



Home Office

Notebook guidance

Notebook guidance

About this guidance

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| <p>The purpose of a notebook</p> <p>The contents of a notebook</p> <p>Checking notebooks</p> <p>Keeping and storing completed notebooks</p> <p>Lost or stolen notebooks</p> <p>How notebooks can be used in evidence</p> | <p>This guidance tells criminal investigators in Immigration Enforcement Criminal and Financial Investigations (CFI) teams how to obtain, use and store an official notebook.</p> <p>The guidance contains Home Office policy relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• why notebooks are used (including the use and issue of notebooks)• the contents of notebooks (including how to make notes when it is not operationally appropriate to use an official notebook)• checking notebooks• retention and storage of notebooks• how notebooks can be used in evidence• an example notebook entry• useful notebook inserts <p>Changes to this guidance – This page tells you what has changed since the previous version of this guidance.</p> <p>Contact – This page tells you who to contact for help if your manager can't answer your question.</p> <p>Information owner - This page tells you about this version of the guidance and who owns it.</p> | <p>In this section</p> <p>Changes to this guidance</p> <p>Contact</p> <p>Information owner</p> |
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Notebook guidance: changes to this guidance

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This page lists changes to the 'Notebook' guidance, with the most recent at the top.

| Date of the change | Details of the change |
|--------------------|--|
| 19 November 2015 | Change request: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• housekeeping changes• clarification to basic notebook entries |
| 23 January 2014 | Six month review by the modernised guidance team: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minor housekeeping changes. |
| | For previous changes to this guidance you will find all earlier versions in the archive. See related link: Notebook guidance - archive . |

Related links

See also

[Contact](#)

[Information owner](#)

Links to staff intranet removed

Notebook guidance

The purpose of a notebook

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| <p>About this guidance</p> <p>The purpose of a notebook</p> <p>The contents of a notebook</p> <p>Checking notebooks</p> <p>Keeping and storing completed notebooks</p> <p>Lost or stolen notebooks</p> <p>How notebooks can be used in evidence</p> | <p>This section tells criminal investigators in Immigration Enforcement Criminal and Financial Investigations (CFI) teams about the purpose of using notebooks, the issue of notebooks and how to use them.</p> <p>The purpose of a notebook</p> <p>During an investigation or operation you must use notebooks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• comply with the requirements of section 23 of the Criminal Procedure and Investigation Act 1996 (CPIA)• meet the 'best' procedures for evidence <p>You are required to make an evidential record when you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• observe, obtain or witness any material that would be considered relevant to any criminal investigation• take action to secure evidence after witnessing events <p>You must maintain a notebook to record evidence, throughout an ongoing investigation, of what was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• seen• found• heard• done <p>You must expect to provide witness statements, and give evidence in court, based on information you have written in a notebook.</p> <p>The notes also:</p> | <p>In this section</p> <p>Issuing notebooks</p> <p>Using notebooks</p> <p>Related links</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p> <p>External link</p> <p>Criminal Procedure and Investigation Act 1996 Section 23</p> |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• confirm the evidence was gained at the time rather than at a later date• help colleagues, management and lawyers to see what evidence you are able to present in court | |
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For more information about witness statements, see [related link](#).

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Issuing notebooks

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What criminal investigators do if the usual issuing officer is not available

You can ask another issuing officer for a new notebook, and that issuing officer will record the issue details in their own register.

You must make sure you obtain a new notebook before going out on an Immigration Enforcement operation if you think your current notebook does not have enough remaining pages for you to take any necessary notes. You must cross through all unused pages in the current notebook before you take it out of use and replace it with a new one.

You must never have more than one notebook in use at any time.

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Using notebooks

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If you do not complete a notebook entry as soon as possible:

- it may not be regarded as contemporaneous
- you may not be permitted to refresh your memory from it at court

Sometimes you will:

- write 'trigger notes' in your notebook
- refer to some secondary notes at the time

If you do make trigger or secondary notes you must expand them in the official notebook afterwards.

For some useful inserts to keep with your notebook on using your notebook and noting Home Office cautions, see related links:

- Use of the notebook
- Home Office cautions

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The contents of a notebook

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as the entry time

- if you do not make the entry at the time and you are making it as soon as possible afterwards, you must:
 - note the time the event took place in the body of the notebook
 - note the time you are making the entry in the margin
- if you make a late entry after you have ruled through, signed, dated and timed an entry then you must bring it to the attention of the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) or Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI)- they must then countersign your cross-referenced changes

Effective use of the index

The Home Office notebooks have an index at the front of the notebook, known as IE100A.

At the time of making an entry into your notebook you must complete the index with the following information, the:

- date of the entry
- subject of the entry
- pages the entry covers

By completing the index it acts as a useful reference tool when trying to find past entries in your notebook, particularly when referring to your notebook in court.

When to use a separate page

You must use a separate page for each:

- surveillance period
- operation
- task
- incident

Blank spaces and deletions

You must:

- rule through, sign, date and time blank spaces at the end of a series of entries

- make deletions with a single line, initialled and dated

You must not:

- leave blank spaces between words or any lines left between entries
- use correction fluid or other types of erasing products
- rub out mistakes with an eraser or strike through deletions in heavy pen

Comments or replies made by suspects

When an entry contains any comments or replies to questions made by a suspect, you must:

- read the notebook entry to the suspect (when it is practical)
- include any unsolicited (volunteered) comments made outside of an interview which you consider to be relevant to the offence
- ask them to confirm whether the entry is accurate
- ask the suspect to sign and date under the entry
- record any disagreement and ask the suspect to sign it to confirm
- record any refusal to sign entry

If a second officer is present and has witnessed the suspect's comments or answers, you must ask them to confirm the entry by signing and dating under it.

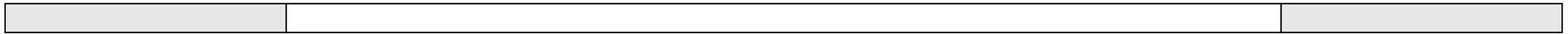
Recording diagrams

These can be very useful to remind you about a certain event or location, for example a room layout. You must refer to any diagrams you make in your notebook in any later witness statement.

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Adopting another officer's notebook entries

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Notebook guidance

Taking notes if unable to use official notebooks

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- digital Dictaphones or other digital recorders which do not rely on a tape recording the contents
- electronic diaries or other electronic media that has the ability to record information

The only exception to this is the use of mobile phones to record evidence in the form of a SMS text message.

Recording notes from SMS text messages

As soon as possible after the event, you must record a full note in the surveillance log using the SMS text to refresh your memory. At the first opportunity you must:

- photocopy the text message off the mobile phone screen
- endorse the copy as a true copy, signing and dating it
- record a brief explanation as to why this method of note taking was used

The photocopy of the phone's screen showing the text message sent then becomes the 'ancillary note' and you must attach it to the surveillance log.

Similarly, if you decided to compose a text message and save this in draft without sending it to colleagues, you must follow the same process as above for recording what you saw or overheard in a surveillance log or your notebook.

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Recording sensitive information

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Checking notebooks

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Keeping and storing completed notebooks

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Lost or stolen notebooks

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How notebooks can be used in evidence

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| <p>About this guidance</p> <p>The purpose of a notebook</p> <p>The contents of a notebook</p> <p>Checking notebooks</p> <p>Keeping and storing completed notebooks</p> <p>Lost or stolen notebooks</p> <p>How notebooks can be used in evidence</p> | <p>This page explains who to contact for more help with a question about the notebook policy and guidance.</p> <p>If you have read this guidance and still need more help, you must first ask your line manager.</p> <div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 10px;"><p style="text-align: center;">Official sensitive– start of section</p><p>The information in this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use only</p><p style="text-align: center;">Official sensitive– end of section</p></div> <p>Changes to this guidance can only be made by the guidance, rules and forms team (GRaFT). If you think the policy content needs amending you must contact the Criminal investigation operational guidance team, who will ask the GRaFT to update the guidance, if appropriate.</p> <p>The GRaFT will accept direct feedback on broken links, missing information or the format, style and navigability of this guidance. You can send these to Guidance – making changes</p> | <p>In this section</p> <p>Changes to this guidance</p> <p>Information owner</p> <p>Related links</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p> |
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This page tells you about this version of the 'Notebook' guidance, and who owns it.

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| Version | 7.0 |
| Valid from date | 18 November 2015 |
| Policy owner | Removed Official - Sensitive |
| Cleared by director | Removed Official - Sensitive |
| Director's role | Director, immigration enforcement |
| Clearance date | 7 June 2012 |
| This version approved for publication by | Removed Official - Sensitive |
| Approver's role | Assistant Director, Criminal and Financial Investigations |
| Approval date | 14 August 2015 |

Changes to this guidance can only be made by the guidance, rules and forms team (GRaFT). If you think the policy content needs amending you must contact the Criminal investigation operational guidance team, who will ask the GRaFT to update the guidance, if appropriate.

The GRaFT will accept direct feedback on broken links, missing information or the format, style and navigability of this guidance. You can send these to Guidance – making changes.

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Related links