



Department of
Justice

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Máinnystrie o tha Laa



Guidance for Signatories

Approving AccessNI Applications

3 April 2025

INTRODUCTION

In March 2025 AccessNI enhanced its systems so that **NIDA LOA2** (Northern Ireland Identity Assurance - Level of Assurance 2) **accounts** are required to apply for AccessNI disclosure certificates. This document sets out revised requirements for signatories in Registered, Responsible and Umbrella Bodies subsequently processing applications.

NIDA LOA2 ACCOUNTS

Online government services in Northern Ireland are delivered through the nidirect platform and to apply for an AccessNI check the applicant must first have a NIDA LOA2 account. To have this account the citizen is required to upload relevant identity documents and a digital identity check is performed by nidirect to verify these documents ahead of the NIDA LOA2 account being opened. Many citizens in NI already have NIDA LOA2 accounts (for example if they have recently renewed a driving licence or for COVID certification) and should use these existing accounts rather than creating new NIDA LOA2 accounts.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NAME CHECKING

It should be noted that although sufficient information may be supplied by the citizen to nidirect to verify their current identity and permit the opening of a NIDA LOA2 account – **AccessNI also requires documentation to be viewed by Signatories in completing the application.** (It remains a legal requirement within the disclosure process for Signatories to be satisfied as to the applicant's identity.)

From 3 April 2025 all applicants will be required to upload two identity documents when completing their disclosure application form. This will assist Signatories who are required to review these documents and verify the content against the information provided on the disclosure application form.

Criminal records (convictions, cautions, disposals, police information etc) are stored centrally under the name(s) of the subject at that time. It may be that these records do not include all previous, current, known-by or maiden names of the subject and it is essential that they are now included in the application to AccessNI. This allows for thorough searching of criminal records to take place so as to produce a disclosure certificate that is as accurate as possible. **What appears to be a duplicate step – asking a second time for ID documents – is an attempt to discover and then ensure all names are recorded on the application that may not have been included when the citizen set up their NIDA LOA2 account.**

All **forenames** must be captured, even if the person only uses one. So, if an applicant simply uses the name Bill, Liam or William, but his full set of forenames are William David John, all of these must be included in the application form. Similarly, if a person shortens their forename, for example James to Jim, the name James must be included in the relevant

section of the form. Jim can be inserted into the 'known by' name box. This increases the potential for AccessNI to match the applicant against a criminal record.

The most common reason for a change of surname is marriage where a new wife may take her husband's surname or both parties take each other's name into a new surname (e.g, Smith-Simpson). All surnames used during a person's lifetime must be captured on the application except in those circumstances where someone (for example, through adoption) takes a new surname before 10 years of age. This includes those who may now use an Irish variation of their surname at the time of application, having used a different name at birth, or have changed their name due to conversion to a particular faith, or by deed poll.

Where possible an applicant should upload their birth certificate or another document which confirms their name at birth and date of birth. This may cause some delay in the event that an applicant has to make an application to the General Register Office (NI) for their birth certificate.

Signatories should pay particular attention to an applicant's email addresses as this can provide proof of other names. An applicant's name on the application form is recorded as Ann Brown but the email address for the applicant is AnnJBrown@gmail.com. This could indicate that the applicant has a middle name beginning with the letter J. Or the email address is Ann.Smith@hotmail.com which could indicate that the applicant has, at some stage, used the surname Smith.

When an applicant provides the title Ms or Mrs on an application form but only provides details of one surname, further clarification should be sought by the Signatory to ensure no surnames have been omitted from the application form.

There are special arrangements for transgender applicants. Please refer to the link below before asking an applicant to complete an application form:

[About Criminal Record Checks](#)

Where the applicant is from **Spain** or **Portugal** and a barred list check is required in relation to working or volunteering with children, Signatories must note that Spanish/Portuguese names often have two personal and two family names. These can be written separately or in the case of Spain joined with a Y, or in Portugal with an E. To avoid delays in processing applications, these names must be included on the application form, for example:

Spain	Jesus Maria GONZALEZ LOPEZ
	Jesus Maria GONZALEZ Y LOPEZ

Portugal

Joana Filipa SANTOS CUHNA

Joana Filipa SANTOS E CUHNA

Where an applicant is from **Bulgaria, Greece** or **France** and a barred list check is required in relation to working or volunteering with children, Signatories must note that both parents' names should be provided to AccessNI. Applicants from **France** should also provide a district code if the town of birth is Paris, Lyon or Marseille. This information should be provided to the following mailbox – ani@accessni.gov.uk.

ENHANCED DISCLOSURE APPLICATIONS FOR APPLICANTS UNDER THE AGE OF 16

Enhanced disclosure applications for children under the age of 16 are processed where the role of Fostering, Adoption or Childminding takes place in the family home. Unfortunately, it is not possible for U16s to create a NIDA LOA2 account. The parent or guardian who lives at the same address as the child, can use their NIDA Account to complete the AccessNI disclosure application on behalf of the child.

At step 3 of the application form the parent/guardian should select the box confirming:
I am a Parent/Guardian completing an application for a person under 16 who lives at my address.

By selecting this box, the sections of the application form which populate the parent/guardian's information will be blank to permit the parent or guardian to insert the child's details.

As the AccessNI application has been created using the parent's NIDA LOA2 account the identity of the child under the age of 16 has not been verified. Signatories must ensure relevant identity documents are checked to verify the applicant's identity.

INFORMATIVE

During the application process, Applicants are informed:

"You are now required to upload two identity documents from the following list so that information provided on your application can be verified. To help avoid delays, where possible you should upload your birth certificate issued at the time of your birth (or another suitable document that confirms your name(s) at birth and date of birth) and a second document that contains both your current name and a photographic image of yourself."

Signatories are required to review the two identity documents supplied by Applicants to ensure that they exactly match the application ahead of being countersigned and submitted to AccessNI.

The Applicant chooses two documents from the **List of Acceptable Documents** and uploads them as part of their application – see Annex A.

The application arrives with the Signatory with some fields pre-populated from the Applicant's nidirect account and these cannot be amended. There is an edit facility available to the Signatory to add names that are missing from the application that may appear on the uploaded documents. The Signatory can either send the application back to the Applicant to complete or alternatively, complete it themselves. The Applicant should be advised that their application has been amended accordingly and that the Applicant should update their nidirect NIDA LOA2 account with the additional information - this will avoid a repetition of the mistake in future applications. The Signatory should retain a note that they have amended the application form until they have informed the Applicant.

Responsibility for the accurate provision of all Applicant details on the AccessNI application rests with the registered Signatory.

LIST OF ACCEPTABLE DOCUMENTS

Doc Ref	
1	Original Birth certificate (issued within 12 months of birth) UK, Isle of Man and Channel Islands - including those issued by UK authorities overseas, eg Embassies, High Commissions and HM Forces
3	Certified copy of birth certificate (issued more than 12 months after time of birth) UK, Isle of Man, Channel Islands or Ireland
4	Long form Irish birth certificate (issued at time of registration of birth) Ireland
5	Adoption Certificate UK, Channel Islands or Ireland
6	Passport Any current and valid passport
7	Irish Passport Card Cannot be used with an Irish passport, Current and Valid
8	Current driving licence photocard Full or provision - UK, Isle of Man, Channel Islands or Ireland
9	Current driving licence photocard (full or provisional) All countries outside the UK (excluding Isle of Man and Channel Islands)
10	Current driving licence (full or provisional) - paper version (if issued before March 2000) UK, Isle of Man, Channel Islands and Ireland
11	e-Visa Upload weblink and share code.
12	Immigration document, visa or work permit Issued by a country outside the UK. Valid only for roles whereby the Applicant is living and working outside of the UK. Visa/permit must relate to the country in which the role is based, Current and Valid
13	Electoral ID card Northern Ireland only
14	Marriage / Civil Partnership certificate UK, Channel Islands or Ireland
15	HM Forces ID card UK
16	Firearms licence UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man, Current and Valid
17	Mortgage Statement UK or Ireland, dated within 12 months
18	Financial statement, for example ISA, pension or endowment UK or Ireland, dated within 12 months
19	P45 or P60 statement UK or Channel Islands, dated within 12 months
20	Land and Property Services rates demand Northern Ireland only, dated within 12 months
21	Council tax statement

	UK or Channel Islands, dated within 12 months
22	Credit card statement
	UK or Ireland, dated within 3 months
23	Bank or Building Society statement
	UK, Channel Islands or Ireland, dated within 3 months
24	Utility bill (not mobile phone)
	UK or Ireland, dated within 3 months
25	Benefit statement, for example Child Benefit, Pension etc
	UK, dated within 3 months
26	Official Government/Council Document
	Central or local government, government agency, or local council document giving entitlement, for example from the Department for Work and Pensions, the Employment Service, HMRC, UK and Channel Islands, dated within 3 months
27	EEA National ID card
	Current and Valid
28	SmartPass issued by Translink
	Northern Ireland
29	yLink card issued by Translink
	Northern Ireland
30	Cards carrying the PASS accreditation logo
	UK, Isle of Man and Channel Islands, Current and Valid
31	Letter from head teacher or further education college principal
	UK - for 16 to 19 year olds in full time education - only used in exceptional circumstances if other documents cannot be provided
32	Letter of sponsorship from future employment provider or voluntary organisation
	Non UK only - Valid only for Applicants residing outside UK and Ireland at time of application
33	Exceptional circumstances – Document agreed with AccessNI
	Cannot be used unless advised by AccessNI