version of this message most weeks, and we understand it. You have a translation. It is probably good. Paying for another one feels like paying twice.

Here is why we still say no, and what we do instead.

What "independently verified" means in practice

The rule doesn't say, in so many words, that you can't translate your own documents. It asks for a translation "that can be independently verified", and the Skilled Worker guidance describes it as coming "from a professional translator or translation company". The word doing the work is *independently*, and this is how we read it.

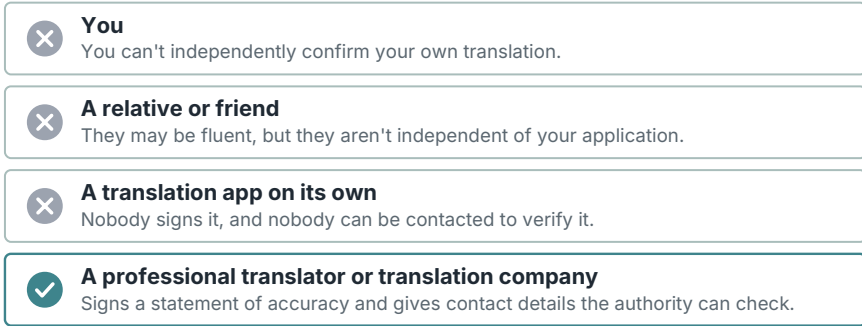


Figure 10. *How we read "independently verified".*

Your father may be a better linguist than any of us. But he is your father. A caseworker who wants to check the translation would be asking a member of the applicant's family whether the applicant's evidence is accurate. That isn't an independent check, however honest the answer.

Why we don't certify someone else's translation

When we certify a translation, we sign a statement that it is accurate and put our name and contact details under it. We can only sign that for work we have done ourselves, from the original document.

So we don't review-and-stamp a translation made by you, a relative, a friend or another company. We translate from your original and certify that.

Your existing translation isn't wasted. Send it to us as a reference. It tells us how you spell the names, what the places are called and which terms your family uses, and that makes the result better. It doesn't change the price, because every line is still checked against the original.

WATCH OUT If you upload your own draft together with the original, the website may count both and double the price. Send the original through the website and email the draft separately, or tell us and we will correct the total.

Translations made abroad

You may already hold a translation made in the country your document came from, perhaps stamped by a notary or a sworn translator there. For that country's purposes it may be exactly right.

For a UK application, look for the four things from Chapter 2, in English: a statement that the translation is accurate, a date, the translator's full name and signature, and contact details. If all four are there, the rule's basic list is met (applications made inside the UK need the translator's credentials too). If any are missing, a notary's seal doesn't make up for it. One customer told us that the notarised translation she had brought from home hadn't met the requirements on its own, and asked us to start again from the original.

Where AI helps, and where it stops

Translation apps are good at what most people use them for: getting the gist of a letter, a menu or a message. Use one to understand your own documents and to check that nothing is missing from ours.

What an app can't do is the thing the rule asks for. Nobody signs an app's translation. Nobody can be contacted about it. And nobody is answerable if a date of birth comes out wrong.

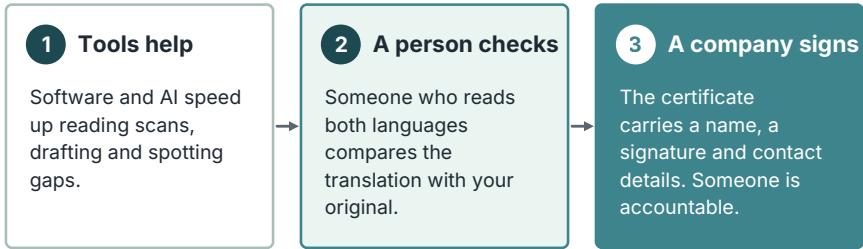


Figure 11. *How we see it: AI is a complement, and every translation needs a human.*

There are also things software still gets wrong more often than people do: a name that should follow a passport, a stamp at an angle, a handwritten year, a page photographed sideways. These are exactly the details an immigration application turns on.

So our view is simple. AI is a useful tool in a translator's hands, in the same way a dictionary is.

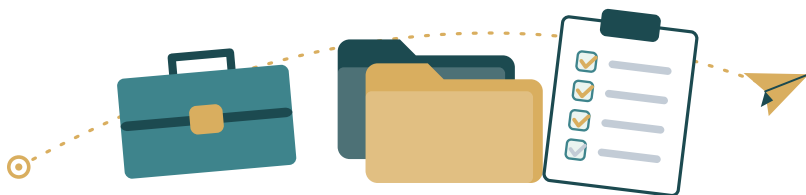
AI is a complement. Every translation needs a human who reads both languages, checks the result against the original and is prepared to sign it.

Checking a translation you can't fully read

You may not read English with confidence. You can still check the things that matter most, because they look the same in any language.

- ☐ Count the pages. Is every page of your original there?
- ☐ Compare every name with the passport.
- ☐ Compare every date, digit by digit.
- ☐ Compare every document number and every amount of money.
- ☐ Look for each stamp and seal on the original, and find where the translation mentions it.

For advisers and solicitors



IN THIS CHAPTER

- Getting a quote your client can pay directly
- Preparing documents so the page count stays honest
- Deadlines, bundles and what the certificate needs to show

You already know the rules in this guide. What you may not know is how to make a translation order take two emails instead of six.

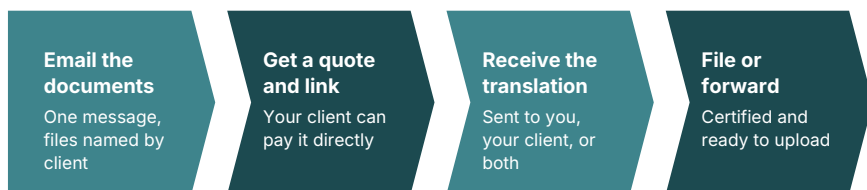


Figure 12. *The shortest route from your client's documents to a file you can submit.*

A quote your client can pay

You don't need to use the website, and your client doesn't need to upload anything. Email the documents to hello@visadoctranslation.co.uk. We count the pages and reply with the

total and a payment link. Forward the link to your client and they pay it directly. Work starts when the payment arrives.

Tell us in that first email who should receive the finished translation: you, your client, or both.

Preparing the documents

Most of the avoidable cost in an order comes from how the files were prepared.

- **Take out pages that are already in English.** Mixed bundles are common in asylum and family cases.
- **Avoid scrolling screenshots.** A single long capture is counted as the several screens it contains, and the text is often too small to read.
- **Name the files.** "Client surname, document, page range" saves a round of questions when one email holds three people's papers.
- **Send a spelling list.** One list of passport spellings per client, applied across the whole set.

Deadlines

If the client has a visa centre appointment or a hearing date, give us the date and the time. "Our client attends at 10am on Thursday" is more useful to us than "urgent".

Standard delivery is 24 business hours, Monday to Friday. Rush is 8 hours from payment. If neither fits, say so before the order is paid, not after.

What the certificate needs to show

For Home Office applications our standard certificate carries what paragraph 39B(f) lists. Two situations need a word with us first.

In-country applications. For leave to remain and indefinite leave to remain, the rule adds "certification by a qualified translator and details of the translator or translation company's credentials". Tell us the application is being made inside the UK.

Tribunal bundles. Our standard certificate is signed by an authorised official of the company. If you follow the older practice direction's wording on translations, which asks for the translator's own signature, identity and qualifications, tell us before the order is placed so that we can say whether we can provide it.

WATCH OUT We don't take work for UK divorce court proceedings. For a divorce application, [Practice Direction 7A](#) asks for a translation "certified by a notary public or authenticated by a statement of truth", and that isn't the certificate we issue.

When someone checks

The point of the contact details on a certificate is that somebody may use them. Authorities and regulators do sometimes write to us to confirm that a certificate is ours. We answer.

FOR ADVISERS If you send us work regularly, write and tell us. It is easier for both sides to agree a way of working once than to explain it with every order.

Ten mistakes that get translations sent back



IN THIS CHAPTER

- The corrections we are asked for most
- Why each one happens
- How to avoid all ten

None of these is exotic. Every one comes from our own inbox, and every one is avoidable.

1 A name that doesn't match the passport

The most common correction by a wide margin. Send passport spellings for everyone the document names. See Chapter 3.

2 Day and month the wrong way round

10.03 is March to most of the world and October to some. Check every date against the original when the translation arrives.

3 A page left out

The back of a certificate, the last page of a statement, the page with only a stamp on it. The rule asks for a full translation, and a missing page makes it partial.

4 Sending pages you don't need translated

Every page you send is translated and charged, even one with only a stamp on it. Take out the pages you don't need before you order.

5 Scrolling screenshots

One long image of a whole conversation looks like a saving. It is counted as the several screens it contains, and the words are often too small to read.

6 A relative's translation

However accurate, it is hard to call independent. We can use it as a reference. We can't certify it.

7 The wrong language on the order

Our website reads the language from your file, and it can get it wrong: Ukrainian taken for Russian, Arabic for something else entirely. Tell us the language in your notes.

8 Leaving it until the day before

Rush exists for a reason, but it leaves no room for a correction. Order when you have the document, not when you have the appointment.

9 Editing the certified PDF

Removing a page or merging files yourself changes what we certified. Ask us to reissue it the way you need it.

10 Asking for something the document doesn't say

A different address, a newer surname, a corrected date. The translation follows the document. If the document is wrong, the fix is a new document.

REMEMBER Most of these are settled before you order. The five-minute check in Chapter 3 is the place to start.

Checklists, glossary and sources



Before you order

- ☐ I know which pages I am going to submit
 - ☐ I have asked whether an English original is available
 - ☐ I have taken out any pages I don't need translated
 - ☐ Every page is photographed flat, both sides, with stamps and margins in view
 - ☐ I have listed the passport spelling of every person named
 - ☐ For handwriting, I have typed out names, places and dates
 - ☐ I have said what the translation is for, and whether I am applying from inside the UK
 - ☐ I have given my deadline, with the time as well as the date
-

Before you submit

- ☐ The page count matches my original
 - ☐ Every name matches the passport
 - ☐ Every date is right, day and month included
 - ☐ Document numbers and amounts of money are right
 - ☐ Each stamp and seal on the original is accounted for
 - ☐ The certificate shows a statement of accuracy, a date, a name and signature, and contact details
 - ☐ I am uploading the PDF exactly as I received it, together with my original document
-

What we don't do

It is quicker for everyone if you know this before you order.

- **UK divorce court proceedings.** The family court rules ask for a notary's certificate or a statement of truth.
- **Notarisation.** We don't provide notary services.
- **Posted hard copies.** Delivery is a certified PDF by email. Print it yourself if paper is needed.
- **Certifying someone else's translation.** We translate from the original and certify our own work.
- **Translation out of English.** We translate into English, for UK authorities.
- **Immigration advice.** We can't tell you which documents to submit or whether an application will succeed.

Glossary

Apostille

A certificate attached to a document by the issuing country's authorities, confirming that a signature or seal on it is genuine, so that it can be used abroad.

Certified translation

A translation accompanied by a signed, dated statement from the translator or translation company confirming that it is accurate, with their name and contact details.

Indefinite leave to remain (ILR)

Permission to stay in the UK with no time limit. Also called settlement.

Leave to remain

Permission to stay in the UK for a limited time, applied for from inside the UK.

Notary public

A specialist lawyer who authenticates documents, mostly for use abroad.

Specified documents

The documents the Immigration Rules require as evidence for a particular application.

Statement of accuracy

The sentence on the certificate confirming that the translation is true and accurate.

Sworn translator

A translator appointed by a court or ministry in countries that have such a system. The UK does not.

Transliteration

Converting a name from one script into another, letter by letter or sound by sound.

UKVI

UK Visas and Immigration, the part of the Home Office that decides visa applications.

Official sources

Every rule quoted in this guide comes from one of these pages. All were checked on 2 October 2026.

- Immigration Rules, Part 1, paragraph 39B
- Immigration Rules, Appendix FM-SE, paragraph 1(j)
- Visiting the UK: guide to supporting documents
- Skilled Worker caseworker guidance
- Student and Child Student caseworker guidance
- EU Settlement Scheme: what you'll need to apply
- First adult passport: documents you need
- HM Passport Office: guidance for paper passport applications
- Tribunal Procedure (First-tier Tribunal) (Immigration and Asylum Chamber) Rules 2014, rule 12
- Practice Directions of the Immigration and Asylum Chambers
- Family Procedure Rules, Practice Direction 7A
- Get your document legalised
- UK ENIC Translation Waiver Service
- ATC, CIOL and ITI: Certified Translation, Getting It Right

Ready when you are

Upload your documents at visadoctranslation.co.uk and see your price before you pay. Standard delivery in 24 business hours, Monday to Friday; rush in 8 hours from payment.

Prefer to ask first? Write to hello@visadoctranslation.co.uk or message us on WhatsApp at [+44 7404 034873](https://wa.me/447404034873). Send the documents with your message and we will reply with a quote.



VisaDocTranslation

120+

languages

24 hours

standard, business
hours Monday to
Friday

8 hours

rush, from payment

Refund

if an authority rejects
it

Quantum Cognition Ltd



Member of the Association of Translation Companies
and of the EUATC network. Our membership number is
on the badge, and you can check it with the ATC.

The translation is the one part of your application that shouldn't keep you awake

Is a phone photo good enough? Why is my name spelt differently from my passport? Can my cousin translate it? Do I need a notary? This guide answers the questions that reach our inbox every week, and quotes the rules so you can check every answer yourself.

INSIDE

- The four things the Immigration Rules ask every translation to carry
- A spelling worksheet that prevents the most common correction
- Document-by-document advice, from birth certificates to chat screenshots
- The official wording for each visa route, side by side
- Two checklists to print and tick off



VisaDocTranslation

visadoctranslation.co.uk

hello@visadoctranslation.co.uk

WhatsApp +44 7404 034873

