

# Records for Multicultural groups



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Research Guide to records for multicultural groups  
at Queensland State Archives

Queensland State Archives (QSA) is the official repository for Queensland Government records selected for permanent retention because of their continuing value. The archived public records are from state government departments, state courts, local government authorities and statutory authorities. The records are in our facility at [Runcorn, Brisbane](#), and open records are available for viewing in the Reading Room, free-of-charge.

Records about people with multicultural backgrounds can be found throughout the collections at Queensland State Archives. The search process to find them will depend partly on whether you are searching for an individual or for more general information about a particular ethnic group.

The main finding aid for records held at QSA is the [Queensland State Archives' online catalogue](#) (known as ArchivesSearch).

The following citation abbreviations are used throughout our catalogue:

ITM	QSA Item (describes the item)
PR	Physical Representation (generally the original or microfilm copy)
DR	Digital Representation (for a digital image)
S	Series ID (for a series of records)
A	Agency ID (for the creating or responsible agency).

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that our catalogue contains images, names and voices of people who have died.**

### Immigration records

Search the QSA [online Immigration indexes](#). If an [online QSA index](#) is available, we recommend researchers search this. The content of online indexes has been sourced directly from original records. Digitised copies of many original registers and indexes are also available in the [QSA catalogue](#), and digitised copies of some microfilmed original records are available on Reading Room computers.

For further information refer to the [Research guide to Immigration records](#).

### Naturalisation records

QSA holds records of early naturalisations in Queensland. Note: People from the British Isles did not need to be naturalized.

For naturalisations until 1908, search the QSA online index [Naturalisations 1851-1908](#) available under the *Courts* heading. After 1908, consult with the National Archives of Australia.

### Land records

Land records include leases and freehold purchases. These records may confirm that a person was naturalised when the naturalisation record cannot be found.

For further information refer to the [Research guide to Land Tenure records](#).

### Electoral rolls

One of the requirements to register to vote was that the individual be either British or Australian born or be a naturalised subject. Electoral rolls can give proof of naturalisation if the naturalisation record is not found. When using electoral rolls, remember that enrolling to vote was not compulsory until 1914, and women were not allowed to enrol until 1905.

For further information refer to the [Research Guide to State electoral rolls](#).

### School records

School admission registers can be used to provide proof of residence at a particular place at a particular time. The registers generally give the child's date of birth, parent's or guardian's name, address and occupation, the date the child commenced at the school and the date of leaving.

Teacher staff records including pay records, annual statistical returns and staff cards contain detailed information about the careers of government teachers.

For further information refer to the [Research Guide to School records](#).

### Will and intestacy files

Will and intestacy files may yield a death certificate as well as information about other family members and friends, both in Queensland and elsewhere. Check the registers to both wills and intestacy files, regardless of whether or not there may have been a will. The registers and files for intestacies and wills are arranged by Supreme Court District (Southern, Central and Northern).

For further information refer to the [Research Guide to Will and Intestacy records](#).

### Aliens or non-British subjects

Registers of non-British subjects and related records were sometimes kept by various agencies including the Police and Courts of Petty Sessions. During wartime, those classified as 'enemy aliens' may have been registered and interned, however records and registers were also kept at other times. They may be general lists or may refer specifically to matters such as applications to hold land.

Search the QSA online [Index to coloured labour and Asiatic aliens in Queensland 1913](#).

Records held at [National Archives of Australia](#) may also be relevant for your research.

### Benevolent and mental asylums

A person may have been an inmate of a benevolent or mental asylum for many reasons including not being able to support him or herself, epilepsy or post-natal depression. Some records are subject to restricted access periods or lengthy closures. Ask the Archivist on duty about the process for accessing closed files.

For further information refer to the [Research Guide to Mental Asylum](#).

### Cemetery records

These records can provide confirmation of the date of death and also give clues to other family members.

For further information refer to the [Research Guide to Cemetery records](#).

### Company and firm records

QSA does not hold actual business records for companies and firms. However, the records held at QSA can provide information about the people involved in the business as well as details of the company or firm. Search the QSA online [Index to companies 1863-1959](#) available under the *Business* heading.

For further information refer to the [Research Guide to Company records](#), [Research Guide to Firms](#), and [Research Guide to Insolvency and liquidation records](#).

### Court and police records

These records can be used to research criminal, civil and other matters. Court and police records include information about hotel licenses, inquests, child maintenance, divorce cases, registration of firms, missing persons, and murders.

For further information refer to the [Research Guide to Court records](#) and [Research Guide to Police Gazettes](#).

### Deed poll (name change) records

In the past, a name could be legitimately changed and there was no legal requirement to lodge a deed poll with the Supreme Court of Queensland. As a general rule, a person was allowed to change both their given name and surname/family/last name without taking any formal legal steps – a valid change was affected by the consistent use of an alternative name. The records held at QSA are from when a person formally register their name change with the Supreme Court of Queensland using a document called a deed poll. In more recent times, a person can make a legal change of name through the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

For further information including current name change practices, refer to the QSA [deed polls \(change of name\) web page](#).

### Inquests

Inquest give circumstances of death and may include personal details about the deceased's family. Search the online index to [Inquests 1859-1902](#) available under the *Courts* heading.

For further information refer to the [Research Guide to Inquest records](#).

### Maps

Parish maps include names of early land holders (selectors and freeholders).

For further information refer to the [Research Guide to Maps](#).

### Mining records

Many migrants travelled to the gold and mineral fields to try their luck. Records to may be helpful include mining leases, registers of claims and records of local Mining Wardens. Search the online Index to [Mineral Leases 1871-1940](#) available under the Lands and Mining heading.

For further information refer to the [Research Guide to Mining records](#) and the [Research Guide to Miner's Homestead Leases](#).

### Pension records

The Queensland Government was only responsible for old age pensions from mid-1908 to mid-1909. QSA holds records of applications for the old age pension for that period. Search the online index to [Pensions 1908-1909](#) available under the *Government* heading.

Queensland State Archives also holds pension records paid through the Treasury to persons employed by the Imperial Government, ca 1870 to 1913. Search the online [Index to Imperial pensions 1898-1912](#).

### Prison and Convict records

Prison records may give physical descriptions about prisoners, information about other crimes committed and aliases used, and sometimes a photograph. Please note that most prison records are subject to a 65 year restricted access period.

Online indexes to some early convict / prisoner records are available under the *Convicts* heading on the QSA website. These include the [Chronological register of convicts 1824-1839](#) and the [Monthly and half yearly returns for Moreton Bay 1829-1837](#).

### Public Service employees

The [Queensland blue books, 1869-1916](#) give details of people employed by the civil establishment in Queensland. The records generally give the employee's name, position, salary, date of appointment, and date first employed by the public service. Some categories of employees are excluded, such as railway workers.

Railway employee records compiled from the *Queensland Government Gazettes* from 1878-1946 are available on our Reading Room computers onsite at Runcorn, Brisbane.

Some Queensland government departments including Police and Education have listed their staff in separate official gazettes. For more information contained in the *Education Office Gazette, 1899-1959* and the *Queensland Police Gazette, 1864-1945*, refer to our Reading Room computers onsite at Runcorn, Brisbane.

Searches in ArchivesSearch using keywords limited to series such as Personnel Files may also be worthwhile.

### Need more information?

Check our online catalogue [ArchivesSearch](#).  
Phone us on (07) 3037 6777 or you can [email](#) an archivist.