

Reproduction of the British passport

Guidance approved by Her Majesty's Passport Office and the Lord Chamberlain's Office

April 2014

OGL

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is to describe the circumstances in which the UK Passport may be copied. This guidance, authorised by the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, has been produced in consultation and has been approved by Her Majesty's Passport Office and the Lord Chamberlain's Office.

2. Background

2.1 Crown copyright

The UK Passport (the Passport) is subject to Crown copyright protection under section 163 of the [Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988](#). This means that it may not lawfully be reproduced without the prior permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO), an official who, as Queen's Printer and Queen's Printer for Scotland, manages Crown copyright on behalf of Her Majesty under the terms of Letters Patent. Crown copyright is administered on behalf of the Controller by HMSO by The National Archives.

2.2 The Royal Arms

The front cover of the UK Passport contains an image of the Royal Arms. The Royal Arms are the property of Her Majesty the Queen and may be used for official purposes by the Monarch and members of the Royal Family, by Her Majesty's government and its departments, Her Majesty's Armed Forces, and by Royal Warrant Holders only.

Use of the Royal Arms without permission is a breach of Crown copyright which is a criminal offence.

2.3 Official documents

UK passports are official documents issued by the Her Majesty's Passport Office. UK Variant Passports are also issued by Passport Offices in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and British Overseas Territories.

Failure to ensure the security of these documents can lead to:

- fraudulent opening of bank accounts, obtaining credit cards, loans, state benefits and duplicate documents, such as passports and driving licences
- stolen 'identities', creating difficulties in obtaining loans, credit cards or mortgages

3. Reproducing the passport

3.1 Definition of copying

For the purposes of this guidance, the term copying includes:

- photocopying
- scanning
- filming
- reproduction in any other medium, including the placing of material on the internet

3.2 Record keeping

The UK Passport contains the personal details of the passport holder. HM Passport Office advises that:

- passport holders should record/photocopy the information on this page, and keep it securely, and separate from the passport. This will help the HM Passport Office to process an application for a replacement passport if the current passport is lost or is stolen
- passport holders should only agree to the reproduction of the personal details page in the passport if they are satisfied that the person, or organisation, will protect the copy from unauthorised disclosure
- unless there is a legal requirement, the organisations which require to retain a reproduction of the personal details in the passport, must first obtain the consent of the individual
- organisations should retain a record of the consent and should store the passport details securely
- photocopies of the personal details page of the passport may be made, for the purposes of record keeping only, by the following persons:
 - ✓ the holder/owner of the passport
 - ✓ notaries, solicitors, banks and government departments
 - ✓ a person or institution subject to the requirements of the Money Laundering Regulations
 - ✓ a person certifying that identification checks required under these Money Laundering Regulations have taken place
- where copies of the bio-data, observations or visa pages are required, copies may be taken in either black and white or colour, and may be held electronically or in paper format. The person or organisation taking the image must ensure that it complies with the [Data Protection Act](#) when holding personal information

- notarised or certified photocopies of passports are not acceptable as proof of identity
- only the original document may be used as evidence of identity; but a photocopy may be made to record the fact that identification checks have taken place. It is for organisations to ensure that they comply with requirements under legislation, and the information in this document does not seek to interpret legal requirements on the taking of copies of passports

3.3 Restrictions on reproduction

The image of the cover of the Passport including the Royal Arms, or the details pages of the Passport may not be used:

- × as the main focus of the cover of a work, for example, the dust jacket or cover of a publication
- × in advertising
- × in facsimile form for use as a passport holder or cover

3.4 Sale of passports

Expired or cancelled passports are returned to the holder. If the old passport is not required, HM Passport Office advises the secure disposal of the passport in order to protect your identity.

Passports remain the property of HM government and they may not be sold by the person named in the passport, or any other person.

If HM Passport Office becomes aware of any attempt to sell a passport, either expired or in date, it will be assumed that the passport is no longer required and HM Passport Office will request that it be returned.

3.5 Use of passports in film, television and theatre

Permission is not normally given for requests to reproduce the UK Passport in total. However permission may be granted for use in film, television and theatre, with the agreed undertaking that the facsimile or 'prop':

- is amended in a way that may not be mistaken for an official document, for example, the watermarked pages are significantly different from the official version
- does not include the number or security features contained inside the passport
- does not contain the details of a living individual such as name, address, birth date, passport number, and next of kin
- is available only for those scenes in which it is required for filming

- is kept in secure storage when not required for filming or during breaks in filming
- or any prototypes or unused replicas are destroyed on completion of filming - these items **must not** be stored or archived

4. Further information

Requests for further clarification of the policy in this field should be sent to either:

Her Majesty's Passport Office

2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

email: mpenquiries@hmpo.gsi.gov.uk

The National Archives

The Information Policy Team
Kew
Richmond
Surrey TW9 4DU

email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk