



Australian Government
Department of Immigration and Citizenship

Ms Anne MacGregor
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BELGIUM

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Dear Ms MacGregor

Thank you for your email and fax of 22 June 2007 to the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, the Hon Kevin Andrews MP, concerning the documentary requirements for demonstrating good character in applications under the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007*. The Minister has asked me to respond on his behalf.

The *Australian Citizenship Act 2007* (the Act) requires that people aged 18 years or over seeking to become Australian citizens be of good character. It is departmental policy that people aged 16 years and over and under 18 years seeking to become Australian citizens also be of good character.

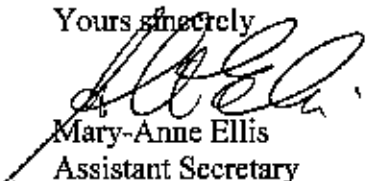
The information on the website has been updated to state that applicants for citizenship by conferral, who have spent 12 months or more overseas after grant of a permanent visa, need to provide overseas penal certificates for those other countries in which they have resided. Residence overseas can be a continuous period or cumulative periods totalling 12 months or more and are only required where the period of stay in any one country exceeds 3 months or more. Only periods spent overseas since the applicant turned 16 years of age will be considered.

However applicants for citizenship by descent or resumption of citizenship who are applying offshore or have spent significant time outside Australia, need to provide a penal certificate for those countries, outside Australia, in which they have resided for the previous 10 years.

The Form 47P, *Character requirements penal clearance certificates*, is not, as you say, specific to citizenship applications as it is also used for visa processing. It is primarily intended as guidance on how to obtain penal certificates for individual countries. Every effort is made to keep it up to date.

Thank you for bringing this matter to the Minister's attention.

Yours sincerely


Mary-Anne Ellis
Assistant Secretary
Citizenship Branch

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