



**AccessNI**

# **Frequently Asked Questions**

October 2024

## Frequently Asked Questions

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## 1. How do I apply to become a Registered, Responsible or Umbrella Body?

If you are an organisation/charity/employer who requires AccessNI disclosure checks to be completed for your staff/volunteers you need to establish the level of disclosure checks required.

Where basic disclosure checks are required for your staff/employees/volunteers, there is no criteria to be met for this level of disclosure check. As an organisation/employer/charity you need to be processing 20 or more checks on an annual basis to be eligible to apply to become a Responsible Body. There is no fee to become registered with AccessNI as a Responsible Body, you will have to pay the relevant fee for processing the AccessNI Basic disclosure checks. The link to apply to become a Responsible Body to process Basic checks has been provided below –

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/accessni-responsible-bodies>

Where standard or enhanced disclosure checks are required for your staff/employees/volunteers, you must ensure there is eligibility for the level of disclosure check required. As an organisation/employer/charity you will need to be processing 20 or more standard/enhanced disclosure checks in total on an annual basis to be eligible to apply to become a Registered Body. There is a one-off registration fee of £195.00 to become a Registered Body, you will also have to pay the relevant fee for processing each Standard and Enhanced disclosure check. The link to apply to become a Registered Body to process Standard and Enhanced checks has been provided below –

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/accessni-registered-bodies>

If you wish to become registered with AccessNI as an Umbrella Body to process disclosure applications for other organisations in addition to disclosure applications for your own staff/employees/volunteers you need to complete the relevant application as detailed above, on each application there will be an option to select Umbrella Body status. There is no additional fee to select Umbrella Body status.

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## 2. How do I apply to become a Countersignatory for a Registered Body or Responsible Body

If your organisation/charity requires an additional Signatory to be added to the **Registered Body account**, please provide the individual with the link below along with the Lead Signatory PIN number –

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/apply-online-become-counter-signatory>

The individual should create a NIDirect account, complete the application above and once completed submit the application. The Lead Signatory should log in to their NIDirect account, check the details provided on the application, verify the applicants information against ID documents and then submit to AccessNI for processing.

Once processed by AccessNI the new Signatory will be provided details of the organisation reference number, their Signatory number and their PIN number.

If your organisation/charity requires an additional Signatory to be added to the **Responsible Body account**, please provide the individual with the link below along with the Lead Signatory PIN number –

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/accessni-responsible-bodies>

The individual should create a NIDirect account, complete the application above and once completed submit the application. The Lead Signatory should log in to their NIDirect account, check the details provided on the application, verify the applicant's information against ID documents and then submit to AccessNI for processing.

Once processed by AccessNI the new Signatory will be provided details of the organisation reference number, their Signatory number and their PIN number.

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### 3. How do I create an NIDirect Account

When making any application to AccessNI whether it is in relation to registration, signatory status or to complete an AccessNI disclosure at any level, the user will be prompted to create or log into an NIDirect account. When creating the account, you must ensure you provide your own email address which you have access to, which will allow you to -

- activate your account,
- reset your password (if required),
- track status of your application (if applying for a disclosure check)
- view your digital disclosure certificate (if applying for a disclosure check).

See the guidance document below:-

[Guidance document to Create a NIDirect account](#)

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### 4. Are NIDirect and AccessNI contact email addresses identical?

The NIDirect log in email address and AccessNI contact email addresses are not connected so are not required to be the same.

- NIDirect log in email – This is the email address you used to create your NIDirect account. This will be used to log into your NIDirect account – you can only create **one** NIDirect account with any individual email address.
- AccessNI contact email – This is used by AccessNI to notify you that an application has been submitted or for any other communication from AccessNI – the same contact email address can be used frequently.

To change your NIDirect account email address – go to the log in page for your NIDirect account and select the option ‘Manage my account details’. Log into the account with your username and password then select email address from text on right hand side of screen. Enter your new email address and confirm it then submit.

An email will be sent to the new email address providing instructions to activate your new email address. You will receive confirmation that your email address has been changed. You can log into your NIDirect account with the new email address, your password will remain the same. Please note that you cannot have two NIDirect accounts using the same email address.

To change your AccessNI contact email address – log into your NIDirect account and at the option ‘Edit Personal Details’ you can change the contact email address.

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## Registered body homepage

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### Registered body homepage

- [View details of applications](#)
- [Manage AccessNI account](#)
- [Edit personal details](#)
- [Track status of applications](#)
- [Manage countersignatories](#)



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## 5. How do I change the Lead Signatory in my organisation

The current Lead Signatory can log into their NIDirect account, at the section entitled ‘Manage countersignatories’ they can promote another registered Signatory to the Lead Signatory position. The current Lead Signatory will default to a Countersignatory for the organisation.

If the Lead Signatory is not available to promote an existing Countersignatory to the Lead Signatory position, an email providing all the details should be sent to AccessNI

at [accessni-compliance@accessni.gov.uk](mailto:accessni-compliance@accessni.gov.uk). The AccessNI Compliance Team will arrange for this to be completed.

If the proposed new Lead Signatory is not registered as a Signatory, they will need to apply to become a Countersignatory (see Question 2). Once the Countersignatory application has been processed, the current Lead Signatory can promote the new Countersignatory to the Lead Signatory position.

If the Lead Signatory is no longer available or has left the organisation, please email the AccessNI Compliance Team at [accessni-compliance@accessni.gov.uk](mailto:accessni-compliance@accessni.gov.uk) who can arrange for an application to add a Countersignatory to be processed and the individual to be promoted to the Lead Signatory position.

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## 6. How do I change organisation details on the NIDirect account

The Lead Signatory is responsible for keeping details of the organisation updated on the NIDirect portal. To change details of the organisation eg address or contact number log into the NIDirect account and select the option 'Manage AccessNI Account' then make the relevant changes/updates.

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### Registered body homepage

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#### Registered body homepage

- [View details of applications](#)
- [Manage AccessNI account](#)
- [Edit personal details](#)
- [Track status of applications](#)
- [Manage countersignatories](#)



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## 7. How do I change personal details on the NIDirect account

The Signatory is responsible for keeping personal details on the NIDirect account up to date. To change name, contact number or email address log into your NIDirect account and at the section entitled 'Edit personal details' update the relevant information.

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## 8. What do I do when I get an Error Message

When completing or processing an application, if you receive an error message, please confirm what stage of the process you have reached and provide a screenshot of the error to enable AccessNI to investigate. Please send details of the error, the error message screenshot and the NIDirect email address of your account to AccessNI to investigate.

[accessni-compliance@accessni.gov.uk](mailto:accessni-compliance@accessni.gov.uk)

**Please note** - Your countersignatory account is to be used for solely countersigning applications on behalf of the organisation. No personal applications can be completed using this account.

If you require a personal application, you need to create another NIDirect account using your personal or a different email address to complete the application.

Unfortunately, regarding password re-sets for NIDirect, AccessNI cannot assist here, these are sent from NIDirect.

NIDirect accounts (NIDA) are owned by NIDirect if you have any queries, you can contact them on the number/email below for advice.

Phone Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 6.00 pm [0300 200 7814](tel:03002007814)

Phone registering for another NIDirect service Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm [0300 200 7868](tel:03002007868)

Email [nida@nidirect.gov.uk](mailto:nida@nidirect.gov.uk)

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## 9. MyAccount is locked – what do I do

Please use the link below to log into your account.

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/log-nidirect-account>

If you are still getting account locked, please reset your password by selecting 'I've forgotten my password'.

After resetting your password, if you are still locked out please email NIDirect at [nida@nidirect.gov.uk](mailto:nida@nidirect.gov.uk) requesting them to unlock your account.

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## 10. I am a Signatory – where can I get the Information Pack

Please find a link to the AccessNI Countersignatory Information Pack which provides a helpful guide on the AccessNI registration and application process. Please select the correct guide for your registered status:-

[AccessNI Countersignatory Information Pack](#)

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## 11. What do I do if I am a Registered Body and wish to become an Umbrella Body

If you are currently registered with AccessNI as a Registered Body and wish to become an Umbrella Body you need to complete the AccessNI Umbrella Body questionnaire as detailed in the link below:-

[AccessNI Umbrella Body documentation](#) (see first document)

Please confirm if you wish to become an open or closed Umbrella Body in the questionnaire.

Before you complete this questionnaire please become familiar with the additional responsibilities of an Umbrella Body by reading the AccessNI circular provided below:-

[AccessNI circular 1/2020 - Change in AccessNI Umbrella Body Arrangements](#)

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## 12. Why is the AccessNI PIN notification/ID validation form so useful

The AccessNI PIN notification/ID validation form is a helpful document and an organisation may wish to consider utilising this document into their processes. The PIN form is a multi-purpose document which –

- provides the applicant with instructions on how to complete the disclosure application.
- allows an organisation to inform applicants of their PIN number.
- provides a section to allow clients and or signatories to confirm what ID documentation has been checked.
- provides an AccessNI list of acceptable ID documents.

The PIN notification/ID validation form is available on our website at the link below and the 'Word' version can be amended to meet the specific needs of an organisation.



The PIN notification/ID validation form should be retained for a period of 90 days following the issue of an AccessNI disclosure certificate.

[PIN notification/ID validation form - Registered Body](#)

[PIN notification/ID validation form - Responsible Body](#)

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### 13. Can I request details from AccessNI on processed applications?

It is not AccessNI policy or within our remit to provide information on disclosure applications processed by a Registered/Responsible Body. It is the Lead Signatory's responsibility to export this information from their NIDirect account, on a monthly basis, using the CSV export facility or by keeping internal spreadsheets.

Please find instructions on how to export information from the AccessNI NIDirect account to excel on page two of the AccessNI Newsletter at the link below:-

[AccessNI Newsletter Issue 22: Autumn 2016](#)

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### 14. Digital or Paper certificates?

When an applicant completes the AccessNI disclosure application form (for any level of disclosure) the default position on the application means a digital disclosure certificate will be issued to the applicant's email address which was used to create the NIDirect account. If an applicant requires a paper certificate they need to select this option on the application form.

Once a digital certificate has been issued, AccessNI cannot issue a paper certificate.

A digital certificate is a verified official document and should be accepted by all employers and organisations.

If a paper certificate is required a new application will need to be completed.

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### 15. Can I get a Certificate reprint?

If a paper certificate is issued to an applicant but it

- does not get delivered by Royal Mail,
- is misplaced/lost by the applicant, or
- gets damaged

a certificate reprint can be provided by AccessNI if

- an email request is sent to the AccessNI mailbox [ani@accessni.gov.uk](mailto:ani@accessni.gov.uk) by the **applicant**.
  - the reprint request is within 90 days of the original certificate being issued.
- There is no fee for a reprinted certificate.

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## 16. How do I get a Basic check?

If you require a Basic disclosure check, there are two options to consider:-

- through a Responsible Body using the link below, a PIN number will be required from the Responsible Body organisation to allow you to complete this application.

[Apply online for a basic check through a Responsible Body](#)

- as an individual using the link below, a PIN number will not be required to complete this application but payment details will be required from the applicant.

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/apply-online-basic-check>

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## 17. What documents are acceptable as identity documents

If you or an employee are applying for any level of an AccessNI disclosure application, identity documentation is required to allow the application to be processed.

Details of acceptable identity documents is provided at the link below:-

[AccessNI identity check guidance for Signatories](#)

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## 18. Are online bank statements acceptable

AccessNI does not permit online bank statements to be accepted as a form of identity as these documents can easily be created using online technology. To ensure no fraudulent documentation is provided online bank statements should be stamped, signed off and dated by a bank official or a paper statement, issued to the applicant by post, should be provided

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## 19. What is Regulated activity with children/adults?

To be eligible for the AccessNI enhanced disclosure with a barred list check an applicant must be working/volunteering in a position of Regulated Activity.

Regulated Activity can be categorised into two areas:-

1. Regulated activity with children which includes:-

Teaching, training, supervising, coaching children on a frequent\* basis (\*once per week on a weekly basis or four times per month); overnight supervision (this only needs to occur on one occasion); providing healthcare; providing personal care; driving a vehicle for children.

2. Regulated activity with adults which includes:-

Providing healthcare; providing personal care; social work; assistance with general household duties (which requires the role holder to have access to an individual money to do their shopping or pay their bills); power of attorney responsibilities; conveying to/from medical or social care appointments due to age or disability issues.

For further information on regulated activity please see the links provided below:-

[Regulated Activity in relation to Children | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](http://health-ni.gov.uk)

[Regulated Activity in relation to Adults | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](http://health-ni.gov.uk)

The definition of Regulated Activity changed in September 2012. Where a position/role met the previous definition of Regulated Activity there is eligibility for an AccessNI enhanced only disclosure with **no** barred list check. Further details of the previous definition are provided in the link below:-

<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/publications/vetting-and-barring-scheme>

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## 20. What countries is an Access Certificate for?

The disclosure certificate required for a position will be determined by the location in which the role takes place. For example, if the teaching role is in Northern Ireland an AccessNI disclosure is required or if the nursing position is in England, a DBS disclosure is required.

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## 21. Can AccessNI include checks on someone from another country?

When recruiting an individual from another country to work or volunteer in a position of Regulated Activity in NI an AccessNI disclosure check can be processed.

The AccessNI disclosure application should be completed in the normal way and the relevant ID documentation check completed as required by our identity checking

guidance as detailed at the link below. When recruiting a non-UK citizen you may find the list of acceptable document on pages 19 and 20 helpful on the guidance document provided at the link below:-

[AccessNI identity check guidance for signatories](#)

If the individual has not lived in the UK before there is unlikely to be any information held on the Police National Computer and if this is the case it would not be helpful to process an AccessNI disclosure application, and you may wish to consider requesting a Certificate of Good Conduct from the individual's country of origin. One further action you may wish to undertake for foreign nationals is a check of the website of the police force in the country of origin, particularly if 'most wanted' details, etc are published there.

See information provided at the link below:-

[Checking job applicants, employees and volunteers](#)

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## 22. What do I do if a message says my PIN number is incorrect?

When applying for an AccessNI disclosure application, if the applicant receives an error message advising that an incorrect PIN number has been provided, please check:-

- has the applicant been provided with the correct PIN number. If an organisation is registered with AccessNI as a Registered Body (to process standard and enhanced disclosures) and as a Responsible Body (to process basic disclosures) they will have two PIN numbers. Make sure the correct PIN number has been provided to the applicant for the level of disclosure they require.
- is the applicant completing the correct application for the level of disclosure check required.

If the above issues have been checked, and the problem continues, please request the applicant to provide a screen shot of the page and email it to AccessNI at [BusinessSupport@accessni.gov.uk](mailto:BusinessSupport@accessni.gov.uk)

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## 23. I don't have a National Insurance number – what do I do?

When completing the disclosure application form, if an applicant does not have a national insurance number they should leave this section blank. The applicant will be offered two options to explain why they have no national insurance number -

- under 16 years of age or

- a non-UK citizen.

If an applicant has lost their national insurance number and do not know it, they should enter XXXXXXXXX at this section of the form.

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