



SECTION 501 QA CHECKLIST Notice Of Intention To Consider Refusal

All Notices of Intention to Consider Refusal (NOICR) of a visa pertaining to a character decision are to be quality assessed using the checklist below. The checklist should be completed by case officer and checked by supervisor.

Each officer should sign their name to attest that they have personally confirmed that every relevant item on this checklist has been correctly completed for the relevant NOICR.

Client Name:

QUALITY CHECKING ISSUE - NOICR	
Notification and address correct and in accord with s494B and is addressed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last address for service provided to the Minister by the recipient for the purposes of receiving documents; or • Authorised recipient/agent 	Y/N
Notification mode clearly stated and is in accord with applicant's advice	Y/N
Timeframes for response correctly specified	Y/N
Applicant's correct name has been used throughout. <i>As per application form</i>	Y/N
Details of visa and application date are stated correctly (visa by class as per Schedule 1). <i>As indicated on application form</i>	Y/N
Systems checked for any visas in effect and relevant paragraph included	Y/N
If visa applicant is using a migration agent or authorised recipient, details are shown correctly in NOICR	Y/N
All documents listed are relevant and have been named correctly	Y/N
Incoming passenger cards, immigration inspect reports and movements checked, as relevant	Y/N
s. 47E(d)	Y/N
Travel date recorded in Portal (if known), for offshore cases	Y/N
Priority, Location and Interest Category indicated in Portal	Y/N
The most appropriate ground of s501 has been cited	Y/N
Court transcripts requested for significant convictions in Australia	Y/N
s. 47E(d)	Y/N
s. 47E(d)	Y/N
Other relevant departmental systems/files checked	Y/N

Prepared by: Name:

Signature:

Date:

Checked by: Name:

Signature:

Date:



~~OFFICIAL: Sensitive~~

Case referral form

Visa Applicant Character Consideration Unit (VACCU)

IMPORTANT PRE-REFERRAL REQUIREMENTS


- Determine whether your referral falls within the VACCU referral guidelines (s. 22(1)(a)(ii)). Please note that specific arrangements exist for BVE and RRV referrals – refer to [VACCU intranet page for additional information](#).
- Ensure that relevant information on this form is completed and all mandatory documents are attached.
- All questions are mandatory. However, if the:
 - question is not relevant, type 'N/A'.
 - information is unknown, please provide a reason why it is unknown.
- Additional referral procedures and guidance are located in LEGEND for the following:
 - The Controversial Visitor Procedural Information
 - The Foreign Policy Travel Sanctions and Autonomous Travel Sanctions Procedural Information
- Please refer all pre-referral enquiries to the Cancellation Support Helpdesk s. 22(1)(a)(ii) [@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:cas@homeaffairs.gov.au).

Client ID	Type here Client ID
Client TRIM file number	Type here Client ID – TRIM number
IRIS ID	Type here IRIS ID
CCMD Service No (VACCU to complete)	Type here the Service number
VACCU client file (VACCU to complete)	Type in VACCU client file number

Is this an urgent request	Choose an item.
Reasons for the urgency	Click or tap here to enter text.

Visa Applicant's Details:	
Applicant name	SURNAME, First name, Middle name
Known alias	Type here the applicant's known aliases
Type of applicant	Choose type of applicant
Gender	Using drop down, select applicant's gender
Date of birth	Type DOB in this format: dd mmmm yyyy. E.g. 24 April 1967
Country(ies) of citizenship	Type here the applicant's country(ies) of citizenship. Example: United States, Italy
Current location	Using drop, select location of applicant
If applicant is in detention, select detention location	If applicant in detention, select detention centre using drop down
If applicant is onshore, select state or territory	If applicant is onshore or APOD, select applicant's state or territory
Agent details - if applicable	
Migration agent	Type here name and address of migration agent Email of MA Type here the email address of the migration agent
Authorised recipient	Type here name and address of Authorised recipient Email of AR Type here the email address of the Authorised recipient
MA/AR agreed to email contact?	Using drop down, select Yes or No.

**Attach form 956
(TRIM only)
Sample TRIM link**



sample.1.tr5

Drop TRIM link to form 956 here


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Application Details:	
Visa applied for	Type here the visa the applicant's applied for
Criminal declaration	Did the applicant declare their criminal history in the Application form? Select Yes/No
Date of lodgement	Select here the application lodgement date
Date of sending the referral (VACCU to complete)	Select date of referral of this case
Reason for travel (visitors only)	If applicant is offshore, Type here applicant reason for travel to Australia
Proposed travel date	Click or tap to enter a date.

Character Consideration:	
Information	<p><i>Subsection 501(1) of the Act states that the Minister may refuse to grant a visa to a person if the person does not satisfy the Minister that the person passes the character test. Similarly, certain visa subclasses require that non-migrating dependants and eligible New Zealand sponsors satisfy PIC 4001.</i></p> <p><i>Select the relevant ground you believe the applicant/NMD/eligible NZ sponsor may fail the character test under (refer to VACCU intranet page or 501 procedural instruction in LEGEND for further information). Please select the most appropriate.</i></p>
Applicable limb/s	Use drop down to select the limb used in the previous consideration
Latest arrival date (if applicable)	Click or tap to enter a date.
Length of residence in Australia (VACCU to complete)	In years and month, type here the applicant's length of residence in Australia
Number and age of minors	Provide the number and ages of applicant's minors
Other family in Australia	Provide details on applicant's other family members in Australia
Family violence matters	Use drop down to select Yes or No If selected "Yes" above, please provide details: Provide details here re family violence
Non-refoulement obligations	Non-refoulement obligations is the practice of not forcing refugees or asylum seekers to return to a country in which they are liable to be subjected to persecution. Use drop down to select Yes or No
Criminal record(s)	E.g. 14 July 2017 – AFP penal certificate: 1 count of deal property suspected proceed of crime, 1 count of possessing identifiable information – commit/facilitate indictable offence.
Country(ies) of offence	List the country(ies) where criminal offence occurred.
Please select applicable level of case sensitivity	Key sensitivity: Use drop down to select
	Additional sensitivity 1 Use drop down to select
	Additional sensitivity 2: Use drop down to select
Other	Provide additional information if required.

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Other details – Primary applicant	
Previous travel to Australia (VACCU to complete)	Type here information re Previous travel to Australia Drop TRIM link of Movement Records
Previous s501 consideration	Select applicable consideration.
	Select the date of previous consideration, if applicable.
	Use drop down to select the most appropriate limb
All other Schedule 2 requirements met:	Use drop down to select Yes or No
s. 47E(d)	
Applicant agreed to be contacted by email?	Use drop down to select Yes or No If applicant agreed to email contact, please provide applicant's email address: Type in the applicant's email address If applicant did NOT agree to email contact, please provide applicant's postal address: Type in the applicant's postal address in full

Mandatory documents <small>(All documents in a language other than English must be accompanied with an official translation)</small>	
The absence of a required mandatory document may result in the referral being returned. All records must be first saved in TRIM. Attach TRIM links only, not the TRIM reference number.	
Document description	TRIM attachments or comments
Please note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referrals will be returned where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attachments are included in any format other than a TRIM link mandatory documents are not included. When saving an email or document in TRIM, the following naming convention must be followed: <Document name> - <Document date> - <SURNAME> - <First name> - <DOB> - <CID>. Example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFP National Police Certificate - 01/12/2019 – SMITH - George Michael - 01/01/1950 – 1234567899. 	You can drag and drop more than one TRIM link.  Sample 1.tr5
Full disclosure criminal history reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full disclosure criminal history reports with at least a 12 month validity period including all countries applicant has resided in for longer than 12 months over the age of 16 years in the last 10 years. See: Home Affairs website "Character requirements for visas" page and s. 47E NZ applicants: A New Zealand vetting police clearance is required as the Ministry of Justice certificate does not outline pending charges or dispositions for convictions. Applicants should refer to Travelling with a criminal conviction USA applicants: State penal certificates where the offence(s) occurred and each state the applicant has resided in must accompany FBI identification record China applicants: Court dispositions/sentencing remarks 	Drop TRIM link here

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Mandatory documents (All documents in a language other than English must be accompanied with an official translation)	
The absence of a required mandatory document may result in the referral being returned. All records must be first saved in TRIM. Attach TRIM links only, not the TRIM reference number.	
Document description	TRIM attachments or comments
Detailed statement from applicant <i>outlining the nature and circumstances of their conduct/offending. Otherwise, Provide reasons if statement is not provided.</i> Type here reasons for not providing statement.	Drop TRIM link here
Visa application and/or sponsorship forms <i>Including where applicable, Personal particulars for assessment including character assessment (Form 80) and review decisions (AAT/judicial)</i>	Drop TRIM link here

Other documents – Where relevant (All documents in a language other than English must be accompanied with an official translation)	
All records must be first saved in TRIM. Attach TRIM links only. Where a TRIM link is not provided, VACCU will consider no additional document was submitted.	
Document description	Attach TRIM link
Penal clearance waivers <i>If applicable, contact the relevant Post in accordance with the guidelines in the s. 47E and attach the penal clearance waiver. Please also attach a copy of the client's completed Form 80 and Character statutory declaration.</i>	Select relevant option Drop TRIM link here
Court documents and other relevant character material s. 47E(d)	Drop TRIM link here
AVO/VO/DVO are required for family and domestic violence offences. s. 47E(d)	Drop TRIM link here
Protection visa assessment (where applicable) including s36/Dir 75 assessment s. 47E(d)	Select relevant option Drop TRIM link here
Any claims of rehabilitation <i>Undertaken by the applicant need to be supported by documentary evidence as applicable (e.g. probation reports, completion of programmes, community service etc.)</i>	Select relevant option Drop TRIM link here
Evidence to support reason for travel <i>Including invitations to events, medical documentation to support urgent travel requests for compassionate grounds etc.</i>	Select relevant option Drop TRIM link here

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Other documents – Where relevant (All documents in a language other than English must be accompanied with an official translation)

All records must be first saved in TRIM. Attach TRIM links only. Where a TRIM link is not provided, VACCU will consider no additional document was submitted.

Document description	Attach TRIM link
Letters of support <i>Including character references and representations from members of parliament and public.</i> <i>Letters of support would be more useful if they are labelled when saved into TRIM:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Letter from EmployerLetter from Wife etc.	Select relevant option Drop TRIM link here
Other material relevant to a character assessment <i>Such as information relating to ties to Australia, minor children or dependants who may be impacted by the decision.</i> <i>Please attach relevant documents. Examples: passports of minor children or impact statement.</i>	Select relevant option Drop TRIM link here
Copy of advice/information from relevant stakeholders s. 47E(d)	Select relevant option Drop TRIM link here

For Bridging Visa E applications only – If applicable

Refer to BVE Referral Guidelines for information/scenarios regarding supplying disclosable information

Condition 8564	Select Satisfied or Not Satisfied
Section 75(1) affected	Select Yes or No
Detention Review Officers notes signed date	Select a date.
Attach Detention Review Officers document	Drop TRIM links here of DRO document
Start date for the 90 days	Select date for the start of the 90 days.

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Checklist – To complete prior to submitting the referral

Not completing the below checklist may result in the referral being returned.

Action item	Instructions	Select when completed
s. 47E(d)		Choose an item.
s. 47E(d)		Choose an item.

Details of referring Business area

Referring team	Type here name of business area referring the case	
Location of referring team	Use drop down to select Onshore/Offshore Choose an item.	Select state or territory of referring team
Contact officer	Type here name of the contact person for this referral	
Referring STO/Post	Type here name of the referring post STO/Post	
Contact email address	<i>Preferably group mailbox</i> Click or tap here to enter text.	

VACCU will:

- acknowledge referrals once accepted and will advise whether the referral may be streamlined
- return referrals that are missing required information or where information is provided in a format other than TRIM link. Rejected referrals must be resubmitted as VACCU does not retain information of returned referrals.

Please save this form; prior to emailing the form to [s.22\(1\)@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:s.22(1)@homeaffairs.gov.au) or clicking the button.


Click to email form to VACCU

To be completed by VACCU staff only

Other information on offending

Type here other information of offending

s. 47E(d)



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To be completed by delegate only

Outcome

1. The available information indicates that Mr/s SURNAME would not fail the Character Test if formally considered under s501.
2. Having regard to the circumstances of this case, Ministerial Direction 90 and departmental guidelines, formal consideration under s501 by the Minister or delegate is not warranted at this time.
 Issue a warning Letter (tick)
3. Having regard to the circumstances of this case and the available information, a full consideration may be required.
 Please provide the following information: Click or tap here to enter text.
 Please issue a Notice of Intention to Consider Refusal (NOICR) to the applicant
s. 47E(d)

Delegate comments

Delegate comments

s. 47E(d)

Delegate of a Minister administering the *Migration Act 1958*

Delegate signature

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

Follow up outcome where additional information was required

Click or tap here to enter text.

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For information on Staff Support Services please visit MyHR.



Border and operations

s. 22(1)(a)(ii)



Visa applicant character consideration

On this page:

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- [How to refer a visa applicant to VACCU](#)
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The Visa Applicant Character Consideration Unit (VACCU) manages the character consideration of visa applicants. The VACCU is a unit within the National Character Consideration Centre (NCCC).

Determining whether a section 501 assessment is appropriate

The conduct of a non-citizen may fall within the scope of the 'character test' however, due to the serious consequences for the non-citizen, visa refusal under s501 should only be considered where all other possible grounds for refusal have been ruled out.

A visa application should be assessed according to all Schedule 2 criteria before refusal under s501 is considered. Visa integrity concerns, for example where a visa applicant provides fraudulent documentation in relation to a visa application, should be refused on the basis that they are unable to demonstrate that they pass the relevant visa criteria, rather than under s501. PIC4020 provides grounds to refuse the visa based on false or misleading information such as when a person fails to declare their criminal history on their visa application.

How to refer a visa applicant to VACCU

1. Assess whether the visa applicant should be referred to VACCU according to the current [VACCU Character Referral Guidelines](#) (s. 22(1)(a)(ii)). Note that:
 - Separate guidelines and a referral form for Bridging E visa applicants are currently under review – contact a Status Resolution Manager or VACCU for further advice if required.
 - Different policy settings for Resident Return Visa (RRV) applicants are outlined in the Character Procedural Instruction in LEGEND, see [Section 501: The character test, visa refusal and visa cancellation](#).
2. Complete the relevant VACCU referral form (links in the table below). A separate referral to VACCU is required for each individual visa application.

3. Seek relevant information from the visa applicant including:

- overseas penal certificates, good conduct certificates and military certificates
- a detailed personal statement outlining the nature and circumstances of the offending behaviour
- independent documents to support the s501 assessment for example, copies of court documents such as sentencing remarks and court orders
- independent information relating to the applicant's rehabilitation such as prison/parole reports, psychological assessments and evidence of completion of rehabilitation courses
- other relevant information such as character references and documentation to support reasons for travel or other case sensitivities.

Suggested wording to use in a s56 request for information is available at [s56 wording - preparing character cases for referral to VACCU](#) s. 22(1)(a)(ii)). If you have requested that the applicant completes a Form 80 or the Character Statutory Declaration consider applying regulation 2.03AA if the applicant fails to provide the requested documents.

Where there is any doubt about whether an applicant meets the character requirements, penal clearances should be requested from places of residence beyond the last 10 years s. 47E(d) .

4 s. 47E(d)

5. Ensure that all other Schedule 2 requirements continue to be met and that there are no outstanding matte s. 47E(d)

6. The applicant's penal certificate and other relevant information that has been received by mail or fax should be scanned or digitised. Attach all relevant documents as TRIM links where possible, along with the completed VACCU referral form in

an email to s. 22(1) @homeaffairs.gov.au. You must highlight any sensitivities clearly in your email. Do not send the hard copy file.

7. VACCU will triage the referral and will send an acknowledgement if the case has been accepted or return the referral if not. It is recommended that you send the applicant standard wording to advise them that they have been referred to the VACCU for character assessment however, this may not be appropriate in all circumstances, such as sensitive cases.

s. 47E(d)

8. Once VACCU has accepted the case, create a Stream 3 referra s. 47E(d)

Note: should the applicant's circumstances change and they no longer meet Schedule 2, or seek to withdraw their application, you will need to notify VACCU as soon as possible. We will return the case for your further action or finalise the Stream 3 referral as no longer required.

Who to refer

s. 47E(d)

A visa applicant should be referred to VACCU if the following circumstances are present.

Applicant circumstance	Action required
Substantial Criminal Record: Section 501(6)(a)	Refer to Section 501: The character test, visa refusal and visa

a substantial criminal record as defined by s501(7):

- the person has been sentenced to death
- the person has been sentenced to imprisonment for life
- the person has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of 12 months or more (a suspended sentence is considered a prison sentence)
- the person has been sentenced to 2 or more terms of imprisonment, where the total of those terms is 12 months or more
- the person has been acquitted of an offence on the grounds of unsoundness of mind or insanity, and as a result the person has been detained in a facility or institution.
- the person has:
 - been found by a court to not be fit to plead, in relation to an offence
 - the court has nonetheless found that on the evidence available the person committed the offence, and
 - as a result, the person has been detained in a facility or institution.

Immigration Detention related criminal convictions: Sections 501(6)(aa), 501 (6)(ab)

cancellation

Refer to the [VACCU Character Referral Guidelines](#) s. [redacted] 22(1) (a)(ii)) for additional guidance prior to referral.

Refer to VACCU for consideration under s501 of the *Migration Act 1958*, using the [VACCU referral template](#) s. 22(1) (a)(ii) [redacted].

Refer to VACCU for consideration under s501 of the *Migration Act 1958*, using the [VACCU referral template](#) s. [redacted] 22(1) (a)(ii) [redacted].

The applicant has been convicted of an offence that was committed:

- while the applicant was in immigration detention
- during an escape by the person from immigration detention
- after the person escaped from immigration detention but before the person was taken into immigration detention again, or
- the applicant has been convicted of escaping from immigration detention.

Association and membership: Section 501(6)(b)

The Minister reasonably suspects that the applicant has been or is a member of a group or organisation, or has had or has an association with a group, organisation or person and that group, organisation or person has been or is involved in criminal conduct.

Refer to VACCU for consideration under s501 of the *Migration Act 1958*, using the [VACCU referral template](#) s. [REDACTED] 22(1) (a)(ii)).

Note: Evidence must be provided that clearly indicates the nature of the applicant's association with the identified person, group or organisation and the degree, frequency and duration of the association. Failure of this limb of the character test does not require the applicant to have been sympathetic with, supportive of, or involved in the criminal conduct of the group or organisation.

People smuggling, human trafficking, international crimes: (Sections 501(6)(ba)(i)-(ii) and (f))

Refer to [VM-1001-s501-the character test, visa refusal and visa cancellation](#)

Where a person has been charged or indicted with one or more of the following, or there is reasonable suspicion that the applicant has been involved in:

- people smuggling
- people trafficking

Refer to VACCU for consideration under s501 of the *Migration Act 1958*, using the [VACCU referral template](#) s. [redacted] 22(1)(a)(ii)).

War Crimes: Sections 501(6)(ba)(iii) and (6)(f)(i)-(v)

Where a person has been charged or indicted with one or more of the following, or there is reasonable suspicion that the applicant has been involved in:

- crime of genocide
- crime against humanity
- war crime
- crime involving torture or slavery
- crime that is otherwise of serious international concern.

Refer to s. 47E(d) [redacted]

s. 47E(d) [redacted]

Conduct: Section 501(6)(c)

Having regard to either or both of the following to determine if the applicant is not of good character:

- the person's past and present criminal conduct
- the person's past and present general conduct.

Consider advice provided in [Ministerial Direction 90](#).

Refer to the [VACCU Character Referral Guidelines](#) s. [redacted] 22(1)(a)(ii)) for additional guidance prior to referral.

Refer to VACCU for consideration under s501 of the *Migration Act 1958* using the [VACCU referral template](#) s. 22(1)(a)(ii) [redacted]

Domestic and Family violence:

Where a person has committed an act of violence against women or children, or another vulnerable member of society, it is to be considered serious. If a person has been convicted for domestic violence offending or is subject to a relevant order (perpetrator only), they should be referred to VACCU in accordance with the referral guidelines.

Refer to [VM-1001-s501-the character test, visa refusal and visa cancellation](#)

Refer to the [VACCU Character Referral Guidelines](#) s. 22(1)(a)(ii)) for additional guidance prior to referral. Obtain a copy of the relevant domestic violence order to include with the referral.

Unacceptable Risk: Section 501(6)(d)(i) –(ii)

In the event the person were allowed to enter or to remain in Australia, there is a risk that the person would:

- engage in criminal conduct in Australia or
- harass, molest, intimidate or stalk another person in Australia

Consider advice provided in [Ministerial Direction 90](#).

Refer to the [VACCU Character Referral Guidelines](#) s. 22(1)(a)(ii)) for additional guidance prior to referral.

Refer to VACCU for consideration under s501 of the *Migration Act 1958* using the [VACCU referral template](#) s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Unacceptable Risk: Section 501(6)(d)(iii)-(v)

In the event the person were allowed to enter or to remain in Australia, there is a risk that the person would:

- vilify a segment of the Australian community

Refer to s. 47E(d)

- incite discord in the Australian community or in a segment of that community, or
- represent a danger to the Australian community or to a segment of that community, whether by way of being liable to become involved in activities that are disruptive to, or in violence threatening harm to, that community or segment or in any other way.

Sexually based offences involving a child:Section 501(6)(e)

A court in Australia or a foreign country has convicted the applicant of one or more sexually based offences involving a child, or found the applicant guilty, or found a charge proven against the applicant for such an offence.

- A conviction, charge proven or finding of guilt relating to persons under the age of 18 and including but not limited to:
 - child sex offences, child abuse, possession/distribution of child pornography, solicitation or grooming of a minor, incest, indecent dealings with children, and other non-contract carriage offences.

Refer to VACCU for consideration under s501 of the *Migration Act 1958* using the [VACCU referral template](#) s. 22(1)(a)(ii)).

Adverse Security Assessments:Section 501(6)(g)

The applicant has been assessed by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) to be directly or indirectly a risk to security (within the meaning of section 4 of the *Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979*) and PIC 4002 is not a criterion of the visa the applicant has applied for.

Consider advice provided in [Ministerial Direction 90](#).

Refer to VACCU for consideration under s501 of the *Migration Act 1958* using the [VACCU referral template](#) (s. 22(1)(a)(ii)).

Note: Protection visa applicants who have been issued with an adverse security assessment can be refused under section 36(1B) of the Act and do not need to be referred to VACCU.

Interpol notices: Section 501(6)(h)

An Interpol notice in relation to the applicant, from which it is reasonable to infer that the person would present a risk to the Australian community or a segment of that community, is in force.

Consider advice provided in [Ministerial Direction 90](#).

Refer to VACCU for consideration under s501 of the *Migration Act 1958* using the [VACCU referral template](#) (s. 22(1)(a)(ii)).

PIC 4001 assessments

- Eligible New Zealand citizen sponsors who may not satisfy PIC 4001
- Non-migrating dependants who are required to satisfy PIC 4001 where there is evidence to suggest they may not.

Consider advice provided in [Ministerial Direction 90](#).

Refer to VACCU for consideration, using the [VACCU referral template](#) (s. 22(1)(a)(ii)).

PIC 4016 and 4018 and Regulation 1.20KB

Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident or eligible New Zealand citizen sponsors of minor visa

Consider advice provided in PAM3: Div 1.4 - Form 40 sponsorship Protection of children - Sponsors of concern. The NCCC requests that urgent or critical cases are signed off by the PMO or EL1 of

applicants for child, partner and extended eligibility category visas who have:

- a conviction or outstanding charge/s relating to persons under the age of 18 and including but not limited to child sex offences or child abuse, including possession of child pornography
- any conviction for sex offences against an adult that resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (for example, rape, indecent assault) or any outstanding charges for sex offences against an adult
- other criminal convictions that you consider may constitute a compelling reason to believe that the grant of the visa would not be in the best interests of a minor applicant.

the visa processing area. See also [Referral for applications with sponsor of concern \(50KB DOCX\)](#).

You can also use the [Request for comment checklist \(69KB DOCX\)](#).

The VACCU requests that urgent or critical cases are signed off by the PMO or EL1 of the visa processing area.

VACCU referral form tip sheet

VACCU has created a tip sheet and sample of the VACCU referral form to use as a guide when completing the form.

- [VACCU Referral tip sheet](#) [s. 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#))
- [VACCU referral template sample](#) [s. 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)).

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Answers the most common questions about sending referrals to the VACCU.

— Collapse all

Why is VACCU changing the referral form?

The VACCU is introducing a new referral form to address some of the persistent issues presented by relevant stakeholders, and to promote best practice in:

- safeguarding applicant's personal and private information
- complying with the Department's record keeping policy
- removing size limitations, which eliminates the need to send multiple emails per referral.

What is the best way to fill in the form?

The form is designed using MS Word. Where drop-down menus are available, select the most appropriate option from that menu. You can also add notes or create narrative in the free text box. Make sure you are entering information within the designated brackets. It is important to follow the correct format when placing dates and attaching **TRIM links only** for mandatory and supporting documents in the referral form.

What can I do if I have broadband or bandwidth issues that prevent staff from creating TRIM Links?

VACCU recognises that some offshore locations have limited Internet bandwidth and issues with internet connections that prevent staff from creating TRIM Links. To support these offshore locations, VACCU will accept records using TRIM Reference (e.g. s. 22(1)(a)(ii)). To be exempt from sending the TRIM links, overseas posts must meet the following criteria:

- The overseas post must have limited data capacity due to persistent problems with internet connections.
- The overseas post must have an agreement with VACCU to use a TRIM reference in lieu of a TRIM link. We encourage overseas posts with limited bandwidth and internet issues to reach out to VACCU to discuss solutions.
- Staff are to copy and paste the TRIM reference and refrain from hand typing the TRIM reference into the referral form. Experience informs us that manual typing often results in typo errors which can lead to the referrals being returned to business referring areas.

Note: An exemption must be agreed upon with VACCU prior to this process being implemented in your processing area.

On average, how long will it take VACCU to process a referral?

The length of time taken to complete a character assessment will depend on the complexity and circumstances of the case. Incomplete referrals and not providing TRIM links to supporting documents may contribute to further delays in the assessment of a referral. Please ensure the referral form is fully completed before emailing VACCU to avoid the referral being returned to you.

How can I check that the referral was received?

You will receive an auto-generated response as soon as a referral is sent to the VACCU mailbox. This is your record and reference that your referral has been received by VACCU.

Can I send applicant's supporting documents as separate attachments in an email to VACCU?

VACCU will send back supporting documents that are not attached to the referral form. The new referral form is designed to drag and drop TRIM links into up to 4.5MB of data without the need to send a separate email.

Where can I find information on how to refer an application to VACCU for character assessment?

There are two ways in referring an applicant for character assessment, this can be done by:

- using the VACCU referral form template with trim links to mandatory and other supporting documents
- contacting the Cancellation Support Helpdesk for assistance at [s.22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:s.22(1)(a)(ii)@homeaffairs.gov.au)

Why do we need to create a TRIM link?

Trim links are important to safely transmit information and documentation and eliminate the risk of security breaches. They also allow for the information required for the purposes of s501 character assessment to be directly provided to VACCU.

Is there a maximum limit on number of TRIM links that can be attached to each relevant section?

NO, you can attach as many TRIM links as you need to. The only caveat is that TRIM links must be attached directly to the form in the designated section.

Overseas post use DFAT email gateway which limits attachment size to maximum of 5MB per email, will the number of TRIM links included be limited by this?

A single TRIM link is normally 4KB in size, in principle you can attach up to 4.5MB of data to the form. Please refer to the VACCU referral form tip sheet on how to create a TRIM link for information.

On the 'For Bridging Visa applicant only' section, will be it acceptable to leave this unfilled if the case being referred is a non-Bridging visa applicant?

YES, you can skip and leave the BVE section unfilled if this is not relevant to your referral.

What if I cannot provide the mandatory documents?

If mandatory documents cannot be provided, it is important to fill in the relevant field on the referral form as to why the document cannot be provided. Please note that referral will be sent back if information/reason is not adequately provided. If documents have been requested and you are waiting for a response from the applicant or their representative, please ensure you have the documents available prior to referring to VACCU.

Am I able to send a referral to VACCU if the applicant has pending court matters?

If an applicant has pending court matters to be heard, please wait until an outcome becomes available prior to submitting a referral to VACCU. VACCU will consider your referral incomplete if there are pending matters waiting to be settled. Your referral will be returned if it is incomplete.

What do I do if a field on the form is not applicable?

If a section is not applicable, please leave the field blank or type "not applicable" if this is an option to choose. Please ensure no fields on the form are deleted.

What are drop down menus?

Dropdown menus are options given where it is available in the form. This will allow you to select the most relevant information to choose instead of manually typing the information required. Please note that some Dropdown menus have a “not applicable field” for sections that may not potentially apply.

What must I provide in the referral email?

A referral email will need to have the VACCU referral form attached to it. No further attachments are required in your email as mandatory and other supporting documents must be placed in the referral form as TRIM links.

To save time, can I submit the missing document or information only as advised by VACCU without completing a new referral form?

VACCU will not keep and accept an incomplete referral form. If a referral has been returned or rejected because the form has not been properly completed and or mandatory documentations were not initially provided, you must submit a new referral form to VACCU.

Further assistance

The VACCU does not provide pre-referral assessments however, will provide advice on any submitted referrals following a full triage and assessment based on the documents you have provided.

For guidance on character matters, contact the Cancellation Support Helpdesk at [s.22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:s.22(1)(a)(ii)@homeaffairs.gov.au)

Contact

To contact VACCU

Email: s. [REDACTED]@homeaffairs.gov.au
22(1)

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