



26 May 2023

45 Pipitea Street, Wellington 6011

Phone +64 4 495 7200

Terry via FYI

[fyi-request-22601-](mailto:fyi-request-22601-98e35ec0@requests.fyi.org.nz)

[98e35ec0@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-22601-98e35ec0@requests.fyi.org.nz)

dia.govt.nz

Tēnā koe Terry

OIA request 22/23 0798 Request for Citizenship Timeframes

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 28 April 2023.

You requested –

I am aware that the key reasons for an application failing the automated checks are:

- i. Applicant is not from an English-speaking country or does not hold a visa-type that automatically demonstrates they meet the English language requirements*
- ii. System does not automatically show that the applicant meets the presence requirement for New Zealand citizenship.*
- iii. System does not automatically provide a photo match with Immigration New Zealand records.*

Regarding these reasons, I have the following questions and request the OIA:

- 1. For the first reason (i): what type of the visas will be automatically considered to meet the English language requirement?*

1(a) If applicants hold these visas, how do they answer the English language requirement question in the online application form?

1(b) In addition, in the online application form, under the English language requirement question, it states that "Is English the applicant's first language? You can answer 'yes' if you currently speak English on a daily basis, or if you grew up in an English-speaking country." Does it mean that applicants using English on daily basis, such as at work, would be considered English as their first language?

- 2. For the second reason (ii): An applicant has met the total 1350 days requirement and 240 days requirements for five years. However, the applicant applied the citizenship before the fifth anniversary of their residency. In such case, does this applicant meet the presence requirement? Will this application fail the automatic check?*
- 3. For the third reason (iii): How applicants can avoid this issue and pass the automatic check?*

4. *Do applicants having other names (rather than official names or official name changes), such as English name used in workplaces, require manual verification and fail the automated check?*
5. *Futhermore, is there any reasons that automated checks may fail?*
6. *I would reuquest a list of applications showing
(a) the dates for applications submitted, officer allocated and
(b) decisions made from November 2022 to today (the latest).*

I have replaced the bullet points in your original request (above) by labelling and numbering them for ease of response.

On the 11 May 2023 we sought clarification via email for questions 5, 6(a) and 6(b). For question 5 we needed to confirm whether the word 'other' was missing from this question, which you confirmed it was, and your updated question is as follows:

"Futhermore, is there any 'other' reasons that automated checks may fail?"

For questions 6(a) & 6(b) we sought clarification for this question because as it stood that part would likely be refused under 18(f) of the Act due to substantial collation. However, you confirmed that you would still like:

"Both 6(a) and 6(b) if they are available please".

In response to your request, I can provide you with the information below.

Question 1 Response

The visas that are considered to meet the English language requirement are:

- Investor Categories: Employees of relocating businesses, Investor, Entrepreneur Residence Visa, Investor 2 category
- Family Categories: Parent
- Skilled Categories: Skilled Migrant and Residence from work

Question 1(a) Response

The applicant needs to answer the questions truthfully in the online citizenship by grant (CBG) application.

Question 1(b) Response

You have identified question 15 in the online CBG application form which asks, 'Is English your first language?', with further information that states – If you grew up in an English-speaking country tick 'yes'. If you did not grow up in an English-speaking country, tick 'no'.

Question 16 in the online CBG application form asks about conversational English with information that says: If you can speak English in everyday situations, such as talking to your doctor or dealing with your bank, tick 'yes'. However please note that speaking and understanding English in everyday situations alone does not determine whether someone is assessed as meeting the English language requirement.

Question 2 Response

Yes, they do meet presence requirement and no, it will not fail the automated check.

Question 3 Response

If Immigration New Zealand does not have a photo on file during the automated check, the application will be placed into a different queue as the Life and Identity Services Officer who processes the application will need to complete further processing steps. Applicants cannot avoid this issue.

Question 4 Response

No, declaring having used other names, whether officially or just in everyday life, does not affect the automated checks.

Question 5 Response

Yes, there are other reasons (other than the ones mentioned above) that can fail the automated checks:

- if applicants have particular conditions on their visas;
- if the system is not able to automatically match the application with an Immigration identity;
- if the system cannot automatically confirm that the applicant has met some of the character requirements (the Citizenship office still do manual external checks after the automation process has been completed); and
- where there is information provided in the application that the system flags as needing manual verification.

Questions 6(a) and 6(b) Responses

To provide the information for this question would require substantial collation. Therefore, this part of your request has been refused under section 18(f) of the Act: the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

Next steps

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, the Department has decided to proactively release a copy of this response on the DIA website. All requestor data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release. The released response will be made available here: <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Official-Information-Act-Requests-2>.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KARAGGETT', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kate Raggett
Manager Operational Policy and Official Correspondence
Service Delivery and Operations