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# Employment Suitability Clearance Information Pack

## Overview of Employment Suitability Screening

The Department of Home Affairs (the Department) is charged with protecting Australia's border and managing the movement of people and goods across it. We hold a privileged place at the border and in the community, with access to secure environments, and the ability to make decisions that affect a person's safety, rights and freedoms, and Australia's trade and commerce. Our work and the information we hold is valuable to organised crime syndicates, who actively try to circumvent border controls, reduce border integrity and threaten national security. Our border management activities are a significant target for criminal groups who have strong financial and other motives to infiltrate border protection agencies across the globe. It is paramount that our behaviour as a Department is consistent with the laws we enforce and a testament to our resolute integrity.

Within this context, the Department has developed and implemented a comprehensive employment suitability screening process which is designed to examine a range of Department-specific risk factors relevant to its personnel and other individuals who are provided with access to the Department's resources. It is designed to provide assurance to the community that there are minimal risks associated with an individual or their circumstances which may:

- cast doubt on an individual's ability to support the Department to achieve its mission, or
- otherwise reduce the confidence the community places in the Department to maintain the integrity and security of Australia's borders.

All individuals who require non-public access to departmental assets must undergo employment suitability screening and be granted an Employment Suitability Clearance (ESC). This document provides information that may help you complete and lodge your application for an ESC.

## Contact Us

If you have questions regarding the ESC application process or its requirements, would like to arrange a confidential discussion regarding your circumstances, or would like further information, please contact the Pre-employment Screening team at [ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au) or 1300 243 717.

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## 1. Your Obligations during the ESC Process

You must fully cooperate with the Department during the ESC process and provide all required documentation and information within the requested timeframe.

You are obliged to tell us what you know, or reasonably suspect, during your initial application and fully cooperate with the Department during any subsequent enquires or interviews.

Dishonesty, even regarding matters that may seem trivial or irrelevant to you, may cast doubt on your suitability to be employed by the Department or to be provided with non-public access to the Department's assets. Dishonesty includes making false statements, withholding information, hiding mistakes and ignoring risks.

There may be serious consequences if you consciously or deliberately provide false and / or misleading information to the Department, including (but not limited to) the Department finding that you are not suitable to be granted an ESC.

If you are unsure of whether a particular fact or matter may be relevant to your ESC, please contact the Pre-employment Screening team at [ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au) or 1300 243 717 for confidential advice regarding your circumstances and disclosure requirements.

## 2. Submission Process

Once you have undertaken all activities specified in the ESC Submission Checklist, submit your completed ESC Questionnaire and all supporting documentation via ESC Online.

To avoid processing delays, please ensure you complete the [ESC Submission Checklist](#) prior to submitting your application for an ESC.

If you experience technical issues or have questions while completing the ESC Questionnaire, please contact the Pre-employment Screening team at [ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au) or 1300 243 717.

## 3. Assessment Process

The ESC process will appear similar to the security clearance process undertaken by the Australian Government Security Vetting Agency (AGSVA).

Once an ESC application is submitted, the Department will use the information provided by you to undertake relevant background checks in order to identify any factors or personal circumstances that pose an integrity risk to you or to the Department and thereby assess whether you are suitable to have non-public access to departmental assets. The specific risk factors which are examined during the ESC process are contained in the [ESC Assessment Criteria](#).

The types of background checks that are undertaken by the Pre-employment Screening team include, for example, a national police history check, as well as inquiries to determine whether you have a history of non-compliance with any laws which the Department and its partner agencies are responsible for enforcing at the Australian border.

The Pre-employment Screening team will then make an assessment as to whether there are any risks associated with you or your circumstances which may cast doubt on your suitability to be employed in the Department.

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A member of the Pre-employment Screening team may contact you to discuss your ESC application and seek further information either by phone or email. Your participation in any such conversation is purely voluntary and you can terminate the conversation at any time or decline to answer any question. If you do not provide the information requested, your application will be assessed on the basis of the information available. You are entitled to have a support person, including a union or legal representative present during this conversation, including if you need any assistance understanding what is said but they cannot advocate on your behalf. If you intend to bring/have a support person present you should advise the Pre-employment Screening team member. A written record will be made of the conversation. With your consent, an audio record of the conversation may also be made using a voice recorder. You may request a copy of any record made of the conversation, however you must not make your own recording of the conversation without prior approval from the Pre-employment Screening team.

Any information that you give should be given on the basis of what you know or suspect, and in light of the prohibition on giving false or misleading information (discussed below). Any information you give will be used in accordance with the privacy notice as outlined in the ESC Registration General Consent form.

A key point to remember is that the ESC process is designed to be fair and balanced, and is not designed nor intended to punish individuals for past mistakes or indiscretions, or for issues in an individual's life which may be outside their control. Mitigating factors may be taken into account during the ESC process – such as your intent, age and/or maturity at the time at which a matter of concern occurred.

## 4. Consequences for Providing False and / or Misleading Information

You will be asked to sign a Statutory Declaration and certify that all information and supporting documents you have provided to support your application for an ESC is correct.

Giving false or misleading information to the Department is a serious offence under Division 137 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth), which is punishable by a period of imprisonment of up to 12 months. This includes omitting to advise the Department of any matter or thing without which the information you provide is misleading.

Providing false or misleading information to the Department may also result in a range of adverse administrative actions being taken. These may include (but are not limited to) a finding that you are not suitable to be granted an ESC and thus will not be employed by or associated with the Department, a finding that you are not suitable to hold an AGSVA security clearance, or other disciplinary actions.

## **5. National Police History Check**

A national police history check is an integral part of the assessment of your suitability. You should note that the existence of a record does not mean that you will be assessed automatically as being unsuitable. Each case will be assessed on its merit, so it is in your interest to provide full and frank details to support your application for an ESC.

Information will be forwarded to the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) and other Australian police agencies<sup>1</sup> for checking. By signing the ESC general consent form, you are consenting to these agencies accessing their records to obtain and disclose police history information that relates to you to the Department.

Police history information may include outstanding charges, and criminal convictions/findings of guilt recorded against you that may be disclosed according to the laws of the relevant jurisdiction and - in the absence of any laws governing the release of that information - according to the relevant jurisdiction's information release policy.

If you have lived overseas within the five years prior to submitting your ESC application, you may also be asked to obtain a police check from that country. A member of the Pre-employment Screening team will contact you if you are required to do so.

### **Spent Convictions Schemes**

The following information is provided as general guidance and is not exhaustive. The aim of Spent Convictions legislation<sup>2</sup> is to prevent discrimination on the basis of certain previous convictions. Spent convictions legislation limits the use and disclosure of older, less serious convictions and findings of guilt. Spent convictions of specific offences will be released where the check is required for certain purposes regardless of how old the convictions are. Each Australian police agency will apply the relevant Spent Convictions legislation/information release policy prior to disclosure. If you require further information or clarification, please contact the individual police agencies directly for further information about their release policies and any legislation that affects them.

### **I have spent / old convictions, do I need to disclose these to the Department?**

Yes. Prospective employees undergoing pre-employment screening must disclose spent convictions. Current employees being rescreened or applying for an ESC are encouraged to disclose spent convictions. You will be given the opportunity to declare past and current criminal history (if any) when completing an

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Federal Police, The New South Wales Police Force, Victoria Police, Queensland Police Service, South Australia Police, Western Australia Police, Tasmania Police Service, Northern Territory Police Force.

<sup>2</sup> Applicable Spent Convictions legislation, as amended from time to time.

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application for an ESC. Please note that people with criminal records are not automatically barred from applying for positions with the Department. Each application will be considered on its merits.

# 6. Statutory Declaration Requirements

## Requirements for how a Statutory Declaration must be made

To make an ESC Statutory Declaration. You can use:

- the physical form named ESC Statutory Declaration ([the approved form](#)) as observed by an approved witness in-person
- [myGov and your Digital Identity](#)

The Department will only accept an approved form statutory declaration if:

- the declaration has been witnessed by an authorised witness in accordance with the relevant legislation
- the declaration is in the correct format
- the declaration was signed and witnessed at the same time on the same day
- in the event corrections are made, all corrections are ruled out (no white-out is to be used) and are initialled by both the signatory and the witness
- must be hand signed in person not digital
- once signed, scan the document and upload as part of your ESC Pack submission.

The Department will only accept a digital ESC Statutory Declaration form if:

- the form is created using the myGov website or myGov app which is the only approved online platform
- you have a valid digital identity which is connected to myGov
- the content from the ESC Statutory Declaration approved form including all the declarations have been transcribed exactly to the body of the digital form.
- you have drawn, typed or uploaded a photo of your signature to sign the digital form
- the form has been downloaded as a pdf and a QR code is available on each page for verification
- the document has been uploaded as part of your ESC pack submission

# 7. Official Secrets Requirements

## Requirements for how Official Secrets form must be made

- the declaration is completed in full
- the declaration was signed and witnessed at the same time on the same day
- the official secrets document can be witnessed by anyone over the age of 18 years
- in the event corrections are made, all corrections are ruled out (no white-out is to be used) and are initialled by both the signatory and the witness

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- must be hand signed in person not digital
- once signed, scan the document and upload as part of your ESC Pack submission.

### Authorised Witnesses before whom a Statutory Declaration can be made

A statutory declaration under the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959* may be made before—

(1) A person who is currently licensed or registered under a law to practise in one of the following occupations:

Chiropractor	Dentist	Legal practitioner
Medical practitioner	Nurse	Optometrist
Patent attorney	Pharmacist	Physiotherapist
Psychologist	Trade marks attorney	Veterinary surgeon

(2) a person who is on the roll of the Supreme Court of a State or Territory, or the High Court of Australia, as a legal practitioner (however described); or

(3) A person who is in the following list:

- Agent of the Australian Postal Corporation who is in charge of an office supplying postal services to the public
- Australian Consular Officer or Australian Diplomatic Officer (within the meaning of the *Consular Fees Act 1955*)
- Bailiff
- Bank officer with 5 or more continuous years of service
- Building society officer with 5 or more years of continuous service
- Chief executive officer of a Commonwealth court
- Clerk of a court
- Commissioner for Affidavits
- Commissioner for Declarations
- Credit union officer with 5 or more years of continuous service
- Employee of the Australian Trade Commission who is:
  - in a country or place outside Australia; and
  - authorised under paragraph 3 (d) of the *Consular Fees Act 1955*; and
  - exercising his or her function in that place
- Employee of the Commonwealth who is:
  - in a country or place outside Australia; and
  - authorised under paragraph 3 (c) of the *Consular Fees Act 1955*; and
  - exercising his or her function in that place
- Fellow of the National Tax Accountants' Association

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- Finance company officer with 5 or more years of continuous service
- Holder of a statutory office not specified in another item in this list
- Judge of a court
- Justice of the Peace
- Magistrate
- Marriage celebrant registered under Subdivision C of Division 1 of Part IV of the *Marriage Act 1961*
- Master of a court
- Member of Chartered Secretaries Australia
- Member of Engineers Australia, other than at the grade of student
- Member of the Association of Taxation and Management Accountants
- Member of the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy
- Member of the Australian Defence Force who is:
  - an officer; or
  - a non-commissioned officer within the meaning of the *Defence Force Discipline Act 1982* with 5 or more years of continuous service; or
  - a warrant officer within the meaning of that Act
- Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia, the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants or the National Institute of Accountants
- Member of:
  - the Parliament of the Commonwealth; or
  - the Parliament of a State; or
  - a Territory legislature; or
  - a local government authority of a State or Territory
- Minister of religion registered under Subdivision A of Division 1 of Part IV of the *Marriage Act 1961*
- Notary public
- Permanent employee of the Australian Postal Corporation with 5 or more years of continuous service who is employed in an office supplying postal services to the public
- Permanent employee of:
  - the Commonwealth or a Commonwealth authority; or
  - a State or Territory or a State or Territory authority; or
  - a local government authority;
  - with 5 or more years of continuous service who is not specified in another item in this list
- Person before whom a statutory declaration may be made under the law of the State or Territory in which the declaration is made
- Police officer
- Registrar, or Deputy Registrar, of a court

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- Senior Executive Service employee of:
  - the Commonwealth or a Commonwealth authority; or
  - a State or Territory or a State or Territory authority
- Sheriff
- Sheriff's officer
- Teacher employed on a full-time basis at a school or tertiary education institution.

### Further Information about Statutory Declarations

Refer to the [Attorney-General's Department website on Statutory Declarations](#) for further information. The website also includes links to the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959* and *Statutory Declarations Regulations 1993*.

Example of a Correct Statutory Declaration



Australian Government  
Department of Home Affairs

Statutory Declaration

Commonwealth of Australia  
Statutory Declarations Act 1959

I, (print full name): John Citizen  
Of, (residential address): 6 Residential Ave, Belconnen ACT 2617  
And, (current occupation): Engineer

make the following declaration under the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959*:

1. I acknowledge that I understand I must obtain and maintain an endorsed Employment Suitability Clearance (ESC) or ESC with Aftercare Arrangements as a precondition to being employed by the Department of Home Affairs (the Department), or otherwise provided with non-public access to the Department's assets.
2. I have read the Privacy Notice and I acknowledge that I understand that my personal information will be collected and disclosed by the methods and for the purposes as indicated.
3. I have read the Consequences for Providing False and/or Misleading Information section of the Employment Suitability Clearance Information Pack and I acknowledge that I understand that giving false or misleading information to the Department is a serious offence.
4. I have read the Consequences for Providing False and/or Misleading Information section of the Employment Suitability Clearance Information Pack and acknowledge that I understand if I give false or misleading information to the Department I may be subject to adverse administrative action.
5. I have read the Information Regarding the National Police History Check section of the Employment Suitability Clearance Information Pack and I acknowledge that I understand that Spent Convictions legislation (however described) in the Commonwealth and many States and Territories protects "spent convictions" from disclosure.
6. I understand that, as a law enforcement agency, the position/entitlement or association with the Department for which I am being considered may be in a category for which exclusions from Spent Convictions legislation may apply.
7. I acknowledge that I understand that if I receive an adverse ESC, I will not be eligible to be employed by the Department or otherwise provided with non-public access to the Department's assets.
8. I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, all information I have provided and that I may provide in the future to support my application for an ESC is true, accurate and complete.

I understand that a person who intentionally makes a false statement in a statutory declaration is guilty of an offence under section 11 of the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959*, and I believe that the statements in this declaration are true in every particular.

Signature (of person making the declaration) J. Citizen.  
Declared at (place, day, month and year) Belconnen on 12 of June 2016  
Before me (Signature, full name, address and qualification of person before whom the declaration is made) Sally Jones  
Full Name Sally Jones  
Address Unit 1 / 14 Smith Street, Belconnen ACT 2617  
Qualification Permanent employee of the Commonwealth with 7 years continuous service

Note 1 A person who intentionally makes a false statement in a statutory declaration is guilty of an offence, the punishment for which is imprisonment for a term of 4 years — see section 11 of the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959*.  
Note 2 Chapter 2 of the Criminal Code applies to all offences against the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959* — see section 5A of the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959*.

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### Example of a Correct Official Secrets Declaration:

	<b>Australian Government</b> <b>Department of Home Affairs</b>	<b>OFFICIAL</b> <b>Personal Privacy</b>	<b>Official Secrets</b>
For use by Commonwealth employees, contractors, consultants when commencing, terminating, ceasing employment or contract			
<b>Declaration</b>			
I,	John Citizen		
of	6 Residential Ave, Belconnen ACT 2617		
in the State/ Territory of	Australian Capital Territory		
<p>I understand that all official information, including sensitive and classified information, acquired by me in the course of my duties is the property of the Australian Government. I will not publish or communicate any such information to another person in any form either during or after my service in or association with the Australian Government, unless that disclosure is for official purposes.</p> <p><i>Official information</i> is all information created, sent and received as part of the work of the Australian Government. I understand that <i>information</i> includes an opinion, and a report of a conversation.</p> <p>I acknowledge that I must comply with my obligations under the following legislation, and any other relevant legislation relating to official secrecy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Part 5.6 of the <i>Criminal Code Act 1995 (Commonwealth)</i></li><li>• Section 13 of the <i>Public Service Act 1999 (Commonwealth)</i></li><li>• Regulation 2.1 of the <i>Public Service Regulations 1999 (Commonwealth)</i></li><li>• Part 6 of the <i>Australian Border Force Act 2015 (Commonwealth)</i></li></ul> <p>I further understand that any breach of laws regarding the safeguarding of official information is an offence, and may render me liable to criminal prosecution. I also understand that these obligations continue to apply to me after I cease employment with the Australian Government.</p> <p>I also acknowledge that I have a duty to report any contacts from former colleagues who show a suspicious, persistent or unusual interest in my work with the Department of Home Affairs or that of the Australian Government.</p> <p>I hereby certify that all official information/matter that will be/has been acquired by me in the course of my employment with or on behalf of the Australian Government will be or has been returned to an official representative of the Australian Government authorised to receive the information/matter prior to the cessation of such employment or contract</p>			
Dated this	12	06	2016
	Day	Month	Year
	 Signature		
<b>Witness</b>			
	 Signature of Witness		12/06/2016 Date
Sally Jones		Permanent employee of the commonwealth with 7 years continuous service	
Name of Witness		Designation / Position	
Unit 1/14 Smith Street, Belconnen ACT 2617 Address of Witness			
<b>OFFICIAL</b> <b>Personal Privacy</b>			v1.0 - August 2019 page 1 of 1

## **8. Proof of Identity Requirements**

### **Australian Citizens**

If you are born in Australia or hold Australian Citizenship, you must provide the Department with

#### **Category A Document:**

**You must provide one of the following documents:**

- Australian Birth Certificate (front and back)
- Australian Citizenship Certificate (front and back)
- Australian Citizenship by descent extract (front and back)

#### **Category B Document:**

**You must provide one of the following documents:**

- Passport (Australian or foreign)
- Australian driver licence (front and back) or learner permit, or foreign driver licence
- ImmiCard (current or expired)
- If you do not hold one of the above cards you can provide an Australian government issued proof of age card

#### **Category C Document:**

**You must provide two of the following documents:**

- Medicare Card
- ASIC/MSIC
- Centrelink concession card
- Enrolment with the Australian Electoral Commission
- Commonwealth or state/territory government photo identity card
- Australian tertiary student photo identity document
- Consular photo identity card issued by DFAT
- Police Force Officer photo identity card
- Australian Defence Force photo identity card
- DFAT issued Certificate of Identity
- DFAT issued Document of Identity
- DFAT issued United Nations Convention Travel Document
- Firearms licence
- Security Guard/Crowd Control photo licence
- Bank card (numbers MUST be blocked out)
- Credit card (numbers MUST be blocked out)

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- Certified academic transcript from an Australian university
- Foreign government issued documents (e.g. driver licences)
- DVA card (i.e. Gold Card)

### Category D Document:

- High quality digital photograph which is less than 6 months old which meets the Digital Photograph Requirements

### Additional documentation that may be required:

### Category E Document:

**If you have legally changed your name you must provide one of the following:**

- Marriage certificate
- Name change certificate (issued by Births Deaths & Marriages) (should be verified)
- Divorce order
- Revocation of registered relationship certificate
- Decree nisi
- Deed poll document

### Category F Document

**If you were born in Australia after 20/8/1986 you must provide your birth certificate and one of the following:**

- Passport
- Australian Citizenship certificate (front and back)
- One parent's Australian Birth Certificate (front and back)
- One parent's Australian Passport
- One parent's Australian Citizenship Certificate issued before your birth (front and back)

### Category G Document:

**Evidence of current address if address does not appear on another document**

- Statement from financial institution
- Land title notice
- Rental agreement
- Phone or internet bill

### Australian Citizens born overseas

If you were born overseas, you must provide the Department with the following additional document/s:

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- A clear copy of your original birth certificate and certified English translated copy
- If you do not have a birth certificate you must provide an appropriately witnessed Commonwealth Statutory Declaration (you can download a Commonwealth Statutory Declaration form from the Attorney-General's Department ([ag.gov.au](http://ag.gov.au)) detailing the following:
  - Your full name at birth;
  - Your date of birth;
  - Your place of birth;
  - Your parents' names and dates of birth;
  - The reason you do not have a birth certificate.
- Evidence of foreign citizenship held (Foreign birth certificate or Foreign Passport). If you do not have evidence of foreign citizenship please complete a Commonwealth Statutory Declaration form outlining the reason why.

### What if I cannot provide a Required Document?

If you are unable to provide a required document, contact the Pre-employment Screening team via [ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au) to discuss your options.

### Foreign Documents

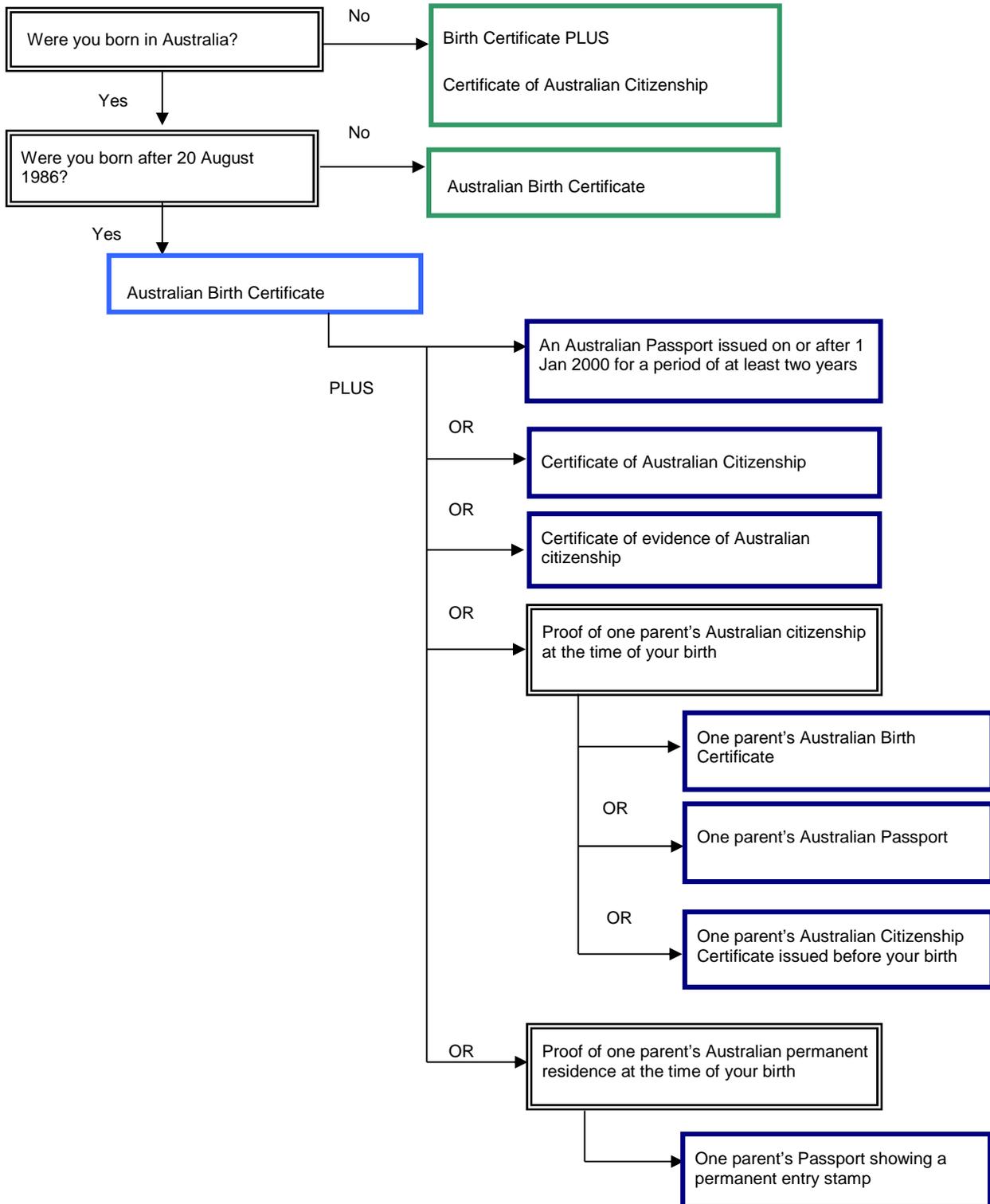
Where a required document is in a language other than English, you must provide a translation of the document from a National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) accredited provider, along with a copy of the original document. For further information see the [NAATI website](#).

### Identity Documents do not need to be Certified

A standard scanned copy or photocopy of your identity documents and translations will suffice, provided the copy is clear and legible. You do not need to provide certified copies of your supporting identity documents.

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**Required Documents – Additional Evidence to Prove Australian Citizenship**





## 9. Digital Photograph Requirements

Each application for an ESC must be accompanied by a high quality digital photograph. The photograph must be no more than 6 months old and show you as you currently appear. Pictures taken on a mobile phone or digital camera are acceptable, provided they meet the requirements below.

The photograph must be an image file (for example, in JPEG format).

### General Requirements

Your photograph must:

- be taken on a plain, light-coloured background (e.g. cream or white)
- have appropriate brightness and contrast showing your skin tones naturally
- have uniform lighting (no shadows across or behind the face)
- be a clear and sharply focused image
- be of a reasonable size and quality (e.g. 800 x 600 pixels or higher).

The photograph must also:

- be taken with a neutral expression and your mouth closed (not laughing or frowning)
- show your shoulders square on (not looking over shoulder)
- show your face looking straight at the camera, not tilted sideways or up or down
- show the edges of your face (hair out of face)
- show your eyes open and clearly visible (nothing obscuring eyes, including hair)
- not show any shadows or 'red eye'
- not show any reflections on glasses or face
- have no ink or other marks
- show no head coverings (except for religious purposes).

### Head Coverings

The photograph must show you without any hat or other head covering. If, however, you wear a head covering for religious reasons, we will accept a photograph of you wearing it, but your facial features from the bottom of the chin to the top of the forehead and both edges of your face must be clearly shown.

### Glasses

It is preferable that you do not wear your glasses in your photo, but you may do so if you wish.

If you do choose to wear glasses:

- they must show your eyes clearly
- there should be no flash reflection off the glasses
- lenses should not be tinted
- heavy framed glasses should not be worn
- frames should not cover any part of your eyes.

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### Examples of an Acceptable Digital Photograph – Style Requirements



not looking at camera  
**Not Acceptable**



Looking direct at camera and  
no head tilt **Acceptable**



face edges not visible  
**Not acceptable**



**Acceptable**

### Example of an Acceptable Digital Photograph – Size and Quality Requirements

As per the example below, the digital photograph you submit must be of a reasonable size and quality (e.g. 800 x 600 pixels or higher).



## 10. Verify documents

The Protective Security Policy Framework (PSPF) – Eligibility and suitability of personnel has a mandatory requirement concerning verification of a person's identity using the Document Verification Service (DVS). DVS checks whether the biographic information on your identity document matches the original record.

**The internet page <https://authors.homeaffairs.gov.au/careers-subsite/Pages/vacancies/verifying-identity-documents.aspx> has guidance on the verification process.**

A section within the ESC Questionnaire asks you to input relevant data to verify some of the required documents. These documents will be listed on the Verify Documents page. Please note that not all the supporting documents can be verified but all the documents must be uploaded.

Each time you verify a document you will receive a 'letter' response, these are:

Y – the details supplied match the issuer record.

N – some or all of the supplied details do not match the issuer's record.

D – the document is invalid or not electronically captured.

S – the request cannot be processed because of a system error issue.

In order to successfully verify your identity documents, you must ensure that the details that you enter match the details on the document. If the document details that you enter cannot be verified, you will need to check your details again, for example a space before or an additional space or character within the name will result in a 'N' or not matched response.

In some cases removing the slashes, spaces or dashes from numbers will result in a 'Y' or matched response. For example if your Document ID was E.C.(2)No.98765 you should enter EC298765.

**Please be aware that should you continue being unsuccessful in verifying your document, in the first instance, you should contact the document issuer for assistance which in some cases may mean gaining a new document. In the second instance, you can seek assistance from the ESC team by emailing [ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au) with a subject heading of DVS Unsuccessful.**

## 11. Frequently Asked Questions

### I hold an OSA, Do I need an ESC?

If you already hold an Organisational Suitability Assessment (OSA) issued by the former Australian Customs and Border Protection Service, you will be deemed to hold an ESC. At any time you may be directed to undertake an ESC rescreen by the Pre-employment Screening team.

### Why am I required to undergo an ESC?

It is the Department's policy that any individual who requires non-public access to the Department's assets (such as its information, systems or premises) as part of their role must first obtain both:

- a granted Employment Suitability Clearance (ESC), and
- a minimum BASELINE security clearance.

This requirement applies to all Department and ABF employees as well as all Senior Executives, personnel from other public service agencies and statutory authorities, consultants and contractors.

## What is the difference between a Security Clearance and an ESC?

The AGSVA security clearance and ESC complement each other. Combined, they provide the Secretary of the Department with confidence that an individual is suitable to be employed by the Department or to be provided with non-public access to its assets. The table below summarises the purpose of, and risk factors examined during, the two clearance processes.

	Security Clearance	Employment Suitability Clearance
Purpose	Provides the Australian Government with assurance that an individual can protect Australian Government security classified resources by assessing whether an individual possesses and demonstrates the following character traits: honesty, trustworthiness, maturity, tolerance, resilience and loyalty.	Provides the community with assurance that there are no risks associated with an individual or their circumstances which may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cast doubt on an individual's ability to support the Department to achieve its mission, or</li> <li>otherwise reduce the confidence the community places in the Department to maintain the integrity and security of Australia's borders.</li> </ul>
Risk Factors Examined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>external loyalties, influences and associations</li> <li>personal relationships and conduct</li> <li>financial considerations</li> <li>alcohol and drug usage</li> <li>criminal history and conduct</li> <li>security attitudes and violations</li> <li>mental health disorders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>associations and conflicts of interest</li> <li>criminal history and/or involvement in criminal or illegal activities</li> <li>compliance with border-related laws</li> <li>drug use</li> <li>compliance with the APS Values, Employment Principles and Code of Conduct</li> <li>dishonesty in the ESC process</li> <li>cumulative impact of multiple risk factors</li> </ul>

## **Can someone else complete / submit my ESC Questionnaire on my behalf?**

Unless you have a need for assistance, it is expected that you will complete and submit your ESC Questionnaire by yourself. This is designed to limit the potential for third parties to submit incorrect information on behalf of an applicant or to provide the applicant with incorrect advice throughout the process, which may have an impact on the outcome of the ESC. If you have received assistance to respond to the ESC Questionnaire, advise the Pre-employment Screening team at the time of submission.

Applicants with a need for assistance may include those who hold mental or physical disabilities and/or those with language or comprehension barriers. To discuss the alternate arrangements available to assist with the completion of the ESC Questionnaire, please contact the Pre-employment Screening team directly at [ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au) or on 1300 243 717 to arrange the appropriate services.

## **Can I manually submit my application for an ESC?**

If you are unable to access a computer or have technical difficulties in accessing ESC Online, please contact the Pre-employment Screening team at [ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:ESC@homeaffairs.gov.au) or 1300 243 717 to discuss your submission options.

## **What happens to my personal information?**

At all times, your personal information will be collected, used, stored and disclosed in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles in Schedule 1 of the *Privacy Act 1988*.

## **What are the possible outcomes of the ESC process?**

Subject to the outcome of any applicable review and appeal mechanisms, there are three possible outcomes which may occur as a result of the employment suitability screening process:

1. A decision that you are suitable to be employed by the Department or provided with non-public access to Departmental assets – which will result in you being granted an ESC.
2. A decision that you are suitable to be employed by the Department or provided with non-public access to Departmental assets, however, there is a risk associated with you or your circumstances which requires ongoing monitoring or management – which will result in you being granted a conditional ESC and being placed on an Aftercare Arrangement.
3. A decision that you are not suitable to be employed by the Department or provided with non-public access to departmental assets – which will result in you being not granted an ESC.

## **What are Aftercare Arrangements?**

Aftercare Arrangements are designed to manage and / or mitigate any risks to the Department or an individual which may be identified during an employment suitability screening process. Aftercare Arrangements may be used as an alternative to the decision maker not granting an ESC in circumstances where risks identified during an employment suitability screening process can be adequately and cost effectively mitigated or managed. Aftercare Arrangements may include, for example, a requirement for you to participate in specific activities, such as reporting contact with particular individuals who may pose some risk to you or the Australian border.

## **Can I refuse to consent to the Department undertaking particular activities?**

## For Official Use Only

The Department collects your personal information and the personal information of third parties associated with you for the purposes of assessing and determining your application for, and ongoing eligibility to maintain, an ESC.

When you undergo a Commonwealth security clearance, you are required by the AGSVA to provide 'general consent' for a variety of checks and inquiries to occur. The consent which you provide during the ESC process is similar to the type of consent you provide to the AGSVA during the security clearance process.

Failure to provide consent or to provide your personal information or the information requested about third parties associated with you will result in the Department being unable to make a determination as to your entitlement to hold or maintain an ESC, and may result in you not being eligible to have non-public access to the Department's assets. An ESC is an essential qualification for working at the Department. Withholding consent would result in the Department not be able to assess your employment suitability to work in the Department.

### **I am under 18 years old do I need consent from my parents to undertake an ESC?**

Yes. Parental consent is required for applicants who are under 18 years old to undertake an ESC.