

Practice Note 1 – Foreign language documents

A notary may not authenticate, by means of a notarial act, a document in a language not spoken by the notary unless *the notary attaches a certificate confirming* that the notary either:

- is satisfied as to the meaning of the foreign language document, or
- whilst giving no certification as to the meaning of the document, is nevertheless satisfied that the applicant understands and accepts the contents of the document.

Foreign language documents may contain wording that binds the applicant (and sometimes the notary) to obligations or statements that neither intends or is able to satisfy. It is not acceptable for a notary to simply witness the applicant's signature on the basis that "It doesn't matter if I don't understand it as long as you do". The notary must also attach a certificate satisfying one of the two requirements above. In addition, the name of the applicant must be identifiable on the foreign document either in English, or via a comparison with the foreign name as shown on the passport.