



Australian Government
Department of Immigration and Citizenship

The following information sheet is produced by the London Contact Centre for clients residing in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

PARTNER MIGRATION OVERVIEW

Partner migration refers to applications for entry to Australia made by the married or de facto spouse, fiancé(e) and interdependent (same-sex) partner of Australian citizens, permanent residents or eligible New Zealand citizens.

An application for a Partner visa should be lodged at the responsible overseas migration office for the country in which the applicant usually resides. For persons residing in the UK or the Republic of Ireland, the responsible office is the Migration Section of the Australian High Commission in London. The information below is intended for persons who will be lodging an application in London.

- **For Detailed Information Guide for Partner Migration**
See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/migrants/family/partner-outside.htm>
- **For Booklet 1 Partner Migration**
See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/booklets/books1.htm>
- **For Form 47SP *Application for Migration to Australia by a Partner***
See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/47sp.pdf>
- **For Form 40SP *Sponsorship for a Partner to Migrate to Australia***
See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/40sp.pdf>
- **For Form 47P *Character Requirements; Penal Clearance Certificates***
See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/47p.pdf>
- **For Form 1071i *Health Requirement for permanent entry to Australia***
See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/1071i.pdf>
- **For Medical Forms 26 and 160 if you are Applying in London**
See: <http://www.uk.embassy.gov.au/lhlh/health.html>
- **For Panel Doctor List for UK and Republic of Ireland**
See: <http://www.uk.embassy.gov.au/lhlh/health.html>

FAQs – FEES AND LODGEMENT PROCEDURES

people our business

Contact Centre, Migration Branch, Australian High Commission, London

Telephone: 09065 508 900 (cost of this service is £1 per minute from BT lines and charges may vary for other providers and mobile phone users)

E-mail: London.cc@dfat.gov.au

- **For charges (fees) and application forms and booklets**
See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/990i.htm>

What You Need to Know if Applying in London

- **Payment by Credit card, Debit card, Postal Order or Bank Cheque.**
- **Lodgement by mail preferred**
- **Use Registered Post (Special Delivery recommended)**

Charges (fees) are adjusted on 1 January and 1 July each year and forms may be amended on 1 March, 1 July or 1 November. Please check immediately before applying that you know the current fee and have the latest version of your application forms.

Credit Cards Only

Payments for all applications lodged in London can be made by credit or debit card (excluding American Express or Diners Cards) or postal order or bank cheque. If you choose to supply payment via bank cheque or postal order it must be made payable to 'Australian High Commission' Note that payment in London is taken in GBP. Foreign currency equivalencies are fixed at 1 January and 1 July each year (they do not fluctuate according to daily exchange rates).

Mail Lodgement Preferred

Most applications processed in London are lodged by mail (see postal address below). We recommend that you call our Contact Centre in advance to clarify whether your personal attendance at any time is necessary.

Our postal address is:

*Migration Branch
Australian High Commission
Strand, London
WC2B 4LA*

Use Registered Mail

We strongly recommend that all clients send their applications by some form of registered mail.

Clients in the UK should include a pre-paid self addressed Special Delivery Silver Pouch for the return of documents. This form of registered mail guarantees next day delivery in most instances and because the envelopes have barcodes, the mail process can be tracked on the Royal Mail website through its Track and Trace facility. This means that you are able to determine for yourself without needing to contact us first whether your item has been delivered to the addressee. Clients who have submitted a substantially large quantity of documents requiring return should enclose an appropriately sized and suitably secure self-addressed envelope or box that has been prepaid for special delivery. A record of the return registration should be kept for tracking purposes.

Clients in the Republic of Ireland should enclose an appropriately sized and suitably secure self-addressed envelope, large enough for the return of original documents. This office will then make separate arrangements for postage of those documents.

Courier Deliveries

If you prefer to use a courier to deliver your application, please note that courier items for the Migration Branch may only be delivered to the Migration Counter between 9:00am to 11:00am weekdays except Public Holidays. Access to the public service counter is located on the Strand side of Australia House. Please instruct your courier service explicitly regarding the time and location requirements to ensure items are not refused delivery.

Public Holidays

The Migration Counter will not be open on public holidays

- **For a list of public holiday dates**

See: <http://www.uk.embassy.gov.au/lh/h/Holidays.html>

FAQS – SPONSORS AND APPLICANTS

Do I include my Children in the Application?

- If your children are already registered as Australian citizens then they do not require visas. As such, while you will mention them in your application as members of your family, they are not applicants with you for a Partner visa. They do not require medicals and they do not need to provide police clearances. They must enter Australia on Australian passports.
- If your children were born outside of Australia, and if one parent was an Australian citizen at the time of their birth, they may be eligible for registration as Australian citizens by descent. If registered as citizens, they would then fall into the above category.
- If you would like to receive further information on Registration of Citizenship by Descent in London, please send an email to: <http://www.immi.gov.au/contacts/forms/europe/> and we will send you information about eligibility and the registration process.
- If your sponsoring partner was not an Australian citizen, but was an Australian permanent resident at the time of your children's birth outside of Australia, then you must include any dependent child intending to migrate with you in your Partner application. If included as an applicant for a Partner visa, the child will need to undergo medicals and, if 16 years of age or older, will need to provide a police clearance.

Does My Sponsor Need to do Health and Character Clearances?

- An Australian citizen sponsor, or Australian permanent resident sponsor who met health and character clearances when obtaining the permanent resident visa, will not need to undertake health or character clearances.
- An eligible New Zealand sponsor is required to undertake health and character clearances as part of the processing of the Partner application.

Can a New Zealand Citizen Partner Sponsor?

- Only a New Zealand citizen who meets the definition of 'eligible New Zealand citizen' may sponsor a Partner for Partner Migration
- This definition is very precise and it is important that you explore your partner's eligibility to sponsor before you apply as your application will be refused if the sponsorship criterion is not satisfied
- The definition of 'eligible New Zealand citizen' is defined in the list of Important Terms at the beginning of Booklet 1 Partner Migration (see previous page for link to the Booklet)
- If you would like additional general information about the status of New Zealand citizens in Australia, please send an email to London.cc@dfat.gov.au and request general information about New Zealand citizens.

FAQs – HEALTH REQUIREMENT

- **For information about the health requirement**
See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/health-requirements/index.htm>

Can My Family Doctor do the Medicals?

No. You must use a designated panel doctor and radiologist. See link on first page.

Do I Need to Prove My Identity to the Doctor?

Yes. Each visa applicant undertaking a medical or radiological examination must present a passport for identity verification. This is the only acceptable identity document.

Who Needs to do the Medicals?

All applicants must meet the health requirement and undertake medicals. Each visa applicant aged 11 years and older will require a medical examination and chest x-ray. Each applicant aged 15 years and older will require a HIV test. Further medical tests or reports may be requested by the Medical Officer of the Commonwealth where these are necessary to determine ability to meet the health requirement.

What About Non-Migrating Children?

If the visa applicant has non-migrating children who are under 18 years of age, or over 18 years of age if still dependent on you, including from a previous relationship they may be required to undertake medical clearances. Your case officer will let you know.

Will Pregnancy Affect My Application?

A pregnant applicant may choose not to be x-rayed until after the birth. This may delay finalisation of the application. Your case officer will liaise with you in this regard.

For What Period Are Medical Results Valid?

Medical results are generally valid for 12 months. In some circumstances, they are valid for a shorter period. Your case officer will inform you if validity is less than 12 months.

Can I do My Medicals In Advance of the Application?

You can choose to do your medicals in advance of your application. This may speed up processing. This remains at your discretion and cost. The costs of medicals are not refunded if your application is refused.

What Should I Tell My Panel Doctor About My Application?

It is very important that your panel doctor is informed that you are applying for a Partner visa and that London is the processing office. You should make sure that this information is written on the front of both forms 26 and 160 for each person doing medicals.

Will my Panel Doctor Return the Medicals to Me?

No. Your panel doctor cannot return the medicals to you. The medical results must be sent directly by the doctor to the London office. We will hold them until you apply.

FAQs – CHARACTER REQUIREMENT

- **For information on The Character Requirement**
See: <http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/character-requirements/index.htm>

Who Needs to Obtain a Clearance?

Each applicant aged 17 years and over must provide police checks for each country (including Australia) in which the applicant has lived during the 10 years immediately before the Partner application is lodged where the time spent in a country was 12 months or more in total (cumulatively) and where the applicant was aged 16 years or over at the time of residence.

How Long Does it Take to Get a Police Clearance?

It takes at least **49 days** to obtain a police clearance for the UK. Make sure you factor this into your planning. For other countries, this process may take several months. We cannot

expedite external clearances and we cannot grant a visa until any mandatory character requirement has been satisfied.

Do I Need to Provide Originals?

Yes. We will retain them on file so you may wish to keep copies for future reference.

Do I Need to Declare Spent Convictions?

Yes. Even if they no longer appear on your police clearance.

FAQs – PREVIOUS TRAVEL

How Do I Get Details of Previous Visits to Australia?

If you no longer have previous passports or if you travelled on an ETA and do not know the relevant details, just provide in answer to this question in the application form approximate dates of visits to the best of your knowledge. Your case officer can check your records. You do not need to contact us separately to try to obtain this information.

FAQs – CERTIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS

Who Can Certify Documents?

Australian Terminology

Practising lawyer

Magistrate

Public notary

Justice of the Peace

Commissioner of Declaration

Position/agency recognised by the law of the country to certify documents

UK

Solicitor

Magistrate

Notary Public

Justice of the Peace

Commissioner for Oaths

Officer of a Court appointed by a Judge to take affidavits

IRELAND

Solicitor

n/a

Notary Public

n/a

Commissioner for Oaths

Peace Commissioner

FAQs – SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

Can I Use Form 888?

Form 888 is intended for use in Australia and if you are obtaining a Statutory Declaration from someone in Australia supporting your claims of a genuine and ongoing partner relationship then this is an appropriate form to use and it should be witnessed by a Justice of the Peace or other authorised person.

If you are obtaining a statement from family and friends in the UK or Ireland, there is no special format that you must use. Some people do use form 888 although it is not strictly designed for use outside Australia. Whatever format the declaration is in, it must be witnessed by a person authorised to certify a document in the UK or Ireland, such as a notary public or commissioner for oaths.

FAQs – ORIGINALS OR COPIES

Originals	police clearances must be original
Notarised copies	birth, marriage and divorce and other key personal documents
Simple copies	rental agreements, bank statements, insurance documents etc.

FAQs – PRESENTATION OF APPLICATION

Please do NOT:

- staple papers or divide into plastic sleeves
- place in large folders
- send photo albums and videos
- send large quantities of original photos or letters
- send phone cards

Please DO:

- divide supporting papers thematically (eg financial; statements; personal documents)
- send a representative selection only of copies of letters and photos if you wish to
- use paper slide clips only
- place application form on top followed by sponsorship form
- attach next key personal documents (marriage and birth certificates etc)
- attach next statutory declarations and notarised supporting statements
- attach balance of supporting documents

FAQs – PROCESSING OF THE APPLICATION

When Will I Have First Contact?

We would normally expect you to be contacted within 10 working days of lodgement of your application. You will know we have received your application when the fee is debited.

Who Will Be My Case Officer?

Your application will be processed by a case officer in our Migration Section. The officer will first assess your application and decide whether additional information is required.

If we need more information from you, your case officer will let you know what it is we need and how quickly we need it. You will be given a deadline. It is important that you observe that deadline.

Your case officer will provide their name, position number, direct telephone number, email and fax addresses.

What is London's Preferred Contact Method?

Our preferred contact method is email. If you nominate an email address at which you agree to be contacted we will communicate by email.

Will We Be Interviewed?

You can expect to be interviewed. Whether an interview is required, and whether this is done in person or by phone is at the discretion of your case officer.

FAQs – PROCESSING TIMES

General Principles

The better prepared an application with completed health and character clearances to hand at the time of lodgement, the faster a decision can be made. Take the time to read the online information and Booklet 1 thoroughly and document your claims properly. Good preparation will allow you to present your claims properly.

How Quickly Can you Decide An Application

It is not always possible to anticipate the processing time in advance. Issues can and do arise in the course of processing which must be resolved before a decision can be made. Each application is considered on its merits and against legal and policy requirements. As a general principle, the better you prepare your application the faster we can reach decision stage.

Statistically, London currently takes up to 12 weeks to grant Spouse (Provisional), Interdependency (Provisional) visas and Prospective Marriage (fiancé) visas.

FAQs – INITIAL ENTRY DATE

Spouse and Interdependency Applicants (not fiancés – see below)

Health and police clearances are valid for 12 months from the date of completion/issue. In some circumstances medicals may be valid for a lesser period (for example, if you are subject to a health undertaking requiring you to report to health authorities on arrival in Australia). Whichever of these clearances expires first will determine the "initial entry date" by which you must have entered Australia.

If you have obtained your health and police clearances so far in advance that they expire during processing, or are likely to expire so soon after decision that the initial entry date would not be viable, it is open to your case officer to require you to obtain new health and police clearances. Your case officer will determine the best course of action during processing.

Prospective Marriage (fiancé) Applicants

It is a legal condition of all Prospective Marriage visas that the visa holder must marry within 9 months of the date of grant of that visa.

You will confirm this by providing written confirmation on official letterhead from an authorised Australian Marriage Celebrant stating the date and venue of marriage and the Celebrant's registration details.

As our processing time for these visas is 4 – 12 weeks, please ensure that you have got your timetable properly worked out before you lodge your application. That is, calculate whether our processing times combined with the "marry within 9 months from visa grant" requirement will put you on the right track for the wedding date you have set.

You take responsibility for the timing of lodgement of your application. We will commence processing your application as soon as you lodge it and we will finalise the application when all requirements are met. We will not keep an application "on hold" because you have lodged it too early. If you do lodge too early, you will need to consider the very real possibility of bringing your wedding date forward.

FAQs – MIGRATION AGENTS

You are not required to use a migration agent, however if you intend to use one you are advised to use a migration agent registered with the Migration Agents Registration Authority (MARA) in Australia and operating in the UK and Ireland:

- **For information about registered migration agents operating in the United Kingdom and Ireland**

See: <http://www.themara.com.au/Online/default.asp>