

# IDENTITY CARDS FOR FOREIGN NATIONALS

## GENERAL GUIDANCE - LEVEL 1

### WHAT ARE IDENTITY CARDS FOR FOREIGN NATIONALS?

From **25 November 2008** the UK Border Agency will change the way it issues permission to stay (grants of leave to remain) in the United Kingdom. Identity cards for foreign nationals are a form of residence permit, and will replace the vignettes (or stickers) previously placed in passports. Initially this will only apply to nationals of countries outside the European Economic Area who are granted leave to remain in the United Kingdom as either a student or on the basis of marriage or partnership. More immigration categories will switch from vignettes to cards at a later date.



All applicants aged six or over will be required to give biometrics. These will be scans of all 10 fingerprints and a digital photo. Applicants who are under six will not be required to provide fingerprints. There will be no endorsement in the passport. The grant of leave to stay in the United Kingdom will be issued as a standalone card.

The card is proof of the holder's right to stay, work or study in the United Kingdom. It can also be used as a form of identification (for example, if they wish to open a bank account in the UK). The holder is not required to carry their card at all times, but they must show it at the border when travelling outside the United Kingdom.

Although employers are not legally required to check documents, we recommend that they do so for everyone they wish to employ. It will enable them to establish an excuse against payment of a civil penalty for employing an illegal worker, shows their recruitment process is open and transparent, and ensures their recruitment practices do not discriminate against anyone because of their race.

The identity card for foreign nationals is **not a travel document**. Therefore if the holder travels abroad they must take **both their card and their passport** as evidence that they are entitled to return to the United Kingdom.

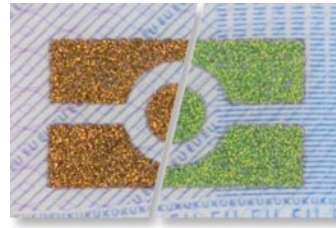
### WHEN WILL CARDS REPLACE VIGNETTES IN PASSPORTS?

The roll-out of cards will be phased according to the immigration category under which the migrant is granted leave to stay in the United Kingdom. Any person who applies for an extension of stay as a student or on the basis of marriage or partnership on or after 25 November 2008 will be required to apply for an identity card for foreign nationals. Migrants granted leave to stay in the United Kingdom under other immigration categories will receive a vignette in their passport. Both vignettes and cards will remain in circulation for the foreseeable future. For up-to-date information on which immigration categories are issued with cards please see the UK Border Agency website at **[www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk)**.



## SECURITY FEATURES

The International Civil Aviation Organisation ‘**chip inside**’ symbol, found on the front of the card above the holder’s image, is printed using Optically Variable Ink (OVI). As the card is tilted, the OVI shifts colour depending on the angle of viewing, whilst displaying a metallic quality.



**Two colour Ultra Violet design** – the angle of the design is different on the front and back.



**Dynaprint** – from one angle, the ‘valid until’ date and the letter ‘U’ are visible; tilting the card replaces these with a photograph of the holder and the letter ‘K’.



**Tactile features** – the back has a raised design incorporating the four national flowers of the UK, seen by shining a light across the card.



The **Card number** is unique.

**Kinegram™** – various designs can be seen as the card is tilted, showing a distinctive colour change and large amount of fine detail.



Physical checks can also be performed on the card. As it is made entirely from polycarbonate, it will have a distinctive sound when flicked, and the holder’s image will always be in grey-scale. The card should not be bent or folded, as this is likely to cause it to break. Contact with water should be avoided to prevent damage to the contact chip.

## **IMMIGRATION CONDITIONS**

The holder's immigration conditions are shown on both the front and the back of the card. Information on the card will also show if the holder is required to report to the police.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

You can obtain further advice on verifying the card's security features by telephoning the UK Border Agency card verification helpline on 0300 123 4699. If you call the helpline when presented with a card they will be able to tell you if the card is valid.

If you find a card that does not belong to you, send it to:

Returns Unit,  
Freepost RRYX-GLYU-GXHZ  
PO Box 163  
Bristol  
BS20 1AB

You can find further information on the UK Border Agency website **[www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk)**