



Home Office

# Nationality policy: renunciation of all types of British nationality

Version 3.0

This guidance explains how to consider a request from a British citizen to renounce their status

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# About this guidance

This guidance tells Home Office staff how to consider declarations to renounce British nationality.

## 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 Nationality Policy 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 Rules and Forms team.

## Publication

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

- version **3.0**
- published for Home Office staff on 30 January 2018

## Changes from last version of this guidance

Clarification that where a British citizen who held leave to enter or remain, including where this was indefinite, prior to becoming British will not revert back to that status on renunciation.

### Related content

[Contents](#)

# The law

This page tells you about the legal basis on which a British national can renounce their status.

With the exception of British nationals (overseas), the requirements for the renunciation of British citizenship are set out in the [British Nationality Act \(BNA\) 1981](#).

These can be found at:

- [section 12 of the BNA 1981](#) for British citizens
- [section 24 of the BNA 1981](#) for British overseas territories citizens
- [section 29 of the BNA](#) for British overseas citizens
- [section 34 of the BNA 1981](#) for British subjects
- [article 7\(10\) of the Hong Kong \(British Nationality\) Order 1986](#) for British nationals (overseas).

In order to make a declaration renouncing their status an individual must:

- be aged 18 or older
- be of full capacity (of sound mind)
- have another citizenship or nationality or will acquire one after renouncing

Where an individual under the age of 18 has either been married or in a civil partnership they will be considered as meeting the age requirement.

During periods of war in which the UK is involved there is no obligation to register a declaration of renunciation.

The individual will cease to hold the relevant status at the time the declaration is registered. If it is registered on the basis that they will obtain another citizenship or nationality and they fail to do so within 6 months from the date of registration, the individual will be considered as retaining their original status.

## Related content

[Contents](#)

# Fee

An application must be made on [Form RN](#) and include the full fee.

The [British Nationality \(Fees\) Regulations](#) provide that the fee for the registration of a declaration of renunciation shall be payable on submission of the declaration. This means that a declaration of renunciation cannot be registered until the fee has been paid.

The fee for the registration of a declaration of renunciation is set out in the [schedule to the fees regulations](#). If more than one citizenship or status is being renounced at the same time, only one fee is payable, unless the person wishes to renounce British overseas territories citizenship. This is because renunciation of British overseas territories citizenship is considered by the Governor of the territory, and so a separate fee is needed.

Where the declaration is not submitted with the full fee you must refuse to register the declaration.

## **Related content**

[Contents](#)

# Supporting evidence

In order to demonstrate that an individual meets the requirements to renounce their status they must provide:

- their birth certificate
- their marriage or civil partnership certificate, if they are under the age of 18 and have been married or in a civil partnership
- evidence of British nationality such as their passport, certificate of registration or naturalisation, birth certificate and relevant evidence of their parent's status
- their current passport describing the holder as a citizen or national of the country concerned or a statement from the authorities of the country concerned confirming citizenship
- a statement from the authorities of the country concerned confirming that the person will become a citizen or national of that country if they do not currently hold citizenship of another country

## **Related content**

[Contents](#)

[Application forms](#)

# Holders of additional forms of British nationality

In addition to being a British citizen, a person may also be a British overseas territories citizen, a British national (Overseas), a British overseas citizen or a British subject under the British Nationality Act ([BNA 1981](#)) and can renounce any of those citizenships and statuses.

A person can renounce any one (or more) of these other citizenships or statuses on the grounds that they will remain a British citizen. But a person who wishes to renounce British citizenship in order to acquire, or keep, citizenship of another country, is likely to want to renounce any other form of British nationality they may hold as well.

The person must state in their application what forms of British nationality they hold and which they want to renounce. If they have not done this, but you have reason to believe that they hold more than one form of British nationality, you must contact them to ask if they also wish to renounce the other citizenship or status. If so, they can download and complete a further [application form](#) from the GOV.UK website.

The reason for requesting a further form is to make sure that the Home Office have a clear record of the citizenship or statuses renounced. If a fresh form is not completed, but the person still wishes to renounce British citizenship only, the original declaration may be registered.

A British citizen, who is also a British subject under [section 30](#), [section 32](#) or [section 33](#) of the BNA 1981, will automatically lose that status under [section 35](#) of the act upon acquiring another citizenship or nationality. In these circumstances, renunciation of that status is unnecessary if it is being done because another citizenship is to be acquired. If the authorities of the other country require a formal declaration to be made before their citizenship or nationality can be acquired, the declaration should be processed in the normal way.

You must not attempt to dissuade the applicant or the authorities of the country concerned that renunciation of British subject status is unnecessary.

## Related content

[Contents](#)

[Declaration forms](#)

British citizenship

British overseas territories citizens

British overseas citizens

British subjects

British national overseas

British protected persons

# Consideration of declarations

You must give declarations of renunciation priority consideration at all stages.

## Declarations to be registered by a given date

Where the authorities of another country have given a date by which the person must renounce British citizenship, it is very important that you give the declaration sufficient priority to enable it to be registered before that date. Otherwise, the person may lose citizenship of that country. If sufficient evidence of British citizenship has not been submitted, it should not be called for if this will delay registration of the declaration.

If the declaration cannot be registered on or before the date given by the other country and, as a result, the declarant may have lost citizenship of that country, the declaration should not be registered. Instead, a letter of explanation must be sent to the declarant. If the declaration was inadvertently registered after the date specified by the other country, a letter should be sent to the applicant acknowledging our responsibility for the delay. In such cases it should also be noted that the renunciation may be void.

## Checking full capacity

We should normally be satisfied that the applicant is of full capacity (for example, they have some understanding of the meaning and consequences of renunciation). The person should have explained on the form RN why they wish to renounce British citizenship and the form should have been countersigned by an adult who has confirmed personal knowledge of the declarant and that they are of full capacity. Alternatively, reasons should be given as to why it would be in the declarant's best interests for the full capacity requirement to be waived in their case.

In cases where the applicant is not considered to be of full capacity you must consider whether it would be in their best interests to waive the requirement.

## Voided renunciations

A declaration will be void if both of the below are satisfied:

- the declarant has no other citizenship
- having made the declaration to acquire another nationality, they fail to do so within 6 months of the date of registration

A declaration may be void if evidence comes to light that the declarant lost the other citizenship before the renunciation was registered.

## Immigration status after renunciation



Where a British citizen renouncing their citizenship previously held leave to enter or remain in the UK (including indefinite leave to remain) they cannot resume this status after they have renounced their citizenship. This is because any leave they held prior to obtaining British citizenship will have automatically fallen away at that point and is no longer valid. They will therefore need to ensure that they regularise their position if they want to remain in the UK after they have renounced their citizenship.

## Position after renunciation

People who enquire about access to travel documents after renunciation must be advised as follows:

- if they have changed their mind, and wish to travel urgently or otherwise on a British passport, they should be told of the [procedure for resumption of citizenship](#)
- if, for the time being at least, they do not have any citizenship or nationality, and wish to travel, they may be eligible for a Home Office Travel Document as a stateless person - enquiries should be referred to Travel Document Section

There is no provision for the resumption of British subject status.

## Post registration action

Once you have registered the renunciation you must send the file to the Citizenship Ceremonies Support team in Liverpool, confirming that evidence of an alternative nationality or citizenship has been seen. You must attach the following documents to the file:

- both parts of the declaration form
- a print out of the confirmation screen
- 2 copies of the letter confirming registration
- any other documents

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## **Action to be taken by the Citizenship Ceremonies Support team**

You must stamp both copies of the form to show that the declaration has been registered and on what date.

You must note CID of the following information:

- the citizenship or status renounced
- the other citizenship or potential citizenship

If the applicant acquired the citizenship or status being renounced by registration or naturalisation before October 1986 you must:

- endorse the Home Office and the applicant's copy (if available) of the certificate of registration or naturalisation as follows:
  - 'the holder ceased to be a (insert status being renounced) by declaration of renunciation (insert details of forms submitted as declarations of renunciation) registered at on (insert date registered)'
- also note any other manual records

You must:

- send the applicant's British passport (if available) to the Her Majesty's Passport Office (HM Passport Office) with an explanatory note
- despatch the applicant's copy of the declaration with the completed registration letter and any documents
- remove the Home Office copy of the declaration from the file and place it in the records
- send the file to layby, unless there is a request to send it elsewhere

## **Action to be taken where the person fails to obtain an alternative nationality or citizenship**

Citizenship Ceremonies Support team will:

- endorse the declaration:
  - 'This declaration of renunciation is void because the declarant did not acquire another citizenship within 6 months. The declarant is therefore deemed to have remained a British citizen/British Overseas citizen/ British subject.'
- (if the applicant was registered or naturalised) re-endorse the certificate, and amend the computer record, to show that the renunciation is void

### **Related content**

[Contents](#)

**Related external links**

Registration as a British citizen: following renunciation

Registration as a BOTC: following renunciation