



Home Office

Naturalisation and registration certificates

Version 10.0

This guidance tells His Majesty's Passport Office staff about how to accept and deal with naturalisation and registration certificates

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About: Naturalisation and registration certificates

This guidance tells His Majesty's Passport Office staff when customers must send naturalisation or registration certificates to support their claim to a British passport, and how staff use them to progress an application.

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 **10.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **2 November 2022**

Changes from last version of this guidance

This guidance has been updated to tell Digital Application Processing (DAP) examiners how to deal with applications containing an error on the certificate of registration or naturalisation.

Related content

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British naturalisation and registration certificates

This section tells HM Passport Office staff about naturalisation and registration certificates issued by the UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) service, how to check details shown on the certificate are genuine and case note certificate details.

Naturalisation and registration are legal processes by which an adult or a child with no automatic claim to British nationality can become a British national and obtain the same rights and privileges as someone who was born a British national.

Customers who get British nationality by naturalisation must attend a citizenship ceremony (unless they are exempt). Those people who register are not required to attend a ceremony. When a person becomes a British national by registration or naturalisation, UKVI issue them with a nationality certificate.

A person is officially naturalised or registered from the date entered on their British nationality certificate. Their certificate shows the customer's:

- current name
- previous name
- place of birth
- date of birth
- British nationality, section and subsections of the relevant nationality act
- Home Office reference number
- certificate number
- date of registration or naturalisation

These are the details that must appear on the passport unless we have [evidence of a change to the details](#).

For passport purposes, customers must send us their original naturalisation or registration certificate to show their claim to British nationality and confirm their personal details. Some customers may send us their citizenship ceremony invitation instead of their naturalisation certificate. You, the examiner, must not accept these as evidence of British nationality.

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When UKVI change a British nationality certificate

This section tells HM Passport Office staff about endorsements (amendments).

The United Kingdom Visas and Immigration service (UKVI) will reissue a naturalisation or registration certificate if they accept the original certificate was issued in error.

If UKVI have correctly issued the certificate based on the original evidence provided they will not reissue using different details. If the customer provides different evidence later (for example, for a different date of birth) UKVI will add an endorsement (printed explanation) to the top of the original certificate showing there is a difference.

If there is more than one endorsement, UKVI will endorse both top corners. If the endorsed certificate was issued before 1986, the endorsement will be at the bottom of the certificate. Customers must [contact UKVI to change any detail on their certificate](#).

See Checking an endorsement on a nationality certificate if you are unsure if you can accept an endorsement for passport purposes.

Endorsements added before 2018

Before 2018 UKVI marked certificates in 2 ways depending on whether they accepted the customer's evidence or not. The endorsement will show:

- as a 'statement of fact' when they did not accept the evidence the customer gave
- as an official endorsement when they accepted the customer's new evidence

His Majesty's Passport Office do not accept a 'statement of fact' endorsement as evidence to change the personal details on a passport. If we cannot accept the endorsement you must contact the customer and tell them why. This gives them the opportunity to withdraw their application or have it issued in the original details entered on the certificate.

Statement of fact endorsements will show the details claimed by the customer and any evidence seen. For example:

“According to documentary evidence produced to the Home Office the place of birth of the person named below should read [PLACE OF BIRTH]”

“After the certificate had been issued, the holder (or the holder's agents) informed the Home Office that his father's date of birth should have read

Endorsements added after 2018 and before 18 February 2020

From 2018 UKVI stopped 'statement of fact' endorsements on certificates but did not standardise the wording on the endorsements.

However, UKVI will clearly show on the endorsement they have accepted the customer's evidence to change the detail on the certificate. For example, where UKVI have officially accepted a change of name:

"I HEREBY CERTIFY that this is a true extract of the Home Office record of the Certificate of Naturalisation (or Registration) issued to *SURNAME* FORENAMES (new names)"

Endorsements added after 18 February 2020

From 18 February 2020 UKVI introduced standardised wording for their endorsements. For example, where UKVI has officially accepted:

- a change of name:

"According to documentary evidence produced to the Home Office the Name of the certificate holder should read (accepted name):

For head of Nationality Directorate.
(date of endorsement)"

- a change of place or date of birth:

"According to documentary evidence produced to the Home Office the date (and place) of birth of the certificate holder should read (place of birth) (date of birth)

For head of Nationality Directorate.
(date of endorsement)"

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Dealing with British nationality certificates

This section tells HM Passport Office staff how to assess British nationality certificates, what risk indicators may be present and how to record the details of British nationality certificates on the system and in case notes

For information on security features of naturalisation and registration certificates and details about faulty certificates which are still acceptable, see the UK Knowledge Base.

British nationality certificate: change in personal details

We normally issue the customer's passport in the same details recorded on their naturalisation or registration certificate. However, the customer may apply for their passport and give us different details in their first British passport application or in a renewal or replacement of an earlier passport.

By doing so the customer is usually trying to tell us that they are now known by a different name or there was an error in a previous passport. If the customer applies using details that are different from their naturalisation or registration certificate you must use guidance for:

- place of birth changes
- date of birth changes
- name changes
- gender change

You must refer the application to Enhanced Application Checking if you suspect a customer registered or naturalised as a British citizen using false information.

For example, if their name, date of birth or place of birth is different on the application compared with the nationality certificate and there's no genuine reason why, such as, there's no evidence to show:

- the customer has changed their name
- a town, city or country has officially changed name

If you have any concerns, for example you suspect fraud, you must refer the application to your operational team leader (OTL). The OTL will instruct you whether to refer the application to an Enhanced Application Checker or Counter Fraud team for further investigation.

Nationality certificates that show the place of birth is unknown

If a nationality certificate shows 'UNKNOWN' in the place and country of birth, you must refer to Place and country of birth guidance.

Nationality certificate shows only a country of birth

If a nationality certificate shows only a country of birth in the place and country of birth, you must refer to Place and country of birth guidance.

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Checking a British nationality certificate with UKVI

This section tells HM Passport Office staff when, why and how to check a customer's nationality certificate with UK Visas and Immigration service's systems.

You, the examiner working on Digital Application Processing (DAP) or the Application Management System (AMS), must check naturalisation and registration certificate details using UK Visas and Immigration service (UKVI) systems.

How to check a British nationality certificate with UKVI

If you, the DAP or AMS examiner, have concerns about accepting a naturalisation or registration certificate, for example, when you cannot confirm if a UKVI endorsement is acceptable for passport purposes, or it fits the criteria where you must complete extra checks you must check UKVI's systems to see if the document was issued to the customer. For example, by checking the customer's address and photos on file to check the passport application is for the same person.

When you have completed your checks, you must:

1. Refer the application and certificate to the Counter Fraud team (CFT) if you suspect fraud.
2. Add a case note recording all your actions and checks and clearly record the outcome of your investigation.

You must continue to examine the customer's application in line with all guidance if the certificate details match the UKVI records and you have no other fraud concerns. When the details on the certificate do not match the details on the UKVI systems, you may need to contact UKVI direct to confirm the information and decide what you must do next.

Nationality certificates: suspected mistakes

UKVI will sometimes make a mistake on a naturalisation or registration certificate itself or you may suspect that an incorrect decision has been made.

You, the DAP examiner, must keep the application in DAP where possible, dealing with the query on the nationality certificate in line with this guidance.

You must deal with the customer's application on DAP if:

- the certificate is issued correctly
- the incorrect date format is the only concern
- you can confirm the customer's identity on UKVI systems
- you intend to return the certificate to the customer

If you need to return a naturalisation or registration certificate to UKVI, you must check if the document is being handled by a Document Management Service (DMS) or Document Handling Unit (DHU) site (see Dual running: how to identify the document handling process).

If the document is being handled by a DMS site, you must transfer the application to AMS.

If the document is being handled by a DHU site, you must:

1. Put a case note on the customer's application confirming you have returned the naturalisation or registration certificate to UKVI.
2. Update Application Receive Domain (ARD) to show the document must be returned to UKVI.

When the application processing is complete, the DHU will send the naturalisation or registration certificate back to UKVI.

Queries with dates on nationality certificates

Naturalisation certificates are dated at the customer's citizenship ceremony. If the customer is not required to attend a citizenship ceremony UKVI will date the certificate when they issue it.

If, you, receive a certificate of naturalisation or registration that does not have a date or the date is not in the correct format, you must check UKVI systems to confirm:

- the date the certificate was issued – ceremony attended date
- if the naturalisation ceremony has:
 - taken place
 - been waived

Undated certificate: UKVI systems confirm issue date

If UKVI's records show the customer did attend a citizenship ceremony (or their ceremony was waived) and there are no other concerns with the application, you must:

1. Return the certificate to UKVI and ask them to send the certificate to the customer when they have dated it.
2. Tell the customer you have sent their certificate to UKVI to be corrected using letter 305.
3. Add a case note to record your actions and decisions.
4. Issue the passport in line with current guidance using the information in UKVI's records if the customer is entitled to a passport. The naturalisation date is the ceremony attended date if there was one or, if this was waived, the outcome date on UKVI systems.

Undated certificate: UKVI systems shows no ceremony date

If your checks on UKVI's systems show there are no other concerns with the application but the citizenship ceremony has not taken place and has not been waived, you must:

1. Contact UKVI by email and ask them to check the details.
2. Complete the Querying a nationality certificate with UKVI form and ask them to return the certificate back to you.
3. Tell the customer (using letter 305) you have sent their certificate to UKVI to be corrected and will hold their application open until you hear from UKVI.
4. Add a case note to record the actions and decisions you made.
5. Store the application until UKVI return the corrected certificate.

When you receive the corrected certificate, you must continue to examine the application.

Dated nationality certificate: no ceremony attended date on UKVI system

You must accept the date on the nationality certificate is correct and return it to the customer if the nationality certificate is dated, the customer is newly naturalised and you've confirmed (all the following points):

- the customer's identity and nationality
- UKVI systems does not show a ceremony attended date and the date when the decision was granted is within 3 months of the date on the certificate

You do not need to contact UKVI to tell them their records do not show the ceremony attended date. These applications can remain in DAP as no direct contact is needed with UKVI.

If the certificate was issued more than 3 months ago and there is no ceremony attended date on UKVI's system, you must contact UKVI to check the date and confirm what we must do next.

Dated nationality certificate: date on certificate differs to UKVI system

If the date on the nationality certificate differs from the ceremony attended date, recorded on the UKVI system, you must:

1. Contact UKVI by email and ask them to check the details.
2. Return the certificate to UKVI and ask them to send the certificate back to us when they correct it.
3. Tell the customer (using AMS letter 305) you:
 - have sent their certificate to UKVI to be corrected
 - will hold their application open until you hear from UKVI

4. Add a case note to the application explaining what you have done.
5. Store the application until UKVI return the corrected certificate.

If UKVI confirm the certificate is correct you must continue to examine the application and return the certificate to the customer when you complete the application.

Dated nationality certificate: incorrect date format

If the nationality certificate date has been added in a format other than date, month (written in full) and year, (for example 22 July 2009), you must check the date on UKVI systems.

You can accept the different date format, issue the passport and return the certificate to the customer if:

- the date on the certificate and UKVI records matches and just the format is different
- there are no other concerns with the application
- you have confirmed the customer's identity

If the date is incorrect (it does not match the records), we must return the certificate to UKVI to correct.

Nationality certificate is laminated

If the customer sends us a laminated certificate of registration or naturalisation, you, the DAP or AMS examiner, must:

- confirm the details of the certificate on UKVI systems
- accept the laminated document as if it was not laminated
- check if additional supporting documentation is needed

If the details on the certificate match those on the UKVI system and no more supporting documents are needed, you must accept the laminated copy of the document as confirmation of nationality.

If the details on the certificate do not match those on the UKVI system you must contact UKVI to check if there has been an administrative error or refer to CFT if you suspect fraud.

Checking an endorsement on a nationality certificate

If you, are unsure about the meaning or wording on an endorsement you must check UKVI systems to see if UKVI accepted the change. You must only email UKVI if you are still unclear after checking UKVI systems.

When you have resolved your query, you must add a case note to record your findings and decision.

If we cannot issue a passport using the details on an endorsement because UKVI did not accept the change you must contact the customer and tell them why using letter template 316

Any changes in personal details must be in line with current policy.

Suspected administrative mistakes

Where the mistake is only administrative it does not impact the customer's nationality or identity, we can continue to issue the passport if we can confirm the customers, identity and entitlement.

For example, the mistake may be a spelling error on the certificate itself or an incorrect status recorded in one area of UKVI's systems but not in another.

If UKVI's systems confirm the information we have is correct and human error has caused a typing error on the certificate we can issue the passport but must send the certificate to UKVI to be re issued correctly. You must ask UKVI to return the certificate to the customer.

Where the suspected error is more complex and impacts the customer's nationality claim or identity these must be referred to the Quality, Examination Support team (QuEst) to contact UKVI to agree next steps.

Administrative error: affecting BC 6(1) and BC 6(2) BNA'81 claims

We are aware of a small number of UKVI records that show a customer's status as British citizen sec 6(1) British Nationality Act 1981 (BNA'81) in UKVI's Atlas system (this will only be in the initial phrase of the notes and the rest of the notes will confirm the correct status) but the certificate shows British citizen sec 6(2) BNA'81.

If you, the examiner, discover a certificate where the Atlas Person Search notes the customer's nationality as BC 6(1) BNA'81 but the certificate shows BC 6(2) BNA'81 you must:

1. Check the customer's immigration history on Atlas to confirm the correct status (as shown on the certificate).
2. Add a case note to record the difference and the checks you made to confirm the correct nationality status.
3. Accept the status recorded on the certificate is correct and return the certificate to the customer.

If you are still unable to confirm the correct status you must contact UKVI by email to investigate and decide the next course of action.

This error on UKVI's systems is currently under investigation and correction, we do not need to report this to UKVI.

Suspected incorrect UKVI decisions

You, the examiner must use the query process to refer the case to QuEST where there are:

- regularisation cases (see Refusals and withdrawals guidance) where the Home Office has made an error
- complex cases where you believe the customer's nationality status section is incorrect or there is an auto claim
- complex cases where UKVI have issued a certificate with a child change of name without both parents consent and we cannot issue the passport without the other parent's consent
- possible errors in the UKVI decision making process

QuEST will review the application, UKVI system notes and contact UKVI to investigate the possible error. UKVI will advise the next action we must take.

QuEST: dealing with complex nationality certificate referrals

If you, the QuEST officer, need to email the Technical support team in UKVI about a nationality certificate, the **Subject header** on the email must include the following information:

- certificate/Re-roll HMPO query
- Home Office reference number
- customer name (as shown on the certificate)

The email must contain details of the error found and your contact details. When UKVI reply you must:

1. Add a case note to the application to record the results of the UKVI checks.
2. Tell the examiner what they must do next. For example:
 - return the certificate to UKVI
 - continue with the application
 - wait for UKVI to return the certificate
3. Add an alert on AMS or DAP to the application for the next working day to notify the examiner.

Querying a nationality certificate with UKVI

If the details on UKVI systems do not match the details on the certificate and you need to contact UKVI, the application must be dealt with in AMS. You, the AMS examiner, must email the Support team in UKVI to ask them to confirm the correct details.

To check the details with UKVI you must:

1. Complete the Querying a nationality certificate with UKVI form explaining the error found.

2. Attach the form to an email that shows all the following information in the **Subject header:**
 - 'certificate/Re-roll HMPO query' or 'certificate/Endorsement query' (if the query is about an endorsement on a certificate)
 - Home Office reference number
 - Customer's name (as it appears on the certificate)
3. Email the form to UKVI to confirm the correct details.
4. Add a case note to record what you have done.
5. Pigeonhole the application until you receive a reply from UKVI.
6. Add a case note to record UKVI's response and scan the form onto the application as a permanent record.

If UKVI confirm the details are correct you must continue to examine the application in line with guidance.

Returning a nationality certificate to UKVI

If UKVI tell you the details on the certificate must be corrected, you must not send it back to the customer, you must:

1. Add a case note to confirm the information you receive from UKVI.
2. Case note the customer's status which UKVI confirm is correct.
3. Complete the Querying a nationality certificate with UKVI form explaining where UKVI must return the certificate (for example, the customer's address or back to HM Passport Office).
4. Send the customer's certificate and the Returning a nationality certificate to UKVI form, by secure delivery to:

UKVI Department 201
The Capital Building
New Hall Place
Liverpool L3 9PP

5. Add a case note to the application to record that you have returned the certificate to UKVI.
6. Scan the completed Querying a nationality certificate with UKVI form onto the application as a permanent record.

UKVI will investigate, correct the certificate and send it back to the customer or HM Passport Office as requested.

Contacting UKVI when we are waiting for a reply

You, the operational team leader must contact the agreed UKVI contact to query cases which have not been responded to and:

- need an urgent UKVI reply
- have been waiting for a reply for at least 4 weeks (for non-urgent cases)

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Recording British nationality certificates on the system

This section tells HM Passport Office staff working how to record a customer's naturalisation or registration certificate on a first time passport application on Digital Application Processing (DAP) and the Application Management System (AMS).

The customer must add their nationality or registration certificate details onto their application when they apply for their first British passport.

Case noting British nationality certificates

When a customer has registered or naturalised you, the examiner working on Digital Application Processing (DAP) or the Application Management System (AMS) must add a case note recording the certificate details. For example:

Nat cert shows [insert nationality act and section reference]
HO ref number [reference number]
Dated: [insert certificate date]
Place of issue: [insert place of issue as shown on certificate]

Some registration sections in the BNA'81 can be 'by descent' (BD) or 'otherwise than by descent' (OTBD) depending on the customer's circumstances. You must investigate the customer's claim and make sure you case note their status in full (including the BD or OTBD determination) as it could affect a future claim.

Recording British nationality certificates on DAP

You, the Digital Application Processing (DAP) examiner, must check the customer's nationality or registration details when you complete a **Nationality** task.

You must:

1. Check the image of the certificate on the **Documents** tab.
2. Check the details shown on the certificate match the details entered by the customer on the **Naturalisation or registration** tab.
3. Click **Edit details** if you need to correct any errors on the:
 - o Certificate number
 - o Issue date
4. Add a case note to explain any changes you have made to the details.
5. Click **Save**.

DAP may show information in the **Naturalisation or registration** tab that does not refer to the customer's naturalisation or registration certificate. For example, when the customer sent the application and added in error:

- a parent's naturalisation or registration certificate details

- their birth certificate details

You, the DAP examiner, must:

1. Click **Edit details** and remove the information on the Naturalisation or registration tab.
2. Add a case note to explain any changes you have made to the details.
3. Click **Save**.

Recording British nationality certificates on AMS

You, the examiner working on the Application Management System (AMS), must make sure you record the customer's naturalisation or registration certificate in the:

- supporting documents tab
- Naturalise tab if the customer is applying for their first British passport

You, the examiner must also record the details of the customer's naturalisation or registration certificate as a case note.

Sopra Steria Ltd will data verify the information the customer has provided on their application form, but they will not add anything the customer has missed.

If the customer is a first time passport holder or is changing their national status due to registering or naturalising, you must check the **Naturalise** tab on the Examination screen in AMS and update the information recorded by the customer by:

1. Selecting the **Yes** radio button.
2. Correcting any errors on the:
 - **Date of Issue**
 - **Certificate Number**

If you make any changes to the information the customer entered, you must add a case note to explain what these were.

You must contact the customer and tell them to send us their certificate if they have told us they have naturalised or registered but did not send the certificate to us. When you receive the certificate, you must check the details recorded on AMS are correct.

If the customer is applying for a renewal, a replacement, a change or has not naturalised or registered you must:

1. Select the No radio button.
2. Remove any information typed into the:
 - Date of Issue field
 - Certificate Number field
 - Place of Issue field
3. Add a case note to state:

- “app not nat/reg”, if for example, they have added their birth certificate details to the section
- “Naturalise section not relevant” if the application is to renew a previous passport

The information captured in the **Naturalise** tab will not be available on Main Index. If you need to view this information you must create a Criminal Procedures and Investigations Act (CPIA) report.

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