



Home Office

Changes to dates of birth

Version 1.0

Policy guidance on changes to dates of birth.

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About this guidance

This guidance sets out the policy on dates of birth and the circumstances they may be changed.

For the purpose of this guidance:

- 'official' means:
 - immigration, nationality and asylum caseworkers
 - immigration and border force officers
 - passport examiners
 - civil registration caseworker
 - 'senior official' means any official of at least Senior Executive Officer (SEO) grade, or its equivalent
- 'individual' means applicants, claimants, customers, individuals, guardians and parents
- 'third party' means a "representative", "carer", "solicitor" or person acting on behalf of an applicant

A date of birth is a record of a one-time event. It is used to determine the age of an individual, which affects how they are treated by the Home Office and law enforcement bodies. It is important for dates of birth to be accurately recorded as they impact on the rights, responsibilities and entitlements of individuals, including their access to education, employment, pensions, right to vote at elections, among many other rights and responsibilities.

Scope

This policy guidance covers parts of the Home Office responsible for covering the Borders, Immigration and Citizenship System (BICS):

- Border Force
- General Register Office for England and Wales
- Her Majesty's Passport Office
- Immigration Enforcement
- UK Visas and Immigration

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 Identity Security 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 **1.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **14 September 2020**

Changes from last version of this guidance

This is new guidance

Related content

[Contents](#)

Date of birth: background

A date of birth is a record of a one-time event. It is a form of biographical information which makes up an element of an individual's identity, alongside their name, sex marker and nationality and biometric information such as facial images and fingerprints.

Every birth in the UK must be registered within 42 days at a local authority register office. Rules may be different for individuals who are born overseas. Most individuals arriving from overseas will enter the country using a travel document or an identity card that records their date of birth.

Our policy requires individuals to possess a single identity for all official purposes, which can be made up from biometric and biographic data. The Home Office issues trusted documents that individuals may use to assert their identity and status in the UK. It is important the information contained on those documents is accurate.

Certain biographic information, such as names, gender and nationality may change over an individual's life-time and we may be asked to change our records and re-issue documentation in response to those changes. As examples, an individual may request a change of name following marriage or divorce, or for their recorded sex marker to be updated when transitioning to a preferred gender.

Dates of birth are a fixed event and may only be amended in limited circumstances to correct a record following:

- a recording or notification error
- where a court or tribunal makes a ruling
- where an individual is found to have provided false information
- where new evidence arises, or the information was not previously available

Related content

[Contents](#)

Related external links

Use and change of names

EU Settlement Scheme (interim guidance): Gender identity and sex markers on documents

Documents: physical

This page contains information on the types of documents the Home Office issues that contain an individual's date of birth.

Her Majesty's Passport Office issues:

- UK passports
- other British passports, for example Hong Kong British National (Overseas), British Overseas Territory, British Subject and British Protectorate
- emergency passports

General Register Office for England and Wales issues:

- birth certificates

UK Visas and Immigration issue:

- biometric residence permits
- biometric residence cards
- residence documents
- entry clearance vignettes
- visas
- Home Office travel documents
- certificate of a right of abode
- certificate of naturalisation
- certificate of registration

The list is not exhaustive and does not include individuals' online information on their immigration status which does not display their date of birth.

Related content

[Contents](#)

Recording a date of birth

This section tells officials about the importance of maintaining accurate records and the circumstances a date of birth may be amended. The various parts of the Home Office which make up the Borders, Immigration and Citizenship System (BICS) have different roles establishing dates of birth.

Accurate records

It is important that dates of birth are correctly recorded as the Home Office issues trusted documentation that is relied upon by other government departments and third parties when establishing the holder's identity and status.

A date of birth is a record of a historical event that occurred in the past. Individuals will only have one formal date of birth which will be used as part of their identity.

However, there are 3 circumstances where a date of birth which is recorded on a Home Office issued document may be amended.

Amending dates of birth

Officials will only amend a date of birth on a Home Office issued document in one of the following circumstances:

- [recording error](#)
- [finding by a court or tribunal](#)
- [fraud](#)
- [new evidence or information was not previously available](#)

Recording error

Officials will correct a date of birth where there is credible evidence the date of birth was incorrectly recorded either as an error of an individual or an official. For example:

- where an individual swapped the day of birth with the month but has clear documentary evidence to show they have erred, such as the information contained in their national passport
- an official mistyped an individual's date of birth, which resulted in the incorrect date of birth being recorded on a Home Office issued document
- where there is a transliteration error where a date of birth recorded using a non-Gregorian (western) calendar is incorrectly transferred to a Gregorian calendar

Finding by a court or tribunal

Officials will amend a date of birth where a court or tribunal has determined an individual's date of birth to be different to the one recorded by the Secretary of State or the Register General.

Fraud

Officials will correct a date of birth where they have clear evidence an individual was issued a Home Office document using a false date of birth. For example:

- where an individual obtained leave by deception using false biographic details and officials have obtained satisfactory evidence of the individual's correct identity, such as the individual's national passport - officials must reissue a replacement document in the correct details following recovery of the document containing the false information unless the individual's status in the UK is revoked
- where an individual obtained a UK passport using false biographic details and officials obtain satisfactory evidence the information provided by the individual to be incorrect - officials must seek to recover the document where possible

Where the official suspects an individual used criminal deception to obtain a Home Office document, they must consider referring the matter to the fraud investigation team or immigration enforcement to enable an interview to be taken under caution.

New evidence or information was not previously available

Officials may allocate a date of birth to an individual who is unable to provide satisfactory evidence of their birth date. This could be where a UK birth was not formally registered or an undocumented migrant who has claimed asylum. For example, officials would change the date of birth where:

- a document has been issued using an assessed date of birth and the individual subsequently produces strong evidence, such as a recognised national passport, along with other valid supporting documentation or other evidence that would satisfy the Secretary of State the date of birth recorded on a Home Office issued document is incorrect
- the individual was assessed to be an adult, but other evidence such as an age assessment undertaken by an expert from a local authority indicates the date of birth given by the official was incorrect
- an initial age assessment by a local authority was incorrect and other evidence proves the assessed date of birth to be inaccurate

The Secretary of State will not alter a date of birth unless there is credible evidence that the one recorded on a Home Office document is incorrect.

Officials must weigh up all the evidence an individual provides before agreeing to amend a date of birth. This evidence may include additional documentary evidence, in-person interviews with the individual, their behaviour and the opportunities they

had to request the date of birth to be corrected, the circumstances of the case, expert evidence (age assessments) and other relevant information including background information about the country that issued the individual their documentation. Officials must also consider whether to undertake background checks, which may include checks against law enforcement databases, on the new identity details. This is not an exhaustive list.

Officials must afford an individual an opportunity to explain any discrepancies in the information they provide concerning their claimed date of birth before coming to a final decision on whether to amend Home Office records. Officials must consider whether the circumstance require the individual to be interviewed or whether the matter can be dealt with using correspondence. Where the official suspects an individual used criminal deception to obtain a Home Office document, they must consider referring the matter to the fraud investigation team or immigration enforcement to enable an interview to be taken under caution.

Decision in writing

Officials must explain in writing the Secretary of State's decision. Where a decision is made to maintain the current recorded date of birth, officials must provide their reasons.

The reply must set out the evidence considered and how it was weighed against the individual's request to amend the record.

Electronic records

When the Secretary of State decides to amend a date of birth on an official Home Office document, officials must reflect the change on the individual's electronic record including the date of birth used to access an individual's online record of their immigration status. Officials must also ensure that the original date of birth is retained on the individual's record, although not as the main detail.

Related content

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General Register Office

This page tells officials and individuals about changing dates of birth on birth certificates issued in England and Wales.

The General Register Office (GRO) holds records of births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships, stillbirths and adoptions in England and Wales. For records in Scotland, contact the [National Records of Scotland](#) and for Northern Ireland, contact the [General Register Office for Northern Ireland](#).

For birth registrations in England and Wales, individuals who register the birth of a child are expected to know the date of birth.

On the rare occasion a date of birth is incorrectly recorded in a birth registration the GRO can correct the information. The original information will always be shown as it was first given at the time of the registration, but a note will be written in the margin of the register explaining what the correct information should be and the date on which the correction was made. All birth certificates issued afterwards will include this note.

The individual applying for the correction will need to show that the information originally given at the time of the registration was wrong. They will have to provide a copy of the birth certificate and produce documents showing the correct information. These documents should be valid or dated around the date of birth.

To correct the date of birth in an entry, individuals may provide the following information:

- letter from doctor or midwife in attendance at time of birth
- letter from hospital or hospital records
- baptismal certificate or equivalent (if other evidence is not available)
- letter from mother's GP confirming date of birth from hospital records

Individuals applying to correct information recorded on a birth certificate can find details and the application form at: [Application form to correct details on a birth registration](#).

Related content

[Contents](#)

Related external links

[National Records of Scotland](#)

[General Register Office for Northern Ireland](#)

[Application form to correct details on a birth registration \(England and Wales only\)](#)

Her Majesty's (HM) Passport Office

This page tells officials and individuals about how HM Passport Office records a date of birth in a passport and how individuals can correct an error in their passport.

HM Passport Office relies upon information contained in source documents to issue a passport to an individual. For UK born British citizens this is normally a birth certificate issued by the General Register Office (GRO), GRO for Northern Ireland or National Records Scotland. HM Passport Office has published policy on acceptability of [birth certificates](#). For individuals who have naturalised or registered as a British citizen, HM Passport Office primarily rely on information contained on the naturalisation or registration certificate.

HM Passport Office has produced guidance on the [date of birth](#) recorded in passport when individuals do not have a birth certificate, or a date of birth recorded onto a naturalisation or registration certificate. It also provided guidance on [resolving errors](#) recorded on passports.

Related content

[Contents](#)

Related external links

[Date and place of birth](#)

[Birth certificates and the full birth certificate policy](#)

[Preventing and resolving errors on passports](#)

UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)

This page tells individuals and officials about how UKVI records and corrects dates of birth.

UKVI issues documents to foreign nationals and Commonwealth citizens with the right of abode who are coming to the UK or are residing in the country. Officials are required to determine the identity of individuals who apply to UKVI for some form of status in the UK, as securely as possible, before it issues any documentation which can be used to evidence status and the holder's identity.

Source documents

In most cases UKVI will use the date of birth printed in a national passport or other travel document recognised by the UK, as these types of documents form the individual's primary identification document.

There may be circumstance where recognised passports and travel documents are unavailable and UKVI officials may consider other forms of documentation, such as identity cards and foreign issued birth certificates, when establishing an individual's identity.

Partial, contradictory or no documentary evidence

There may be circumstances where individuals are unable to provide satisfactory evidence of their date of birth, such as an undocumented migrant who claims asylum in the UK.

Where officials cannot determine an individual's date of birth from the evidence they have provided, officials may need to rely on alternative methods to determine the applicant's date of birth, based upon interviews and the individual's demeanour. However, where officials suspect the individual to be a child, they must request a local authority to carry out an age assessment.

We have published separate guidance on [assessing age for asylum applicants](#) (also on [GOV.UK](#)) which sets out how officials must make decisions when an asylum applicant claims to be a child with little or no evidence.

Incorrect date of birth

Where UKVI officials decide a date of birth was incorrectly recorded on a document they will amend the records in line with the stated policy as set out in the section on [Amending dates of birth](#).

Biometric residence permits (BRP) and biometric residence cards (BRC)

Customers who believe their date of birth has been incorrectly recorded on their BRP or BRC, either because of an error by an official or by the applicant themselves, should be asked to submit their error correction request with supporting evidence using the [Report a problem with your new BRP](#) service.

UKVI officials will consider amending its records and whether to reissue a BRP or BRC as set out in the section on [Amending dates of birth](#).

Officials must require the individual to return the incorrect BRP. The incorrect BRP will be cancelled and individual must not use it.

Cancelled BRPs must be sent to:

BRP Returns
P.O. Box 195,
Bristol,
BS20 1BT

Vignettes, visas and certificate of the right of abode

Officials must endorse incorrect vignettes and visas to show they are cancelled before issuing a replacement document.

Registration and naturalisation certificates

Individuals may apply for a replacement citizenship certificate if the one issued contained incorrect personal details (be that name or date of birth, in accordance with the corresponding change of biographic details policy). If the error was the fault of UKVI there would be no fee to pay, if it is not an error of the department then a fee of £250 is required to process the request. This only applies for individuals who became a British citizen on or after 1 October 1986. Individuals who were naturalised or registered as a British Citizens on or before 30 September 1986 cannot apply for an amended certificate. They can request a certified copy of their certificate from the National Archives but would need to contact UKVI for help if incorrect details were recorded.

Please see GOV.UK for further information on [replacement citizenship certificates](#).

Related content

[Contents](#)

Related external links

[Report a problem with your new BRP](#)

[Assessing age for asylum applicants](#)

[Replace or correct a UK citizenship certificate](#)