Home Office

Nationality policy: renunciation of all types of British nationality

Version 4.0

This guidance explains how to consider a request from a British citizen to renounce their status.

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About this guidance

This guidance tells Home Office staff how to consider declarations to renounce British nationality.

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 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 **4.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **7 August 2026**

Changes from last version of this guidance

Changes made following review, including to update processes to reflect current systems.

Related content
Contents

The law

This page tells you about the legal basis on which a British national can renounce their status.

With the exception of British Nationals (Overseas), the requirements for the renunciation of British citizenship are set out in the British Nationality Act (BNA) 1981.

These can be found at:

- section 12 of the BNA 1981 for British citizens
- section 24 of the BNA 1981 for British overseas territories citizens
- section 29 of the BNA for British overseas citizens
- section 34 of the BNA 1981 for British subjects
- article 7(10) of the Hong Kong (British Nationality) Order 1986 for British nationals (overseas)

In order to make a declaration renouncing their status an individual must:

- be aged 18 or older
- be of full capacity (of sound mind)
- have another citizenship or nationality or will acquire one after renouncing

Where an individual under the age of 18 has either been married or in a civil partnership, they will be considered as meeting the age requirement.

During periods of war in which the UK is involved there is no obligation to register a declaration of renunciation.

The individual will cease to hold the relevant status at the time the declaration is registered. If it is registered on the basis that they will obtain another citizenship or nationality and they fail to do so within 6 months from the date of registration, the individual will be considered as retaining their original British nationality.

Fee

An application must be made on Form RN and include the full fee.

The British Nationality (Fees) Regulations provide that the fee for the registration of a declaration of renunciation shall be payable on submission of the declaration. This means that a declaration of renunciation cannot be registered until the fee has been paid.

The fee for the registration of a declaration of renunciation is set out in the schedule to the fees regulations. If more than one citizenship or status is being renounced at the same time, only one fee is payable, unless the person wishes to renounce British

overseas territories citizenship. This is because renunciation of British overseas territories citizenship is considered by the Governor of the territory, and so a separate fee is needed.

Where the declaration is not submitted with the full fee you must refuse to register the declaration.

Related content
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Holders of additional forms of British nationality

This page tells you how to deal with cases where the customer has another form of British nationality.

In addition to being a British citizen, a person may also be a British overseas territories citizen, a British National (Overseas), a British overseas citizen or a British subject under the British Nationality Act (BNA) 1981 and can renounce any of those citizenships and statuses.

A person can renounce any one (or more) of these other citizenships or statuses on the grounds that they will remain a British citizen. But a person who wishes to renounce British citizenship in order to acquire, or keep, citizenship of another country, is likely to want to renounce any other form of British nationality they may hold as well.

The person must state in their application what forms of British nationality they hold and which they want to renounce. If they have not done this, but you have reason to believe that they hold more than one form of British nationality, you must contact them to ask if they also wish to renounce the other citizenship or status. If so, they can download and complete a further application form from the GOV.UK website.

The reason for requesting a further form is to make sure that the Home Office has a clear record of the citizenship or statuses renounced. If a fresh form is not completed, but the person still wishes to renounce British citizenship only, the original declaration may be registered.

A British citizen, who is also a British subject under section 30, section 32 or section 33 of the BNA 1981, will automatically lose that status under section 35 of the act upon acquiring another citizenship or nationality. In these circumstances, renunciation of that status is unnecessary if it is being done because another citizenship is to be acquired. If the authorities of the other country require a formal declaration to be made before their citizenship or nationality can be acquired, the declaration should be processed in the normal way.

You must not attempt to dissuade the applicant or the authorities of the country concerned that renunciation of British subject status is unnecessary.

Related content
British citizenship
British overseas territories citizens
British overseas citizens
British subjects
British national overseas
British protected persons
Contents

Related external links
Declaration forms

Consideration of declarations

This page tells you how to consider applications.

Declarations to be registered by a given date

Where the authorities of another country have given a date by which the person must renounce British citizenship, it is very important that you give the declaration sufficient priority to enable it to be registered before that date. Otherwise, the person may lose citizenship of that country. If sufficient evidence of British citizenship has not been submitted, it should not be called for if this will delay registration of the declaration.

If the declaration cannot be registered on or before the date given by the other country and, as a result, the declarant may have lost citizenship of that country, the declaration should not be registered. Instead, a letter of explanation must be sent to the customer. If the declaration was inadvertently registered after the date specified by the other country, a letter should be sent to the customer acknowledging our responsibility for the delay. In such cases it should also be noted that the renunciation may be void.

Customers living in the UK

A British citizen who renounces their citizenship will lose their right of abode in the United Kingdom, unless they also have that right as a Commonwealth citizen. If they previously held permission to enter or remain in the UK (including indefinite leave to remain) before they became a British citizen, they cannot resume that status after they have renounced British citizenship. This is because any permission they held prior to obtaining British citizenship will have automatically fallen away at that point and is no longer valid.

If a customer wants to live in the UK after renouncing, and qualifies for indefinite leave to remain or limited leave to remain, they will need to apply under the Immigration Rules. They can apply for settlement / leave at the same time as they apply to renounce citizenship, but the immigration application must not be decided until after the person has renounced. If you have an in-country renunciation application and the person has stated that they wish to apply for immigration leave, you must check the system to see if there is an application. You must let the relevant team know once the renunciation application is at decision stage.

Checking full capacity

We should normally be satisfied that the applicant is of full capacity (for example. they have some understanding of the meaning and consequences of renunciation). The person should have explained on the form RN why they wish to renounce British citizenship and the form should have been countersigned by an adult who has confirmed personal knowledge of the customer and that they are of full capacity.

Alternatively, reasons should be given as to why it would be in the person's best interests for the full capacity requirement to be waived in their case.

In cases where the customer is not considered to be of full capacity you must consider whether it would be in their best interests to waive the full capacity requirement.

Evidence required

In order to demonstrate that an individual meets the requirements to renounce their status they must provide evidence that they are of full age (18 or over). For renunciation purposes, a person under 18 is treated as being of full age if they if they have been married or in a civil partnership. Customers must therefore provide:

- their birth certificate or passport to show their age
- their marriage or civil partnership certificate if they are under 18

The must also provide:

- evidence of British nationality, such as their passport, certificate of registration or naturalisation, birth certificate and relevant evidence of their parent's status
- evidence that they have, or will obtain, another citizenship or nationality after renunciation, either:
  - their current passport describing the holder as a citizen or national of the country concerned or a statement from the authorities of the country concerned confirming citizenship
  - a statement from the authorities of the country concerned confirming that the person will become a citizen or national of that country if they do not currently hold citizenship of another country

Checking for another citizenship

You must check that the customer either:

- has another citizenship
- will acquire another citizenship once they have renounced British nationality

If the person has not provided the relevant evidence, it must be requested. If the information is not provided, and you cannot be satisfied that person will have another citizenship, you must refuse the application

Post registration action

Once you have registered the renunciation you must refer the case to the Citizenship Ceremonies Support team (CCST) in Liverpool, confirming that evidence of an alternative nationality or citizenship has been seen. You must upload the declaration and covering letter to Atlas. CCST will destroy any previous registration or naturalisation certificate.

Official – sensitive: start of section

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Official – sensitive: end of section

You must print off the declaration of renunciation, and date it to show when the declaration was registered. You must then send it to the customer.

You must complete the relevant Atlas task to show:

- the citizenship or status renounced
- the other citizenship or potential citizenship

You must:

- send the applicant's British passport (if available) to the His Majesty’s Passport Office (HM Passport Office) with an explanatory note
- despatch the applicant's copy of the declaration with the covering letter and any documents
- if the person was a British citizen by registration or naturalisation, refer the case to the Citizenship Ceremonies Support Team (CCST) to destroy the citizenship certificate

Related content
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Position after renunciation

This page tells you about the person's status after renunciation and what happens if they do not acquire another nationality.

Travel

People who enquire about access to travel documents after renunciation must be advised as follows:

- if they have changed their mind, and wish to travel urgently or otherwise on a British passport, they should be told of the procedure for resumption of citizenship
- if, for the time being at least, they do not have any citizenship or nationality, and wish to travel, they may be eligible for a Home Office Travel Document as a stateless person - enquiries should be referred to Travel Document Section

There is no provision for the resumption of British subject status.

Immigration status after renunciation

Where a British citizen renouncing their citizenship previously held leave to enter or remain in the UK (including indefinite leave to remain) they cannot resume this status after they have renounced their citizenship. This is because any leave they held prior to obtaining British citizenship will have automatically fallen away at that point and is no longer valid. They will therefore need to ensure that they regularise their position if they want to remain in the UK after they have renounced their citizenship.

Action to be taken where the person fails to obtain an alternative nationality or citizenship

A declaration will be void if both of the below are satisfied:

- the customer has no other citizenship
- having made the declaration in order to acquire another nationality, they fail to do so within 6 months of the date of registration

A declaration may be void if evidence comes to light that the customer lost the other citizenship before the renunciation was registered.

Guide RN advises customers to send the 'Applicant's Copy' of the declaration to the Home Office, together with a letter from the authorities of the other country concerned, confirming that they have not acquired that country's citizenship.

Citizenship Ceremonies Support team will:

- endorse the declaration:

‘This declaration of renunciation is void because the declarant did not acquire another citizenship within 6 months. The declarant is therefore deemed to have remained a British citizen/British Overseas citizen/ British subject.’

The caseworker will:

- update the renunciation record on Atlas to “refuse”
- contact HM Passport Office by email to tell them that the renunciation has been voided and the person remains a citizen
- arrange for a new certificate of registration to be issued - this should be endorsed to say that it is a copy of the original issued on (date)

Related content
Registration as a British citizen: following renunciation
Registration as a BOTC: following renunciation
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