

# Changes to identity verification and signing deeds

## News story

We're making it easier to verify a person's identity and sign deeds for land registration purposes.



From Monday 4 May, we have introduced temporary changes when verifying a person's identity and for signing deeds. In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak HM Land Registry is regularly reviewing its practice, policy and procedures, taking guidance from customer feedback.

## Identity verification

In addition to conveyancers and chartered legal executives, verification can now be undertaken by people who work, or have worked, in certain professions including:

- retired conveyancers, chartered legal executives, solicitors and barristers
- bank officials and regulated financial advisers
- medical doctors, dentists and veterinary surgeons
- chartered and certified accountants
- police officers and officers in the UK armed forces
- teachers and college and university teaching staff
- Members of Parliament and Welsh Assembly members
- UK civil servants of senior executive officer (SE0) grade or above
- magistrates

The verification can also be done by way of a video call.

Further details on these changes are available in our new [practice guide 67A: temporary changes to HM Land Registry's evidence of identity requirements](#).

# Signing deeds

HM Land Registry will accept deeds that have been signed using the 'Mercury signing approach'.

This means that, for land registration purposes, a signature page will need to be signed in pen and witnessed in person (not by a video call). The signature will then need to be captured, with a scanner or a camera, to produce a PDF, JPEG or other suitable copy of the signed signature page. Each party sends a single email to their conveyancer to which is attached the final agreed copy of the document and the copy of the signed signature page.

This is effective from Monday 4 May. [Practice guide 8: execution of deeds](#) has been updated with more information.

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## 1. 4 May 2020

We have added a link to new practice guide 67A: temporary changes to HM Land Registry's evidence of identity requirements.

## 2. 1 May 2020

First published.