



SGIC

Your Future, Our Mission



The Singapore PR Document Checklist

Every document a permanent residence application needs, ordered by how long each one takes to get. Plus the cross-checks that catch the problems ICA will not tell you about.

START HERE

Collect in the right order, not the obvious one.

Most people gather documents in the order they think of them. Passport first, because it is in the drawer. The birth certificate last, because it is in another country.

That is the wrong way round, and it is the single most common reason a PR application sits unsent for months.

Some documents arrive the same day. Others have to be requested from a government office overseas, and then translated once they arrive. The slowest item on your list sets your start date, so it should be the first thing you do, not the last.

The trap almost everyone falls into

A translation cannot begin until the document exists. If a birth certificate takes six weeks to arrive from overseas and its translation takes another three, that is nine weeks, not six. Two waits, one after the other. Order the overseas documents on day one and the translation clock starts nine weeks earlier.

How the checklist is laid out

Every document has three things marked against it: who needs it, roughly how long it takes to obtain, and whether it is likely to need an official translation.

Then four boxes to tick as you go.

BOX	TICK IT WHEN
☐ Have	The document is in your hands, in a clear scan, and has not expired
☐ Request	You have asked for it and are waiting. Write the date you asked
☐ Translate	It needs an official translation and you have arranged one
☐ Checked	It agrees with your other documents. See the cross-check on page 7

A document you have is not the same as a document that works

Most of the problems a consultant finds are not missing documents. They are documents that exist but disagree with each other, or that have quietly expired. Page 7 is where that gets caught, and it is the part of this checklist worth the most.

DO THESE IN THIS ORDER

What to start today, and what can wait.

Ordered by how long each group takes to obtain. Start at the top on day one, even if you are not applying for months.

START TODAY
 6 to 10 weeks

Anything issued outside Singapore. Birth certificates, marriage certificates, civil records, and confirmations from overseas universities. Request all of them on the same day. These are the only items on the list you genuinely cannot speed up, and everything below can be done while you wait.

AS EACH ARRIVES
 2 to 4 weeks each

Official translations. Any document not in English. This cannot start until the document is in your hands, which is why the group above comes first. Arrange the translator now so there is no gap when the documents land.

WEEK ONE
 1 to 3 weeks

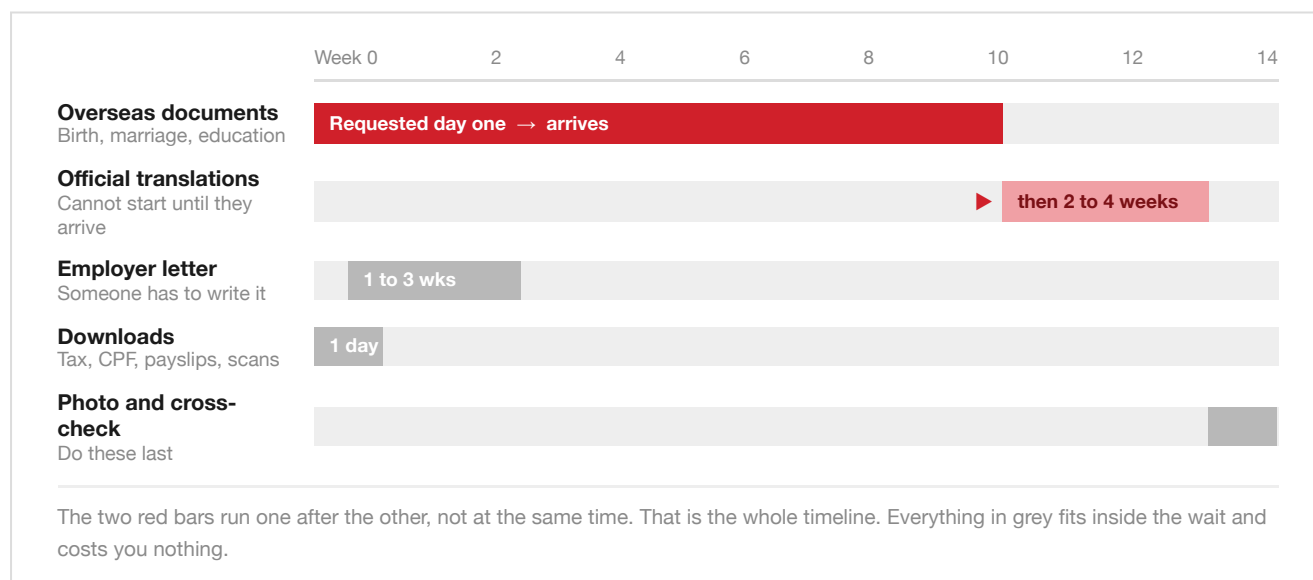
Anything a third party has to write or reissue. An employment letter from your HR department. Replacement education certificates or transcripts. Letters from a previous employer. People are slower than systems, so ask early and chase.

ANY TIME
 Same day

Anything you can download. Tax assessments, CPF contribution history, payslips, bank records, your pass details, passport scans. These take an afternoon. Leave them until the waiting items are moving.

LAST
 Same day

The photograph, and the final read-through. Take the photograph near the end so it is recent, then do the cross-check on page 7 before you submit anything.



If you remember one thing from this page

The overseas documents decide when you can apply. Order them on day one and everything else fits inside the wait. Order them in month three and you are three months behind, however organised the rest of your file is.

GROUP ONE

Identity and status.

Who you are, and what permits you to be here. The overseas items in this group are usually the slowest documents in the whole application.

DOCUMENT	WHO NEEDS IT	LEAD TIME	TRANSLATE	HAVE	REQ	TRANS	CHK
CORE IDENTITY							
Passport Biodata page, plus any pages showing a change of name	Everyone	Same day	No	☐	☐	—	☐
Birth certificate Must show your parents' names. This is the document people most often have to request from overseas	Everyone	6 to 10 wks	Likely	☐	☐	☐	☐
National identity card From your country of citizenship, both sides	Where issued	1 to 4 wks	Likely	☐	☐	☐	☐
Deed poll or change of name record Any legal name change, however long ago	If applicable	2 to 6 wks	Likely	☐	☐	☐	☐
YOUR STATUS IN SINGAPORE							
Current pass Employment Pass, S Pass, LTVP, PEP or ONE Pass. Front and back	Everyone	Same day	No	☐	☐	—	☐
Pass history Every pass you have held here, in order, with dates. Gaps get asked about	Everyone	Same day	No	☐	☐	—	☐
Photograph To the current specification. Take it near the end so it is recent	Everyone	Same day	No	☐	—	—	☐

The name problem, and why it matters more than it sounds

If your name is written differently on any two documents, that has to be explained. Chinese, Malay and Indian names romanised at different times, in different countries, by different clerks, very often are. A middle name on one document and not another. A hyphen that appears and disappears. Dialect spellings on an older certificate. None of it is your fault and all of it has to be accounted for. Check page 7 before you assume your documents agree.

GROUP TWO

Employment and income.

The group that carries most of the weight, and the one where documents most often disagree with each other.

DOCUMENT	WHO NEEDS IT	LEAD TIME	TRANSLATE	HAVE	REQ	TRANS	CHK
CURRENT EMPLOYMENT							
Employment letter On company letterhead, signed. Your job title, the date you started, and your current salary	Employed	1 to 3 wks	No	☐	☐	—	☐
Payslips Recent consecutive months. No gaps in the sequence	Employed	Same day	No	☐	☐	—	☐
Employment contract Including any letter varying your salary or title since you signed it	Employed	Same day	No	☐	☐	—	☐
OFFICIAL INCOME RECORDS							
Income tax Notice of Assessment Recent consecutive years, downloaded from IRAS	Everyone	Same day	No	☐	☐	—	☐
CPF contribution history Where you have contributed. This is the record that dates your employment independently	If applicable	Same day	No	☐	☐	—	☐
PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT							
Letters or certificates of service From earlier employers, especially any period you will be asked to account for	If applicable	2 to 4 wks	Possible	☐	☐	☐	☐
Explanation of any gap Study, caring, redundancy, relocation. Written plainly, with anything that supports it	If applicable	Same day	No	☐	—	—	☐
IF YOU RUN A BUSINESS							
Company registration and your role in it Plus filed accounts or financial statements	Owners	1 to 3 wks	Possible	☐	☐	☐	☐

GROUP THREE

Education, family and sponsorship.

Education records from overseas institutions are slow and easy to forget.
Family documents decide whether the people you want included are actually included.

DOCUMENT	WHO NEEDS IT	LEAD TIME	TRANSLATE	HAVE	REQ	TRANS	CHK
EDUCATION							
Highest qualification certificate Degree, diploma or professional qualification	Everyone	Same day	Likely	☐	☐	☐	☐
Transcript The record of what you studied and when, not just the certificate	Everyone	2 to 6 wks	Likely	☐	☐	☐	☐
Replacement copies If the originals are lost. Overseas institutions are slow, so start this the day you notice	If applicable	6 to 10 wks	Likely	☐	☐	☐	☐
Professional membership or licence Where your work requires one	If applicable	1 to 3 wks	Possible	☐	☐	☐	☐
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY							
Marriage certificate Frequently issued overseas, so treat it as a long-lead item	If married	6 to 10 wks	Likely	☐	☐	☐	☐
Divorce or death certificate For any previous marriage. Leaving one out is treated as an omission, not an oversight	If applicable	6 to 10 wks	Likely	☐	☐	☐	☐
Children's birth certificates One for each child you are including. Must show both parents	With children	6 to 10 wks	Likely	☐	☐	☐	☐
Children's passports and passes Plus school enrolment records where they study here	With children	Same day	No	☐	☐	—	☐
IF YOU ARE APPLYING THROUGH A SPOUSE							
Sponsor's identity documents Their NRIC, and proof of citizenship or PR status	Spouse route	Same day	No	☐	☐	—	☐
Sponsor's income records Employment letter, payslips and tax assessments, same as your	Spouse route	1 to 3 wks	No	☐	☐	—	☐

THE PART MOST PEOPLE SKIP

Do your documents agree with each other?

Having every document is not the same as having a file that holds together. Most of what a consultant actually finds is not a missing document. It is two documents that contradict each other, and nobody noticed.

Work down this page with your file in front of you. Each row is a pair that has to match.

CHECK THAT THIS	AGREES WITH THIS
Your name, exactly as spelled on your passport	Your birth certificate, your certificates, your payslips and your pass. Every romanisation, middle name, hyphen and initial. If any differ, you need a document that links them
The start date on your employment letter	Your CPF contribution history and your earliest payslip with that employer. These come from different systems and are frequently a month or two apart
The salary on your employment letter	Your recent payslips and your tax assessments. Bonuses and allowances make these look different when they are not. Be ready to explain the gap
Your employment dates, all of them in sequence	Your pass history. Any period working without a matching pass, or a pass with no matching employment, will be asked about
Your education dates	Your employment dates. Look for overlaps you cannot explain and gaps you have forgotten about
Your marriage date	Your spouse's pass records and your children's birth certificates. Dates that do not line up need an explanation ready
Your parents' names on your birth certificate	Your children's birth certificates and any family document naming them. Spellings drift across generations and countries
Every address and period of residence you declare	What your pass history and tenancy records actually show

If something does not match

Write down every row that did not match. Do not assume any of them are fine, and do not assume any are fatal. Some need one line of explanation. Others change how the whole file reads and need a document behind them first. Which is which depends on your history and what else in your file points the same way, and that is the judgement this checklist cannot make for you.

What is certain is that an unexplained mismatch is a question you never get to answer, because nobody will ring you to ask.

THE THREE PATTERNS

It is usually not the person.

Most applications do not fail because the person is not good enough. They fail on something in the file. These are the three that come up again and again, and ICA does not tell you which one it was.

One · A form filled in wrongly

Not dishonesty. A date entered in the wrong format. A field left blank because it looked optional. A previous employer omitted because the job lasted four months. An address from years ago that was approximate.

Check for it: read every answer back against the document that proves it, one at a time. Not the whole form at once, and not on the day you submit.

Two · Two documents that show different dates

Your employment letter says March. Your CPF record starts in April. Both are correct, because they record different things. From the outside it reads as an inconsistency, and nobody will ring you to ask.

Check for it: page 7. Every pair on that list, with the documents in front of you.

Three · Something written down that cannot be proved

A job title that is real but does not appear on any document. A responsibility you genuinely hold that is nowhere in writing. A period of study with no transcript. If it is stated, there should be something behind it.

Check for it: go through everything you have written and ask, for each claim, which document in the file supports it. Anything with no answer needs one, or needs rewording.

Why this matters more than it should

An unsuccessful application does not come with a reason. You are told the outcome and nothing else. That is why the checking has to happen before you send, not after: afterwards there is nothing to work from, and applying again without changing anything tends to produce the same result.

WHAT TO DO NOW

The first week decides the timeline.

You do not need to be ready to apply to start. You need to start the things that take longest. Here is the week that saves three months.

Today	List everything that was issued outside Singapore. Your birth certificate, your marriage certificate, your education records, anything civil. That list is your critical path and nothing else on this checklist matters as much.
Today	Check what you already hold. Not whether you think you have it. Open the folder, look at the document, and check it has not expired and is readable. A scan you cannot read is a document you do not have.
Day two	Request every overseas document at once. All of them on the same day, not one at a time as you get to them. They run in parallel and the slowest one sets your date.
Day three	Ask your HR for the employment letter. Job title, start date, current salary, on letterhead, signed. Ask now, because it will sit in somebody's inbox.
Day four	Find a translator and ask what they need. Do not wait for the documents to arrive. Know the cost, the turnaround and the format in advance so the work starts the day they land.
Day five	Download everything instant. Tax assessments, CPF history, payslips, passport and pass scans. An afternoon's work, and it tells you what is genuinely outstanding.
Weekend	Do the cross-check on page 7 with what you have so far. Finding a name mismatch now, while you are already requesting documents, costs you nothing. Finding it in month three costs you the three months.

Then wait, and use the time

After that first week most of the list is out of your hands and moving. What is left is the part worth thinking about properly: whether your profile is ready, not just whether your paperwork is.

WHEN THE LIST IS NOT THE QUESTION

Did anything on page 7 not match?

If you worked through the cross-check and wrote down a row or two that did not line up, that is the conversation worth having. Not the list. The list is the easy part and you now have it.

What the checklist cannot tell you is whether your particular mismatch is routine or serious, which of your gaps matters most, or whether your profile is better served by applying now or by waiting and building it. Those depend on your route, your history and what the rest of your file looks like alongside it.

That part takes someone reading it.

Book a PR Strategy Session

A private conversation with an SGIC consultant about your own profile. Bring the rows from page 7 that did not match, and anything on the list you could not find. What looks fine, what needs attention, and what to do in the next three months.

There is no obligation to purchase. ICA decides every application.

Book a session →

Not ready for that yet?

Start with the free assessment instead. Eight questions about your route, your work history, how long you have been here and what you can prove with documents. A consultant reads the answers and sends a written review on WhatsApp.

assessment.sgimmigrations.com

About this document

Prepared by SG Immigration Consultancy Private Limited as general guidance for people preparing a Singapore permanent residence application. It is not legal advice and it is not a statement of ICA policy. Requirements differ by route and change over time, so confirm the current requirements for your own application before you submit. ICA reviews every application and makes the final decision.