

Rubrics for Evaluating New Applications for BCG Certification
Revised 1 January 2021

Instructions: For each indicator below mark the description that best applies to the work sample. Within each description, pay special attention to the words *and* (all criteria in the description must be met) and *or* (any of the criteria can be met).

INDICATOR ↓	MEETS STANDARDS	PARTIALLY MEETS STANDARDS	DOES NOT MEET STANDARDS	UNDETERMINED
Requirement 2—Development Activities				
DA1. Engagement in development activities Standards 89–90 ¹	The applicant has engaged in a variety of development activities aimed at improving genealogical standards attainment.	The applicant has engaged in development activities aimed at improving genealogical standards attainment but the variety of activities is limited.	The applicant’s activities are not targeted at improving genealogical standards attainment.	Development activities are missing.
Requirement 3— BCG-Supplied Document Work				
DW1. Accuracy of transcription Standards 23, 29, 32	Nearly every word and idiosyncrasy (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, signatures, or marks) is precisely rendered; obsolete letter forms are appropriately recorded; difficult or partially illegible words are transcribed; and transcriber comments are clearly identified.	More than a few words and idiosyncrasies are not precisely rendered or more than a few words are missing; obsolete letter forms are misrendered; some difficult or partially illegible words are not attempted; or transcriber comments are not clearly identified.	Many words and idiosyncrasies are not precisely rendered; many words are missing or not attempted.	The transcription is missing.
DW2. Completeness of transcription Standards 29, 32	All sections of the document are transcribed, including headings, insertions, endorsements, and notations; blots, tears, or other physical flaws affecting legibility or completeness are mentioned.	A small section of the document is omitted; or some significant physical characteristics are overlooked.	A significant section of the document is omitted; or no significant physical characteristics are noted.	The transcription is missing.
DW3. Accuracy of abstract Standards 23–24, 30–32	The abstract retains the document’s original meaning; it quotes any ambiguous words and phrases; and it identifies any editorial comments as the abstractor’s.	The abstract slightly alters or obscures the document’s meaning; or it does not clearly identify editorial comments as the abstractor’s.	The abstract significantly alters or obscures the document’s meaning.	The abstract is missing.

¹ For more information about the standards, see Board for Certification of Genealogists, *Genealogy Standards*, second edition (Nashville, Tennessee: Ancestry.com, 2019).

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DW4. Completeness of abstract Standards 29, 30, 32	All significant information from all parts of the document is reported; boilerplate phrases are excluded; blots, tears, or other physical flaws affecting legibility or completeness are mentioned.	A small part of significant information is omitted; some boilerplate phrases are retained; some significant physical characteristics are overlooked.	A significant amount of information is omitted; many boilerplate phrases are retained; no significant physical characteristics are noted.	The abstract is missing.
DW5. Adequacy of citation Standards 1–6, 32	A complete and accurate citation is provided.	A citation is provided but is inaccurate or incomplete.	No citation is provided.	The work sample is missing.
DW6. Analysis of reliability Standards 35–39, 44	All characteristics and evidence indicating reliability, credibility, and accuracy of information are correctly appraised, including puzzling information or inconsistencies.	A few characteristics or evidence indicating credibility, reliability, and accuracy are poorly appraised or not considered.	Many characteristics or evidence indicating credibility, reliability, and accuracy are poorly appraised or not considered or the analysis of reliability is missing.	The work sample includes no analysis of any type.
DW7. Analysis of background context Standards 12, 24, 41	Analysis of the document’s background considers all significant geographic, political, legal, and historical factors, and recognizes phrases, terms, and other characteristics of the record common to the area, time period, or record type.	Analysis of the document’s background overlooks a few relevant geographic, political, legal, or historical factors, or shows unfamiliarity with a few relevant phrases, terms, or other record characteristics.	Analysis of the document’s background overlooks many relevant geographic, political, legal, or historical factors, or shows unfamiliarity with many relevant phrases, terms, or other record characteristics, or the analysis of background context is missing.	The work sample includes no analysis of any type.
DW8. Analysis of information relevance and soundness of presumptions Standards 42, 45	The analysis identifies all significant information in the document relevant to the research question specified in requirement 3-C; all presumptions are valid.	The analysis overlooks a few significant items of information relevant to the research question; or a presumption is unsound.	The analysis overlooks much relevant information in the document; or several presumptions are unsound; or the analysis of information relevance is missing.	The work sample includes no analysis of any type.
DW9. Analysis of evidence Standards 40, 43	The analysis recognizes all direct, indirect and negative evidence relevant to the research question specified in requirement 3-C.	The analysis overlooks some direct, indirect and negative evidence relevant to the research question.	The analysis overlooks much direct, indirect and negative evidence relevant to the research question or the analysis of evidence is missing.	The work sample includes no analysis of any type.
DW10. Efficiency of research plan Standards 1, 9–16	The research plan identifies logical sources and efficiently prioritizes first steps for the discovery of evidence that will help answer an effectively focused research question; and all sources in the plan are fully identified.	The research plan omits or gives low priority to a logical first step; it proposes a redundant, irrelevant or likely unproductive step; an inadequately focused question reduces efficiency; or some sources mentioned in the plan are not fully identified.	The research plan omits or gives low priority to several logical first steps; the steps are mostly redundant, irrelevant or likely unproductive; one or more unfocused questions prevent efficiency; or many sources mentioned in the plan are not fully identified.	The research plan is missing.

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Requirement 4—Research Report Prepared for Another Person				
RR1. Focus and responsiveness Standards 10 and 74 (bullets 3–5 and 9)	The research question or questions are clearly defined and effectively focused, and the report either fulfills the recipient’s authorization and instructions, or explains why it was not possible.	Some part of the research question or questions is partially unclear or partially unfocused; or the recipient’s authorization or instructions are left partially unfulfilled without explanation.	The research question or questions are unclear or ineffectively focused; or the recipient’s authorization and instructions are left largely unfulfilled without explanation; or the authorization is unclear or not established in advance.	The work sample is not accompanied by a copy of the client’s instructions.
RR2. Extent and efficiency of research Standards 9, 11–18, 19, 41, 58 (bullets 1–2); and if DNA is used, Standards 51 and 53	Research covered sources potentially relevant to the problem and extended to those that might illuminate or challenge other findings in the time allowed; and it proceeded in a logical sequence; and efficient steps were proposed for any continuing investigation.	Research bypassed or gave low priority to a potentially relevant source or overlooked a few sources that might illuminate or challenge other findings in the time allowed; or it included a few redundant or irrelevant steps; or similar problems affected plans for any continuing investigation.	The research bypassed two or more potentially relevant sources that could have been consulted in the time allowed; or it mostly consisted of poorly prioritized, redundant or irrelevant steps; or similar problems affected plans for any continuing investigation.	The report meets most standards but its scope is too narrow to meet the application guide requirement for “in-depth and skillful use of a range of sources.”
RR3. Adequacy of source citations Standards 1–7, 22, 62	Sources are cited fully and consistently, following recommended standards; lapses of any kind are few in number and generally minor in consequence.	Key citations or important details are sometimes missing or inaccurate; or the format or style has numerous inconsistencies.	Many citations are missing, incomplete or inaccurate; or the format or style has little or no consistency.	The report is missing.
RR4. Adequacy of starting-point information Standard 74 (bullet 2)	A clear summary of earlier research or previously known information informs the recipient of the investigation’s starting point.	Earlier research or previously known information is not recapitulated completely or accurately enough to easily remind the recipient of the starting point.	Earlier research or previously known information is not recapitulated at all.	The report is missing.
RR5. Comprehensive-ness and accuracy of reported findings Standards 23–27, 74 (bullets 7–8)	Positive and negative findings are reported accurately and in sufficient detail to avoid repetition of the same searches later; and contents of records and comments about them are clearly distinguished.	Positive and negative findings are reported with occasional lapses in accuracy or detail; or contents of records and comments about them are sometimes indistinguishable.	Many positive or negative findings are not accurately or fully reported; or contents of records and comments about them are mostly indistinguishable.	The report is missing.
RR6. Quality of evidence Standards 35–39, 44, 58 (bullet 3)	Evidence is drawn from reliable sources and information, and the use of any weak evidence is logically defended.	Some evidence is drawn from reliable sources and information, but the high credibility of several items is not recognized, or a few items of low credibility are used without justification.	Much evidence is drawn from unreliable sources and information without any justification.	The report meets most standards but its scope is too narrow to meet the application guide requirement for “in-depth and skillful use of a range of sources.”

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RR7. Correlation and assembly of evidence Standards 40, 42–43, 45–47, 60–61, 64–66; and if DNA is used, Standards 52, 54, and 55	The most significant connections and contradictions in evidence are presented.	A few significant connections or contradictions in evidence are overlooked.	Many points of agreement or disagreement in evidence from multiple sources are not acknowledged; or the conclusion is based on one source, so no correlation of evidence is involved.	The report meets most standards but its scope is too narrow to meet the application guide requirement for “in-depth and skillful use of a range of sources.”
RR8. Resolution of conflicting evidence Standard 48	Conflict resolutions are logical; and additional research to address any unresolved conflicts is proposed.	Conflict resolutions are plausible but not fully clear or persuasive.	Most conflict resolutions are illogical, unclear, or unconvincing; or conflicting evidence is left unresolved and additional research to address unresolved conflicts is not proposed.	The report meets most standards but its scope is too narrow to meet the application guide requirement for “in-depth and skillful use of a range of sources.” <div style="background-color: black; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 2px;">NOT APPLICABLE</div> No conflicting evidence.
RR9. Soundness of conclusions Standards 49–50, 59; and if applicable, Standard 56	All final and intermediate conclusions are consistent with reliable and sufficient evidence.	A final or intermediate conclusion is partially inconsistent with relevant evidence; or a conclusion rests on only partially reliable or only partially sufficient evidence.	A final conclusion or many intermediate conclusions are not consistent with relevant evidence; or a conclusion rests on unreliable or insufficient evidence.	The report meets most standards but its scope is too narrow to meet the application guide requirement for “in-depth and skillful use of a range of sources.”
RR10. Clarity of report Standards 67–70, 74 (bullet 1)	The report’s format and sequence are easy to follow; and the writing throughout is clear, and largely free from grammar, spelling, punctuation, and typographical errors.	The report’s format or sequence is occasionally hard to follow; or writing throughout is sometimes unclear or disorganized or has occasional grammar, spelling, punctuation, or typographical errors.	The report’s format or sequence is confusing; or writing throughout is frequently confusing or disorganized or has many grammar, spelling, punctuation, or typographical errors.	The report is missing.
RR11. Document images and separation safeguards Standards 8, 28, 71, 74 (bullet 10)	All document images exactly reproduce the entire item of interest; each one bears a complete source citation and is cross-referenced in the report; and safeguards protect other report parts from separation or loss.	All document images exactly reproduce the entire item of interest; a few images lack a complete source citation or are not cross-referenced in the report; or safeguards do not protect other report parts from separation or loss.	Several document images exclude part of the item of interest, or one or more appear to have been inappropriately altered; or many images lack complete source citations.	The report is missing. <div style="background-color: black; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 2px;">NOT APPLICABLE</div> Document images were not supplied to the client.
RR12. Respect for privacy Code of Ethics, “To protect the client,” bullet 10; and if DNA is used, Code of Ethics, “To protect people who provide DNA,” bullet 2	The report includes written permission from <i>all</i> of the following individuals: (1) the client and (2) living owners of DNA match lists referenced in the report.	The report includes written permission from <i>most</i> of the following individuals: (1) the client and (2) living owners of DNA match lists referenced in the report.	The report omits written permission from <i>many</i> of the following individuals: (1) the client and (2) living owners of DNA match lists referenced in the report.	The report is missing.
	See code as revised at <i>Board for Certification of Genealogists</i> > Ethics and Standards > Genealogist’s Code of Ethics (https://bcgcertification.org/ethics-standards/code/).			

INDICATOR ↓	MEETS STANDARDS	PARTIALLY MEETS STANDARDS	DOES NOT MEET STANDARDS	UNDETERMINED
Requirement 5—Case Study: Conflicting, Indirect, or Negative Evidence				
CS1. Extent of research Standards 12, 14, 17, 19, 41, 58 (bullets 1–2); and if DNA is used, Standards 51 and 53	The research is broadened beyond the person of interest to include family members or associates or same-surname individuals to a degree necessary for the problem; it extends to sources that might illuminate or challenge other findings; and it covers all relevant jurisdictions and all potentially relevant sources appropriate for the research question.	The research extends beyond the person of greatest interest but overlooks some relevant individuals, disregards some sources that might illuminate or challenge other findings, or bypasses a relevant jurisdiction or a potentially relevant source appropriate for the problem.	The research focuses largely on one person; or it disregards many sources that might illuminate or challenge other findings; or it overlooks several relevant jurisdictions or two or more potentially relevant sources appropriate for the problem.	The case study meets most standards but does not fulfill the application guide requirement for a problem of relationship or identity that cannot be solved with uncontested direct evidence.
CS2. Adequacy of source citations Standards 1–8, 22, 62	Sources are cited fully and consistently, following recommended standards; lapses of any kind are few in number and generally minor in consequence.	Key citations or important details are sometimes missing or inaccurate; or the format or style has numerous inconsistencies.	Many citations are missing, incomplete or inaccurate; or the format or style has little or no consistency.	The case study meets most standards but does not fulfill the application guide requirement for a problem of relationship or identity that cannot be solved with uncontested direct evidence.
CS3. Quality of evidence Standards 35–39, 44, 58 (bullet 3)	Evidence is drawn from reliable sources and information, and the use of any weak evidence is logically defended.	Some evidence is drawn from reliable sources and information, but the high credibility of several items is not recognized, or a few items of low credibility are used without justification.	Much evidence is drawn from unreliable sources and information without any justification.	The case study meets most standards but does not fulfill the application guide requirement for a problem of relationship or identity that cannot be solved with uncontested direct evidence.
CS4. Correlation and assembly of evidence Standards 40, 42–43, 45–47, 60–61, 64–66; and if DNA is used, Standards 52, 54, and 55	The most significant connections and contradictions in evidence are presented; and any conflicting evidence is presented fully and accurately.	A few significant connections or contradictions in evidence are overlooked.	Many points of agreement or disagreement in evidence are not acknowledged; or the conclusion is based on one source, so no correlation is involved; or contradictory evidence is omitted or presented inaccurately.	The case study meets most standards but does not fulfill the application guide requirement for a problem of relationship or identity that cannot be solved with uncontested direct evidence.
CS5. Resolution of conflicting evidence Standard 48	Conflict resolutions are logical.	Conflict resolutions are plausible but not fully clear or persuasive.	Conflicting evidence is left unresolved; or most conflict resolutions are illogical, unclear or unconvincing.	The case study meets most standards but does not fulfill the application guide requirement for a problem of relationship or identity that cannot be solved with uncontested direct evidence. <div style="background-color: black; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 2px;">NOT APPLICABLE</div> No conflicting evidence.

INDICATOR ↓	MEETS STANDARDS	PARTIALLY MEETS STANDARDS	DOES NOT MEET STANDARDS	UNDETERMINED
CS6. Soundness of conclusions Standards 49–50, 59; and if applicable, Standard 56	The final conclusion and all intermediate conclusions are consistent with reliable and sufficient evidence.	The final conclusion or an intermediate conclusion is partially inconsistent with relevant evidence; or a conclusion rests on only partially reliable or only partially sufficient evidence.	The final conclusion or many intermediate conclusions are not consistent with relevant evidence; or a conclusion is based on unreliable or insufficient evidence.	The case study meets most standards but does not fulfill the application guide requirement for a problem of relationship or identity that cannot be solved with uncontested direct evidence.
CS7. Clarity of writing Standards 67–71	Writing throughout the project is clear, organized, and largely free from grammar, spelling, punctuation, and typographical errors.	Writing throughout the project is sometimes unclear or disorganized or has occasional grammar, spelling, punctuation, or typographical errors.	Writing throughout the project is frequently confusing or disorganized or has many grammar, spelling, punctuation, or typographical errors.	The case study meets most standards but does not fulfill the application guide requirement for a problem of relationship or identity that cannot be solved with uncontested direct evidence.
CS8. Respect for privacy If DNA is used, Code of Ethics, “To protect people who provide DNA,” bullet 2	The case study includes written permission from all living owners of DNA match lists referenced in the case study. See code as revised at <i>Board for Certification of Genealogists</i> > Ethics and Standards > Genealogist’s Code of Ethics (https://bcgcertification.org/ethics-standards/code/).	The case study includes written permission from <i>most</i> living owners of DNA match lists referenced in the case study.	The case study omits written permission from <i>many</i> living owners of DNA match lists referenced in the case study.	NOT APPLICABLE The case study does not include living owners of DNA match lists or the study does not use DNA.
Requirement 6—Kinship-Determination Project				
KD1. Extent of research Standards 12, 14, 17, 19, 41, 58 (bullets 1–2); and if DNA is used, Standards 51 and 53	The research underlying all parent-child relationships in the project is appropriately broad for reliable kinship determination; it reaches beyond the person or sources of most-direct impact in search of information that might illuminate or challenge other findings, and it covers all potentially relevant sources appropriate for each circumstance.	The research underlying one kinship determination is not appropriately broadened beyond one person or a few sources; or it overlooks a relevant jurisdiction, or a potentially relevant source appropriate for the circumstance.	The research underlying two or more kinship determinations in the project is not appropriately broadened beyond a few sources; or it overlooks several jurisdictions, or two or more potentially relevant sources appropriate for the circumstance.	The kinship-determination project is missing.
KD2. Adequacy of source citations Standards 1–8, 22, 62	Sources are cited fully and consistently, following recommended standards; lapses of any kind are few in number and generally minor in consequence.	Key citations or important details are sometimes missing or inaccurate; or the format or style has numerous inconsistencies.	Many citations are missing, incomplete or inaccurate; or the format or style has little or no consistency.	The kinship-determination project is missing.

INDICATOR ↓	MEETS STANDARDS	PARTIALLY MEETS STANDARDS	DOES NOT MEET STANDARDS	UNDETERMINED
KD3. Quality of evidence Standards 35–39; 44; 58 (bullet 3)	Evidence is drawn from reliable sources and information, and the use of any weak evidence is logically defended.	Some evidence is drawn from reliable sources and information, but the high credibility of several items is not recognized, or a few items of low credibility are used without justification.	Much evidence is drawn from unreliable sources and information without any justification.	The kinship-determination project is missing.
KD4. Correlation and assembly of evidence Standards 40, 42–43, 45–47, 60–61, 64–66; and if DNA is used, Standards 52, 54, and 55	The most significant connections and contradictions in evidence pertaining to kinship determinations are presented; and any conflicting evidence is presented fully and accurately.	A few significant connections and contradictions in evidence are overlooked.	Many points of agreement or disagreement in evidence are not acknowledged; or the conclusion is based on one source, so no correlation is involved; or contradictory evidence is omitted or presented inaccurately.	The kinship-determination project is missing.
KD5. Resolution of conflicting evidence Standard 48	Conflict resolutions are logical.	Conflict resolutions are plausible but not fully clear or persuasive.	Conflicting evidence is left unresolved; or most conflict resolutions are illogical, unclear, or unconvincing.	The kinship-determination project is missing. <div style="text-align: center;">NOT APPLICABLE</div> No conflicting evidence.
KD6. Soundness of conclusions Standards 49–50, 59; and if applicable, Standard 56	All kinship determinations are consistent with reliable and sufficient evidence.	A kinship determination is partially inconsistent with relevant evidence, or rests on only partially reliable or only partially sufficient evidence.	Two or more kinship determinations are not consistent with relevant evidence, or rest on unreliable or insufficient evidence.	The kinship-determination project is missing.
KD7. Clarity of writing Standards 67–71	Writing throughout the project is clear, organized, and largely free from grammar, spelling, punctuation, and typographical errors.	Writing throughout the project is sometimes unclear or disorganized or has occasional grammar, spelling, punctuation, or typographical errors.	Writing throughout the project is frequently confusing or disorganized or has many grammar, spelling, punctuation, or typographical errors.	The kinship-determination project is missing.
KD8. Biographical information Standard 73	Biographical information places all couples in the project in their respective historical, community, religious, and economic contexts.	Biographical information for some couples in the project is superficial or missing.	Biographical information for all couples in the project is superficial or missing.	The kinship-determination project is missing.
KD9. Format Standard 72	The project closely follows a format that is generally accepted in the field; any deviations or inconsistencies are few in number.	The project follows a format that is generally accepted in the field but contains many deviations or inconsistencies.	The project uses a format that is not generally accepted in the field.	The kinship-determination project is missing.
KD10. Respect for privacy If DNA is used, Code of Ethics, “To protect people who provide DNA,” bullet 2	The project includes written permission from <i>all</i> living owners of DNA match lists referenced in the project. See code as revised at <i>Board for Certification of Genealogists</i> > Ethics and Standards > Genealogist’s Code of Ethics (https://bcgcertification.org/ethics-standards/code/).	The project includes written permission from <i>most</i> living owners of DNA match lists referenced in the project.	The project omits written permission from <i>most</i> living owners of DNA match lists referenced in the project.	NOT APPLICABLE The project does not include living owners of DNA match lists or the project does not use DNA.

Overall Evaluation		
	<i>SUFFICIENT FOR CERTIFICATION</i>	<i>INSUFFICIENT FOR CERTIFICATION</i>
Overall evaluation	The applicant’s work samples demonstrate most documenting, research, and writing standards, and any partially met or unmet standards are easily remediable.	The applicant’s work samples do not demonstrate most documenting, research, and writing standards; <i>or</i> the applicant’s work samples demonstrate most standards, but at least one partially met or unmet standard is not easily remediable; <i>or</i> the applicant did not follow <i>Application Guide</i> directions closely enough to provide the evidence needed to evaluate many indicators.