ZE practical guide

Documents & attestation guide

Original, certified copy, translation, and consular attestation are not names for the same action. Start with the receiving authority, country of issue, and language before handing over an original or paying for translation.

For: For anyone preparing personal, academic, or commercial documents for use with an authority in or outside Malaysia.

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Do you have a written list from the receiving authority specifying language, original or copy, and the accepted attestation path?

Decision brief: the receiving authority determines the document order, not the other way around

The guide separates originals, certified copies, translation, and consular attestation, showing when to return to the receiving authority or responsible mission.

4 layers

Original, copy, translation, attestation[1]

Each layer must be aligned to the receiving authority; one does not automatically replace another.

EN

Foreign-document language[1]

Wisma Putra refers to translation of foreign-language documents into English in its guidance.

Important

Foreign mission role[1]

For foreign-origin documents, the instructions refer to authentication by the relevant foreign mission before Malaysian Consular Division submission.

Original / notarised

Copy status[1]

Wisma Putra notes that a copy may need notary endorsement in stated circumstances when the original is not shown.

Document type changes the verification path

Route	Suitable for	Key point	First move
Local academic document	A certificate or document issued by a Malaysian educational institution for use outside the country.	The guidance refers to endorsement from the relevant education ministry or department before Consular Division submission.	Ask the receiving authority for accepted attestation form and language before any translation.[1]
Foreign-origin document	A document issued outside Malaysia for use with a Malaysian authority or another mission.	Wisma Putra refers to relevant foreign-mission authentication and English translation within its published path.	Request a written acceptance chain from your receiving authority and identify the country of issue before any stamp.[1][3]
Commercial document	A certificate of origin, invoice, bill of lading, or company document needing endorsement for external use.	The guidance names different endorsing bodies by document type, such as a chamber of commerce, notary public, or Ministry of Health.	Classify the document by use purpose, not title alone, then check the authority named in the guidance.[1]

Document journey from issuer to receiving authority

1 **Identify the receiving authority** File owner

Request a written list identifying purpose, language, original or copy, validity, and accepted attestation route.[1]

Output: Documented receiving requirements

2 **Check original and details** File owner

Match name, date, passport number, or reference across every document, and keep a clear digital copy before handing over the original.[1]

Output: Document consistency log

3 Obtain accepted translation

Translator or accepted provider

Follow the receiving authority's language. Wisma Putra names a Court Translator, ITBM, PPM/DBP, and a foreign-mission-certified translator among listed providers.[1][2]

Output: Presentable translation

4 Endorse and attest

Issuer, mission, and Consular Division

Follow the written sequence for your case, record who keeps the original and who receives a copy and when, and do not assume one route for every country.[1][3]

Output: Documented authentication chain

5 Submit and follow up

File owner or representative

Submit only the requested version and obtain a receipt or confirmation. If a new request appears, return to the receiving authority's list rather than restarting everything randomly.[1]

Output: Submission and follow-up record

Control file: copies, dates, and a route for every document

Source and original[1]

Avoid damage or loss of a hard-to-replace document

- Original, where it is held, reference number, and issue date.
- Clear PDF or scan before any handover or dispatch.
- Record of who received the original and agreed return date when a representative is used.

Translation and endorsement[1][2]

Track the accepted version, not every available version

- Translation language and provider or translator the receiving authority requires.
- Copy of stamp or endorsement, authority name, and procedure date.
- Clear instruction on whether the document needs an embassy, consulate, notary, or ministry.

Submission and acceptance[1]

Avoid needless re-attestation

- Receiving authority checklist and its version or official email date.
- Submission receipt, tracking number, or image of the delivered version.
- Record of deficiencies or comments and deadline for each response.

Pause and ask in these situations

Name or date discrepancy[1]

- A discrepancy between passport and certificate or between original and translation may need a linking document or explanation, not simply another stamp.
- **Action:** Ask the receiving authority which linking document it accepts before re-translating or attesting.

Foreign document or Apostille[1][3]

- The chain differs by issuing country, mission, and receiving authority; an Apostille alone does not prove every authority will accept it or that every step is removed.
- **Action:** Check the HCCH register, then confirm the path in writing with the receiving authority and relevant embassy or mission.

Sensitive or irreplaceable original[1]

- Handing over an original without a record can expose you to loss or delay another process that needs it.
- **Action:** Do not hand an original to an intermediary or private party without a receipt identifying document, purpose, recipient, and return date.

Identify the receiving authority before choosing an attestation path

There is no one chain valid for every document. The country of issue, language, document type, and receiving authority determine

what is actually needed.

Four layers not to confuse[1]

- Original: the document issued by the competent authority, with issue date and any required reference or stamp.
- Certified copy: a copy matching the original through an accepted party. Wisma Putra may require notary endorsement if the original is not presented in specified situations.
- Translation: language conversion through an accepted provider. Do not assume an uncertified translation or a notary translation is accepted in every pathway.
- Attestation/endorsement: official verification of stamps and signatures before use with another authority or mission.

Before translating or attesting[1][2]

- Ask the receiving authority for written requirements: original or copy, language, issue-validity window, and accepted attestation route.
- Match name, date, and passport number across all documents. A small discrepancy can require an explanation or linking document before acceptance.
- Scan files before handing over originals and retain an organised copy named by date and authority. Do not rely on an unclear phone photograph.

How do local, foreign, and commercial documents differ?

Wisma Putra explains general pathways, but receiving-authority acceptance governs the individual case. Use these stages as a

review map, not a substitute for written instructions.

Documents issued in Malaysia[1]

- Wisma Putra states that federal or state government documents can be verified without a second endorsement, with the situation differing if the original is not shown.
- For certificates from Malaysian educational institutions, the instructions refer to endorsement with printed name, position, and stamp from the relevant education ministry or department before Consular Division submission.
- For commercial invoices, shipping documents, or certificates of origin, the instructions require specific endorsements from a chamber of commerce, notary public, or Ministry of Health according to document type.

Documents issued outside Malaysia[1][3]

- Wisma Putra's instructions state that a foreign-origin document needs authentication from the relevant foreign mission in Malaysia before Consular Division submission, and foreign-language documents must be translated into English.
- The receiving authority or embassy can specify a different route by country of issue. Do not start any authentication chain without asking for the accepted version for your own transaction.
- Check Apostille Convention status in the HCCH register and the receiving authority's position. Do not assume an Apostille alone shortens every requirement in Malaysia or at a particular embassy.

Build a file that can be tracked and reviewed

The goal is not collecting stamps. The goal is allowing the receiving authority to trace the original, translation, and attestation

easily. Keep copies, correspondence, and dates for every stage.

Pre-submission checklist[1][2]

- Written instructions from the receiving authority, and the original or certified copy in the required form.
- An accepted translation where needed. Wisma Putra names a Malaysian Court Translator, ITBM, PPM/DBP, or a translator appointed or certified by a foreign mission among options in its guidance.
- Applicant or representative identification and an authorisation letter when acting through a representative, in line with Consular Division instructions.

When should you pause and ask?[1][3]

- If an authority requests a newer copy, a different language, or embassy authentication, pause the general route and ask for its written sequence for the specific case.
- If name, date, or passport number differs between original and translation, do not assume translation alone resolves it; ask the receiving authority which linking document is needed.
- If the document is sensitive or irreplaceable, do not send or hand over the original to an intermediary without a clear receipt naming the authority, purpose, and return timing.

Final checklist

- ✓ Written requirements from receiving authority
- ✓ Original or certified copy
- ✓ Accepted translation where needed
- ✓ Issue date and validity of each document
- ✓ Digital copies and authorisation letter where needed

Official sources

[1] **Attestation of official documents, certificates, and commercial invoices** — Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia — Wisma Putra
https://www.kln.gov.my/web/guest/attestation-of-documents

[2] **Official translation services** — Malaysian Institute of Translation & Books — ITBM
https://www.itbm.com.my/services/translation

[3] **Apostille Convention status table** — Hague Conference on Private International Law — HCCH
https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/conventions/status-table/?cid=41

This guide does not decide document acceptance for your transaction. Differences in receiving authority, country of issue, and language make written verification before attestation, translation, or payment essential.