

Background Check SLA Template for Asia

Turnaround Time, Escalation, Quality and Reporting

A framework that separates provider-controlled actions from external dependencies — defining when the TAT clock starts and pauses, escalation and follow-up rules, quality measurement, and management reporting.

Executive Summary & What the SLA Should Cover

A Strong SLA Should:

- 1 Distinguish case initiation, report issuance and successful verification.
- 2 Set check-level turnaround targets rather than one blanket case-wide promise.
- 3 Document clock-pause rules for missing information and third-party delay.
- 4 Define source follow-up standards and case closure rules.
- 5 Escalate clearly when cases age beyond target.
- 6 Measure quality (accuracy, completeness, corrections, QA) alongside speed.

Speed alone is not enough — quality KPIs and monthly reporting on TAT, ageing, pauses and defects must sit alongside it.

Area	What the SLA Should Define
Scope	Countries, candidate populations and check types included.
Turnaround time	How TAT is calculated and what counts as complete.
Dependencies	Missing information, candidate action, third-party response.
Escalation	When and how delayed or disputed cases are escalated.
Quality	How accuracy, completeness and corrections are measured.
Reporting	Operational and management information supplied.

Define the SLA Terminology First

Term	Recommended Definition
Case	A screening order for one candidate, containing one or more checks.
Check	An individual component — e.g. employment, education, criminal record, sanctions.
Business day	A normal working day for the delivery team and, where relevant, the source.
SLA start time	When the provider has all required information, documents and authorisation.
Turnaround time (TAT)	Business days from SLA start to completion, excluding clock-pause periods.
Unable to verify	Prescribed attempts completed; source could not confirm or refute — a completion status, not a positive verification.
Clock pause	A documented period excluded from measured TAT due to an agreed dependency.

Don't Confuse These Three Events

- 1

Case initiation
The provider has started work.
- 2

Report issuance
An interim or final report has been delivered.
- 3

Successful verification
The source has affirmatively confirmed the information.

A check may be properly closed “unable to verify” after all agreed attempts are exhausted — never relabelled as verified just to meet a KPI.

Use Check-Level TAT Instead of One Case-Wide Promise

A case may combine an instant sanctions search with an employment check needing several follow-ups. One TAT for the whole package hides the real source of delay.

Check Type	Illustrative Target*	Common Dependencies
Identity / document validation	1–2 business days	Document quality, name mismatch, resubmission.
Sanctions, watchlist & PEP screening	1–2 business days	Potential-match review, DOB data, transliteration.
Adverse media	2–5 business days	Search scope, languages, identity resolution.
Criminal-record check	3–15+ business days	Jurisdiction, authority process, fingerprints/certificates.
Bankruptcy / insolvency search	2–5 business days	Record accessibility, identifiers, local process.
Civil litigation / court-record search	3–10+ business days	Court coverage, manual retrieval, archives.
Directorship / company search	2–5 business days	Registry access, identifiers, historic records.
Employment verification	5–10+ business days	Former-employer response, HR contact, archives.
Education verification	5–15+ business days	Institution response, holidays, fees, consent.
Professional qualification	3–10+ business days	Licensing-body process, record availability.
Professional reference	5–10+ business days	Referee availability, approved contact details.
Credit check (where permitted)	2–5 business days	Permitted purpose, consent, bureau process.

**Illustrative procurement benchmarks — not guaranteed eeCheck service times for every jurisdiction.*

Specify Exactly When the Clock Starts and Pauses

The Clock Starts Only After the Provider Has:

- 1 A valid order and candidate identifiers/history
- 2 Legible supporting documents
- 3 Required authorisation and consent
- 4 Country-specific forms
- 5 Clarification of any obvious inconsistency

Every clock pause should record: reason, start date/time, required action, responsible party, notification sent, and resume date/time. Avoid blanket “third-party delay” exclusions — the provider still owns timely initiation, follow-up and escalation.

Permitted Clock-Pause Event	Example
Missing candidate information	Required document, identifier or consent outstanding.
Candidate action required	Candidate must attend appointment or authority process.
Client clarification required	Client must clarify scope or supplied information.
Additional form / fee approval	Employer, university or authority requests extra form/charge.
Source closure	Public holiday, institutional break, exceptional disruption.
Client hold	Client asks provider to suspend the case.
Other agreed dependency	Another expressly agreed event prevents progress.

Follow-Up & Closure Rules and Escalation Matrix

First contact within 1 business day; 8–12 reasonable attempts across different channels; validate independently obtained contacts; close only once the agreed attempt standard is met.

Case Age	Recommended Action
50% of target TAT consumed	Internal review of progress and dependencies.
Target TAT reached	Client status notice, delay reason, next action.
2 days beyond target	Operational escalation and alternative-route review.
5 days beyond target	Management escalation with recovery plan.
Max age reached	Client decision: continue, close inconclusive, amend scope.

Level	Trigger	Client Update
L1 Routine	Missing document, minor clarification	Within 1 business day
L2 SLA risk	Target TAT reached, backlog	Within 1 day of escalation
L3 Material	Significant backlog, quality defect	Initial update in 4–8 hours
L4 Critical	Data incident, major outage	Per incident schedule / law

Roles such as Account Manager, Operations Manager, DPO and Executive Sponsor should be named — not individuals — so the matrix survives personnel changes.

Measure Quality, Not Only Speed

Metric	Illustrative Target
Report accuracy	≥ 99.5%
Report completeness	≥ 99.5%
On-time initiation	≥ 95%
TAT attainment	90–95%
Quality-review compliance	100%
Correction timeliness	≥ 95%
Client-query response	≥ 95%

A “material error” should be defined, distinguishing provider error, source error, and candidate/client input error — these categories should never be used to avoid accountability.

Severity	Target Action
Critical	Immediate containment and incident escalation.
High	Corrected report targeted within 1 business day.
Medium	Correct within 2 business days.
Low	Correct within 3–5 business days.

Quality and data protection should never be traded for speed.

Require Transparent Status & Outcome Reporting

Useful Status Labels

- Pending candidate
- Pending client
- Pending source
- Under provider review
- Quality review
- Completed
- Closed unable to verify

Each check should show case/check reference, candidate ID, country, check type, dates, current status, dependency, clock status, target and completion dates, next action, and outcome classification.

Monthly Report Area	Recommended Information
Volumes	Orders and completed checks by country and check type.
TAT	Median, 90th-percentile TAT and % completed within target.
Ageing	Open-case ageing bands and long-running exceptions.
Pauses	Clock-pause volume and reasons.
Outcomes	Unable-to-verify rate and main causes.
Quality	Corrections, defects, complaints, incidents.
Improvement	Root-cause analysis, corrective actions, capacity forecast.

Governance Cadence, Service Credits & the SLA Schedule

Review Cadence

Meeting	Frequency
Operational	Weekly / as agreed
Service review	Monthly
Governance	Quarterly
Formal SLA	Annually / change

Treat Service Credits Carefully

Apply only after a reasonable measurement volume; exclude documented client/candidate and uncontrollable third-party delays; still hold the provider accountable for initiation and follow-up; focus on repeated or material underperformance; cap credits reasonably; preserve separate remedies for privacy, security or serious misconduct.

Section	Suggested Wording / Requirement
A. Service objective	Perform Screening Services per agreed scope, methodology & law — accuracy and lawful processing alongside timely delivery.
B. Measurement period	Measured monthly in [time zone]; minimum [volume] eligible Checks per metric before a % service level applies.
C. Turnaround time	Target TAT = Business Days from SLA Start to completion & QA review, excluding approved Clock-Pauses.
D. Initiation / missing info	Provider reviews orders within [1 Business Day]; notifies Client/candidate of missing information.
E. Follow-up standard	[8–12] reasonable contact attempts across [agreed period] for source-dependent verification.
F. Delays & clock pauses	At Target TAT, Provider states reason, last action, dependency, next action & update date.
G. Quality	Report Accuracy/Completeness ≥[99.5%]; TAT Attainment ≥[90–95%]; QA reviews [100%].
H. Reporting	[Weekly] case-ageing reports + [monthly] service report: volumes, TAT, ageing, pauses, outcomes, defects, actions.
I. Escalation	Operational, SLA-risk, material & critical issues follow the agreed escalation matrix.
J. Continuous improvement	Material/repeated misses get a corrective-action plan: owner, action, due date, effectiveness check.
K. Exclusions	Excluded time/events limited to documented circumstances in the Schedule.

Asia-Specific Considerations & Final Takeaway

- Consent, notification and permitted-purpose requirements
- Restrictions on criminal, credit and medical checks
- Cross-border transfer and data-location requirements
- Local-language and transliteration searches
- Common-name identification and limited identifiers
- National, regional and institutional holidays
- Archive availability for older records; mandatory fees

Final Strategic Takeaway

The best SLA is not simply the shortest. It defines what the provider must control — prompt initiation, diligent follow-up, accurate reporting, transparent status updates, quality assurance and timely escalation — giving the employer reliable visibility while protecting candidates and report integrity.