Introduction

Citizenship Ceremonies

Citizenship Ceremony Invitation Certificates

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The British Nationality Act 1948, which came into force on 01.01.49, introduced the concept of Registration as a British national for certain categories of people born abroad. Later nationality legislation added to the list of those entitled to register. For passport purposes, applicants need to produce their original certificate to establish their claim to British nationality. Any changes or amendments to the legislation would have no effect on how we deal with applicants who have registered under the new sections and the new Acts.

If examining staff are concerned about the authenticity of a Registration certificate, they should check the system in both names. If checks are clear, telephone the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA) who will be able to confirm the details.

Details of the Registration Certificate should be case noted to show the full status and details of any change of name.

Example: Nat Cert shows BC sec ***** BNA '81
Cert No. ******** Ref no. ********
Issued HO ************

Examining staff should remember that in some cases Registration may be "By Descent" or "Otherwise than By Descent".

Please also see Naturalisation Certificates - Change in Personal Details for information on how to proceed where an applicant's personal details differ from the Naturalisation or Registration certificate to section 2 of the application form.

Citizenship Ceremonies

The Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 introduced new criteria for naturalisation and registration, and at schedule 1 explains how an adult will normally attend a Citizenship Ceremony before being granted Citizenship. This has resulted in a major change to the layout and style of certificates.
All applicants over the age of 18 years, who successfully made an application for British Citizenship on or after 1 January 2004, will be required to attend a Citizenship Ceremony.

The Registration Service will carry out citizenship ceremonies on behalf of the Home Office. The Home Office will no longer despatch completed naturalisation and registration documents to the applicant's home address. They will instead be despatched to a Local Authority central point of contact (there are a total of 210 central points of contact). At the same time as the certificate is despatched, the applicant will be sent a letter to the home address inviting him/her to contact the local authority, indicated on the letter, to arrange a ceremony.

Certificates relating to applicants over the age of 18 who are required to attend a ceremony will be despatched to the central point undated. A Superintendent Registrar on their deputy will insert the date. There is no statutory requirement relating to the format in which the date is written. In view of this, certificates will appear with a number of variations relating to the format in which the date is written. However, where an applicant has attended a ceremony in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, registration ink will have been used when writing the date.

Overseas - Where an applicant is resident overseas and is required to attend a ceremony, the British Embassy or British High Commission will host the ceremony on behalf of the Home Office. These certificates will also be hand dated. Again the format may differ from post to post.

Only where an applicant has attended a Citizenship Ceremony will British Citizenship be conferred. The applicant will be presented with the certificate. Citizenship takes effect from the date shown on the certificate.

In view of the introduction of ceremonies, design and security features relating to naturalisation and registration certificates have been changed and enhanced. The new style documents will come into circulation on 27 February 2004 after the first Citizenship Ceremony has taken place.

**Citizenship Ceremony Invitation Certificates**

Citizenship Ceremony Invitation Certificates are not accepted as part of a passport application and should not be accepted as evidence of British Citizenship.