

Reference: 02124609

Information Requests  
[information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:information.requests@ofcom.org.uk)

23 January 2026

Dear,

### Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning Royal Mail services.

We received this request on 23 December 2025 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

#### Your request & our response

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*"I have reviewed the Conditions which you impose on Postal Operators: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/post/market-performance/conditions> - to which I was kindly directed.*

*I cannot see anything in the documentation relating to the provision of "Signed For" services. Specifically, I am interested in the Royal Mail's (a private company) 'First Class Signed for' and 'Special Delivery' services. The links to the product promotional pages are:*

<https://www.royalmail.com/sending/uk/special-delivery-guaranteed-1pm>

<https://www.royalmail.com/sending/uk/signed-for-1st-class>

*Both these services promise that the sent letter will be signed for by the recipient and a visual copy or confirmation of that signature will be provided to the sender (customer) via an online portal.*

*"Promise" is to be understood in quite a loose sense.*

*I have two questions."*

- 1. In your view, does the scope of regulatory conditions imposed by Ofcom on postal operators include or exclude Signed For Services? This would appear to be a simple Yes, or No question, though, of course I am ready to be advised otherwise.*
- 2. If the answer to 1. is "yes", (unambiguously or with some qualifications) - can you tell me if you have any policies relating to the expected success rate/unacceptable failure rate? What percentage of letters sent via a 'Signed For' service would you expect to receive a signature? (This could be handled separately from 'lost' cases, so one could ask 'what percentage of 'Signed For' letters would you expect to be delivered and signed for?). For clarity, and to avoid possible confusion; this question is not about delivery times. The question relates completely to whether a 'signed for' item receives a signature.*

Having considered your request, we note that this is not a valid request under the FOI Act as it is asking for views/explanations/advice, and not information we hold. To be helpful, we have set out some general background below and pointed you to some publications you might find helpful.

'Signed For services' fall within the wider scope of services requiring "proof of delivery", so while there is an obligation for services to include such "proof of delivery" based on some "evidence from the recipient" the requirement does not specifically focus on obtaining a signature. Obtaining a signature remains one of a range of options for "proof of delivery". Here are the relevant conditions in case you wish to further explore the meaning of "proof of delivery": [DESIGNATED USP CONDITION 1](#) (see page 4).

In 2021, Royal Mail asked Ofcom to consider modifying our regulations relating to "proof of delivery" to reflect new technology allowing effective evidence to be gathered without reliance on signatures. As part of a public consultation, we proposed to retain regulations without any amendments, with Royal Mail making [further submissions](#) supporting new methods of obtaining "proof of delivery" (see answer to Consultation Q5.1 at pages 33-34). This request followed adoption of alternative technological methods used for parcel deliveries during the emergency period initiated following Government guidance for social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic. Ofcom discusses the impact on services requiring "proof of delivery" in the [Post Monitoring Report 2020-21](#), paragraph 4.6.

We set out our considerations of this policy and our decision to not make any regulatory amendments in the 2022 [Review of Postal Regulations](#) Statement – see paragraphs 5.197-5.198 and 5.214-5.216. Our decision focused on an assessment of "evidence from the recipient" required to act as "proof of delivery", recognising some circumstances where a photo may not be sufficient in achieving the expected level of security set out in regulations and relevant service terms and conditions.

We do not hold information on the rate/percentage of '*Signed For*' letters.

Yours sincerely,

## Information Requests

### Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress. Please email the Information Requests team ([information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:information.requests@ofcom.org.uk)) to request an internal review.

### Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).