

Poste Restante Index

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F1	Service Information	Collection Counter Procedures	F9
F2	Costs	Uncollected Counter Procedures	F10
F3	Address Requirements		F11
F4	Identification Requirements		F12
F5	Collected Information		F13
F6	Uncollected Mail		F14
F7	Retention of Items		F15
F8	Receipt Counter Procedures		F16

- If you're travelling in the UK, you can collect mail addressed to you at any Post Office.
- The person sending you mail simply needs to address it as POSTE RESTANTE mail.
- You can only use the Poste Restante service for up to three months in any one UK town (except in exceptional circumstances).
- The service is specifically for people who are travelling.
- We may withdraw the UK service if we think it's being abused (i.e. if the addressee has a fixed address in the area).
- We hold mail posted inside the UK to another UK destination, including Royal Mail Signed For items, for 18 days. We hold mail posted abroad to UK destinations for 21 days. We hold mail for someone at sea for up to two months.
- You cannot redirect mail to or from a Poste Restante address but the sender can request that we return an uncollected item before the standard two week holding period.

Availability of service

Poste Restante is a facility provided for the convenience of travellers who are away from their home, and who do not have a recognised postal address for receipt of mail (both letters and parcels) in the delivery area requested.

Poste Restante is available both in the UK and abroad and enables travellers to collect their mail from a local Post Office branch.

If the prospective sender of a Poste Restante item wishes to know the address of the nearest Post Office branch (within the UK) to which they can direct the item:

Continued on next page...

Availability of Service

- Advise them to telephone the Post Office external Helpline on 08457 223344 (local call rate) for assistance or visit www.postoffice.co.uk.

Please note: In some countries the addressee is charged a special fee on parcels addressed 'Poste Restante'.

Conditions of use

Poste Restante may not be used by any person who has a residential or business address in the postal delivery area to which an item is addressed.

The service is provided free of charge in the UK, but it may not be used in the same town for more than three months.

Please note: Some foreign postal administrations may charge a collection fee when the customer calls to collect their mail.

Royal Mail Special Delivery items

The delivery guarantee for Royal Mail Special Delivery items still applies when they are addressed care of 'Poste Restante' to a Post Office branch address.

- Poste Restante is free of charge.
- Any charges levied by HM Customs and Excise are collected from the addressee by Royal Mail, together with a handling fee of £4.00.
- The handling fee is to offset the costs incurred by Royal Mail in collecting the charges on behalf of HM Customs and Excise.

Inland Poste Restante

Letters must include the recipient's surname, and be addressed to a specific Post Office branch. The words 'Poste Restante' or 'To be called for' must be included in the address.

For example: Letters addressed as in this example would be delivered to the Crown Office in Tonbridge, Kent:

Mr J Jones
Poste Restante
TONBRIDGE
Kent
Postcode (if known)

Please note: Letters addressed to a person on board a ship should include the name of the ship in the address.

Letters not fully addressed

If a letter is not fully addressed it will be delivered to one of the following:

- A Crown Office, if there is one in the area where the item is addressed
- an agency branch, if there is not a Crown Office

If a letter is addressed to a specific London postal area, the letter will be delivered to the nearest Post Office branch that handles Poste Restante items.

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Any letters addressed to the recipient at 'Poste Restante, London', which do not include a postcode will be delivered to:

Trafalgar Square Post Office
24-28 William IV Street
LONDON
WC2N 4DL

Unacceptably addressed items

If the name on a Poste Restante item is:

- made up of initials only, without a name
- a forename (christian name) without a surname
- a clearly fictitious name

the item will be considered as unacceptably addressed and will be treated by Royal Mail as undeliverable.

International Poste Restante

All items sent to a Poste Restante address abroad must bear the full name of the addressee (without use of initials, abbreviations, forename only, fictitious names etc.).

The form of address below applies equally to visitors to the UK who wish to receive mail by Poste Restante from abroad.

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The address must include:

- the words 'POSTE RESTANTE'
- the name of the town
- the postcode if known
- the province, state or department where appropriate
- the country name

For example:

- Mrs. B Newton
- POSTE RESTANTE
- 00100 Rome
- Italy

Letters addressed to a person on board a ship should include the name of the ship in the address.

There may be specific instructions for addressing Poste Restante items to particular destinations.

- Always refer to the individual country information section of Your Instant Guide to Postal Services when you offer advice to customers wishing to use the service.

Evidence of Identity for Collecting Mail

When a customer calls to collect a Post Restante item, they will need to produce satisfactory evidence of identity.

Inland Poste Restante

The following are examples of the sorts of items that are acceptable as identification in UK Post Office branches:

- bank or Girobank cheque card
- credit card
- national passport or identity card
- full (not provisional) Driving Licence (Paper and photo versions are both acceptable)
- membership card of nationally known Association, e.g. AA, RAC, etc.
- Military photo ID
- current Trade Union or Trade Association membership card
- National Savings book
- personal cheque book

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International Poste Restante

Generally, acceptable items of identification for the International Poste Resante service are:

- personal cheque book
- credit card
- National Savings book
- full driving licence (not provisional)
- council rent book
- medical card
- Military photo/Services (Forces) identity card
- birth, adoption, or marriage certificate
- standard UK or National passport

However, as regulations abroad are subject to alteration, customers should be advised to use their standard UK or other national passport for identification, if possible.

- You can collect your mail at any Post Office branch. To find the most convenient UK Post Office address for a specific location, contact the Post Office (External) Helpline on 0845 722 3344.
- You can collect Letters sent to you while you're travelling, including Royal Mail Signed For
- You can collect your mail during the normal opening hours of the Post Office branch.
- You must show proof of identity.
- If you want someone to collect mail for you, they must bring written permission from you, and proof of both their identity and yours.


- We return uncollected mail to the sender.
- If we can't see a return address, we treat the mail as undeliverable.
- We return uncollected mail **18 days** for an item **posted in the UK** and delivered to a UK Post Office
- We return uncollected mail **21 days** for an item **posted overseas** and delivered to a UK Post Office
- However, the sender can ask for the uncollected item to be returned sooner - by requesting this on the envelope.

Retention of items (Page 1 of 1)

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Poste Restante items are normally kept at Post Office branches for the following periods:

Inland letters	two weeks
Letters from overseas	one month
Letters addressed to a seaport for a person on a ship which is due to arrive	two months



Please note: Poste Restante letters held at a Post Office branch must be checked regularly to ensure that any still on hand at the end of the retention period are disposed of **see**

Uncollected Counter Procedures



F1

Request by the sender for return of the letter

A postal item bearing a message on its outer cover for return within a shorter period of time than those shown above should be returned as requested.

A request by the sender for the return of a Poste Restante item before the expiry of the retention period may be complied with if it appears genuine, for example where the addressee has left the postal district or is not coming to collect the item.

Receipt of Poste Restante items

When a Poste Restante item is received at your branch:

- Check that it has been delivered to the correct branch, according to the directions on the mail item

Addressing of Mail


F1

Guaranteed Delivery services items

- Sign the delivery officer's Delivery Card P4550
- Datestamp the item clearly on the back to show the date of receipt:
 - if the item is a postcard, datestamp the address side only
 - if the item is fragile, write the date of receipt on the back
- Do not mark philatelic items in any way (datestamp a piece of paper and attach it to the item)
- Place the item in a secure area until it is signed for.

Please note: Customs charged items or surcharged items requiring payment should also be kept in a secure area.

Other items

Place them in the drawer/fitting designated in your branch for holding Poste Restante items, ideally in a position out of sight of customers, ready for collection.

When a customer calls to collect a Poste Restante item:

- Ask for satisfactory evidence of identity unless the customer is known to you. (See Also)

Identification
requirements



Royal Mail Signed For and Royal Mail Special Delivery items

- Obtain the customer's signature on a Delivery Card P4550
- Write the item reference number on the card
- Ask the customer (or agent) to print and sign their name
- Datestamp the Delivery Card P4550 and file it locally.

The screenshot shows a 'Confirming your delivery' form. Red arrows point to the following fields:

- Datestamp:** A circular field in the top right corner.
- Customer or agent must complete this section:** A section containing a signature line and a name line.
- Input the time:** A field labeled 'Time' with a dropdown menu.
- Bar-code reference number:** A field labeled 'Bar-code reference number'.

Datestamp

Customer or agent must
complete this section

Input the time

Bar-code reference number

Collection by an Agent

If an agent calls to collect a Poste Restante item on behalf of the addressee:

- Ask for evidence of identity for both the addressee and the agent
- Obtain from the agent written proof that they have the addressee's permission to collect the item (e.g. a signed letter of authorisation from the addressee)
- Where possible, check that the signature on the letter of authorisation matches the signature on the form of identity presented by the agent.

Uncollected Letters

- Examine Poste Restante letters regularly to check that they have not reached the end of their retention period.

If an item has reached the end of its retention period:

- Mark the item 'Not Called For — Return To Sender'
- Draw a line through the Poste Restante address so as to cancel it without making it illegible
- Initial and date the item for return.

Mailwork branches only

- Affix an 'Unable to deliver' label P3960 on the item adjacent to the Poste Restante address
- Complete it as follows:

The image shows a 'Royal Mail' form with the following fields and instructions:

- Not called for**: A checkbox with a red arrow pointing to it from the instruction 'Tick the 'Not called for' box'.
- Date**: A field for inputting the date, with a red arrow pointing to it from the instruction 'Input the date and your initials'.
- Initials**: A field for inputting initials, with a red arrow pointing to it from the instruction 'Input the date and your initials'.

Tick the 'Not called for' box

Input the date and your initials

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All branches

Return items as indicated below:

Uncollected items from National Savings and Investments

- Send to National Savings in the appropriate National Savings envelope.

Uncollected ordinary and Royal Mail Signed For items

- Place in an ordinary letter bag.

Uncollected Guaranteed Delivery services items

- Input the item on the Horizon Online TM system as a prepaid Royal Mail Special Delivery, from the Front Office menu select:
 - Postal Services
 - Other Postal
 - Postal items Undelivered Priority
- Scan the bar-code on the item being returned.

Please note: If the bar-code is not read after the third attempt, input it manually.

- Select the reason for return from the picklist displayed

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- If the actual reason for return is not shown, then ' No Answer (After GDT)' should be selected

Please note: You should select the correct reason from the picklist applicable to the item being returned. Before or after GDT should be selected as to whether or not the item had the first delivery attempted before or after its applicable GDT. If this is not known, then 'Before GDT' should be selected.

- Place the item in a secure place with any other Priority Service items.

Please note: When you generate your Despatch Reports in readiness for the collection the scanned items will appear on them.