



Home Office

Knowledge of language and life in the UK

Version 31.0

This guidance tells you about the knowledge of language and life requirement for those applying for indefinite leave to remain (ILR) or British citizenship.

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About this guidance

This guidance tells you about the knowledge of language and life requirement for those applying for indefinite leave to remain or naturalisation as a British citizen.

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 Nationality Policy team.

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

Publication

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

- version **31.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **18 December 2025**

Changes from last version of this guidance

New 'Certificates' section added to include Postgraduate Certificates (PGCert). Clarification added to 'Evidence of physical or mental condition' section about exemption requirements.

Related content

[Contents](#)

Knowledge of language and life in the UK

This page tells you which applicants must meet the knowledge of language and life (KoLL) in the UK requirement to be granted indefinite leave to remain or be naturalised as a British citizen.

Background

The British Nationality Act 1981 provides that a person applying for naturalisation must have sufficient knowledge of life in the United Kingdom, and of English, Welsh or Scottish Gaelic. Regulations specify how a person can demonstrate knowledge of English language and life in the UK, which is set out in this guidance.

Since 2007 the requirements for certain indefinite leave to remain applications have included knowledge of English language and of life in the UK.

To meet the KoLL requirements for either indefinite leave to remain or naturalisation, a person must meet both parts of the requirement:

- knowledge of language
- knowledge of life in the UK

Indefinite leave to remain

All those applying for indefinite leave to remain (ILR) under a route which requires KoLL, must meet both parts of the requirement, unless they are exempt because of their age or because of a physical or mental condition.

The following categories of people do not need to meet the KoLL requirement:

- victims of domestic violence
- foreign and Commonwealth citizens on discharge from HM Forces (including Gurkhas)
- highly skilled migrants applying under the terms of the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme (HSMP) judicial review, and their dependants
- bereaved spouses, civil partners, unmarried partners or same-sex partners of people present and settled in the UK
- parents, grandparents and other dependent relatives of people present and settled in the UK, applying under paragraph 317 of the Immigration Rules, even if they are aged between 18 and 64
- adult dependent relatives, under Appendix FM of the Immigration Rules, even if they are aged between 18 and 64
- retired persons of independent means
- people applying for ILR as a refugee
- people applying for ILR on the basis of discretionary leave
- people applying for ILR on the basis of humanitarian protection

- people applying for ILR outside the Immigration Rules, for example under discretionary arrangements such as those for Gurkhas, widows, overage dependants and orphans
- people applying for ILR as a stateless person

In addition, doctors, dentists, nurses or midwives who have previously been granted leave under Tier 2 (General), do not need to meet the English language requirement for indefinite leave to remain. The exemption only applies to the knowledge of English language requirement, and they are still required to satisfy the Knowledge of Life in the UK.

Applications for settlement under simplified routes made after 1 December 2020

Applications for settlement under the following routes are subject to separate simplified [Immigration Rules](#) on English language and Knowledge of Life in the UK, which can be found at Appendix English Language and Appendix KoL UK:

- Skilled Worker
- Representatives of an Overseas Business
- T2 Minister of Religion
- T2 Sportsperson
- UK Ancestry
- Global Talent
- Innovator
- T5 (Temporary Worker) International Agreement Workers who are private servants in a diplomatic household
- Hong Kong British National (Overseas)

For these routes, refer to the guidance on Assessing the English Language requirement to consider how these applicants meet the English language requirements set out under the simplified rules. For Life in the UK the guidance below continues to apply to these routes.

Naturalisation as a British citizen

All those applying for naturalisation must meet both parts of the KoLL requirement, unless they are exempt because of their age, physical, mental condition or they are exempt under the Windrush scheme (Windrush scheme casework guidance).

Related content

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[Exemption because of age: naturalisation](#)

[Exemption because of physical or mental condition](#)

[Categories not subject to knowledge of language and life: indefinite leave](#)

[Exemption because of age: indefinite leave](#)

Exemption because of age

This section tells you when people are exempt from the knowledge of language and life in the UK (KoLL) requirement, because of their age.

Indefinite leave

People aged under 18 years, or 65 years or older on the date of their application are exempt from the KoLL requirement.

Naturalisation

There is discretion to waive the KoLL requirement if, because of a person's age, it would be unreasonable to expect them to meet it. This is set out in [paragraph 2\(1\)\(e\) of schedule 1 to the British Nationality Act 1981](#).

Where the applicant is aged 65 or over you must waive the requirement.

Where the applicant is aged 60 to 64, you must normally waive the requirement if the time needed to reach the required standard means the applicant would then be aged 65 or over.

Where the applicant is aged under 60 you must not normally waive the requirement based on age alone.

If you are intending to exercise discretion in respect of an applicant under 65 you must contact the Nationality Policy team prior to making a final decision, setting out the details of the application and why you are intending on applying discretion.

Evidence of age

Any person who is applying indefinite leave or naturalisation and is claiming to be exempt from KoLL due to their age must provide evidence to support this. This may include:

- passport
- EEA identity card (for naturalisation purposes)
- birth certificate

Related content

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Exemption because of physical or mental condition

This page tells you when to exercise discretion and waive the knowledge of language and life in the UK requirement, because of a physical or mental condition, to a person applying for naturalisation as a British citizen or indefinite leave to remain.

There is discretion to waive the knowledge of language and life in the UK requirement if, because of a person's physical or mental condition, it would be unreasonable for them to meet it.

This is set out in:

- [Appendix KoLL of the Immigration Rules](#) (for indefinite leave to remain applications)
- Appendix English Language and Appendix KOL UK of the [Immigration Rules](#) (for indefinite leave to remain applications on the following routes made after 1 December 2020: Skilled Worker, Representatives of an Overseas Business, T2 Minister of Religion, T2 Sportsperson, UK Ancestry, Global Talent, Innovator, T5 (Temporary Worker) International Agreement Workers who are private servants in a diplomatic household, Hong Kong British National (Overseas))
- [paragraph 2\(e\) of Schedule 1 to the British Nationality Act 1981](#) (for naturalisation applications)

To request a waiver the applicant must provide a completed medical waiver proforma from a doctor confirming their physical or mental condition. All original and current relevant medical reports setting out their diagnosis should also be submitted with the completed exemption form.

When to exercise discretion

You must exercise discretion if the applicant:

- is suffering from a long-term illness or disability that severely restricts their ability to learn English or prepare for the Life in the UK test
- has a mental condition which prevents them from speaking or learning English to the required standard

Where a person provides evidence that they would be unable to satisfy one part of the requirement, it does not automatically mean that they will be unable to meet the second part of the requirement. It may be that their condition would make it unreasonable for them to prepare and complete the Life in the UK test but due to the different nature of how English language is assessed they are still able to demonstrate that they satisfy the English language requirement.

How to exercise discretion

You must consider how the condition would prevent the applicant from taking the Life in the UK test or learning English. For example, discretion may be appropriate where an applicant:

- is deaf
- is a person without speech
- has a speech impediment which limits their ability to communicate in the relevant language

Each application must be considered on its own merits and will depend on the facts in each case including whether the applicant is a national of a majority English-speaking country.

Life in the UK test centres, and many colleges can cater for a variety of disabilities, such as blindness. An applicant may be able to do the test even if they produce evidence of a disability.

You must also consider whether an applicant's condition would prevent them from meeting both parts of the requirement or just one.

Evidence of physical or mental condition

If an applicant claims to have a physical or mental condition, they must provide original and current medical evidence from a medical practitioner. This must include the [medical waiver proforma](#). Where a request for an exemption does not include a medical waiver proforma completed by a relevant [medical practitioner](#) you must provide the applicant with the opportunity to provide this unless the application falls to be refused on another ground.

All those applying for naturalisation are required to demonstrate KoLL unless they are aged over 65, exempt under the Windrush scheme, or have a physical or mental condition that prevents them from doing so. If an applicant has obtained an exemption because of a physical mental condition for their indefinite leave to remain application, they will be required to make a separate exemption request for their naturalisation application.

Where an applicant fails to provide a completed waiver despite the document being requested, you must consider whether they satisfy the knowledge of English language and life in the UK requirements based on the information available. Any refusal must make it clear that they do not meet the language and / or life in the UK requirements and have not provided the specified evidence to be considered for a waiver from these requirements.

Applications which are not subject to specific medical waiver evidence requirements

You cannot insist that an applicant seeking a waiver provides the medical waiver [proforma](#) completed by a registered medical practitioner, where you are considering an application for:

- Naturalisation submitted before 9 August 2018
- indefinite leave to remain (ILR) application submitted before 1 November 2018
- settlement under a simplified route made after 1 December 20 (Skilled Worker, Representatives of an Overseas Business, T2 Minister of Religion, T2 Sportsperson, UK Ancestry, Global Talent, Innovator, T5 (Temporary Worker) International Agreement Workers who are private servants in a diplomatic household, Hong Kong British National (Overseas))

If the application seeking the waiver fits into one of the categories above, you must consider whether the evidence provided of the applicant's condition is sufficient to exercise discretion.

If you are not satisfied that the applicant has provided sufficient information or documents to support their request you must give them the opportunity to provide further documents (such as a completed [medical waiver proforma](#)). You do not need to request further information if the application falls to be refused on other grounds. In these cases, the refusal must also include the fact that they have not met the knowledge of English language or life in the UK requirements and set out why this requirement has not been waived.

Related content

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Knowledge of English language

This page tells you how a person can meet the English language part of the knowledge of language and life in the UK (KoLL) requirement.

An applicant will meet the English language requirement if any of the following apply, they:

- are a national of a majority English speaking country
- have passed an approved speaking and listening Secure English Language Test (SELT) at B1 level or above of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)
- have an academic degree equivalent to a UK bachelor's degree or above, taught in English

A person applying after 1 December 2020 for settlement on the Skilled Worker, Representatives of an Overseas Business, T2 Minister of Religion, T2 Sports person, UK Ancestry, Global Talent, Innovator, T5 (Temporary Worker) International Agreement Workers who are private servants in a diplomatic household, or Hong Kong British National (Overseas) routes can also meet the English Language requirement for settlement if they:

- have previously shown they meet the required level in a successful application

For guidance on the considering the English requirement for these routes you should see Assessing the English Language requirement guidance for these routes.

A person who successfully made an indefinite leave to remain (ILR) application on the basis of a B1 level qualification can meet the English language requirement for naturalisation without needing to pass another qualification but will be required to pass the Life in the UK test if they have not already done so.

A person can apply for indefinite leave to remain without passing a KoLL test if they have an English language speaking and listening qualification at A2 CEFR and have been in the UK for [15 years with limited leave](#) as a:

- partner
- child
- parent
- dependant of HM Forces personnel
- dependant of a points-based system (PBS) migrant
- dependant of a work permit holder

Overseas applicants

There is also a provision for naturalisation cases for a person designated by the Secretary of State to confirm in writing that a person has sufficient knowledge of language and life in the UK.

However, at present, no one is designated by the Secretary of State for these purposes.

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National of a majority English-speaking country

This page tells you how a person can meet the speaking and listening part of the knowledge of language and life in the UK (KoLL) requirement by being a national of a majority English-speaking country.

Nationals of majority English-speaking countries are considered automatically to meet the English language part of the KoLL requirement and do not need to show a formal speaking and listening qualification. They must, however, show they have passed the [Life in the UK test](#).

Nationals of the following countries are accepted as majority English speakers:

- Antigua and Barbuda
- Australia
- The Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- Canada
- Dominica
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Jamaica
- Malta
- New Zealand
- St Kitts and Nevis
- St Lucia
- St Vincent and the Grenadines
- Trinidad and Tobago
- The United States of America

For naturalisation purposes this includes Ireland.

British overseas territories citizens are also accepted as majority English speakers.

Evidence

A person must provide a valid passport or travel document to show they are a citizen or national of a majority English-speaking country. A dual national can rely on either of their nationalities.

If the person's passport or travel document has:

- been lost or stolen
- expired and been returned to the relevant authorities

- is with another part of the Home Office

alternative evidence as proof of nationality will be accepted. This must be:

- a current national identity document
- an original letter from the person's home government or embassy confirming their full name, date of birth and nationality

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Speaking and listening qualification at B1 level

This page explains how a person can meet the speaking and listening part of the knowledge of language and life in the UK (KoLL) requirement.

A person will meet this by having a speaking and listening qualification in English at B1 level or above of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Applications made on or after 12 November 2015 for naturalisation and on or after 19 November 2015 for ILR

For naturalisation applications made on or after 12 November 2015 and indefinite leave to remain (ILR) applications made on or after 19 November 2015, the only tests that are acceptable are qualifications covering speaking and listening at B1 or above from the Secure English Language Test (SELT) list published on the Home Office pages of [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

No other tests are acceptable and the test must be taken at an [approved test centre](#).

Indefinite leave applications

The English language test must have been taken no more than 2 years before the date of application. However, tests that have been taken more than 2 years ago and have since expired can still be accepted where both of the following apply. The qualification:

- is from one of the providers on the current SELT list
- has previously been accepted by us as part of another immigration application, such as for entry clearance

A qualification that is not from one of the providers on the current SELT list, is not acceptable even if previously accepted by us as part of another application

Naturalisation applications

A person who successfully made an application for indefinite leave to remain based on a B1 level qualification can meet the English language requirement for naturalisation without needing to pass another qualification. This is regardless of whether the original qualification is on the current SELT list.

Applications for naturalisation before 12 November 2015 or ILR before 19 November 2015

Where an application is made before 12 November 2015 for naturalisation or before 19 November 2015 for ILR, the following tests are acceptable:

- qualifications covering speaking and listening at B1 or above from the Secure English Language Test (SELT) published on the Home Office pages of Gov.uk. A new SELT list was introduced on 6 April 2015:
 - for tests taken on or after 6 April 2015 you must refer to the most current SELT list
 - for tests taken before 6 April 2015 you must refer to the previous SELT list - only tests sat at an approved centre are acceptable
- qualifications in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) at Entry level 3, level 1 or level 2, that include speaking and listening and that have been regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) - the qualification must be listed as an ESOL qualification on the [Ofqual Register of Regulated Qualifications](#) and have been taken in England, Wales or Northern Ireland - qualifications listed as ESOL qualifications are acceptable regardless of whether the name of the qualification includes reference to ESOL - for the Ofqual register
- a National Qualification in ESOL at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 4, 5 or 6 awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)

ESOL qualifications often have 4 components:

- reading
- writing
- speaking
- listening

Where the ESOL qualification is on the Ofqual register, you must accept unit credits in speaking and listening, even if the applicant has not obtained the whole qualification at the required level.

For SELT tests, the applicant must pass the whole qualification.

A person is not required to study for their qualification at any particular institution or follow any particular curriculum. The method of study that a person follows to reach the minimum B1 English level is up to them.

Evidence

For tests taken on or after 6 April 2015, applicants do not need to supply any evidence of the English language test - instead they must provide a unique reference number (URN). The URN is in the following format:

- XXX / 123456 / 123456 / 123456789 which consists of the:
 - first 3 letters of the SELT provider's name

- date of test
- test centre number
- candidate number

You must use the secure English language test (SELT) unique reference number included on the application form to check the provider's online verification system, to confirm that the applicant passed the test.

See Secure English language tests: online verification systems to verify a test result.

The application does not meet the English language requirements if the test does not appear on the online verification system.

Once the test results have been verified, you must enter the URN into the 'Case Notes' field in CID and on the case reference number screen using the 'SELT Certificate No' selection.

For tests taken before 6 April 2015, one of the following pieces of evidence is acceptable:

- a certificate from an approved English language test provider showing:
 - the applicant's name
 - the qualification obtained
 - they have reached B1 of the CEFR in speaking and listening or above
 - the date of award
 - if specified English language test or qualification results are only available online, the applicant must provide the appropriate identity details to allow online verification - see Online verification systems
- a printout of the online score from a Pearson test of English (PTE) showing they have passed an approved test from an approved English language test provider and has reached B1 level of the CEFR or above
- an ESOL certificate for a qualification issued in England or Wales that is listed on the Ofqual Register of Regulated Qualifications, which includes speaking and listening and is at ESOL entry level 3, level 1, level 2 or level 3
- an ESOL certificate issued in Scotland awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority that includes speaking and listening and is at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 4, 5 or 6

Validity of qualifications

Validity dates of SELT qualifications listed on the Home Office pages of GOV.UK, or on the Ofqual register, will not be applied for ILR applications provided either:

- the qualification has previously been accepted for another immigration application
- if it is being presented for the first time, that it was taken in:
 - England and was regulated by Ofqual
 - Wales and was regulated by the Welsh Government

- Northern Ireland and was regulated by the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)
- Scotland and was regulated by the SQA

Validity dates of SELT qualifications were not applicable to citizenship applications made before 6 April 2015, as validity dates were not referred to in the regulations. For applications made between 6 April and 12 November 2015 you can accept an expired qualification if it was taken in the UK and was regulated by Ofqual, the Welsh Government or CCEA, or if taken in Scotland, by the SQA.

After 12 November 2015, you can only accept SELT qualifications which remain valid unless the qualification was accepted in an application for settlement.

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The information on this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

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Related content

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Degree qualifications

This page explains how a person can meet the speaking and listening part of the knowledge of language and life in the UK (KoLL) requirement by having a degree taught in English.

A person can demonstrate they meet the KoLL requirement where they have a degree that was taught (or researched) in English.

The qualification must:

- be academic (not vocational or professional)
- be deemed by UK National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) to meet the recognised standard of a bachelor's or master's degree or PhD in the UK
- have been taught in English or have been delivered in a majority English language speaking country (excluding Canada)

Before 6 April 2016, a points-based system (PBS) online points calculator printout, showing 10 points has been awarded for English language could be submitted, together with the original degree certificate, to satisfy the English language element of KOLL requirement. The points-based calculator was abolished on 6 April 2016.

Majority English-speaking countries

If the applicant has a degree that was taught or researched in a [majority English-speaking country](#) (excluding Canada but including Ireland) they must provide:

- their degree certificate
- an Academic Qualification Level Statement (AQUALS) from Ecctis (formerly UK NARIC) confirming the qualification is equivalent to a UK qualification

Non-majority English-speaking countries

If the applicant has a degree that was taught or researched in a non-majority English-speaking country they must provide:

- their degree certificate
- an Academic Qualification Level Statement (AQUAL) from Ecctis (formerly UK NARIC) confirming the qualification is equivalent to a UK qualification
- an English language Proficiency Statement (ELPS) from Ecctis (formerly UK NARIC), which will confirm that the degree was taught in English

Evidence from NARIC

An applicant must provide an AQUALS or a statement of comparability from Ecctis (formerly UK NARIC) confirming the qualification is equivalent to a UK qualification. Where the qualification was obtained in a non-majority English-speaking country, an ELPS or an English language assessment (ELA) is also required. However, you do not need to see additional confirmation from Ecctis (formerly UK NARIC) where the:

- Home Office have previously accepted a degree qualification as meeting the requirements for an earlier application, and leave was granted
- degree was awarded by a UK university

If the qualification has not previously been used for an immigration application, or the previous application was refused, the applicant must obtain confirmation from Ecctis (formerly UK NARIC) that it meets the relevant criteria.

An official statement from Ecctis (formerly UK NARIC) must be obtained before applying. For further information see the [Ecctis website](#).

Evidence of degree

The applicant must provide evidence of their degree by providing an original degree certificate. If the applicant is awaiting graduation, or no longer has the certificate and cannot get a new one, they must provide an original:

- academic reference from the academic institution on official letter headed paper
 - the reference must show:
 - the applicant's name
 - the title of award
 - that the qualification was taught in English
 - when the academic qualification has been, or will be awarded
 - the date the certificate will be issued (if the applicant has not yet graduated) confirms the institution is unable to re-issue the original certificate of award
- academic transcript on official letter headed paper - the transcript must show:
 - the applicant's name
 - the name of the academic institution
 - the course title
 - that the qualification was taught in English
 - confirmation of the award

Diplomas

Applicants holding a postgraduate diploma, or a graduate diploma from a UK university, are considered to have the required level of English for an indefinite leave to remain (ILR) or citizenship application.

Postgraduate diplomas are usually abbreviated as PGDip, PG Dip, PgD, PgDip. Examples would be:

- postgraduate diploma in legal practice
- graduate diploma in law

- postgraduate diploma in education
- postgraduate diploma in teaching

A postgraduate diploma, or graduate diploma from a university outside the UK, must have [Ecctis \(formerly UK NARIC\)](#) confirmation showing it is comparable to a UK degree, and was taught in English.

You must not accept professional diplomas from either inside or outside the UK, which do not require an undergraduate degree as an entry requirement, for example:

- accountancy
- marketing
- hotel management
- retail management
- cosmetic science
- food hygiene

Certificates

Applicants holding a postgraduate certificate from a UK university are considered to have the required level of English for an indefinite leave to remain (ILR) or citizenship application.

Postgraduate certificates are usually abbreviated as PGCert, PG Cert, PGC, PgCert. Examples would be:

- postgraduate certificate in legal practice
- postgraduate certificate in education
- postgraduate certificate in teaching

A postgraduate certificate from a university outside the UK, must have [Ecctis \(formerly UK NARIC\)](#) confirmation showing it is comparable to a UK degree, and was taught in English.

You must not accept professional certificates from either inside or outside the UK, which do not require an undergraduate degree as an entry requirement, for example:

- accountancy
- marketing
- hotel management
- retail management
- cosmetic science
- food hygiene

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Life in the UK test

This page tells you about the Life in the UK test.

Acceptable test

To meet the life in the UK requirement, an applicant must have successfully completed the test operated by a provider approved for this purpose. The current test is administered by PSI.

United Kingdom

In the UK, the Life in the UK test must be booked through [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Channel Islands and Isle of Man

If the test is taken in the Isle of Man, it must be the test known as the 'Life in the UK Test'.

If the test is taken in Guernsey or Jersey, it must be the test known as the 'Citizenship Test' and administered either by:

- an educational institution
- another person who has been approved by the Lieutenant Governor

Overseas

There are arrangements in place for armed forces personnel and their dependants to take the Life in the UK test in Germany and Cyprus.

Format of the test

The test lasts 45 minutes and is computer based. There are 24 multiple choice questions. People are told if they have passed or failed on the day they take the test. People can take the test in Welsh if they go to a test centre in Wales, or Scottish Gaelic if they take the test in Scotland.

The test questions are based on the 'Life in the United Kingdom: A Guide for New Residents' handbook. People must study the handbook to prepare for the test.

Applicants may take the test as many times as is necessary to pass.

Evidence the applicant has passed the Life in the UK test

Before 1 October 2019

Applicants had to provide their pass notification letter with their application. After this time, they needed to provide only the reference ID.

Between 1 October 2019 and 17 December 2019

Applicants who sat their test after 1 October 2019 and before 17 December must provide their 7-digit test reference ID. Caseworkers can use this ID to validate an application on either Warehouse or Entity.

The following test information is included on Warehouse:

- the applicant's personal information
- Home Office reference number
- test details including:
 - test reference
 - test centre name and reference
 - date of test
 - result of test
- how many times an applicant has taken the test
- the serial number of the document used for identification at the test centre, if the test was taken on or after 16 March 2008

Legacy Life in the UK data will be available through Entity Search.

From 17 December 2019

From 17 December 2019, PSI will not issue pass notification letters and instead applicants can access their results via their PSI Life in the UK (LitUK) account. The applicant's unique reference number (URN) will be displayed against their test results, and it is this URN that they will need to include on their application form. Applicants will also receive an email upon sitting the test with their URN, whether they failed or passed it.

You can access the applicant's details and validate their application by using the online verification portal; the portal will show the applicant's test result and include a photograph of the applicant. You can obtain access via their local account admin user. If you have concerns about the test results of an applicant, you must discuss this with your senior caseworker.

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Official - sensitive: end of section

Identification documents

All applicants will have a photograph taken on the day of the test. This is intended to further support caseworkers with applicant test validation and to improve the integrity around the test.

Guidance for applicants on what type of documents are accepted by test centres is published on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

If an applicant has included one of these documents with their application and wants it returned so they can take the test, this can be sent back to them.

[Returning documents so applicants can take the test: indefinite leave](#), can provide further information.

If the applicant does not have any of the documents listed in the [guidance](#) it may be possible to arrange for an applicant to take the test. These requests are considered on their own merits.

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Returning documents so applicant can take the test: indefinite leave

If an applicant asks for the return of their passport, travel document or driving licence before a decision is made on the application, you must return the document to the applicant.

You must not follow this process if an applicant wants their passport or travel document to travel outside the common travel area.

For more information on applicants who travel outside the common travel area, see related link: [Section 3C of the Immigration Act 1971](#) (as amended).

You must not follow this process if:

- an applicant is unlawfully present in the UK, for example, an overstayer or illegal entrant
- an applicant has been refused asylum or humanitarian protection and has no other basis of stay in the UK
- an applicant has been refused leave to remain under the Immigration Rules, or refused European documentation (for example a residence card) as the third country national family member of an European Economic Area (EEA) citizen

and has no right to reside, whether or not they have a right of appeal in the UK (unless they have an existing period of leave, other than under 3C or 3D of the Immigration Act 1971)

- a decision under [section 47 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006](#) has been made
- leave to enter or remain has been curtailed with the result that the migrant has no outstanding leave

Applicants can request the return of these documents to take the test if they have submitted an application for indefinite leave. They may need to vary their application depending on the results of their test.

If you receive a request for return of documents, you must:

- refuse the application if it would be refused even if the applicant met the knowledge of language and life requirement - for example if there is another requirement of the rules the applicant does not meet
- write out for any further information you need from the applicant at the same time as you return the passport or travel document if it does not fall to be refused on other grounds
- advise the applicant their application may be refused if they do not return their passport or travel document within 28 calendar days
- if you return a UK driving licence you must still allow the applicant 28 days to return their Life in the UK pass notification letter, but the applicant does not have to return their driving licence - you must copy this document and attach the copy to their file
- return the document by recorded delivery - note the reference details in the case references screen on Atlas

If the applicant does not return their documents within 28 calendar days, you must refuse the application on the basis of the non-production of documents. If an application is made for indefinite leave rather than limited leave, you must also refuse the application for not meeting the knowledge of language and life requirement. For further information see Failure to give information within a reasonable time.

Related content

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Validation, variation and withdrawal of applications

Results of the applicant's test: indefinite leave

This page tells you how to consider a case where the applicant has been given time to sit the Life in the UK test results.

Applications for indefinite leave

If the passport or travel document is returned to the Home Office within 28 days and you:

- have confirmation they have passed the test; you can grant indefinite leave if all the requirements are met
- do not have confirmation they have passed the test you must refuse the application - this is unless they have varied their application to one for limited leave in which case you must consider the application for limited leave

If the passport is not returned within 28 days, you must refuse the application on the non-production of documents and the fact they do not meet the knowledge of language and life requirements

Applications for limited leave

If the passport or travel document is returned within 28 days, and you:

- have confirmation they have passed the test and the applicant has varied their application to one for indefinite leave, you can grant indefinite leave if all the requirements are met
- do not have confirmation they have passed the test you can grant limited leave, as long as they meet the other requirements of the rules

If the passport is not returned within 28 days, refuse the application on the non-production of documents

Related content

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False documents

This page tells you how to consider applications where you receive a false knowledge of language and life in the UK document.

If you get written confirmation that a document provided is not genuine, you must refuse the application on the basis that the applicant does not meet the knowledge of language and life requirement.

You must inform the applicant in their refusal letter we have kept the document.

Official - sensitive: start of section

The information on this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

Official - sensitive: end of section

Related content

[Contents](#)

Meeting requirement after 15 years in the UK: indefinite leave

This page tells you how a person can meet the knowledge of language and life in the UK requirements if they have at least 15 years' continuous leave to enter or remain in the UK.

An applicant will be deemed to have sufficient knowledge of English language and about life in the UK if they:

- are not a national of an English-speaking country
- have provided specified evidence of an English language speaking and listening qualification at A2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) entry level 2 or level 3 on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 3
- have provided evidence from a qualified English language teacher that it is not reasonable to expect the applicant to pass a qualification at B1 CEFR, ESOL entry level 3 or Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 4
- have spent a continuous period of at least 15 years leave to enter or remain in the UK in one of the categories listed in paragraph 3.2(a) of [Appendix KoLL of the Immigration Rules](#)

A 'qualified English language teacher' is a person who holds a qualification in teaching English as a foreign language or in teaching English to speakers of other languages. The qualification must have been awarded by an organisation:

- regulated by the Office for Qualification and Examination Regulation
- regulated by the Scottish Qualification Authority
- recognised by [UK National Academic Recognition Information Centre \(NARIC\)](#) to be the equivalent of such a qualification

For the evidence of the qualification that must be supplied, see paragraph 4.7 of [Appendix KoLL](#) of the Immigration Rules.

The evidence from a qualified English language teacher must be a letter from the teacher, signed and dated within 3 months of the date of application, and include the following:

- the applicant's name
- confirmation the applicant has attended an English language class taught by a qualified English language teacher for at least 75 guided learning hours within the last 12 months preceding the application - guided learning hours means the time during which a person is taught or given instruction by a qualified English language teacher but does not include time spent on unsupervised preparation or study

- confirmation the writer has assessed that the speaking and listening level attained by the applicant is not at [B1 level](#) or above
- confirmation of the writer's qualifications as an English language teacher

Related content

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Evidence of KoLL: additional information requests

This page explains when you can request additional information to verify a person has met the knowledge of language and life in the UK requirement (KoLL).

In some cases, you may suspect that the applicant used deception in relation to a test or qualification. Examples of this might be where the applicant's level of English does not appear to match the level of their qualification, or where the Home Office has been advised of possible cheating in a life in the UK test.

In such cases the Immigration Rules and Nationality Regulations allow you to disregard that test or qualification.

You must then write to the applicant explaining that the Home Office is unwilling to accept the test or qualification as evidence that the KoLL requirement is met and give them the opportunity to re-sit the KoLL test or take another B1 level test.

For a life in the UK test re-sit you must refer the case to your deputy chief caseworker who will liaise with the test provider to arrange a re-test.

If you are not satisfied with a B1 qualification you must ask the applicant to take a test with one of the providers on the current SELT list, at an [approved test centre](#).

If the applicant does not send in acceptable evidence that they meet this requirement within the time allowed, you must refuse the application.

You do not need to request additional evidence of the KoLL requirement, where it is clear that the application may be refused for other reasons.

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Recording outcomes on CID / Atlas

This page tells you how to update CID for cases requiring knowledge of language and life in the UK.

You must select the appropriate Atlas outcome from below when you grant an application in a category that requires the knowledge of language and life:

- GRANT ILR (KOL TEST) - if the applicant has passed the Life in the UK test and is granted indefinite leave
- GRANT ILR (ESOL) - if the applicant has completed an English for speakers of other languages course and is granted indefinite leave
- GRANT ILR (EXEMPT FROM KOL) - if the applicant is exempt from the requirement and is granted indefinite leave - you must use this outcome if the applicant qualifies for a specified exemption or if a senior caseworker agrees to waive the knowledge of language and life requirement for the application
- GRANT LTR (NO KOL) - if the applicant does not provide evidence they meet the knowledge of language and life requirement, and is granted limited leave under the transitional arrangements in place between 2 April 2007 and 30 March 2009

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