

DNA testing and immigration – what you need to know



Scientific advances in DNA analysis make it easier than ever to establish a relationship between family members, a fact that can play a vital role in immigration cases.

AlphaBiolabs has a long history of working with specialist [immigration solicitors](#) and their clients on DNA testing for immigration. As a result, we are well-versed in what members of the public and legal professionals need to know about DNA testing for this purpose.

In this blog, we discuss the benefits of DNA testing for immigration, which tests are best, and when an applicant might choose a DNA test to support a visa or citizenship application.

Do I need a DNA test for immigration?

The first thing applicants need to know about DNA testing and immigration is that **officials cannot ask for DNA evidence**.

However, if you are invited to submit further evidence, this is often provided as an option and **you can choose to submit the results of a DNA test if you wish to do so**.

This issue was highlighted most recently in 2018, when Home Secretary Sajid Javid apologised to a significant number of immigrants who had been advised that DNA testing was mandatory for certain family visa applications, without any legal basis for such a requirement.

[Home Office DNA policy guidance](#) was later updated, acknowledging that the department did not have the power to make such a request.

While documents such as birth or marriage certificates will usually be enough to prove a relationship, circumstances where DNA tests can be invaluable include:

- If a child is born abroad to UK citizens and parents are seeking citizenship for the child. In this instance, the mother or father may choose to have a **paternity or maternity test** to confirm parentage.
- If a relative plans to move to the UK and they want to submit DNA evidence to confirm a familial relationship (where a UK citizen is sponsoring them for citizenship or a visa), they may decide to have a **complex relationship DNA test** performed.

These types of tests can be used to verify a biological relationship between siblings, grandparents and their grandchildren, nieces and nephews and their uncle(s) or aunt(s), or even tell us the likelihood of two or more people being cousins.

In the past, complex relationship tests could only draw one of two conclusions – whether the subjects were related or unrelated.

However, technological advances mean we are now able to paint a more complete picture of a person's family tree.

For example, if a person is seeking UK citizenship for multiple children, DNA testing would be able to determine which of those children are sons or daughters, or if any the children are in fact more likely to be nieces or nephews of the applicant.

This makes it much more difficult to fool a DNA relationship test for citizenship applications.

Sample collection

Whether you're a member of the public or a specialist immigration lawyer instructing a testing laboratory on your client's behalf, it's important to remember that DNA tests for immigration must meet a certain standard to be provided as evidence.

This includes the requirement for the test to be performed by a Home Office-approved ISO 17025-accredited testing laboratory – like AlphaBiolabs – and for samples to be collected under strict chain of custody conditions.

A DNA test for immigration purposes is performed in the same way as most DNA relationship tests. A cheek (buccal) swab is rubbed on the inside of each donor's cheek to obtain DNA for analysis.

The DNA samples of the individuals are then analysed and compared to determine whether they share enough matching DNA markers (alleles). If they share enough DNA markers, they are likely to be biologically related (e.g. parent and child, aunt/uncle and niece/nephew, full or half-siblings, cousins etc.).

An AlphaBiolabs DNA test can analyse and compare up to 42 DNA markers, for an extremely accurate and conclusive result.

When testing a person in a foreign country, a Home Office-approved laboratory will be well-versed in collecting DNA samples from individuals living abroad.

A sample collection kit is sent to the required foreign location, and an appointment can be arranged via a local GP, medical practice, hospital, or another approved clinic in the applicant's country.

The DNA samples are then collected (both in the UK and abroad) under chain of custody, with the donors required to provide a form of ID, and two passport-sized photos that are signed by the collector at the time the samples are obtained.

How can I order a DNA test for immigration?

Using the very latest scientific methods, we can verify how individuals are related, strengthen immigration applications, and reunite families with their loved ones in the UK.

As a UKAS-accredited testing laboratory, AlphaBiolabs has worked with British Embassies and some of the largest specialist immigration solicitors in the UK for 18 years.

Our DNA immigration tests are recognised and admissible to UK courts, the Ministry of Justice, the UK Visas and Immigration Service and HM Passport Office.

We also offer free sample collection for legal clients at our walk-in centres across the UK and operate alongside a large international network of sample collectors, who work closely with immigration centres, consulates, and embassies worldwide to ensure a fast and efficient service.

Legal clients can [request a quote online](#) today or email testing@alphabiolabs.com for expert advice.

Members of the public looking for immigration DNA testing can also request a quote online, email info@alphabiolabs.com or call 0333 600 1300 to speak to our friendly and knowledgeable Customer Services team.

By Janine Griffiths

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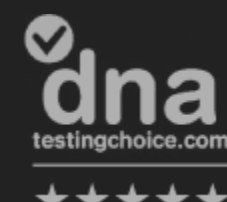
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Established in August 2004,
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 DNA Paternity, Drug and Alcohol
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