



Response to the questionnaire on diplomas and other education documents within the framework of the Apostille Convention

30 May 2005

NEW ZEALAND

1. Criterion for characterising diplomas as public documents

The competent authority (The Department of Internal Affairs) issues Apostilles for certificates issued by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, which is a government department. This relates to government-issued secondary school qualifications. We hold copies of the relevant seals and signatures for verification purposes.

In New Zealand, Apostilles are only issued for documents issued by government departments and Notaries Public. University degrees must be notarised first, as Universities are not core government departments and we do not hold copies of their seals.

2. Procedure leading to an Apostille in relation to diplomas – Nature of the public document to which the Apostille relates

Unless issued by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, documents must be notarised before an Apostille is issued. Normally the Notary Public notarises a copy of the diploma. Documents do not require prior certification. Apostilles are only issued for tertiary qualifications issued in New Zealand that have been notarised.

Procedure. The client has the document or a copy of the document notarised, unless it has been issued by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, in which case it can be apostilled directly. It is then sent to the competent authority. An Apostille is affixed by way of a cover sheet and the documents are bound together and sealed with the seal of the Department of Internal Affairs.

3. Competent authority to issue Apostilles

There is only one competent authority in New Zealand, the Department of Internal Affairs. There are no plans to designate a specific competent authority for the issuing of Apostilles in relation to diplomas.

4. Original or certified copy?

The competent authority will issue an Apostille for a notarised copy of a diploma, but only when it is clear that the Notary Public has sighted the original.

5. On-line diplomas

To date the competent authority has not been requested to issue an Apostille for an on-line diploma. To the best of our knowledge none of our state's institutions offer on-line diplomas.

6. Raising the public awareness?

We do not have a view on this issue. The competent authority issues Apostilles for very few diplomas, and they are all for documents issued by one of the seven Universities in New Zealand or by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. However the competent authority would be happy to add a special note to an Apostille if this is considered desirable by other countries.

At this stage, we have no other comments or suggestions on this issue.