



Home Office

# How to decide if an application is a UK or overseas submission

**Version 15.0**

His Majesty's Passport Office guidance on deciding if an application is a United Kingdom or overseas application.

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# About: How to decide if an application is a UK or overseas submission

This guidance tells His Majesty's Passport Office operational staff, what:

- we consider:
  - a UK application (submission)
  - an overseas application (submission)
- why it's important to correctly treat an application as a UK or overseas submission
- what to consider when changing:
  - a UK submission to an overseas submission
  - an overseas submission to a UK submission

Separate guidance is available for how customers apply from the UK and overseas.

## Contacts

If you have any questions about the guidance and your line manager or senior caseworker cannot help you or you think that the guidance has factual errors then email the Guidance team.

If you notice any formatting errors in this guidance (broken links, spelling mistakes and so on) or have any comments about the layout or navigability of the guidance then you can email the Guidance team.

## Publication

Below is information on when this version of the guidance was published:

- version **15.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **10 January 2025**

## Changes from last version of this guidance

This guidance has been updated to clarify when to use the option **Cannot change application from UK to abroad**.

### Related content

#### [Contents](#)

Paper application – how a customer applies

Digital Customer Services – how a customer applies

Digital Premium Service – how a customer applies

Paper counter applications – how a customer applies

Local Services – how a customer applies

Post Office Limited Check and Send service – how a customer applies

Post Office Limited Digital service – how a customer applies

# Why we treat UK and overseas submissions differently

This section tells HM Passport Office operational staff why we must decide if an application is a UK or an overseas submission, and how our suppliers handle applications when they are received.

We issue passports (in line with the Royal Prerogative guidance) when we are satisfied:

- with the customer's:
  - identity
  - nationality
  - entitlement (for example, court orders or objections)
- there are no safeguarding (child protection) or vulnerability concerns

Customers can send an application from the UK or overseas. We must make sure we correctly treat the application as a UK or overseas submission, as we:

- may carry out different (or extra) checks to support the security of the British passport, protect vulnerable customers and prevent identity or fraud, for example:
  - carrying out checks on other systems
  - asking a customer for extra evidence
  - asking for a referee
  - asking a customer to attend an interview
  - offering the customer the choice of voluntarily providing DNA
- must make sure the customer paid the correct passport and delivery fees
- must make sure we correctly deliver the passport and return supporting documents (see posting passports and documents)
- may need to transfer the application to another Application Processing Centre (as not all of them deal with overseas applications)

## UK or overseas: online applications

If the customer applies online, Digital Customer Services (DCS) will ask them if they live in the UK. If the customer selects:

- 'Yes' – AMS (Application Management System) or DAP (Digital Application Processing) will treat it as a UK submission
- 'No' – the customer must select the country they are applying from, and AMS or DAP will treat it as an overseas submission

## UK or overseas: paper applications

If a customer sends us a paper application and it is processed on DAP the DHU (Document Handling Unit) will record it as:

- a UK application if the form is an SE04
- an overseas application If the form is an OS

If a customer sends us a paper application and it processed on AMS, Sopra Steria Ltd (SSL) will scan it as:

- a UK submission and send it to an examination team who deals with UK applications, when:
  - it has a UK residential address and a UK delivery address
  - it has an overseas residential address but a UK delivery address
- an overseas submission and send it to an examination team who deals with overseas applications, when:
  - it has an overseas residential address and an overseas delivery address
  - it has a UK residential address but an overseas delivery address

Our document handling suppliers will tell us, if:

- the application appears to be:
  - an overseas submission (but the customer sent it from a UK address)
  - a UK submission (but the envelope appears to have come from an overseas country)
- the application has a UK residential address (but the customer sent it from overseas)

They will do this by:

- scanning the envelope (and storing this with the application pack), for applications handled by the DHU (Document Handling Unit) and processed on DAP
- sending the envelope to the examination team, for applications handled by SSL and processed on AMS

### Related content

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# Deciding if an application is a UK or overseas submission

This section tells HM Passport Office operational staff what to consider when deciding if an application is a UK or overseas submission.

When deciding if an application is a UK or overseas submission, you must consider the case and decide if it is:

- straightforward
- non-straightforward

## Straightforward cases

When considering if an application is a UK or overseas submission, there are a number of scenarios where it is more straightforward to make the decision.

### UK application: passport to be delivered to a UK address

You must treat the application as a UK submission, if the customer meets both these conditions:

- they apply from the UK
- they want their passport delivered to a UK address

It does not matter if the customer will be temporarily out of the UK, while we are dealing with their application (for example, if they are travelling for business).

However, you must consider how the customer will travel overseas if we have their passports, as it may be a sign, they have not declared a passport.

### Overseas application: delivery to a UK or overseas address

You must treat the application as an overseas submission, if the customer meets all the following conditions:

- they apply from overseas
- they want their passport delivered to:
  - an overseas address
  - a UK address (for example, they will be temporarily visiting the UK, including child applications)

If you have any fraud, safeguarding (child protection) or vulnerability concerns, you must refer the application to the Counter Fraud team.

## UK application: delivery to an overseas address

You must treat the application as an overseas submission, if the customer meets both the following conditions:

- they apply from the UK
- they want their passport delivered to an overseas address

If you have any fraud, safeguarding or vulnerability concerns, you must refer the application to the Counter Fraud team.

## Overseas application: delivery to a UK address

Some customers applying from overseas with a UK delivery address, may be members of His Majesty's Armed Forces (see: HM Armed Forces applications made overseas) or their dependents.

If a customer is not a member of the armed forces or their dependent, you must treat their application as an overseas submission, if they meet the following conditions:

- they apply from overseas
- they want their passport delivered to a UK residential address

You must also consider how the customer travelled (or intends to travel) to the UK if we have their passports, as it may be a sign, they have not declared a passport.

If you have any fraud, safeguarding or vulnerability concerns, you must refer the application to the Counter Fraud team.

## Overseas application: delivery to a BFPO address

If the delivery address is to a British Forces Post Office (BFPO) address you must treat the application as a UK submission (including for the fee required). These can be identified by the BFPO number and the address showing Ruislip, HA4 6DQ.

BFPO addresses can be used by:

- members of the Armed Forces (in line with HM Armed Forces passport applications guidance)
- customers making personal passport applications, who live on an armed forces base (for example, a member of HM Armed Forces or their dependents)

There are some exceptions when we may treat an application from a member of HM Armed Forces as an overseas submission (see: His Majesty's Armed Forces passport applications).

## Diplomatic and Official service passports

If a diplomat, official (or their dependents) apply:



- for a Diplomatic or Official passport or their first standard passport, the Diplomatic and Official Passport team in Durham will deal with the application
- to renew or replace their standard passport:
  - any examiner can deal with the application
  - you must treat the application as a UK submission (even if they are overseas)

## Overseas customer attending a UK boarding school

If a customer normally lives overseas but is at a UK boarding school, you must treat the application as a UK submission, if both the following apply:

- they were in the UK when they sent their application
- they want us to deliver their passport to their UK boarding school

If they were not in the UK when they sent their application or they want us to deliver their passport overseas, you must treat the application as an overseas submission.

## UK application: delivery address changed (overseas)

If a customer applies from the UK with a UK delivery address but later asks us to post their passport overseas, you must consider:

- where they normally live and ask for proof of address
- why they want us to deliver their passport overseas
- if they want us to deliver their passport overseas for compassionate reasons (for example, the death of a relative or medical treatment)

If the customer:

- normally lives in the UK and needs us to deliver their passport overseas for compassionate reasons, you must treat the application as a UK submission (if you have evidence of the compassionate reasons)
- normally lives overseas, you must treat the application as an overseas submission
- cannot give us evidence of the compassionate reasons or wants us to deliver their passport to an overseas address for reasons other than compassionate, you must treat the application as an overseas submission

If you have any fraud, safeguarding or vulnerability concerns, you must refer the application to the Counter Fraud team.

## UK postal or online application: customer living overseas

Sometimes a person will make a postal or online application from the UK for someone else, for example:

- a parent for a child who lives overseas
- a third party for an adult who lives overseas

You may find this out when the application has a UK delivery address but:

- the application is for a first time passport and the birth certificate shows they were born overseas
- the documents are foreign
- there is other evidence with the application that suggests the person who the passport is for, lives overseas (for example, court orders)

You must consider:

- where the person who the passport is for lives (ask for evidence to confirm it)
- how the customer travelled to the UK (ask for evidence that shows how, if the person making the application tells you the customer travelled to the UK)
- why the person made an application in the UK for someone who is overseas
- if you suspect the person (who the passport is for) is trying to avoid the extra:
  - checks we do (for overseas applications)
  - documents we ask for (for overseas applications)

If you have any fraud, safeguarding or vulnerability concerns, you must refer the application to the Counter Fraud team.

If the person who the passport is for, lives overseas, you must deal with the application as an overseas submission. The customer will need to provide an overseas delivery address so we can deliver their passport.

## Non-straightforward cases

There may be times when you receive:

- a UK application but consider it to be an overseas submission
- an overseas application but consider it to be a UK submission

We cannot list every scenario where you must [change the submission route](#). You must consider:

- where the customer lives and ask for proof of address (if you have any doubts about where they live)
- where the customer applies from, for example, if:
  - they apply from the UK or overseas
  - they apply from the UK or overseas due to a temporary or compassionate reason (you need evidence if it's for compassionate reasons)
- if our document handling supplier included or scanned the envelope the customer used with their application (to see if it has any foreign post marks)
- where the customer wants us to deliver their passport, for example:

- if they want us to deliver their passport overseas but they live in (or applied from) the UK and the reason why (you must ask for proof of address, if you have doubts about where the customer lives)
- if they want us to deliver their passport to an address in the UK but they live (or applied from) overseas and the reason why (you must ask for proof of address, if you have doubts about where the customer lives)
- if a person is applying for a passport for someone overseas
- where the majority of the customer's documents are from, for example, if:
  - all the documents are foreign documents
  - any (or all) of the documents are UK documents (including registration or naturalisation certificates issued overseas)
- if you suspect the customer is trying to avoid:
  - the checks we do on overseas applications
  - paying the overseas application fee
  - sending the extra documents we need for overseas applications
- if there are any fraud, safeguarding or vulnerability concerns

You must consider all these points together. If you have doubts about changing the submission route, you must discuss the application with:

- your operational team leader (OTL)
- the Quality and Examination Support team (QuEST)

If you have any fraud, safeguarding or vulnerability concerns, you must refer the application to the Counter Fraud team.

## Overseas customers applying at a UK counter

Only some customers can apply for their passport using the Premium or Fast Track service. You must refer to Digital Fast Track: who can apply and Premium service: who can apply.

### Related content

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# How to change the submission route

This section tells HM Passport Office operational staff how to change the submission route from UK to overseas, or overseas to UK, if you are processing the application on AMS (Application Management System) or DAP (Digital Application Processing).

If you need to change the submission route (from UK to overseas or overseas to UK), you must:

1. Add a case note to explain the actions and decisions you have made.
2. Refer the application to your OTL.
3. Tell the OTL why you decided to change the submission route and ask them if they agree.

There are also specific scenarios, often linked to crisis situations, where you may need to follow a different process to ensure the application is handled appropriately. For example, see Crisis: Afghanistan.

## DAP: changing the submission route from UK to overseas

If the OTL agrees you need to change the submission route from UK to overseas and you are working on DAP, you must:

1. Select **I cannot do this application**.
2. Select the reason **Cannot** change application from UK to abroad.
3. Add a case note to explain the actions you have taken and decisions you have made.

The application will now remain in DAP and will be transferred to the EHT (Exceptions Handling team). The EHT will follow their 'withdraw and reapply' process to change the submission route.

## AMS: changing the submission route from UK to overseas

If the application was transferred to AMS, you, the examiner working on AMS, must check the submission route for the country the customer is in.

If the country the customer is in has an online submission route using Digital Customer Services (DCS), you must:

1. Tell the customer (by phone or by letter):
  - we must withdraw the application
  - they must [reapply online](#) using the correct channel
  - they will receive a refund for the withdrawn application, and their supporting documents are being returned to them
2. Give the customer a refund for the withdrawn application.
3. Add a case note to explain the actions and decisions you have made.

4. Withdraw the application.
5. Arrange for the customer's documents to be returned to them (if you are virtually examining, you must follow this process).

If the country the customer is in has a paper application submission route, you must:

1. Tell the customer you will treat their application as an overseas submission.
2. Update the delivery address.
3. Update the correct option in the 'additional service' field to show it's an international delivery (in the fees tab on AMS). If the delivery address is Ruislip, HA4 6EP, you must make sure the 'additional service' field shows as an international delivery, so our delivery partner can correctly deliver the passport.
4. Transfer the application to an examiner or Application Processing Centre that deals with the overseas application (if you need to).

When you, the AMS examiner, receives the transferred application you must:

- send the customer system letter 302 and a blank paper application form.
- take the balance of fee
- ask for any other documents or evidence you need

## **DAP and AMS: changing the submission route from overseas to UK**

If the OTL agrees you need to change the submission route from an overseas to a UK one, you must:

1. Tell the customer you will treat their application as a UK submission.
2. Update the delivery address for passport and documents.
3. Give the customer a refund for the difference between the overseas fee they paid and the cost of the UK application (if they paid an overseas fee)
4. Deal with the application in line with current guidance.

If you are processing the application on AMS, you must also update the correct option in the 'additional service' field to show if it's a UK delivery. If the delivery address is Ruislip, HA4 6EP, you must make sure the 'additional service' field shows as an international delivery so our delivery partner can correctly deliver the passport.

### **Related content**

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