



Monique Hawkins
Sent via email

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

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Dear Monique

Thank you for your letter of 29 May to Tim Moss, our Chief Executive, about driving licence applications from EU citizens living in the UK and the broader issues you have raised concerning the process for dealing with these when name discrepancies arise. I have been asked to reply and I apologise for the delay in doing so.

I understand that the individual application you referred to in your letter has now been resolved and a licence issued. While I am pleased that this individual case has been successfully concluded, I understand the wider concerns you have raised and I will take this opportunity to address them.

The DVLA is required to undertake identity and security checks before issuing a driving licence. These safeguards help protect the integrity of the driver licensing system and prevent fraud.

In cases where an applicant's name differs on their identity document to the one shown on their driving licence record or application, we require additional evidence to establish the link between the names. This requirement applies equally to all applicants, regardless of nationality.

Depending on the circumstances, acceptable evidence may include:

- A UK marriage certificate or civil partnership certificate.
- Divorce documentation, including decree nisi, decree absolute, conditional order or final order.
- A gender recognition certificate.
- A deed poll or statutory declaration.

Information on acceptable identity documents can be found at: [Identity documents needed for a driving licence application - GOV.UK](#). This guidance also confirms that applicants must provide additional evidence where their name has changed since their identity document or driving licence was issued.

The issue highlighted by this particular case appears to arise from the way names are presented through immigration status share codes and the source data used to generate them by the Home Office. As you are aware, in some cases the information presented may not reflect an individual's current surname where the name has changed, for example following marriage or for another reason. Where the name provided through a Home Office issued share code differs from the name on a driving licence application or existing driving licence record, the DVLA must request further evidence to verify the connection between those identities before a licence can be issued.

It is important to emphasise that this is not a systemic issue affecting all applicants with immigration status share codes or those with non-UK passports, nor does it indicate a wider failure in the DVLA's processes for dealing with such applications. The vast majority of applications submitted supported by share codes are processed successfully and without the need for additional evidence.

To avoid similar difficulties, applicants whose current name differs from the name shown through their share code should provide either their passport or supporting documentation that links their previous and current names when submitting their application. This enables the necessary checks to be completed without delay.

I can also confirm that we usually only destroy a driving licence where a valid application has been received and a replacement licence can be issued. However, in limited circumstances, we may dispose of a licence where it has been badly damaged, defaced, or otherwise unsuitable for return.

I can assure you that we have reflected on the issues you have identified and I will ensure that the feedback received is considered as part of ongoing work to improve guidance and staff awareness. We will also discuss with Home Office colleagues.

If you still consider a meeting would be helpful I would be more than happy to do so. If you would like a meeting, please contact driverspolicy@dvla.gov.uk and a member of the team will be pleased to assist.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Cude', with a horizontal line underneath.

Andrew Cude
Head of Strategy and Policy

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