

NAMES

1. Change of name: how it can be done

1.1 There is nothing in the law of the United Kingdom to prevent people from changing their name simply by using another one and gradually becoming known by it. A person who wishes to evidence the change may do so by advertising it in the local press, by making a statutory declaration, or by executing a deed poll.

2. Procedure where an applicant for citizenship sends in documentary evidence in different name(s)

2.1. Guidance issued with application forms advises applicants that they should ensure that the details provided are correct, as these will be entered on their certificate of citizenship. We would normally expect the name used to be the one that is on a person's official documents. If the name that they are using is not the one that is on the current passport, travel document or identity card, they are requested to explain the discrepancy and send documentary evidence to show that they are known by the name given, such as a marriage or civil partnership certificate, change of name deed or other official documents.

2.2. If we come across a case where the name used is different to that on the official documents and this has not been explained satisfactorily, or at all, we should contact the applicant/agent, by telephone preferably, otherwise in writing, to request an explanation for the discrepancy. We should point out that, if the name on a naturalisation certificate does not match other official documents, this may cause difficulties in applying for a British passport. If a person does not agree to have official details included on the certificate, the case should be discussed with an EO caseworker or Senior Caseworker. The details of the telephone conversation and our decision should be clearly recorded on CID. Where a change of name has taken place, we should normally ensure that the name at birth is included on the certificate, although this can be omitted if there is a good reason for this, e.g. because the person has been adopted or is no longer living in the gender they were considered to have at the time of their birth.

3. Change of name before naturalisation or registration

3.1 Applicants who wish to change their name before naturalisation or registration should normally be asked to produce a deed poll or statutory declaration showing the new name. On the certificate the new name will be shown as well as the name at birth.

3.2 In the case either of a child born illegitimate and subsequently

legitimated by the parents' marriage or of an adopted minor, the name at birth does not normally need to be specified where the parents request its omission.

- 3.3 Provided an applicant's identity has been established, and no obvious difficulty can be seen in the future (e.g. when applying for a passport), a minor amendment to a name can be accepted without insisting upon a statutory declaration or deed poll. A deed poll or other documentary evidence is necessary in cases where the names proposed differ so radically from those shown in existing documents that identity would otherwise be in doubt.
- 3.4 We are afforded some flexibility in this area by the disclaimer on the bottom of the certificate, which states: "This certificate does not certify the accuracy of the personal particulars which are those supplied by the person who made the application."
- 3.5 In all change of name cases we need to be satisfied that the person named on the certificate meets the statutory requirements for British citizenship, and so is identifiable as the person who met the residence and other requirements.

4. **Single-named applicants and spelling discrepancies**

- 4.1 Applicants may state that their full name consists of one name only (e.g. Mr Aziz). As this may be due to an oversight by the applicant or representative, confirmation should be sought, before a certificate is issued, that the applicant has no other names. If this is confirmed, a subsequent request for the name on the certificate to be amended should normally be refused and we should write to the applicant/agent along the lines indicated in 6.1 below.
- 4.2 The spelling of a name on an application form may also differ from that previously used. In such cases the applicant should be asked to provide confirmation of the correct spelling.

5. **Change of gender**

- 5.1 Where an applicant has changed gender it is likely that the name at birth will be different from the current name. As with a straightforward change of name case, we need to be certain that the applicant and the owner of the supporting documents are the same person. Where the name change is not evidenced by a deed poll or statutory declaration we should see the applicant's gender recognition certificate (see entry in Volume 2, General Information, "**GENDER RECOGNITION ACT**").
- 5.2 From 3 December 2007 there is no legal requirement for a person's name at birth to be included on a certificate of naturalisation. If a person

has changed gender and does not wish the name at birth to be on the certificate, we should not include this information.

- 5.3 Where the applicant does hold a gender recognition certificate care must be taken to ensure that we do not disclose, to a third party, the applicants name at birth. This is because this information is protected under the terms of the **Gender Recognition Act** and its disclosure can lead to prosecution.
- 5.4 It is not our usual policy to alter a certificate of registration or naturalisation after it has been issued (see below), but where a person has changed gender we should, if requested, re-issue the certificate omitting the name at birth.

6. **Alterations to certificates after issue (known as ‘re-rolls’)**

6.1 A certificate of registration or naturalisation is issued on the basis of the information supplied by the applicant at the time of application and cannot be altered. Those who change their name after they have been naturalised or registered, and ask for their certificate to be altered to show the new name, should be advised that:

- it is not the normal practice of the Home Office to alter a certificate once it has been issued, and
- they should evidence the change by executing a deed poll or making a statutory declaration and to produce this document whenever they produce the certificate of naturalisation or registration

NB – see section 5.4 for guidance on re-issuing certificates after a change in gender.

6.2 Alteration by the Home Office

6.2.1 Requests for amendments to be made to certificates should normally be referred to the caseworking team that was responsible for making the mistake.

6.2.2 If the responsible team no longer exists or the certificate was issued prior to the computerisation of Nationality records (1 October 1986) the certificate should be sent to the Correspondence and Enquiry Team to deal.

6.2.3 Should the EO caseworker decide that issuing a re-roll is not appropriate but an endorsement on the certificate may be more suitable, the certificate and supporting documentation should be sent to the Correspondence and Enquiry Team to consider.

- 6.2.4 As a general rule, no guarantees should be given that the details on a certificate will be amended in advance of a written request being received and considered by the appropriate group or section.

6.3 Endorsements

- 6.3.1 Where we have made an error on a certificate (that is that the information provided at the time of the certificate was correct), we should re-roll the certificate showing the correct details.
- 6.3.2 Where the information printed on the certificate was believed to be correct at the time of issue, but new evidence has come to light after issue that it was in fact incorrect and the certificate holder can provide satisfactory proof of the new details, the certificate can be endorsed to show the correct details. The Correspondence and Enquiry Team consider these requests.
- 6.3.3. Where the information printed on the certificate was believed to be correct at the time of issue, and the certificate holder later claims the details are incorrect but cannot provide satisfactory proof of the new details, the certificate can be endorsed to show the claimed details. This can include endorsements to show that evidence was supplied. These types of endorsements, however, are only statements of the fact that evidence was supplied, not that we have accepted the evidence. These endorsements will not therefore be accepted by IPS in order to change the personal details on a passport. The Correspondence and Enquiry Team consider these requests.

- 6.3.4 Examples of endorsements are as follows:

Where a certificate holder has claimed a different date of birth and this **has** been accepted:

"The correct date of birth of the holder of this certificate of registration (or naturalisation) is..... and not as entered overleaf."

Where a certificate holder has claimed a different place of birth and provided evidence, but this has **not** been accepted:

"According to documentary evidence produced to the Home Office the place of birth of the person named below should read (place of birth)"

Where a certificate holder has claimed a different date of birth, but this has **not** been accepted:

"The holder has produced a birth certificate recording that he (or she) was born on"

OR

"The holder states that the correct date of birth is, but cannot provide evidence to support this"

Where a certificate holder has claimed a different date of birth and provided evidence, but this has **not** been accepted:

"According to documentary evidence produced to the Home Office the date of birth of the person named below is"

Where a certificate holder has claimed a different personal detail (which is not shown on the certificate), but this has **not** been accepted:

"After the certificate had been issued, the holder (or the holder's agents) informed the Home Office that his father's date of birth should have read; or that her title should be 'Miss'."

6.4 Unofficial alterations

6.4.1 From time to time, certificates of naturalisation or registration which have been altered come into the possession of the Home Office. These should be referred to CET who will make further enquiries. If there is any doubt that the person presenting the certificate is the rightful holder the police may be asked to make enquiries and report.

6.4.2 If it is clearly established, whether through police enquiries or otherwise, that the person presenting the certificate is not the rightful owner, then the certificate should be impounded. The person who presented it should be told that it has been impounded and for what reason, and should not be allowed to have a copy of the original. It may also be appropriate, where deliberate misrepresentation has taken place and, if reference to the police has not already been made, to draw the person's attention to the possibility of legal proceedings arising from the irregular possession and use of the certificate.

6.4.3 If the person presenting the certificate is the rightful owner,

further action depends on the nature of the alteration. If the original text is clearly legible, even though crossed out, the holder should be warned that the alteration is likely to cause difficulty in the future and advised to obtain a certified copy of the original on payment of the prescribed fee. If the person does not agree, the altered certificate may be returned.

6.4.4 If the alteration has obliterated the original text, or has skilfully changed it so that the new reading would pass for the original:

- a certified copy of the original should again be offered at the prescribed fee, and, in this case, and
- the altered document should be retained, on the ground that it is no longer identical with that accepted and endorsed by the Secretary of State

6.5 Possibility of nullity

6.5.1 Caseworkers dealing with:

- changes of name after naturalisation or registration
- requests for the alteration of other important personal particulars on a certificate
- certificates which have been altered unofficially

should not overlook the possibility that the naturalisation or registration may have been obtained by impersonation, in which case it might be a nullity (see **Chapter 55**).

7. Foreign names

7.1 7.1 Details of common forms and use of certain foreign names are held by Nationality Policy Team, and can be viewed on request.

8. Geographical names and descriptions of nationality status

8.1 A list of countries can be found on the FCO website:
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/find-an-embassy/>.

If an applicant claims to be from a country which does not appear on the FCO list, further enquires should be made to see if this is a country name which is officially recognised.

Specific country names to note:

- 8.2 Taiwan Since Her Majesty's Government do not recognise the claim of the Chinese Nationalists to be the Government of China, the title "Republic of China" should not be used. The territory over which the Chinese Nationalists exercise jurisdiction is known, for diplomatic purposes, as "Taiwan". The Government and the administration should be referred to as the "Taiwan authorities" or the "Nationalist Chinese authorities". The adjective applied to the Government should be the "Nationalist Chinese", and "Taiwanese" should be used when it is necessary to differentiate the indigenous people from the Nationalist Chinese.
- 8.3 Congo It is important not to confuse Congo with Congo (Democratic Republic). The form "Congolese" should only be used where the context makes it clear which specific country is intended. The country "Congo (Democratic Republic) may be abbreviated to "Congo (Dem. Rep.)" or Congo (D.R.) informally or where space is at a premium. The use of "Democratic Congo" or D.R. Congo should be avoided.
- 8.4 Fiji The term "Fijian" refers only to the indigenous inhabitants of Fiji (i.e. the people of Polynesian, Micronesian or Melanesian descent as defined in the Fiji Independence Order 1970). It should not be used in reference to the country or population in general.
- 8.5 United Arab Emirates: The United Arab Emirates is a State comprising Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Umm al Qaiwain, Ajman, Ras al Khaimah and Fujairah. For official purposes, the designation "United Arab Emirates" should always be used, although each of the component states retains considerable autonomy. For Ajman, the adjectival term "Ajmani" may be used.
- 8.6 United States The use of the terms "America" and "American" should be avoided unless the context makes clear that the "United States" is intended.
- 8.7 Vatican City: In 1929, the Lateran Treaty set up a State called the Vatican City State, this being an area of Rome constituting the territorial extent of the temporal sovereignty of the Holy See. The Holy See is the actual seat (i.e. residence) of the Pope but is generally used as a term to indicate the Pope as Supreme Pontiff together with those associated with him in the government of the Roman Catholic Church at its headquarters.

The Holy See exercises a traditional right to send and receive Ambassadors, to conclude treaties and to participate in international affairs. Since this legal or political personality is more important than the Pope's temporal sovereignty it is the Holy See which normally takes part in international relations, is

represented at international conferences and is a party to international conventions. The only exceptions are questions, such as those dealt with by the Universal Postal Union, where the body interested is clearly the administration of "the Vatican City". Her Majesty's Representative is accordingly Her Majesty's Minister to the Holy See, not to the Vatican City.

Citizenship is of the Vatican, but the Vatican uses three different types of passport: Holy See diplomatic passports, Holy See Service passports, and Vatican City State passports. Holders of the first two types of passport, which include all members of the Papal diplomatic service, are not usually citizens of the Vatican City State; when they retire or leave the service of the Holy See, they revert to their original nationality.

The correct adjective depends on the context. For example, the diplomatic representation of the Holy See should be described as Apostolic (or less correctly Papal) Nunciature, while, on the other hand, it is correct to speak of the Vatican radio or of a Vatican stamp.

- 8.8 Gibraltar Article 2(a) of the Gibraltar Constitution Order 1969 states that "Gibraltar shall **be known as the City of Gibraltar**" but this term rarely, if ever, features in official documents.
- 8.9 Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus The UK does not recognise the self-declared 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' ('TRNC' in the northern part of the island. The 'TRNC' is not internationally recognised, except by Turkey. We should not therefore use the term "TRNC" in any correspondence or on naturalisation certificates, as this would contradict official government policy on the non-recognition of a state.
- 8.10 Burma The UK Government's policy is to refer to Burma rather than 'Myanmar'. The current regime changed the name to Myanmar in 1989. Burma's democracy movement prefers the form 'Burma' because they do not accept the legitimacy of the unelected military regime and thus their right to change the official name of the country. Internationally, both names are recognised.

Historical names

- 8.11 If an applicant for citizenship has recorded their place of birth using a historical name we may issue the certificate in those details, provided they reflect the information on the birth certificate. An example of this might be where a person was born in Beijing, but at the time of their birth it was known as Peking. Alternatively, if a person's place of birth has changed name, and they include the new name, that can be included on the certificate. An example of this might be where a person was born

in Bombay, India: it is acceptable to put the place of birth as “Mumbai” if that is how the applicant stated it on the application form.