



Home Office

Dealing with customer documents

Version 27.0

This guidance tells His Majesty's Passport Office staff about how to accept and deal with customer documents

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About: Dealing with customer documents

This guidance tells His Majesty's Passport Office staff why customers must send documents to support their claim to a British passport. It explains:

- the common requirements for acceptable documents
- the types of documents we can accept

This guidance has separate sections on birth, adoption, naturalisation and registration documents. These are the most common documents we check (examine).

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 Guidance & Quality, Operating Standards.

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 Guidance & Quality, Operating Standards.

Publication

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

- version **27.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **2 November 2022**

Changes from last version of this guidance

This guidance has been updated to tell examiners working on DAP how:

- Document Handling Units (DHUs) deal with unscannable items
- to request a review of a British passport
- to request the rescan or revalidation of a document held in a DHU, using ARD

Related content

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Why we need documents for passport applications

This section tells HM Passport Office staff why we need supporting documents for passport applications.

We use the term 'documents' to mean anything physical that the customer sends us while we are dealing with their application (for example, a birth certificate with security features or a letter or payslip which has none). Documents are usually sent by post but guidance will tell you when you can accept digital images or information that can be checked against other systems. There is separate guidance for photo standards, facial matching and identity checks.

Why we need supporting documents

Before we issue a British passport to a customer, we must be satisfied of their identity, nationality, entitlement and that there are no vulnerability concerns. You will be seeking to link the person applying to the claimed events (for example birth or marriage) and that the events took place (for example a birth or marriage certificate was issued).

There are standard document requirements for each type of application (for example, first time applications, renewals) but you may need extra documents if a customer is applying from overseas or if the standard documents do not provide sufficient evidence (for example authorisation or consent).

If we do ask the customer for documents, we must be satisfied the document:

- is genuine and there are no fraud concerns
- is acceptable for nationality, identity, entitlement and vulnerability purposes
- shows the applicant is who they claim to be
- shows they are more likely than not to be the holder of the identity on the document (for example, a marriage certificate or change of name deed)
- links them to an event (for example, their birth)
- shows a link to their parents or grandparents (if the claim is by descent)
- shows the person applying for a passport, on behalf of a child, can consent to the application or any changes

What we must consider if the customer sends a damaged document

If the customer sends a damaged document, we may ask them to get a replacement. Before asking them for a replacement you must consider:

- the age of the document, making sure the core details are clear and concise with no lines, tears or folds through the core details, obscuring the information

(or any possible amendments); normal wear and tear is acceptable and will be more common the older the document is, you can accept it as long as the details are still legible

- why we need the document; if you intend to accept a document that has been damaged other than by normal wear and tear and you need it to confirm identity, nationality, entitlement or safeguarding you must:
 - complete additional checks, if you are processing on Digital Application Processing (DAP)
 - refer the application to an Enhanced Application Checks examiner (EAC), if you are processing on Application Management System (AMS)
- whether other documents could be accepted instead of asking for a replacement (for example, a statutory declaration)
- if guidance supports alternatives if the document is damaged (for example, Balance of probabilities, Confirming identity checks, Names: aligning names on foreign documents, Supporting documents not available)
- can the document be validated

If you are uncertain whether to accept another document in place of the damaged document or have any doubts you must refer the application to a correctly trained caseworker or operational team leader (OTL).

If you, have fraud concerns about the document (for example, it appears to have been tampered with) refer to:

- EAC: when to refer AMS applications to Enhanced Application Checking for AMS cases
- DAP: additional checks before referring for investigation for DAP cases

When we do not need supporting documents

We do not always need additional supporting documents when processing a passport application, for example, when:

- it is for a like for like replacement of a lost passport
- depending on the customer's circumstances, we can check the information on a document using other systems where this is agreed in guidance
- you are dealing with a crisis application, where an exception has been agreed meaning all or some of the supporting documents are not needed
- the customer is not able to provide the standard supporting documents (and we can consider an application based on balance of probability from the documents they can provide)

Related content

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How we check customers' documents

This section tells HM Passport Office staff what we do to check a document is acceptable when we receive it.

When we receive a customer's document, we do checks to make sure the document is acceptable. These checks may include document:

- validation checks
- verification checks

Document validation checks

When we receive a customer's document, we will check for damage, counterfeiting or potential fraudulent tampering. We call this a document validation check.

You, the examiner, working on AMS or DAP (Digital Application Processing) must also:

- check the document is acceptable for our purposes
- make sure the details on the document confirm information in the application

You must confirm the customer's document is acceptable by checking the sample documents and information held on the Knowledge Base. For example, some countries issue celebration marriage certificates that we do not accept.

Document verification checks

You, the examiner, may be required to carry out a document verification check on a document that we have received. Document verification is the process of confirming the authenticity of a document and the information on it.

A document verification check involves asking an issuing authority, or a foreign country to verify the details on the document provided. For example, if we have received a UK birth certificate, you may need to check with the General Registrar's Office (GRO) the certificate was issued to the person named, on the correct date.

A document verification check is in addition to our standard document validation checks.

Related content

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AMS: how to check and record supporting documents

This section tells HM Passport Office staff how documents are received and how they are checked and recorded on the Application Management System (AMS). It also tells HM Passport Office staff how to add or delete documents.

We deal with passport applications on the Application Management System (AMS) differently to the Digital Application Processing system (DAP). All applications need to satisfy nationality, identity and entitlement requirements. An AMS examiner needs to complete many checks manually.

AMS applications: how we receive documents

Most customers will apply either:

- online
- using a paper form
- through the Post Office Check & Send service

If the application is on the Application Management System (AMS), our delivery partner Sopra Steria Limited (SSL), will record the types of documents received with the application.

AMS applications: personal callers

Some customers may visit our offices in person and bring their application and documents. If they have an appointment, and we accept their application, the counter examiner will:

- record the types and number of documents received (for example 2 marriage certificates) on the application form
- send the application and documents to SSL so they can scan the documents on to AMS

If a customer visits our offices without an appointment there is a post box available for them to leave their application and documents with us. These are sent to Sopra Steria Ltd for action.

AMS applications from British overseas territories

British overseas territories (BOT) offices will send applications and authority declaration forms directly to our Peterborough office. If there are any queries with an application British overseas territories (BOT) offices will email a copy of any documents directly to Peterborough.

How Sopra Steria Ltd records documents on AMS

Sopra Steria Ltd (SSL) will deal initially with AMS applications. They will:

- record all documents they get with the application by selecting the best choice from a prepopulated list of types of document, (for example if they receive a foreign marriage certificate and foreign passport, they will record it as a marriage certificate and passport)
- send the application to the workflow team so they can send the application and documents to an examiner

AMS: how to record documents correctly

It is important that documents are recorded in the right way so there is a correct record of what has been received. You may need to refer again to the documents tab on AMS, if, for example:

- the documents get lost
- you must deal with enquires after the application is completed

When you, the examiner, deal with a customer's application on AMS, you must:

1. Check the documents match what SSL recorded on AMS when you first receive the application.
2. Click on the **remove** link in the supporting documents tab if the recorded documents are wrong.
3. Add the correct documents using the drop down menu on the supporting documents tab.
4. Select the **Supporting documents checked ok?** check box.

AMS: how to check supporting documents

You, the examiner, are responsible for [checking the documents](#) you receive with an AMS application. For example, you must check that documents:

- are genuine
- have the usual security features specific to that type of document
- are in the expected format for the country of issue (see Knowledge Base)
- do not appear to have been altered in any way or have unusual damage to them

If you, the examiner, have doubts about a document (for example, it appears to have been tampered with) refer the application to an Enhanced Application Checking examiner or the Counter Fraud team.

How to scan documents on to AMS

See How to keep scans of supporting documents guidance, for information on when and how to scan supporting documents on to AMS. You must also add a case note.

Related content

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DAP: how to check and record supporting documents

This section tells HM Passport Office staff how documents are received and how they are checked and recorded on the Digital Application Processing system (DAP). It also tells HM Passport Office staff how to add or delete documents.

We deal with passport applications on the Digital Application Processing system (DAP) differently to the Application Management System (AMS). All applications need to satisfy nationality, identity and entitlement requirements. DAP automates some of these checks, but an examiner needs to complete other checks manually.

How we receive and record documents on DAP

When customers send us documents to support their Digital Application Processing (DAP) passport application, the Document Management Service (DMS), or Document Handling Unit (DHU) will:

1. Open the customer's envelope.
2. Record the documents by document type (for example, marriage certificate).
3. Scan and validate the documents.
4. Securely store the documents.

You, the DAP examiner, will see a record of all the documents we receive on DAP, and you will be able to view the scanned documents. Validation checks are made by the DMS and DHU on the physical integrity of the document (for example, for potential fraudulent tampering or counterfeit documents), not the content.

You must check the information contained on the document and decide if it is acceptable for our purposes. DAP does not 'read' the content of a document (for example, it does not check the spelling of a name on a birth certificate). DMS and DHU do not make decisions about the content of the document (this is your role as an examiner).

DMS and DHU use a document identification description to record each document. You must check the document descriptions are correct, so we have an accurate record of what has been received. For example, a full birth certificate must not be recorded as a short birth certificate, because:

- it would appear that you had used the wrong document as evidence to support your decision
- our record would be inaccurate if the customer later queried the documents sent

Some of these document descriptions may be used for more than one type of document (for example, the description could relate to the general document type). If you need to record extra details about the type of document, because you are using

it as part of your decision making, you must add a case note to one of the tasks you are processing.

It is acceptable if DMS or DHU have recorded:

- different types of financial documents as:
 - unclassified financial document
 - bank statement
 - mortgage statement
 - credit card statement
- utility bills as:
 - utility bill
 - gas or electricity bill
 - council tax statement
 - phone bill – landline or mobile
- a change of name deed as:
 - unclassified legal document
 - change of name deed
- a statutory declaration as:
 - unclassified legal document
 - statutory declaration
- a divorce document as:
 - divorce document
 - court order
- medical document as:
 - unclassified medical document
 - medical card
 - medical records

Application Receive Domain (ARD): handling documents

When the DMS or DHU record and scan a document, ARD records each document as an individual item.

ARD associates each individual item with an application. For example, if a customer sends 2 documents, these documents are recorded and scanned individually, and each associated with the customer's application on ARD.

On an item by item basis using ARD, DAP examiners can:

- view the location and status of a document
- re-categorise a document
- correct or update document **Comments**

Document incorrectly scanned on DAP

If a document has been incorrectly scanned on DAP, you must firstly check to see if the customer's documents have been handled in a DMS or DHU site.

If the documents are held in a DMS site, you must:

1. Transfer the DAP application to AMS.
2. Add a case note explaining why if a document recorded on DAP is scanned onto the wrong application (see How to keep scans of supporting documents.)

If the documents are held in a DHU site you must:

1. Continue to deal with the application on DAP.
2. Access ARD.
3. Disassociate the incorrectly scanned document from the wrong application.

Document incorrectly identified on DAP

If a document has been incorrectly identified on DAP (for example, the DMS or DHU have recorded the document as a marriage certificate, but it is a birth certificate), you must re-categorise the document on ARD.

After you have re-categorised the document, you can continue to process the application on DAP in line with guidance. The document category on ARD will be updated to reflect the correct document type.

You must not transfer the application to AMS if the document has been incorrectly identified on DAP.

Document shows incorrect Comments on DAP

If the information about the document in the document **Comments** section are incorrect (for example, the DMS or DHU have recorded 'original' in the **Comments**, but the document is a photocopy) you must access ARD and add a case note to record the correct information about the document.

After you have case noted the document, you can continue to process the application on DAP in line with guidance. Your case note will be recorded in the timeline. The document properties and **Comments** will not be updated, and DAP will not change any of the information in the **Documents** tab.

You must not transfer the application to AMS if the information about the document in the **Comments** section is incorrect.

Documents that DMS will not scan

DMS will record and validate all documents. DMS will not scan:

- British passports (for example, the customer's old passport)
- unscannable documents, for example, a DVD the customer sends as evidence of their wedding
- blank visa pages in a colour photocopy of the customer's foreign passport (DMS will check the customer has sent a full copy)

Documents that a DHU will not scan

When documents are received in a DHU, they are recorded, validated, and prepared for scanning.

However, the DHU are unable to scan some items, for example:

- a DVD (for example, containing images of a customer's wedding)
- physical cash (for example, if the customer sends it in to upgrade an existing application)
- valuable items (for example, an item of jewellery)
- a bank card

The DHU will also not scan a British passport (for example, the customer's old passport), unless:

- we need to request a review of the passport in line with guidance (for example, to check visa stamps)
- the passport has a non-readable machine readable zone (MRZ) (for example, if the passport has been clipped, damaged or the MRZ is non-existent)

Where the DHU staff are unable to scan an item, the item will be validated and recorded on ARD, but there will be no scanned image of the item.

When the DHU staff have validated and recorded the item, they will then either:

- store the item along with the other documents the customer has sent (for example, if the customer has sent a paper photo)
- dispose of the item through confidential waste (for example, if it is a perishable item such as food)
- return the item to the customer (for example, if the customer has sent in a valuable item of jewellery)
- cash any physical cash (for example, if the customer sends it in to upgrade their existing application)

For any unscannable items received:

- DAP will not create a Documents received task
- you will not see the item recorded in the DAP Documents tab
- you can see the item if you search for all the documents associated to that application reference, using the ARD inventory search
- you must not make a request for the item to be validated (because the ECS has already been consulted on the item and told the supplier which action to take next)

An unscannable item can not be used as evidence to support a passport application. For example, if the customer has sent a memory stick containing family photographs, we can not access this so we record the item as unscannable. You would need to ask the customer to send the photographs to us as physical documents.

Documents received: when DAP creates a task

When documents are received (and recorded by the DMS or DHU), DAP will create a **Documents received** task. This will happen when:

- documents are first received by the DMS or DHU (before you, the examiner, have started to process the application)
- you, the examiner, have contacted the customer and they have sent the documents we have asked for

How to deal with a Documents received task

You must review the customer documents, whether or not you have asked for it, and decide if it is relevant to the application.

You, the examiner, must:

1. Check the documents recorded and view the documents that have been scanned.
2. Follow current guidance and decide if the document is relevant to the application:
 - if the document has no associated task, you must case note your actions and decision in the **Documents received** task
 - if there is another task relevant to the document for example, a task where you have asked the customer for information, you can case note on this task or the **Documents received** task (whichever is more appropriate)
3. Select an option to process the task:
 - clear the task
 - ask for documents
 - ask for a digital referee
 - withdraw application
 - refer for investigation

If you review the documents and decide you need to take further action, you must do this:

- on the **Documents received** task (using the task options)
- on one of the other tasks that is showing on the application
- by transferring the application to AMS if you are unable to process it on DAP

If you review the document and decide you do not need to take further action you must add a case note to record your decision before you clear the task.

DAP: storing documents after the application is complete

When an application is complete or has been withdrawn the documents are stored:

- for 25 years on DAP (type of document and scanned image)

- as a permanent record on the application record on Main Index (depending on the type of document)

How to view documents on DAP

To view the documents, you must select the **Document tab**, to show you:

- the document identification description
- the date and time the document was recorded by the DMS or DHU
- comments, which includes, for example, if the document:
 - is a UK or foreign document
 - has passed or failed validation checks

You will need to access ARD, if you need to view:

- the details of the validation checks carried out (for example, the reason why a document has failed the validation check)
- if the document is damaged, laminated or a copy

To view a document on DAP, you must click on the link for the document you want to view. You can **rotate** or **magnify** the document but only if it is 1 page long. You must decide if the document is acceptable for the task that you are processing.

How to view document validation checks

Validation checks on the customer's documents will be completed by:

- second-line DMS (SLDMS), in the DMS
- the Embedded Civil Servant (ECS), in the DHU

Document validation checks: DMS

When the SLDMS carry out validation checks on the customer's documents, you will find the results of the checks on DAP.

If you need the SLDMS to carry out extra validation checks, they will complete a Document validation form to show the outcome of their extra validation checks. Extra validation checks may be needed if, for example, a customer's previous passport has passed validation checks but the customer has reported damage to the document (and the damage is not caused by a faulty chip or wear and tear).

If the SLDMS has done extra validation checks, you will see the form with the results of the checks in the **Documents** tab.

The DMS validation form is recorded on DAP as a document in its own right, and DMS must record the form as **Validation checks passed** (because the form is for internal use, and if it was damaged the SLDMS could complete another). If DMS have recorded the form as **Validation checks failed**, you can accept the form and how it has been recorded, if you can read all the information on the form.

You, the DAP examiner, must:

- check the information on the form
- decide what action you must take, for example:
 - accept a document or ask the customer for more documents
 - complete additional checks
 - refer the application to the Counter Fraud team for investigation
- check the information included in the document and if the document is acceptable for the country of issue
- clear the documents received task

DAP will automatically record a copy of the form on Main Index (MI) so you do not need to add the information in a case note. If you take any further actions, for example make a decision, you will still need to case note these separately.

DMS: how to request document revalidation

You may need to ask the SLDMS to revalidate a document or British passport when you deal with an application on DAP. This may happen, for example when:

- a customer has reported their British passport is damaged (and the damage is not caused by a faulty chip or wear and tear) and there is no validation referral form to show a SLDMS has already checked it (for applications handled by DMS)
- the FLDMS has recorded the document as **failed validation checks**, but they have not scanned a validation form onto the application
- a document (or passport) has been validated by a SLDMS, but the form is unclear, and more information is needed to make a decision

If you need to request the revalidation of a document or passport held in a DMS site, you must:

1. Check where the document is being stored using the information in the timeline.
2. Send an email to the DMS site storing the document:
 - Belfast
 - Durham
 - Glasgow
 - Peterborough
 - Newport
 - Redgrave Court, Bootle
 - Corby
 - Hemel Hempstead
3. Check the email includes in the:
 - subject line: document revalidation request
 - body of email: application reference number, customer's name, the document that needs to be revalidated and the reason why

4. Put the application on hold while you wait for the SLDMS to complete the revalidation.

The DMS staff will:

1. Retrieve the customer's application pack from storage.
2. Revalidate the documents requested.
3. Complete either a:
 - o DMS: British passport validation form, if the request is to revalidate a British passport
 - o DMS: document validation form, if the request is to revalidate supporting documents or a foreign passport
4. Scan the completed validation form onto the application.

DAP will create a **Documents received** task for you to review the form and decide how to proceed when the documents are revalidated.

DMS document revalidation: examples

These are examples of requests for document revalidation. You must make your request specific to the application you are dealing with, the guidance you are following and the decision you need to make.

DAP examiner request example:	SLDMS action example:
The application I am dealing with does not have a validation form attached, but one of the documents is showing it has failed validation checks.	SLDMS will revalidate the document, complete and scan a validation form onto the application.
The customer has declared severe damage to their passport, but the validation form does not provide enough information to be able to process the application.	SLDMS will revalidate the application, complete and scan a validation form onto the application.

There are examples of when a request for document revalidation must not be made.

DAP examiner request example:	Action to take:
The customer has reported the damage to their passport is caused by a faulty chip.	You must transfer the application to AMS for further action.
The DMS has recorded the customer's passport has passed validation, it has wear and tear (but the customer thinks it is damaged).	You must trust the DMS assessment and not request a document revalidation, continue to deal with the application in line with guidance.
The revalidation form contains enough information for you to be able to process the application, but you feel there may be some additional information held on the passport.	You must not request a document revalidation as you have all of the information required to process the application in line with the guidance.

Document validation checks: DHU

When the ECS has completed validation checks on a document in the DHU, you will see the results of the checks on Application Receive Domain (ARD).

For each individual document on ARD, under the **Item validation** tab, you will be able to see the outcome of the document validation assessment.

You, the DAP examiner, must:

- check the information on the **Item validation** screen
- decide what action you must take, for example:
 - accept a document or ask the customer for more documents
 - complete additional checks
 - refer the application to the Counter Fraud team for investigation (for example, if there are any forgery codes present)
- check the information included in the document and if the document is acceptable for the country of issue
- clear the documents received task

DHU: how to ask for document revalidation

You may need to ask the ECS to revalidate a document or British passport when you deal with an application on DAP. This may happen, for example when:

- a customer has reported their British passport is damaged (and the damage is considered wear and tear) and there is no information on the Item validation screen on ARD to show the passport is damaged
- the ECS has recorded the document as **failed validation checks**, but they have not provided a reason why
- a document (or passport) has been validated by an ECS, but the **Item validation** screen on ARD does not have enough information to make a decision

If you need to request the revalidation of a document or passport held in a DHU site, on ARD, you must:

1. Access the **Item validation** screen for the document you need revalidating.
1. Select **Request revalidation**.
2. Enter the reason why you are requesting the revalidation in the free text box.
3. Select **Submit**.
4. On DAP, select **I can't do this**.
5. Select **Waiting for document rescan or revalidation**.
6. Add a free text note to explain you have requested document revalidation.
7. Select **Send**.

When the revalidation request is received in the DHU, the Scanning Validation and Storage (SVS) operator will retrieve the document from storage and refer it to the Embedded Civil Servant (ECS).

The ECS staff will:

1. Carry out revalidation checks on the document as requested by the DAP examiner.
2. On the ARD referral, select the relevant structured case note, adding any additional information including any findings as a free text case note.
3. Select **Submit**.

When the document has been revalidated and the ECS staff have detailed their findings in a free text case note on ARD, DAP will create a task for the examiner to review and decide how to proceed.

DHU document revalidation: examples

These are examples of requests for document revalidation. You must make your request specific to the application you are dealing with, the guidance you are following and the decision you need to make.

DAP examiner request example:	ECS action example:
The Item validation screen on ARD shows a document has failed validation checks but it does not explain why	ECS will revalidate the document. DAP will create a task for the examiner to review.
The customer has declared severe damage to their passport, but the Item validation screen on ARD does not provide enough information to be able to process the application.	ECS will revalidate the document. DAP will create a task for the examiner to review.

There are examples of when a request for document revalidation must not be made.

DAP examiner request example:	Action to take:
The DHU has recorded the customer's passport has passed validation, it has wear and tear (but the customer thinks it is damaged).	You must trust the DHU assessment and not request a document revalidation, continue to deal with the application in line with guidance.
The Item validation screen on ARD contains enough information for you to be able to process the application, but you feel there may be some additional information held on the passport.	You must not request a document revalidation as you have all of the information required to process the application in line with the guidance.

DAP applications: how to ask for a document rescan

You may need to ask a Document Management Service (DMS) or Document Handling Unit (DHU) site to rescan a document, if:

- the image of the document is not clear enough for you to deal with a task
- the incorrect document has been scanned (for example DMS or DHU have scanned one document twice, instead of two separate documents)

The process for requesting a document rescan depends on if the document is held in a DMS or DHU site.

DMS: document rescan

If a document is held in a DMS site and you need a rescan, you must:

1. Check which DMS is storing the document using the information in the timeline.
2. Send an email to the DMS storing the document:
 - Belfast
 - Durham
 - Glasgow
 - Peterborough
 - Newport
 - Redgrave Court, Bootle
 - Corby
 - Hemel Hempstead
3. Check the email includes in the:
 - subject line: document rescan request
 - body of email: application reference number, customer's name, the document that needs to be rescanned
4. Put the application on hold while you wait for the DMS to complete the rescan.

The DMS will retrieve the customer's application pack from their storage, rescan the document to the application and email you to confirm they have completed your request.

When you receive the email from DMS, you must take the application off hold and continue to deal with the application.

DHU: document rescan

If the document is held in a DHU site, to request a rescan of the document on DAP, you must:

1. Select the **Documents** tab.
2. Select the **View details** link for the document you require rescanning, this will open the Item Details screen on the Application Receive Domain (ARD).

Then, on ARD, you must:

1. Select **Request scan**.
2. Select the reason why you require the document to be rescanned.
3. Enter the details for the rescan request in the text box.
4. Select **Submit**.

ARD will submit the rescan request, which will be dealt with by the DHU staff.

You must return to DAP and:

1. Select **I can't do this**.
2. Select the reason **Waiting for document rescan or revalidation**.
3. Enter the reason why you have requested the rescan in the text box.
4. Select **Send**.

The application will then be placed on hold on DAP, awaiting the outcome of the rescan request. When the rescan request has been completed, DAP will create a **Documents rescanned** task for a DAP examiner to review.

DAP applications: reviewing a British passport

You, the DAP examiner, may need to ask civil servants working in the Document Management Service (DMS) or Document Handling Unit (DHU) to review the pages in a customer's old passport, to deal with a task. For example, you may need to know if the British passport contains:

- any visa or travel stamps, or immigration conditions
- evidence of travel, for example to incompatible countries (for additional passport requests) or to particular countries (to help you confirm identity)
- observations

First, you must find out if the passport is held in a DMS or DHU site.

Reviewing a British passport held in a DMS site

You can ask the civil servant in DMS (known as second-line DMS staff (SLDMS)) to review any passport sent to us as part of an application.

You must only ask civil servants in DMS to review a British passport if you are dealing with an application:

- for an additional passport
- where you need information that is not recorded in passport records (on Main Index or G-Search), such as:
 - observations (for example, if you believe these have been added manually)
 - immigration status (for example, for a nationality claim)

It may not be obvious from the application if the passport contains all of the information you need. You can ask them to review the passport when, for example:

- guidance tells you to check for this information
- additional checks are required
- risk indicators need to be resolved
- the customer advises the information is needed in their new passport

How to ask for a review of a British passport held in a DMS site

You can ask the civil servant (known as second-line DMS staff (SLDMS)) to review any British passport sent to us as part of an application.

When you need the SLDMS to review a British passport, you must tell them what you want them to check. You must tell the SLDMS:

- whose passport you want them to review (for example, the customer's, or a parent's)
- the reason for the review, this will allow the SLDMS to understand what they are looking for
- specific dates you need the SLDMS to check (for example, travel history between specific dates if you were checking parents' whereabouts at the time of a child's conception)
- specific country stamps (for example, if you want the SLDMS to check for travel to incompatible countries, or to the country they are now applying from)

You must:

1. Decide what you want the SLDMS to check, following the appropriate guidance (for example Additional passports or Confirming identity checks).
2. Send an email instruction to the SLDMS:
 - using email heading 'SLDMS Ppt review'
 - to tell the SLDMS what to review
3. Put the application on hold while you wait for the SLDMS to complete the review.

You must send the request by email to the DMS storing the document (see DAP applications: how to ask for a document rescan).

The DMS will retrieve the passport from storage and refer to second-line DMS staff (SLDMS) along with the email instruction to review.

The SLDMS will review the passport and detail their findings on a DMS British passport validation form. DMS staff will scan a copy of the completed DMS British passport validation form onto the application on DAP and email you to confirm they have completed your request.

When you, the examiner, get the email you must take the application off hold. When you take it off hold, DAP will create a Documents received task for you to review the form and decide how to proceed.

Reviewing a British passport held in a DHU site

When an old passport is received in a DHU site, staff there will record it on the system and validate all its pages. When validation is complete, the information about the old passport will be visible to you, the DAP examiner, through ARD. However, ARD will not always show a scanned image of the old passport.

The British passport will only be scanned as an image on ARD if:

- we have requested a review of the passport in line with guidance (for example, to check visa stamps)
- the passport has a non-readable machine readable zone (MRZ) (for example, if the passport has been clipped, damaged or the MRZ is non-existent)

It may not be clear from the information on ARD, if the passport contains all of the information you need and you may need to ask request for a review of the old passport. For example, when:

- guidance tells you to check for specific information
- additional checks are required
- risk indicators need to be resolved
- the customer advises the information is needed in their new passport

You must only ask for a scan of the British passport if you are dealing with an application:

- for an additional passport
- where you need information that is not recorded in passport records (on Main Index or G-Search), such as:
 - observations (for example, if you believe these have been added manually)
 - immigration status (for example, for a nationality claim)

How to ask for a scan of a British passport held in a DHU site

When you need to request a scan of a British passport, on ARD, you must:

1. Select the British passport item.
2. Select **Request scan**.
3. Select the reason why you require the passport to be scanned.
4. Enter the details for the scan request in the text box.
5. Select **Submit**.

ARD will submit the scan request, which will be dealt with by the DHU staff.

You must return to DAP and:

1. Select **I can't do this**.
2. Select the reason **Waiting for document rescan or revalidation**.
3. Enter the reason why you have requested the rescan in the text box.
4. Select **Send**.

The application will then be placed on hold on DAP, awaiting the outcome of the scan request. When the scan request has been completed, DAP will create a **Documents rescanned** task for a DAP examiner to review.

DMS review a British passport: examples of requests

These are examples of requests and review responses. You must make your request (and review response) specific to the application you are dealing with, the guidance you are following, and the decision you need to make.

DAP examiner request example:	SLDMS response example (recorded on DMS validation form):
<p>The customer has requested an additional passport based on travel to incompatible countries</p> <p>Please review passport [number] and tell me if there is evidence of travel to [country] or [country]</p>	<p>Passport shows travel to [country] – entry stamps confirm entry on [date], [date] and [date].</p>

Related content

[Contents](#)

How to ask a customer for documents

This section tells HM Passport Office staff how we ask customers for documents before they apply and while we are dealing with their application.

Regardless of how the customer applies we tell them what documents they need to send us. We provide this information:

- on our application forms
- in our guidance booklet
- through our online channel on GOV.UK
- through the Passport Adviceline
- through our service providers, such as the Post Office

If a customer applies online, for example, our system tells them what documents to send. See: How a customer applies: Digital customer service guidance. See also Formats of documents: what we tell customers to send guidance.

If we need more documents

You the examiner, may ask for more documents to enable you to make a decision on nationality, entitlement and vulnerability. For example, if you cannot decide if a customer is entitled and eligible for a passport, or you cannot confirm their identity or need additional consent, you may ask them for extra documents. For more information, see: authorisation and consent, supporting documents not available and balance of probabilities guidance.

When you receive the extra documents you must [check them and make sure they are acceptable for our purposes](#).

How we ask for extra documents: AMS applications

Sopra Steria Ltd (SSL) will ask for extra documents on our behalf, before they send the application to us. See: Steria authority instructions guidance which explains when SSL will ask for extra documents on our behalf.

If you, the examiner, need extra documents for an AMS application, you must:

- contact the customer to ask for the extra documents
 - phone the customer and if guidance allows, take the additional information over the phone adding a case note. If guidance requires a physical document or statement with a wet signature, ask the customer to send this to us.
 - if not possible to phone the customer, send the customer a letter by email or by post
- select the correct AMS letter to explain what documents you need and why
- only send an Admin IT letter if there is not a suitable AMS letter or you need to contact the customer in Welsh.

See How we communicate with customers guidance

How to ask for supporting documents: DAP applications

If a Digital Application Processing system (DAP) examiner needs more documents, they may ask for them by phone, letter or email.

If you, the DAP examiner, ask a customer for documents or more information, you must tell the customer to mark the top of their return envelope with **RQ**. The How we communicate with customers guidance explains how to do this.

When we receive the documents we need, you, the examiner, [must check they are acceptable for our purposes](#).

Related content

[Contents](#)

Original, replacements and certified copies of documents

This section tells HM Passport Office staff about original, replacement and certified copies of documents.

We tell customers (in our customer guidance):

- to send us [original](#) or [replacement](#) documents
- we do not usually accept [laminated](#) or [photocopies of documents](#), but we may do in certain circumstances (see [when you can accept a laminated document](#) and when [we will accept photocopies of documents](#) guidance)

Original documents

Original documents are given out by an official organisation that is responsible for producing the original document. For example, the General Register Office (GRO) are responsible for issuing a birth certificate in the UK. They will not be photocopies (see: [contemporaneous \(original\) documents](#) guidance).

Replacement documents

A replacement document is an official copy of a document given out by an issuing authority. It will not be a photocopy. If a person born in the UK, for example, sends us a replacement of their birth certificate, it must be issued by the General Register Office for England and Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland or a local registration service. For documents issued overseas, you must refer to the country's profile section in Knowledge Base.

Certified copies of documents

A certified copy of a document is a photocopy of a document, certified (confirmed) by a third party (for example, a solicitor) stating the document is a true copy of the original.

You must never accept a certified photocopy of a document issued by the GRO, as replacement certificates are available to everyone. GRO issue birth, adoption, marriage, civil partnership and death certificates.

We normally need [original documents](#) for security purposes. We will only accept certified copies of documents, when there is a justifiable reason why the original or replacement documents cannot be obtained and:

- a solicitor or Commissioner for Oaths confirms the document is a true copy
- local services have validated the document

- UKVI hold the original document and the information can be checked on UKVI systems

Related content

[Contents](#)

How to deal with photocopies, faxes, emails and digital copies of documents

This section tells HM Passport Office staff about copies of documents and when we can accept photocopies, faxes, emails and digital copies.

When a customer sends in documents to support their passport application, they may not always be able to send the original version.

Why we do not accept copies of documents

We always ask for original versions of documents instead of copies because copies of documents are easier to change and any security features may be obscured or missing.

In exceptional cases, we may consider [accepting copies of documents](#) if it is impossible for the customer to send originals. In these cases, we will only accept copies if they are authenticated by a solicitor or Commissioner of Oaths as true copies.

We will not accept documents that an independent provider has certified as a true copy (for example, the Post Office Ltd). You must decide if you can accept a photocopy by following: [when photocopied documents can be accepted](#) guidance.

See also the Crown Copyright page for more information about copying government documents, including passports.

When we will accept photocopies of documents

A customer may sometimes be unable to send original documents (for example, their foreign passport). This may be because the law where they live states the customer must always carry identity documents, or they cannot send identity documents over borders. In these cases, the customer may send us certified photocopies of the originals. We will scan them on the system, in line with current guidance.

We will sometimes accept a photocopy when it is not a core nationality or identity document or if we confirm the details on Main Index.

In most cases a photocopy can only be accepted when HM Passport Office have asked for it as part of a case note or when contacting the customer. We will accept photocopies where there is a justifiable reason for not sending the original, for example:

- if the original document was photocopied, checked against the original and sent by HM Passport Office's overseas Local Service Provider
- where UKVI hold the original document and we can confirm the information shown on the photocopy on UKVI systems

- the photocopy is the personal details page of a standard passport where the customer is applying for a diplomatic or official service passport
- if the customer lives overseas, is a dual national and they submit colour photocopies of their foreign passport (see: Threat assessment of overseas applications guidance)
- where the customer submits a colour photocopy of their newly aligned foreign passport after we have asked for names to be aligned
- if the customer is a frequent traveller or airline crew renewing their current British passport if they need to keep it until their new passport is issued
- the photocopy is the details page from a parent's passport when the passport differs on DAP (see DAP change of parent details)
- if the customer provides a new style PIC (Permanent Identity card), as Hong Kong residents over the age of 15 must always carry valid legal identification, see: British National Overseas (BNO) guidance
- if the photocopy is of a death certificate for Tiered Application Service (TAS) compassionate cases
- where other guidance tells you that you can accept a photocopy

Where guidance allows, you may be able to accept a photocopy of a British passport instead of the original if you can confirm the details on Main Index (MI). For example:

- if a customer is applying for an additional passport and cannot send in their passport due to travel requirements
- if local services sent the application by post and validated the photocopy because the customer needed to retain their passport

For overseas applications, see: [threat assessment of overseas guidance](#).

Related content

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How to deal with laminated documents

This section tells HM Passport Office staff about laminated documents. It explains what a laminated document is and what you must do if you receive one.

A laminated document is a document that has a clear layer of plastic over either one or both sides of the document. Some customers believe that by laminating their document they are protecting it from damage.

Why we do not accept laminated documents

Laminated documents make it difficult for an examiner to check if the document is genuine. More importantly, it can hide the absence of or incorrect security features in the document, including:

- watermarks
- quality and texture of the paper
- heat reactive ink (for naturalisation and registration documents)

If you receive a laminated document, you must not accept it and ask for an unlaminated version of the document, unless it meets [exceptions for accepting laminated documents](#).

If you have concerns about the document or you are accepting a laminated document and there are other risk indicators, you must:

- complete additional checks, if you are processing on DAP
- refer the application to an Enhanced Application Checker (EAC), if you are processing on AMS

When you can accept a laminated document

If you get an application (or document) with a Braille sticker, you must investigate it. If it is clear from case notes, correspondence and conversations with the customer that they are blind, you can accept their laminated document.

We will also accept laminated documents, if:

- the customer has supplied a change of name deed or marriage certificate (evidence of change of name only)
- the birth certificate was issued by the Singapore Registry of Births (birth certificates in Singapore are laminated by the Singapore Registry of Births)
- the birth certificate was issued in Oman (birth certificates are laminated on one side in Oman)
- the birth certificate was issued in Cyprus (birth certificates are laminated in Cyprus)

- it is a naturalisation or registration certificate and we can confirm the information shown on the laminated certificate, using UKVI systems

If a customer provides a laminated document from a different country to the ones listed here, you must refer to the country's profile section of Knowledge Base. If the information in Knowledge Base confirms the laminated documents are not acceptable, you must ask the customer to send you, either:

- an unlaminated version of the document
- written evidence from the authorities that they officially validate the laminated document or confirm the document was officially laminated
 - if the authorities confirm the document is official, you must contact the Guidance and Quality team so they can add the information to Knowledge Base

Related content

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Contemporaneous documents

This section tells HM Passport Office staff about what contemporaneous documents are and why we ask for them.

A contemporaneous document is a document issued when the event took place. For example, a contemporaneous marriage certificate is the certificate issued when the marriage took place.

A non-contemporaneous document is a document issued when registration has taken place after an agreed registration period of time after the event took place, for that country (for example, a birth certificate showing a birth was registered several years after it took place).

Why we ask for additional documents

We will usually ask for contemporaneous documents or documents as close to the time of the claimed event.

For example, if we:

- are unable to validate standard documents a customer has supplied
- need to confirm a link between the customer and their parent for example when dealing with a Balance of probabilities application

We will usually ask for documents that only a customer, claimed parent or person acting on behalf of a child would be able to provide (for example, school records, family photos, medical records) or other documents that may help us decide based on a balance of probability, for example a [statutory declaration](#). For more information, see: [confirming identity and standard documents not available guidance](#).

Related content

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Documents addressed to HM Passport Office

This section tells HM Passport Office staff what to do if they receive a document addressed to HM Passport Office or the customer.

As part of the passport application process, customers will send documents to HM Passport Office usually by a letter or in an email.

Letters addressed to HM Passport Office

Correspondence addressed to HM Passport Office becomes part of the application. You, the examiner, must not return them to the customer. This applies to all letters (for example, from countersignatories and other government departments) in the UK and overseas.

The exception is if a parent asks us to return a consent letter written by the other parent in support of a child's application, as it may be difficult for them to get consent again, although there may be occasions where this cannot be provided. For example, where there are safeguarding risks and the letter has the other parent's address on it which could put them in danger if disclosed.

Once we have issued the passport (or failed the application) we will destroy the letters and cannot return them to the customer.

Letters addressed to a customer or third party

These will be seen as documents supporting the application. You must return letters addressed to the customer or third party (for example, utility bills and bank statements) to the customer (see: posting passports and documents). Where the documents are deemed as not genuine, they can be either:

- kept, where the Counter Fraud team (CFT) have requested
- returned to the claimed issuing authority

You must:

- decide whether to scan the document by following How to keep scans of supporting documents guidance
- case note all important information, as the scanned copy may not be available immediately on the system
- return third party letters by secure delivery to the customer or nominated third party

Dealing with letters on AMS and DAP

Follow How to keep scans of supporting documents guidance for details of

- why we scan supporting documents
- what supporting documents we scan
- how to view scanned supporting documents
- how to scan a supporting document on the Application Management System (AMS) and Digital Application Processing system (DAP)

Related content

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Supporting documents

This section tells HM Passport Office staff about supporting documents, they may receive. This is not a complete list of every supporting document but covers most supporting documents, that we may receive.

For details of how to check a supporting document on AMS (Application Management System) see: [How we check customers documents](#).

For details of how to check and view supporting documents in DAP (Digital Application Processing) see: [DAP: checking supporting documents](#) guidance.

When examining supporting documents, you, the examiner, must refer to Risk Indicator guidance. Many of the documents listed in this section could be issued by UK or foreign authorities.

If a customer asks for any of their documents returned to them before the passport has been issued, see the return of supporting documents on live applications section on the Posting Passports and Documents guidance.

Act of Parliament to change a name

Although it is not likely, a customer may use an Act of Parliament to change their name. If they give evidence of this, see: Change of name evidence: Acts of Parliament.

Address (residency evidence)

You may use an official document or form (for example, a driver license or utility bill) as well as a signed letter from the customer, as evidence of a customer's:

- residency (for overseas applications)
- change of address or alternative address (when posting passports or documents)
- use of name for change of name purposes

Evidence must always include:

- the customer's name
- current address (or proof of residency)

For example, a foreign ID card may not always include the customer's address, but we may use them to help confirm the person lives in that country.

However, at times we will need evidence of an address (for example, to send a passport to a different place). Examples of evidence of address, include

- utility bills

- tax records
- education records
- employment records
- letters from a government department
- driving licence

For more information about proof of address and proof of residence, see: confirming identity guidance

Adoption certificate and adoption order

We may use adoption certificates and adoption orders as part of the evidence of a customer's

- name
- identity
- nationality
- parents (for parental responsibility)

For details on how to proceed when an adoption changes the name of a child, see names guidance.

You must refer to the country profile section of Knowledge Base when dealing with applications with an overseas adoption certificate or adoption order.

Overseas adoptions

Not all overseas birth certificates will show if a child was adopted so great care is needed.

You must compare the date the certificate was issued to that of the child's date of birth. If the certificate was issued more than three months after the birth, discreet enquiries should be made to the person making the application to explain the discrepancy between these dates.

Affidavits

An affidavit is a written statement from a person who has sworn it to be true. It is signed, by both:

- the person making the oath (known as the affiant)
- a notary public or other judicial officer who administered the oath

You can accept an affidavit instead of a statutory declaration as long as the wording of the oath covers the changes required and includes the relevant details, date, signature etc

There are also overseas equivalents to an affidavit which are acceptable. You can accept this if it has been issued by a Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) recommended law firm under the law of the country the customer is residing. It should be acceptable if it is

- in a similar format to a UK declaration
- contains wording appropriate to a UK declaration
- properly signed and witnessed by an appropriate law practitioner

If you receive an overseas equivalent to an affidavit, see: Knowledge Base. If you have any doubt you must refer to a correctly trained caseworker or operational team leader (OTL).

Bank statement

Bank statements may be used to check:

- change of name applications (to help confirm a customer's use of a new name)
- treaty rights applications (to help confirm earnings)

Baptismal certificates

Baptismal certificates may be used as:

- additional evidence when standard documents are not available to establish a customer's identity
- evidence the customer uses their name for all purposes

A baptismal certificate must not be accepted instead of a birth or adoption certificate.

A baptismal certificate usually includes:

- when and where a person was baptised
- the name and title of the minister
- the names of the baptised person's sponsors, (also called godparents in some denominations)

For more information about baptismal certificates, refer to the country profile section of Knowledge Base.

Birth certificate

A birth certificate provides evidence of an event. We use it, for passport purposes, as evidence of a person's name, date and place of birth. We may use a birth certificate to help confirm, a customer's:

- nationality for example to help confirm their parents' details
- identity for example to help confirm their:

- name
- date of birth
- place of birth
- gender
- parental responsibility

See birth certificate and full birth certificate guidance, when dealing with applications with a birth certificate.

We can sometimes accept a short birth certificate, if the application meets the requirements for a Life Events Validation (LEV) check.

Follow guidance on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) for details of how to get a replacement UK or overseas birth certificate.

Certificate of no marriage record or CRS form Number 5

We will ask customers to provide a Certificate of no marriage record (CENOMAR) or CRS form number 5 from the Philippines Government, if we need to check if where the customer is resident in the Philippines, that their mother was not previously married and the marriage was not annulled.

See: Extra documents for children born to Philippine mothers guidance when dealing with these.

Certificates from the court of the Lord Lyon of Scotland

See names guidance if dealing with a certificate from the Lord Lyon of Scotland.

Certificate of registry of birth

A certificate of registry of birth does not always include a person's name. We refer to these certificates as a 'no name certificate of registry of birth'. You will need to ask the customer to send a birth certificate, as we will not accept a certificate of registry of birth without a name.

A certificate of registry of birth may be accepted:

- instead of a birth certificate if the name is recorded on it
- as [contemporaneous evidence](#)

Civil partnership certificate

A civil partnership certificate can be used by either person named on the certificate to change their surname to that of their partners. A civil partnership certificate is evidence of the event and who took part. People who legally end their civil partnership will be issued a [dissolution certificate](#).

A civil partnership certificate may also be used as part of the evidence:

- a customer has changed their name
- of parental responsibility
- nationality
- identity

A civil partnership certificate alone does not confer parental responsibility or nationality. See definition of parents for nationality purposes) and parental responsibility in Authorisation and Consent guidance for where these can be accepted via civil partnership.

Civil partnership: overseas

HM Passport Office recognises civil partnerships conducted overseas by legally empowered authorities, and where they are recognised locally and have a legal status similar to marriage.

You must refer to the country profile section of Knowledge Base if you receive an overseas civil partnership certificate to check if you can accept it.

Confirmation certificate

In this guidance the term 'confirmation' refers to a religious ceremony where an individual confirms themselves to that faith. You may use a confirmation certificate as:

- [contemporaneous evidence](#) to establish a customer's identity
- evidence the customer uses their name for all purposes

Consular birth certificates

Customers may decide to send a consular birth certificate as evidence of British nationality or proof of personal or parental details for children born outside the UK.

From 1 September 2014 consular birth certificates can only be accepted when a customer sends in:

- an original consular certificate registering a birth before 1 January 1983
- a certified copy of consular certificate issued before 1 January 2014 for births registered before 1 January 1983

You can also accept a certified copy of a consular birth certificate issued after 1 January 2014 for a birth before 1 January 1983 if you can confirm the birth is recorded in the register of overseas births with the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) or the mirror register held with General Register Office (GRO).

In all other cases HM Passport Office cannot accept consular birth certificates. Customers must supply their local (foreign) birth certificate as well as full evidence of a legitimate claim by descent.

Checking the register of overseas births

The register of overseas births with the FCDO or the mirror register held with the GRO may hold a record of an overseas birth. If they hold a certified copy of a consular birth certificate issued after 1 January 2014 for a birth before 01 January 1983, the birth and nationality can be accepted without any additional evidence.

To check a consular birth, you must complete the GRO Request for Information form. You must:

1. Select **Standard** in the fees section on the form.
2. Select **Disclosure option 1** if you require an email stating the information or **option 2** certificate if you want a copy of the certificate posted.
3. Complete **Section 4** including a generic Team email, not your personal email address.
4. Complete **Section 5**.
5. Type 'Identity Documents Act' in **Section 7** and under which section of the Identity Documents Act you are requesting the information either:
 - the verification of information provided to the Secretary of State for the purposes of, or in connection with, an application for the issue of a passport
 - determining whether to withdraw an individual's passport
6. Not complete any other section.
7. Email the completed form to GRO FDU stating 'Consular additional checks' in the email subject field.
8. Stating 'urgent' in the email subject field if the request is urgent due to media interest.

You should receive a response from GRO within 15 days although urgent requests will be actioned as soon as possible.

Where the record is:

- verified, you can accept this as proof of birth and nationality
- not verified and there are fraud concerns you must:
 - complete additional checks if you are processing on DAP
 - refer the application to an Enhanced Application Checks examiner (EAC) if you are processing on AMS

Court orders

There are different types of court orders issued in the UK and overseas, (for example, a residence order or full care order). We use court orders for a number of reasons for example to help:

- confirm parental responsibility

- confirm a name change
- grant us authorisation to issue a passport

When dealing with a court order, you, the examiner, must:

- check the document carefully to make sure there is nothing on the order that:
 - forbids the customer from applying for a passport
 - forbids us from issuing the customer a passport
 - prevents the child being removed from the UK for one month
 - limits how the customer may act on behalf of the child
 - stops a change of the child's name
 - is unclear, contradictory, or needs further investigation
- see: parent guardians: consent guidance
- refer to the country profile section of Knowledge Base

UK court orders

See Knowledge Base for details of UK court orders. Previously UK court orders were original documents with a seal, but they are now black and white documents with no security feature. You must accept a court order as an original copy unless you have reason to doubt their authenticity.

If you have any concerns, for example, you suspect fraud, you must complete additional checks (if you are processing on DAP) or refer the application to an Enhanced Application Checker (EAC) (if you are processing on AMS).

Foreign court orders

If you receive a foreign court order, refer to the country profile section of Knowledge Base.

Death certificates

A death certificate may be used:

- to help confirm that the person named has died on a specific date
- when cancelling a deceased person's passport
- to consider if compassionate circumstances apply
- in loco parentis cases

See: birth certificate guidance for more information on:

- corrections on death certificates
- formats of death certificates
- change of format of death certificate after digitalisation of Northern Ireland records

You must refer to the country profile section of Knowledge Base when dealing with an overseas death certificate.

Dissolution certificate: civil partnerships

A dissolution certificate is issued when a civil partnership is formally dissolved. It is like a divorce document.

See: Names: change of name passport applications if a customer wants to change their name or revert to their previous name.

Divorce documents

A divorce document is issued when a marriage is formally dissolved. See Names: evidence to change a name when dealing with a UK divorce document and Knowledge Base when dealing with an overseas divorce document.

See: legitimation and domicile guidance when dealing with an extra-judicial divorce document.

DNA evidence

We may ask someone to help confirm biological links to another person for identity or nationality purposes. Customers will be given options of a court order, DNA evidence or other evidence they wish HMPO to consider. DNA evidence is not mandatory, but a customer can offer it voluntarily in response to a request for further evidence, or without direct request from HM Passport Office. If a customer provides DNA evidence, you must consider it if it meets both:

- an International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) standard accreditation, this is usually ISO/IEC17025 accreditation (the easiest way is for customers to use one of the Ministry of Justice's (MOJ) accredited laboratories)
- Home Office DNA collection standard

You must follow DNA guidance when dealing with DNA evidence.

When considering balance of probability, you may also consider DNA evidence provided under other circumstance, for example UKVI, linked applications or court cases. However, these do not carry the same weight in your decision making.

Domicile questionnaire

We may ask customers to complete a Domicile Questionnaire (DQ). If you receive any of the 3 versions of DQ we use, you must refer to legitimation and domicile guidance.

These are:

- unmarried father

- monogamous marriage
- polygamous marriage

Driving licence

A driving licence may be provided as evidence of a customer's:

- address and identity (for overseas applications, see: [threat assessment of overseas_guidance](#))
- name (see: [change of name](#))

For details of information recorded on a UK driving licence, see: [DVLA website](#).

To check a foreign driving licence, refer to the country profile section of Knowledge Base.

Educational records

We may use educational records (for example, a school report) when dealing with applications, if we need help to confirm:

- the use of a new name or gender
- a person's identity (for example, if the original supporting documents are not available)

See also [contemporaneous documents](#).

Emergency travel documents

For information on what an emergency travel document (ETD) looks like and when and how we issue them, see: [Travel documents issued by UK government offices guidance](#).

Emergency passports

For information on what an emergency passport looks like and when and how we issue them, see: [Travel documents issued by UK government offices guidance](#).

Employment records

See: [tax records](#) when dealing with employment records.

Enrolled deed polls

Enrolled deed polls are deeds that have been voluntarily enrolled in the central office of the Supreme Court of Judicature in the UK. You must accept enrolled deed polls as evidence of a change of name. See: [Names: evidence to change a name for how to process these applications](#).

Overseas enrolled deed polls

You must accept deed polls enrolled in overseas courts as evidence of a change of name. If you have doubts about the enrolled deed poll, you must:

- check the country profile section of Knowledge Base for examples of change of name deeds for the country that issued it
- raise a query with Guidance and Quality team, if you need advice on how to deal with the application

See: Names: evidence to change a name guidance for how to deal with these applications.

Form E

We may ask a customer to complete a Form E to help us decide on their nationality status. See: British Subject guidance when dealing with Form E.

Foreign language documents: translations

If a customer sends a document in a language other than English or Welsh, they must also supply an official translation. This is to make sure we have the correct information and can assess an application correctly.

We will accept translations if the translation is:

- attached to the original document
- provided by a member of a recognised professional organisation (to prove it is genuine)
- signed and stamped by a translator

The translator must be:

- registered with an official organisation (for example, the Institute of Linguists or the Institute of Translation & Interpreting)
- employed by a recognised translation company
- a member of the Association of Translation Companies

If we receive a document that has not been translated this should be returned to the customer and ask that they send it back with a translated version. We must not recommend any translation service (if they ask).

You must tell customers to contact the embassy of the country the document originated from. For more on translation services, see: the [Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office](#) site. See: [How we check customers documents](#).

If, however, an examiner has the language skills to confidently interpret the documents without translation, then it is not always necessary to insist on a translation. A case note must be added giving full details.

Cases which are to be refused on the basis of a foreign document must always have an official translation of the document in question in case the decision and process is challenged.

Foreign language documents: translation completed abroad

An overseas official translation is acceptable, if:

- the translator is a member of an official body in their own country
- the document has been translated by an organisation listed on the [British embassy, high commission and consulate site](#)
- the translation is certified as a true copy by the foreign embassy of that country

Gender recognition and interim gender recognition certificates

You may use gender recognition certificates to help confirm identity, including establishing that someone linked to the event has that name, date of birth, place of birth and gender. You must use other evidence to link the customer to the person named on the certificate. See: Gender recognition guidance, for:

- information on when a gender recognition certificate (GRC) and an interim GRC is issued
- how to deal with applications with a GRC and interim GRC

Government letters

Government letters including letters from central, regional or local government departments in the UK and overseas may be used to examine:

- change of name applications (for example, to help confirm the use of a new name)
- overseas applications (to help confirm identity)

See also [Letters addressed to a customer or third party](#)

His Majesty's Forces birth certificate

When dealing with a forces birth certificate, you must follow the British citizenship guidance. You may need to use a forces birth certificate as evidence of, for example:

- identity (to help confirm the customer's name or name change)
- nationality (including legitimation)
- parental responsibility

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region passports

A Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) passport may be used to help confirm a customer's:

- identity (for example, confirming they use the same name for all purposes)
- nationality (as part of the evidence to check the holder's British status)

If you need information about HKSARs and how to deal with passport applications for British nationals overseas, see: [British Nationals Overseas guidance](#)

Hong Kong identity cards

There are 2 types of identity cards used in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region:

- Hong Kong identity card (HKID)
- Hong Kong permanent identity card (HKPIC)

See: [British Nationals Overseas guidance](#) for information about:

- the different identity cards held by customers
 - born in Hong Kong
 - living in Hong Kong
 - who have a connection to Hong Kong
- how identity cards can be used to support passport applications for British nationals overseas

Identity cards

An identity (ID) card is usually a portable, plastic card embedded with digital information (for example, a chip). Not all countries issue ID cards. In some countries, holders must always carry their ID cards and others only encourage it.

You must refer to the country profile section of Knowledge Base to confirm the details of the customer's ID matches the information we have in Knowledge Base.

In many cases, we can accept colour photocopies of the ID card. See: [Confirming Identity guidance](#).

You may use national ID cards (or equivalent) to check:

- photo identity
- change of name applications (for example, to help confirm the use of a new name)
- overseas applications (to help confirm identity and nationality by checking address and residency on the document)

Letters and correspondence

For information on how to deal with letters and correspondence, see: Supporting documents addressed to HM Passport Office and the customer guidance.

Lost and stolen form

A lost or stolen form (LS01) allows customers to tell us their passport is lost or stolen. We recommend UK customers tell us online or by phone rather than complete an LS01 form. However, customers can still complete an LS01 form if they prefer.

Marriage certificate: UK

A marriage certificate may be used to:

- help confirm nationality (for example, if the claim is through the father)
- identity (for example, to help confirm a change of name)
- consent (for example, to help confirm a parent has parental responsibility)

For information on what details are recorded on UK marriage certificates, see: [the General Register Office website](#).

For information on corrections to marriage certificates and change of formats of UK marriage certificates, see: birth certificate guidance.

Marriage certificates from His Majesty's Forces

The Forces marriage registers have been used to register the marriages of members of the Armed Forces. However, the registrations are not always in forms recognised by either United Kingdom or foreign law and a Forces marriage certificate is not necessarily evidence of a valid marriage.

Before accepting a Forces marriage certificate as evidence, you the examiner must be satisfied the marriage was celebrated following [Section 22 of the Foreign Marriages Act, 1892](#), or [Section 2 of the Foreign Marriage Act 1947](#), and was celebrated by a British Forces Chaplain, or a properly appointed Naval, Army or Air Force Officer.

If there is no record of either Marriage Act on the marriage certificate, you can still accept the certificate as long as it was solemnised by a services chaplain in a services church.

See Knowledge Base for examples of forces marriage certificates.

Marriages overseas

The following marriages overseas can be accepted as being valid in United Kingdom law:

- those celebrated at a British Consulate, and before a Civil Registrar
- those celebrated in a local church and registered by a Civil Registrar

You must refer to a correctly trained caseworker or operational team leader (OTL) where the customer supplies a form of marriage which although may be valid in the law of some countries, it may or may not be accepted in UK law. Such documentation may include a:

- certification of marriage contracted in a country where polygamy is permitted
- certification of marriage celebrated by Proxy (i.e. where only one party is present at the ceremony, and the other is represented by a person holding his or her proxy)
- religious marriage certificate

Marriage in past or present Dependent Territories may be regarded as valid if celebrated by Ministers of recognised religious denominations.

Foreign marriage certificates

If the marriage certificate is not in English, we will need an official translation (see: [foreign documents: translations](#)). You must check Knowledge Base to confirm if you can accept the document.

Infant Hindu marriage certificate

You must refer to a correctly trained caseworker or OTL any application involving an infant Hindu marriage (i.e. where either the groom is under the age of 18 years or where the bride was not 16 years of age at the time of marriage)

Islamic marriage certificates

You should take care when receiving applications accompanied by an Islamic Marriage Certificate which records the details of a marriage that took place in the UK.

There are only a small number of Mosques in the UK that are authorised to perform marriages according to UK regulations, although other mosques are able to perform marriages according to Islamic Rites.

You can accept an Islamic marriage certificate that records the details of a marriage that took place in the UK for change of name purposes. They should not be accepted for status purposes under sections 1 and 2 of the British Nationality Act 1981 (BNA'81) or section 5 BNA'48 unless the customer also sends a marriage certificate issued by the civil authorities in the UK.

You can accept an Islamic marriage certificates that record the details of a marriage that took place abroad for both status and change of name purposes as long as the

document provides details of a marriage that took place in an Islamic country. If you have any doubt you must refer to a correctly trained caseworker or OTL.

If you need to use the marriage certificate for a change of name application, see: Names: evidence to change a name guidance.

Naturalisation certificates

Refer to naturalisation and registration certificates guidance.

Parental order

Customers in the UK cannot apply for a Parental Responsibility Order if they use a surrogate to have a child. They will need to apply for a Parental Order or Adoption Order depending upon the circumstance although this is not mandatory but means one or more parent may not have parental responsibility.

You must follow surrogacy guidance to help confirm the customer's nationality and parental responsibility guidance to confirm consent.

After 6 April 2010, a Parental Order full birth certificate will:

- only have thirteen sections (instead of the usual seventeen sections)
- not have any sections about the informant
- show the parents as male and female or 2 same sex parents

Passports: British passports

You may need to have a British passport (for example, as evidence of customer's identity and nationality). If a customer is applying to renew a British passport, they must normally send us their original passport.

For information on the types of British passports HM Passport Office issue to British nationals, including passport features, see: types of British passport guidance.

Passports: foreign passports

A foreign passport may be used to help confirm:

- identity (for example, photo identity)
- nationality (for example, an entry stamp can be used to show if the customer was in the country when they said they were. This can confirm dates of conception or if a child is in the UK when born abroad)
- the customer's name

If the passport is the customer's, you must check that the name on the foreign passport matches the name on the application. See names: aligning names on foreign documents guidance.

Foreign passport with right of abode

If a customer is applying for their first British passport and sends us a foreign passport that includes a certificate of entitlement to right of abode, you must follow Foreign documents guidance on how to deal with right of abode certificates.

Colour photocopies of foreign passports

Colour photocopies of foreign passports can be accepted in some cases (for example, if local services sent the application by post or an overseas customer cannot send in their foreign passport). The copy must include all passport pages (including visa, bio-data and blank pages).

See: [threat assessment of overseas_guidance](#).

Post-dated (PD1 and PD2) forms

Customers may fill in PD1 and PD2 forms to apply for a post-dated passport in their future name. Refer to Post-dated passports guidance for information, about:

- UK PD1 and PD2 forms
- paper and online applications
- when we accept UK PD1 and PD2 forms
- how to deal with PD1 and PD2s from overseas

Registration certificates

Refer to naturalisation and registration certificates guidance.

Residence permit cards

See: [visas and residence permit cards](#), if you receive a residence permit card.

Status letters

A Home Office status letter is an official document issued by the United Kingdom Visas & Immigration (UKVI), to show their assessment (based on the information and documents provided to them) about a customer's British nationality status.

Status letters are the outcome of a balance of probabilities assessment made by UKVI about the customer's nationality rather than conclusive evidence of nationality.

From January 2018, UKVI no longer issue status letters solely for passport purposes. However, they are still issued for other purposes (and customers may not have informed UKVI of their intention to use them in applications for British passports).

For more information on when a status letter can be accepted as supporting document, see Home Office Status letters guidance.

If you receive a status letter issued by the Windrush task force, further information can be found in the Windrush guidance.

Statutory declarations

A statutory declaration is a written statement of fact that is signed in the presence of:

- a solicitor
- a Notary of the Public
- a Justice of the Peace
- a Commissioner for Oaths
- a councillor (Scotland only. Documents on or after 10/12/07)
- a British diplomatic and consular officer in post abroad
- an officer of the armed services with the rank of Major, Lieutenant-Commander, or Squadron Leader, and above
- any other qualified person

Legally, statutory declarations must contain the following wording.

I (name) do solemnly and sincerely declare, that/as follows.. . . . and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of the Statutory Declarations Act 1835.

If a statutory declaration is received where this wording is not included, it will not be acceptable for passport purposes:

You can accept a statutory declaration for change of name purposes as long as it has been signed in the new name. Some statutory declaration may be signed in both the old and the new name; these can also be accepted. If the statutory declaration is only signed in the old name, then the examiner should request a new statutory declaration showing the new name.

You must refuse any statutory declaration a customer may send in place of a birth or marriage certificate. You must advise the customer that they must produce the relevant certificate or give evidence to show why it is not possible. If a birth has not been registered at all (see Birth Registration), you may consider a statutory declaration as part of a range of evidence, the customer sends.

Overseas statutory declarations

There are also overseas equivalents to statutory declarations which are acceptable. You can accept this if it has been issued by a Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) recommended law firm under the law of the country the customer is residing. It should be acceptable if it is

- contains wording appropriate to a UK declaration

- properly signed and witnessed by an appropriate law practitioner

If you receive an overseas equivalent to a statutory declaration, see: Knowledge Base. If you have any doubt you must refer to a correctly trained caseworker or operational team leader (OTL).

Customers must produce birth and marriage certificates. In some cases, they will claim these are not available and will produce statutory declarations instead. You must recommend that the customer contact the embassy, High Commission or registration service for the country concerned for help in getting a certified copy of the certificate.

If the authorities in the country concerned are unable to trace a record of the birth or marriage the customer must supply written confirmation of this from the relevant embassy, High Commission or registration service.

Once you are satisfied as to the authenticity of the written confirmation the customer must produce additional evidence taken from official records issued close to the date of birth in the relevant country as evidence of:

- full name
- place of birth
- date of birth

For marriages, evidence of the union taken from official records issued close to the date of marriage should be submitted in addition to the statutory declarations.

If you have doubts about the authenticity of any documents sent by the customer, you should consult the British authorities in the country concerned for advice.

Tax record

A customer may use tax records (for example, a letter from a tax authority) as evidence for the following:

- to help confirm a change of name
- to help confirm a change of address
- an overseas application to help confirm identity
- treaty rights (for example, as proof of earnings)

Temporary passports

See travel documents issued by UK government offices guidance for information on what temporary passports look like, when and how they're issued.

Un-enrolled deed poll

Un-enrolled deed polls will be accepted as evidence of a change of name. See: Names: evidence to change a name guidance for how to deal with these applications.

Visas or resident permit cards

You may use visas or residents permit cards to check:

- change of name applications (for example, to help confirm the use of the new name)
- overseas applications (to help confirm identity)

Related content

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