



Home Office

# Place and country of birth

Version 31.0

Guidance for His Majesty's Passport Office staff about the customer's place and country of birth and how they must be shown on the passport and in our records.

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# About: Place and country of birth

This guidance is for His Majesty's Passport Office operational staff dealing with passport applications and tells them:

- how the customer's place and country of birth is part of their identity
- that the customer's place and country of birth affects their nationality
- how the customer's place and country of birth may affect their entitlement
- the impact place and country of birth may have on a vulnerability
- how the customer's place and country of birth may affect consent for a passport
- about the importance of the name of the place and country of birth, and how to correctly record them
- what documents a customer must send us, as evidence of their place and country of birth
- how and when you must make changes to the customer's place and country of birth

## Contacts

If you have any questions about the guidance and your line manager or senior caseworker cannot help you or you think that the guidance has factual errors then email the Guidance team.

If you notice any formatting errors in this guidance (broken links, spelling mistakes and so on) or have any comments about the layout or navigability of the guidance then you can email the Guidance team.

## Publication

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

- version **31.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **10 July 2025**

## Changes from last version of this guidance

This guidance has been updated:

- with minor reformatting changes.
- to tell examiners that Guernsey must be amended to Guernsey, Alderney and Sark if the customer selects Guernsey as their country of birth
- to highlight disputed territories and link these to guidance for observations needed when dealing with foreign passport name alignment
- to tell examiners how to deal with nationality certificates that have Hong Kong or Hong Kong SAR as the country of birth

- to change the reference to government list to Geographical names index throughout
- to roll back changes made in line with the Geographical names index
- to change the reference to government list to Geographical names index throughout
- to show Uitenhage, a town in South Africa, has been renamed Kariega
- to show Dnipropetrovsk, a city in Ukraine, was renamed Dnipro
- to alphabetise the list of common name changes
- to remove references to AMS
- to tell examiners to add observation OBTZ when they are abbreviating a name on a passport

## **Related content**

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# Place of birth on the passport

This section tells HM Passport Office staff how the customer's place and country of birth is part of the customer's identity, affects their nationality and can impact their entitlement to a passport. It includes how the customer's place and country of birth can affect the consent we need to process an application, impact on vulnerability issues. It also includes when we may need to change a place or country of birth.

The customer's:

- place of birth is defined as the village, town, city or area where they were born
- country of birth is defined as the country where the birth happened

When HM Passport Office refers to the customer's 'place of birth', we sometimes mean both the place and country of birth. This guidance will refer to 'place of birth' and 'country of birth' as two separate items of a customer's information.

## Place and country of birth: identity

For passport purposes, the customer's identity can be defined by their biometrics (for example, facial image and fingerprints) as well as their biographical information, such as:

- name
- date of birth
- place (for example, town) and country of birth
- gender

HM Passport Office must make sure we record the customer's place and country of birth accurately, so:

- we issue a passport to the rightful holder of that identity
- we correctly store the information on HM Passport Office records
- the customer can use the passport as a travel document and proof of identity, as shown in the [Cabinet Office identity documents list](#)

We establish the customer's place and country of birth using the customer's documents.

The place and country of birth we record must be shown on the customer's core document (for example, their birth or naturalisation certificate). The customer cannot choose a place of birth to be recorded on their passport, if the place or country of birth is not shown on their core document.

The customer's passport will show their town of birth only (or the village, city or area). The customer's country of birth is not shown on the passport ([except in](#)

[specific circumstances](#)). If a previous passport [shows the country of birth, you must not repeat it in the new passport](#).

HM Passport Office's passport application and passport records contain the customer's place and country of birth.

You must record the customer's place of birth and country of birth in the correct fields on the system, so the new passport and our records show the correct information.

## Place and country of birth: nationality

The customer's place and country of birth affects their nationality claim, as where and when they were born, will affect which legislation applies to their claim to British nationality.

Any request for [changes to the customer's place of birth](#), will mean that you, the examiner, must re-establish the customer's nationality claim.

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## Place and country of birth: consent

The customer's place or country of birth (as well as where the customer is living) may affect who can authorise or consent to the issue of a passport. For example, it may affect:

- who has parental responsibility for a child
- the legislation that may be applicable when a third party provides consent

## Place and country of birth: vulnerability

The customer's place or country of birth may tell us whether there are any vulnerability indicators that we must consider as part of their application (for example, if we are aware that forced marriages or abductions are common).

## Changing the place or country of birth

The customer may want to [change their place or country of birth](#) or there may be times when we need to do this, for example, if a [place name has officially changed](#).

Depending on the circumstances, the customer may need to give us evidence.

### Related content

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# Place or country of birth: using the correct name

This section tells HM Passport Office staff why it is important to use the correct name for the place and country of birth.

We must always record the correct current name for the place and country of birth on the passport and in our records. This may mean you have to change the place of birth or country of birth from that shown on:

- the customer's old passport
- the customer's application
- the customer's documents (for example, their birth certificate)
- our previous passport and application records

Place names on UK government products (for example, the British passport) and in official correspondence (including our websites and passport and application records) are a reflection of UK policy. The use of an unofficial or politically sensitive place or country name can have serious diplomatic consequences.

We must use the [Geographical names index](#) (maintained by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)) or the islands, places and territories list for all country and place names that we record on a passport, product or official record.

You must not record the customer's country of birth as a code (for example, as listed by the [Geographical names index](#) or the [International Organisation for Standardisation](#) site) on any:

- passport
- case note
- document
- website
- passport or application record

## Related content

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# Place and country of birth: documents we accept

This section tells HM Passport Office staff about the documents we will accept to confirm a customer's place and country of birth and when we will record the country of birth as the place of birth. It includes what to do if the customer is unable to send in standard documents to confirm their place or country of birth.

The customer will [tell us their place and country of birth](#), when they make a passport application.

As documentary evidence of the customer's place and country of birth, you can accept the customer's:

- previous British passport (unless it is an Old Blue (hardback style) passports or we know that we need to [change it](#))
- birth certificate
- adoption certificate
- naturalisation certificate
- registration certificate

You, the examiner, must check the customer's documents to confirm where they were born. This may be a village, town or city.

You can accept a place of birth on an application, if you can confirm the place name from the customer's documents.

If born overseas, the customer's core document may show a region only when the exact place of birth is not known. You must only use the region (or country), [if no place of birth \(for example, town\) is shown](#) on the core document.

If the customer's place of birth on their passport application is different to the one on any of their supporting documents (for example, their foreign passport) and it is not explained by a change of name for that place of birth or a HM Passport Office error, you must:

1. Ask the customer:
  - why they have a different place of birth on their documents
  - if they have tried to correct their place of birth on their documents (in cases when their place of birth on the document is incorrect)
  - to send any evidence they have that shows they have been unable to correct the place of birth on their document
2. Add a case note to show their response.
3. Complete additional checks if you have identity concerns.
4. Raise a guidance query to the Quality and Examination Support team to ask what you must do next.

If the document (for example, the birth certificate) shows more than one place, you can issue the passport in the place name the customer has requested, as long as it is shown on the document and it is the village, town or city. For example, if the birth certificate shows both a city borough and the city (such as Lambeth, London) you can record either one as the place of birth on the passport.

You must not use a UK county as the place of birth, for example Lincolnshire or Devon. The exception to this is when the document (for example, an adoption certificate) only shows a county and not a town or city of birth. If the customer then asks for a different place of birth, (for example, a town) you must see evidence to support this change.

You can ask for the customer's full birth certificate, if they were born in the UK and they want their passport to show a place of birth that is not shown on their short birth certificate. You can also request another form of a foreign birth certificate, if the customer was born outside of the UK. If you do, you must check whether we accept the document, as evidence of the customer's birth.

## Place and country of birth: UK nationality certificates

You must use the place and country of birth recorded on the customer's naturalisation or registration certificate unless the place of birth has changed its name. If the place or country of birth has changed its name, you must use the guidance in [Checking the place and country of birth](#).

If the customer wants their passport to show a place of birth that is different to the one shown on their nationality certificate, you must tell them to contact UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) to get the certificate changed. We will not change it on the passport, until they do.

If you suspect there is an error on a nationality certificate, place of birth, you must deal with it using the guidance in Nationality certificates: suspected mistakes.

You must accept the customer's nationality certificate is correct if it shows the customer's country of birth as:

- Hong Kong or Hong Kong SAR, and amend the application to show China as the country of birth (see, [Country of birth, islands, places and territories](#))
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland instead of United Kingdom

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## Nationality certificate issued by UKVI shows country of birth only

If the customer's naturalisation or registration certificate issued by UKVI shows the country of birth only, you must tell them to contact UKVI to get the certificate changed (to show their place of birth).

## Nationality certificate issued by BOT shows country of birth only

If the naturalisation or registration certificate was issued by a British overseas territory and it shows the country of birth only, you must:

1. Record the customer's country of birth as both the place of birth and the country of birth (see [document shows country of birth only](#)).
2. Add a case note.

## Nationality certificate shows place and country of birth as 'stateless'

If the customer's naturalisation or registration certificate shows 'STATELESS' in the place and country of birth, you must send a guidance query to the Quality and Examination Support team (QuEst).

QuEst will:

- contact UKVI and the Passport Policy Team to decide how to record the place and country
- tell you what you must show on the system
- tell UKVI about any information that they must add to their records

## Nationality certificate shows place and country of birth as 'unknown'

If the customer's naturalisation or registration certificate shows 'UNKNOWN' in the place and country of birth, you must:

1. Update the place and country of birth on the system as 'Unknown'. This means the customer's place of birth on their passport will show as 'Unknown'.
2. Deal with the application in line with current guidance (to confirm identity, nationality and entitlement).

## Place and country of birth: document shows country of birth only

We will issue the customer's passport to show the country of birth as the place of birth when the customer's:

- birth or adoption certificate shows a country of birth only
- naturalisation or registration certificate shows a country of birth only, and the certificate was issued by a British Overseas Territory (nationality certificates issued in the UK with only a country of birth [must be corrected](#))

We will record the country of birth as both the place of birth and country of birth and add a case note if the document:

- does not show a place of birth (for example, village, town or region) and shows the country of birth only
- shows the place and country of birth as the same place (for example, where these have the same name, such as Gibraltar)

If the customer's naturalisation or registration certificate was issued by UKVI and only shows the country of birth, you must:

1. Not issue the passport with the country of birth as both the place and country of birth.
2. Ask the customer [to get their nationality certificate amended](#).
3. Pigeonhole the application until the customer returns the amended certificate.

## Place and country of birth: customer was born on a ship or aircraft

If a customer is entitled to a British passport and was born on a ship, hovercraft or aircraft, we must show their:

- place of birth as, 'AT SEA'
- country of birth as, the country the craft was registered to

For example, if the aircraft or ship was registered in the UK or was not registered but belonged to the UK government the country of birth must show UK. This is regardless of where in the world the ship or aircraft was positioned at the time of the birth.

## Place and country of birth: customer's birth place is unknown

Some customers may not know where they were born. If they:

- have a UK nationality certificate that shows their place and country of birth as 'UNKNOWN', you must refer to [Nationality certificate shows place and country of birth as 'unknown'](#)
- born at sea or in an aircraft, you must refer to [Place and country of birth: customer was born on a ship or aircraft](#)

If they do not have a UK nationality certificate and they were not born on a ship or in an aircraft, you must

- consider if there's a credible reason why the customer does not know where they were born. For example, at the time of birth, their mother was urgently leaving (or were being evacuated from) a country in crisis by land (for example, in a lorry)
- check if the customer has been issued with a Home Office document (for example, an asylum identity card, or adoption certificate) that does not show a place and country of birth, or shows it as 'Unknown'

Providing the reason is credible and the customer has a Home Office document (or a certificate issued by the General Register Office of England and Wales, Northern Ireland or Scotland) that does not specify their place and country of birth, you must:

1. Update the place and country of birth on the system as 'Unknown'. This means the customer's place of birth on their passport will show as 'Unknown'.
2. Deal with the application in line with current guidance (to confirm identity, nationality and entitlement).
3. Add a case note to confirm:
  - how you confirmed the customer's British nationality
  - the actions and decisions you made

You must send a guidance query to QuEST, if the customer does not have a Home Office document that shows their place and country of birth as 'Unknown' or the reason is not credible. QuEST will:

- contact the Passport Policy team to decide how to record the place and country
- tell you what you must show on the system

## Place and country of birth: standard documents not available

If the customer's birth has not been registered, you can accept alternative evidence of their place of birth.

If the customer cannot give you standard documents, you must refer to the standard documents are not available or Crisis guidance.

### Related content

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# Checking the place and country of birth

This section tells HM Passport Office staff how the customer's place and country of birth is recorded on the system. It includes how to check the place of birth or country name is correct, what to do if the place or country name has changed or must be abbreviated and how to deal with diacritic characters (symbols and accent marks) in the place or country of birth.

Digital Customer Services (DCS) provides the customer with a drop-down list of country names. The customer will select one of the countries and it will be shown in the 'country of birth' field on Digital Application Processing (DAP).

The drop-down list on DCS does not match the [Geographical names index](#). For example, it allows the customer to select 'Hong Kong' (which we must then change to China). This is because we want to offer the customer options they recognise, to keep them in the digital journey. However, it means you must check the country of birth (and change this if needed) on all applications where the customer is born outside of the UK.

DCS allows the customer to enter their place of birth (for example, town) as free text.

Both the place of birth and country of birth are free text, if the customer applies using a paper application form.

You must make sure that you record the [place of birth and country of birth correctly](#), when you are examining applications.

## DAP: born abroad task

One part of the **born abroad** task on DAP is to check the customer's place and country of birth. DAP will create this task on all applications where the customer's country of birth is not the UK. See DAP: born abroad task.

When processing this task, you must follow this guidance to check the place of birth and check the country of birth.

## How to check the place of birth

You must check the place of birth (the village, town or city) that the customer has provided, is correct (for example, the correct spelling and the current name) on all applications.

When you check what the customer has entered as their place of birth on the application, you might decide that the customer is attempting to change their place of birth. For example, the customer completes their application with their place of birth as 'Glasgow', but their document shows 'Hamilton'.

If the customer wants to change their place of birth then they must send us evidence (for example, if the customer believes we have [made an error on their old passport](#)).

You must add a case note, if you make any changes to the place of birth requested by the customer and include:

- the reason why
- what evidence you have seen (if any)

Unless the customer made an obvious error, if you are changing the place of birth from the one the customer gave us, you must:

- contact the customer by phone, email or in writing, to tell them you are changing the place of birth
- give the customer the opportunity to withdraw their application, if they are unhappy with the change
- add a case note to record your actions and decisions, with reasons

## Place of birth: customer has made an obvious error

The customer may enter their place of birth incorrectly, by making a spelling error or telling us another name for their place of birth (when they send us their application). For example, the customer may complete their application with their place of birth as:

- 'Galsgow', when their document shows 'Glasgow'
- 'London', when their document shows 'Chelsea', or 'Manchester', when their document shows 'Burnage'

When this happens, you must:

- check the customer's place of birth:
  - against the document they provided
  - using external checks, if you need to (for example, an internet search)
- change (correct) the place of birth on the system, so that it matches their document
- add a case note to record your actions and decisions
- not contact the customer to inform them that you have corrected the place of birth

## Abbreviating the place of birth

The system will allow you to record the place of birth using a maximum of 25 characters. If a customer's place of birth is longer than 25 characters, you must abbreviate the place name.

When abbreviating the place of birth, you must:

- check references sources (for example, the internet) to find a common abbreviation that you can use

- contact the customer by email, phone or in writing, to tell them how we will abbreviate the place of birth

If the customer is unhappy with the abbreviation, you must give them the opportunity to withdraw their application. You must case note the contact with the customer and the outcome.

If the customer provides an alternative or locally recognised abbreviation they want to use, you can accept it, as long as you can confirm the abbreviation in reference sources.

When you abbreviate the name in the passport, you must:

- add an observation to the passport using the observation code OBTZ to say 'THE HOLDER'S PLACE OF BIRTH IS (full name of place of birth)'
- add a case note to confirm that you have abbreviated the place of birth, including:
  - the contact you made with the customer and the outcome
  - the full name of the place of birth
  - how you have abbreviated it
  - the reason you have abbreviated it (for example, it is too long for the place of birth field on the system and on the passport)

## Place of birth: Welsh language

If a customer is born in Wales, they can choose to have the name of their place of birth recorded in Welsh, even if their place of birth is not recorded in Welsh on the documents they have provided.

For example, if the customer's document shows their place of birth as Carmarthen but they ask for their passport to show the Welsh spelling Caerfyrddin, we can show the Welsh spelling of their place of birth in their passport.

We cannot record a place of birth in Welsh, if the place of birth is outside of Wales.

## How to check the country of birth

You must check the country of birth the customer has provided is correct on all applications. You may need to change this however the customer has applied (paper application or online).

To check how the country name must be recorded in our records, you must use the:

- [Geographical names index](#) (use the country name shown in the 'Name' column on this list)
- [Country of birth: islands, places and territories](#) if the customer has asked for a country name not on the Geographical names index



If the customer completes their country of birth in a different format to that shown on approved the Geographical names index, you must change it to the correct country name or [abbreviated version](#).

If the customer has asked for a country name not on the list, you must use the [table of islands, places, and territories](#) to find how to record the country. For example, if the customer states their country of birth is:

- Hong Kong, you must change it to China on the system
- The Occupied Palestinian Territories Jerusalem and the West Bank, you must change it to Occ. Palestinian T. (the abbreviated version)

If you change the country of birth, you must:

- case note the change you have made and the reason for this
- not tell the customer about the change (unless you are [recording the country of birth in the place of birth field](#)), as we do not record the country of birth on the passport

## Abbreviating the country of birth

The passport issuing system will allow you to record the country of birth using a maximum of 20 characters. If a customer's country of birth is longer than 20 characters, you must abbreviate the country name using the [list of abbreviations](#).

If you abbreviate the country of birth (in the country of birth field on the system) you must:

- add a case note to show:
  - that you have made the abbreviation
  - the full name of the country
  - the reason that you have abbreviated it
- not add an observation
- not tell the customer that you have abbreviated the country name as we:
  - record the abbreviation in the case notes
  - do not record the country of birth on their passport

## When place or country names have changed

The authorities of a foreign country may officially change the name of towns, provinces or the country itself (for example, Salisbury, Rhodesia is now Harare, Zimbabwe).

If a place or country name changes, HM Passport Office will:

- not update its historical passport records; and,
- always use the current name when dealing with a new passport application or public enquiry (for example, a customer complaint)

You must use the [Geographical names index](#) and the [Country of birth: islands, places, and territories list](#) to check how to show the country name.

You can use the [table of common place name changes](#), or an internet search to confirm the name of a place of birth (for example, town or city).

## Place or country of birth: diacritic or special characters

HM Passport Offices cannot issue a passport which includes diacritic or special characters (for example / or !) in the place of birth or country of birth.

If the customer's supporting documents show diacritic or special characters in the place or country of birth, you must:

1. Follow the process shown in the names guidance (Diacritical Characters and Accent Characters) to correctly change the characters.
2. Contact the customer by email, phone or in writing to tell them how we will record the place or country of birth.
3. Give the customer the opportunity to withdraw their application if they are unhappy with the way we will record the place or country.
4. Add a case note to show:
  - the contact you made with the customer and the outcome
  - how you have transformed the characters and the reason why

### Related content

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# Place and country of birth: change from the previous passport

This section tells HM Passport Office staff when we will change the place of birth from that shown in the customer's previous passport.

We will change a customer's place of birth from that shown on their previous passport without asking the customer for a new declaration or evidence when:

- there was an obvious typing error made on the previous passport (and you are sure of the correct place of birth)
- the name of the customer's place or country of birth has officially changed
- the previous passport included diacritic characters (symbols or accent marks)

We must ask for evidence of the place of birth when:

- the previous passport included the country of birth in the place of birth field
- there was an error made on the previous passport and you are not sure of the correct place of birth

A new declaration is not needed.

## Previous passport: country of birth included in place of birth field

The passport must only show the customer's place of birth (village, town, or city). The passport must not show the customer's country of birth, [unless this is the only place of birth shown on their documents](#).

If the previous passport includes the country of birth (for example Manchester, Jamaica) you must issue the new passport with the place of birth only.

If you are removing the country of birth (but the place of birth is the same as the previous passport) you do not have to tell the customer that you have made the change.

If the previous passport shows the country of birth only, you must:

1. Check passport records to see if the [customer's documents only showed the country of birth](#), in which case you can accept this without evidence from the customer.
2. Ask the customer to provide [evidence of their place of birth](#).

## Previous passport: error in place or country of birth

You must make sure that the customer's new passport is correct, if their old passport or our passport records had an error in the place or country of birth.

You do not need evidence from the customer, if you decide the place of birth recorded on the previous passport, or the country of birth recorded in our records, had an obvious spelling error and you have no doubts about the place or country of birth.

For example, the previous passport shows the place of birth as 'Galsgow' – you must change this to 'Glasgow'.

If you decide that the place or country of birth is not clear, you must ask for [evidence of the customer's place and country of birth](#).

## Previous passport: official name change

If the name of the place of birth or country of birth has changed from the previous passport, you must record the [correct name](#) on the system and issue the passport showing the new name. You:

- do not need to ask for evidence from the customer, and,
- do not need to tell the customer that you have made the change; and,
- must case note the change you have made and the reason why

## Previous passport: diacritic or special characters

If the previous passport includes [diacritic or special characters](#) you must change the place of birth.

### Related content

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# Country of birth: islands, places, and territories

This section tells HM Passport Office staff about some of the islands, places, or territories that a customer may tell us is their country of birth, and how you must record this.

This table tells you, the examiner, what country you must record on the system (in the country of birth field) if the customer tells us they were born in a place which is not listed on the [Geographical names index](#) as a country name.

If you need to add an observation to the customer's passport that relates to a disputed country or territory of birth, you must deal with the application using the Names observations for disputed territories guidance.

Country name provided by the customer	Country you must record on the system (in country of birth field)
American Samoa	United States
Aruba	Netherlands
Ascension	St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha (abbreviated as: St Helena, Asc & TDC)
Bonaire, Saint Eustatius and Saba	Netherlands
Bouvet Island	Norway
Christmas Island	Australia
Cocos (Keeping) Islands	Australia
Cook Islands	New Zealand
Curacao	Netherlands
Faroe Islands	Denmark
French Guiana	France
French Polynesia	France
French Southern Territories	France
Greenland	Denmark
Guadeloupe	France
Guam	United States
Guernsey	Guernsey
Heard Island and McDonald Islands	Australia
Holy See	Vatican City
Hong Kong (country of birth only, not the place of birth Hong Kong)	China
Irish Republic	Ireland
Isle of Man	Isle of Man
Jersey	Jersey
Kurdistan (disputed territory)	Iraq
Las Malvinas	Falkland Islands

Macau or Macao	China
Martinique	France
Mayotte	France
Netherlands Antilles	Netherlands
New Caledonia	France
Niue	New Zealand
Norfolk Island	Australia
North Cyprus (disputed territory)	Cyprus
Northern Mariana Islands	United States
Puerto Rico	United States
Republic of Ireland	Ireland
Reunion	France
Saint Barthelemy	France
Sint Maarten	Netherlands
Saint Martin	France
Saint Pierre and Miquelon	France
Serbia and Montenegro	Montenegro or Serbia (depending on the customer's place of birth)
Sovereign Base Area	Akrotiri or Dhekelia (depending on the customer's place of birth)
St Helena or St Helena Dependencies	St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha (abbreviated as: St Helena, Asc & TDC)
Swaziland	Eswatini
The Occupied Palestinian Territories (disputed territory)	The Occupied Palestinian Territories (abbreviated as: Occ. Palestinian T.)
The Occupied Palestinian Territories – Gaza (country of birth only, not the place of birth Gaza) (disputed territory)	The Occupied Palestinian Territories (abbreviated as: Occ. Palestinian T.)
The Occupied Palestinian Territories – Jerusalem and the West Bank (country of birth only, not the place of birth Jerusalem or the West Bank) (disputed territory)	The Occupied Palestinian Territories (abbreviated as: Occ. Palestinian T.)
Tristan da Cunha	St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha (abbreviated as: St Helena, Asc & TDC)
Tokelau	New Zealand
United States Minor Outlying Islands	United States
United States Virgin Islands	United States
Wallis and Futuna	France
Western Sahara	Morocco
Western Samoa	Samoa
Yugoslavia	Bosnia and Herzegovina (abbreviated as: Bosnia & Herzegovina), Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, or Slovenia (depending on the customer's place of birth)

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# Country of birth: abbreviations

This section tells HM Passport Office staff how to [abbreviate the country of birth](#), when the name on the UK government list or the table of islands, places and territories has too many characters to record on the system.

You, the examiner, must use this table to abbreviate the country of birth, when the name on the UK government list or the table of islands, places, and territories has too many characters to record on the system.

Country name	Abbreviation on the system
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia & Herzegovina
British Antarctic Territory	British A.T.
British Indian Ocean Territory	British I.O.T.
British Virgin Islands	British Virgin Is
Central African Republic	Central African Rep
Congo (Democratic Republic)	Congo (Democr. Rep)
Pitcairn, Henderson, Ducie and Oeno Islands	Pitcairn, Hend. & Is
Sao Tome and Principe	Sao Tome & Principe
South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands	S Georgia & Sand. Is
St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha	St Helena, Asc & TDC
The Occupied Palestinian Territories	The Occupied Palestinian Territories (abbreviated as: Occ. Palestinian T.)
Turks and Caicos Islands	Turks & Caicos Is

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# Place of birth: common name changes

This section tells HM Passport Office staff about some common place of birth name changes.

Old place name	Current place name
Akmolinsk, Tselinograd, Akmol/Aqmola	Astana
Peiping, Peking	Beijing
Frunze	Bishkek
Santa Fe de Bogota, Bogota DE	Bogota DC
Madras	Chennai
Dnipropetrovsk	Dnipro
Lyallpur	Faisalabad
Danzig	Gdansk
Port Elizabeth	Gqeberha
Canton Province	Guangzhou
Kwangtung	Guangdong
Salisbury	Harare
Saigon	Ho Chi Minh City
Batavia, Djakarta	Jakarta
Jullundur	Jalandhar
Uitenhage	Kariega
Leopoldville, Leopoldstad	Kinshasa
Calcutta	Kolkata
Jesselton	Kota Kinabalu
Kiev	Kyiv
Loureno Marques, Lourenzo Marques	Maputo
Bombay	Mumbai
Christiania	Oslo
Titograd, Podgoritsa	Podgorica
Ciudad Trujillo	Santo Domingo
Gyeongseong	Seoul
Leningrad	St. Petersburg
Tel Aviv, incorporated Jaffa	Tel Aviv-Yafo
Villages, towns and cities in northern Cyprus (if renamed by Turkey)	use the original Cypriot name of the village, town or city
Breslau	Wroclaw
Rangoon	Yangon

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