



**The following message was received for our website on 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2015**

Changes are being made to the way in which biometric information, including fingerprints and facial images, are being managed from 6 April 2015.

The new rules will mean that anyone registering or naturalising as a British Citizen will need to provide their biometrics as part of their application. Non-EEA nationals applying for a residence card, derivative residence card or permanent residence card will also need to submit their biometrics.

The changes will help align existing legislation and tighten up checks for those applying to stay in the UK. It will also make it easier to verify people's identities, for individuals to prove their status in the UK and for the Home Office to identify those who do not have the right to be in the UK.

### **How to submit biometrics**

An applicant who is applying in the UK will need to attend a Post Office so their biometrics can be taken. This will be set out in their enrolment letter they will receive after they apply.

Those people applying from overseas to become British Citizens will be required to enrol their biometrics at a biometric enrolment centre, such as a Visa Application Centre. Alternatively if they are travelling to the UK they can enrol their biometrics at a UK Post Office.

### **Residence card (biometric format)**

Successful applicants will receive a residence card (RC) in a new biometric format. The cards are similar in design to the biometric residence permit (BRP). They are the size of a credit card, and show a person's personal information e.g. name, date of birth and nationality, status in the UK and a photograph.

Please note: the RC is different to a BRP, which are issued to certain non-EEA nationals who are subject to immigration control. RCs are issued to non-EEA nationals who have a right of residence in the UK under EU law.

### **Retention and usage**

Fingerprint information will normally be retained for up to 10 years. However, where a person is considered to pose a threat to the UK or for those who are permanently settled in the UK, information will be retained for immigration or nationality purposes.

Once an individual becomes a British Citizen their biometric information will be deleted. However, their photographs will be retained until they obtain their first British passport.

Further guidance will be published on the [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK) website when the changes go live on 6 April.