

Asylum Seekers

A guide to recent legislation

4th edition
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Introduction

This is the fourth edition of *Asylum Seekers – a guide to recent legislation*. It has been produced by Resource Information Service in partnership with the Immigration Law Practitioners' Association.

As with previous editions, the aim of the guide is to brief staff and volunteers in a wide range of organisations about the effects and implications of the 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act and associated changes. The guide is not intended to equip readers with the knowledge to offer immigration advice, but to supplement readers' existing knowledge about the potential implications on their work.

Law and practice in asylum and immigration change rapidly. This guide outlines procedures as at 1 December 2003. A new asylum bill was announced in the Queen's Speech in November 2003 and is likely to come into force during 2004. In addition, changes to legal aid provision for asylum seekers and migrants are also likely to come into force during 2004. Readers of this guide are advised to regularly check relevant websites – Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) – www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk, the Refugee Council – www.refugeecouncil.org.uk and ILPA – www.ilpa.org.uk – for information on changes as they come into force.

The guide is organised in eight chapters, covering an overview of the Act, legal representation, the support system, making an asylum application, bail applications for detained asylum seekers, access to health care, employment and education, vulnerable categories and appeals.

There is a glossary of immigration and other specialist terms, and a further reading list.

The directory also includes listings of asylum seeker and refugee community groups, agencies providing advice for asylum seekers and refugees and other useful groups and organisations.

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*Resource Information Service, Immigration Law Practitioners' Association
December 2003*

Overview of the Act

Law and practice in asylum and immigration changes rapidly. The law and procedures outlined below are as at 1 December 2003. A new asylum bill was announced in the Queen's Speech in November 2003 and is likely to come into force in 2004. In addition, changes to legal aid provision for asylum seekers and migrants are also likely to come into force in 2004.

The Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 (NIAA) introduces new provisions on such diverse topics as citizenship ceremonies, induction centres and the Immigration Appeal Tribunal. Although it repeals parts of previous statutes, it does not replace or consolidate those statutes. Several themes range over NIAA's eight parts, which deal in turn with:

- Nationality
- Accommodation Centres
- Asylum support
- Detention and Removal
- Immigration and Asylum Appeals
- Immigration Procedure
- Immigration offences
- Some residual, general provisions.

The themes are:

- **Deterring irregular migration into the UK:** The Act denies asylum support to those who do not claim asylum as soon as reasonably practicable after arrival in the UK (see Chapter 4). It enables the Home Office to impose penalties on carriers who bring certain classes of passengers to the UK. It enables British immigration officials to carry out immigration controls in EEA countries.
- **Keeping tabs on asylum seekers once in the UK:** The Act introduces accommodation centres, which will house and provide subsistence to some asylum seekers. It enables the Home Office to impose residence, reporting or occupation restrictions on asylum seekers even when they are permitted to enter or remain in the UK.
- **Dealing with the factors which allegedly 'pull' asylum seekers to the UK:** As well as toughening the provisions on asylum support, the Act reduces or removes a number of asylum and immigration appeal rights.

Asylum

An asylum claimant has to attend Immigration and Nationality Department offices in either Croydon or Liverpool in person in order to have his/her application recorded, his/her bio-data (date of birth, nationality etc) taken and initial screening details in relation to journey and basis of claim recorded. Conditions as to residence and reporting will usually be imposed. Asylum seekers who claimed prior to the coming into force of the NIAA can also have conditions imposed or amended in accordance with the provisions of the NIAA. (See Chapter 4).

Nationality

NIAA introduces that in addition to the existing language requirement, an applicant for naturalisation must have 'sufficient knowledge about life in the United Kingdom' and must make a citizenship oath or pledge.

There are also new provisions for deprivation of citizenship.

Humanitarian protection and discretionary leave

The system for granting leave to enter or remain outside the Immigration Rules on an exceptional basis has changed significantly. As from 1 April 2003, 'exceptional leave to enter or remain' has been replaced by two different kinds of leave, known as 'humanitarian protection' and 'discretionary leave'.

A person who does not qualify for asylum may qualify for **humanitarian protection**. Humanitarian protection is leave granted to a person who would, if removed, face in the country of return a serious risk to life or person arising from a death penalty, unlawful killing, or torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. This reflects the UK's obligations under Article 2 (right to life) and Article 3 (prohibition of torture) of the European Convention on Human Rights and Protocol No 6 to the Convention (ie against the death penalty). A person who qualifies for humanitarian protection will usually, but not always, be granted leave for three years and may apply for settlement after three years. Settlement will not be granted automatically, but only where the circumstances continue to justify further leave. Those granted humanitarian protection will have access to public funds and will be entitled to work.

Humanitarian protection will not be granted to those who meet criteria for exclusion from the UK, which include the person's presence not being conducive to the public good because of criminal behaviour or a threat to UK security. He/she may qualify for **discretionary leave**.

Discretionary leave is a more varied concept. It can be granted if:

- Removal would breach Article 8 of the ECHR by breaching the right to a private and family life in the UK. In marriage cases, the standard period granted will be two years in line with the qualifying period for marriage cases in the Immigration Rules. In other Article 8 cases the standard period granted is three years.
- Removal would lead to torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment where the claimant is excluded from humanitarian protection. The standard period granted will be six months. This period applies to the first grant and any subsequent grants following an active review of the case.
- Removal would breach Article 3 of the ECHR because of a person's medical condition or because of other severe humanitarian factors in the country of return (such as the absence of food or shelter). The threshold for this category is very high, and requires removal to have extremely serious consequences for the person concerned. The standard period granted will be three years.
- In cases of unaccompanied asylum seeking children, where there are not adequate reception arrangements available in their own country. The current period granted is three years or leave until age 18, whichever is the shorter although this is under review and likely to change very soon.
- Individual circumstances, although not meeting the criteria of any of the other categories listed above, are so compelling that it is considered appropriate to grant some form of leave. This kind of case will be very rare. The standard period granted will be three years.

Discretionary leave will not be granted on the basis that there is no practical way of removing a person (such as where there is no practical route to the country of origin or where a travel document cannot be obtained). Discretionary leave may be granted for a short period of time depending on the circumstances of a case: for example, leave may be granted for the time until the applicant's spouse intends to leave the UK. Applications for an extension of discretionary leave will normally be the subject of an active review, to decide whether the person still qualifies. Only after a minimum of six years of discretionary leave will a person become eligible for settlement. Any time spent in prison does not count towards settlement. Those granted discretionary leave will have access to public funds and will be entitled to work.

Leave outside the rules

There may still be cases (for example, under immigration concessions) where the Home Office or an immigration officer may exercise discretion and grant someone leave to remain even though the person does not meet the criteria of the Immigration Rules, humanitarian protection or discretionary leave. Further, the Home Office may grant leave to enter or remain in any other particularly compelling circumstances. The type of leave to be granted in these kinds of cases will be 'leave outside the Rules' although this will probably be very rare.

Authority to carry

NIAA gives the Home Office power to introduce an ‘authority to carry scheme’. This is a completely new sort of scheme the essence of which is that airlines and other carriers would be required to obtain authority from the Immigration Service before bringing certain classes of passenger to the UK. The grant or refusal of authority to carry would not determine whether a person is permitted to enter the UK. As at the time of writing, the Home Office has not made or publicised any scheme.

Juxtaposed controls

Juxtaposed controls refers to arrangements under which UK immigration controls are operated in another EEA State and, on a reciprocal basis, that other State operates its own frontier controls within the UK. Prior to NIAA, the Immigration Service already operated immigration controls at the Eurotunnel site at Coquelles and at three Eurostar stations (Paris Nord, Lille Europe and Calais Frethun). NIAA gives the Home Office a new power to exercise British immigration controls at other EEA ports. This enables the Immigration Service to carry out immigration controls before passengers board carriers to the UK. A treaty between the UK and France was signed on 4 February 2003 to enable juxtaposed controls in Calais and Dover. At the time of writing, negotiations are underway for a treaty to establish juxtaposed controls in Brussels for Eurostar services.

Legal representation

Asylum, immigration and nationality law and practice is very complex. A mistake, or delay, can lead to someone being removed, possibly without a right of appeal. Refusal or termination of NASS support can have severe consequences not simply in terms of financial survival but also in terms of separation of families and the processing of a claim to remain. Detention can in practice reduce the time available to submit full details of a claim. It is therefore essential that an individual who seeks advice and assistance is referred as quickly as possible to competent advisers. A person is entitled to legal aid (subject to the means and merits test – see below) whether or not he or she is lawfully in the United Kingdom, in detention or receiving NASS support or public funds.

The ‘Legal Help’ legal aid scheme enables legal advice and assistance in presenting a claim to the Home Office. Representation in asylum or immigration (but not NASS) appeals is carried out under the ‘Controlled Legal Representation’ scheme. Both schemes are subject to financial eligibility tests. The vast majority of asylum seekers will satisfy this test. In addition, the Legal Help scheme has a ‘sufficient benefit’ test and the Controlled Legal Representation scheme a ‘merits’ test. Bail applications can be made under the same schemes.

The majority of asylum seekers will satisfy the ‘sufficient benefit’ test for Legal Help, although clearly unfounded cases will be ruled out. The ‘merits’ test for Controlled Legal Help is tighter, as the solicitor has to be satisfied that there is at least a 50% chance of the appeal winning. Many voluntary organisations are funded by the Legal Services Commission and have to assess clients’ claims under the same financial means and merits tests.

Asylum seekers may also seek advice from non-solicitor advisers. Since April 2001 non-solicitor immigration advisers are regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC), and it is a criminal offence to give immigration advice unless registered with the OISC. This applies to everyone giving advice or services ‘in the course of business... (whether or not for profit).’ This includes voluntary groups who provide advice and help free of charge, even if they are entirely voluntary, and receive no financial support.

At the time of writing the government has issued proposals to limit the number of hours that publicly funded advisers can spend on an individual case. This will mean that the service that asylum seekers can expect from their advisers under legal aid

will diminish. Even if the proposals introduced are not as draconian as is proposed, there will be restrictions and these may change as time goes on. It is essential that advisers keep up to date with the requirements and restrictions imposed by the Legal Services Commission.

The support system

The Government has announced its intention to change the support scheme for families in the coming year in particular in relation to post-appeal support. It is important to keep up to date.

Many of the new provisions of the NIAA are designed to provide a seamless system of support (by the National Asylum Seekers Service – ‘NASS’) for asylum seekers from the point at which they initially make their claim until the time at which their application is finally determined and they have exhausted their statutory appeal rights. (In the case of adults with dependent children this time period is extended up until the point at which, having exhausted their appeal rights, they fail to comply with any specific removal directions issued in relation to their departure from the UK). This is likely to change. The majority of destitute asylum seekers will continue to be dispersed to accommodation outside of the South East of England or London and be provided with vouchers which can be exchanged for cash at designated post offices.

The Home Office can now keep track of exactly where any asylum seeker is at any time. A requirement to comply with the support system can be combined with one to comply with the asylum application process. For example, if an asylum seeker fails to report on more than one occasion without providing a reasonable excuse, she or he will find that the post office is no longer authorised to cash his/her support vouchers.

It is intended that there will be a system of induction, accommodation and removal centres (see Chapter 4). At present, after claiming asylum, most applicants are dispersed. The induction system is in place in Dover.

Dispersal

Challenges to dispersal will usually have to be supported by extensive medical evidence and, if still unsuccessful, by way of judicial review. Although there is provision to prevent dispersal in exceptional circumstances (for example when an applicant is receiving medical treatment not available in the area of dispersal, or if an applicant’s child has been attending a school for more than 12 months), such challenges are rarely successful.

Reporting centres

Reporting conditions will usually be imposed either to Immigration Service offices or to a police station. The Immigration Service has stated that it intends to move to weekly reporting for all asylum applicants. The NIAA enables the Home Office to provide travel expenses for those deemed to be destitute or those who are supported and cannot pay the costs of reporting. Regrettably, the scheme for reimbursement has not yet been introduced.

Support outside the NASS system

There may still be a small number of asylum seekers who are in receipt of income support and housing benefit due to the fact that they claimed asylum, either on arrival or in-country before 4 February 1996 and have yet to have their application determined or their appeal dismissed (whichever was the next decision to be made in their case). There may also be a few asylum seekers who claimed asylum on arrival before 3 April 2000 and have yet to have their claim determined or their appeal dismissed (whichever was the next decision to be made in their case) who are also still in receipt of income support and housing benefit.

Nationals of states which have ratified the European Convention on Social and Medical Assistance and the Council of Europe Social Charter (the most likely to have relevance is Turkey) may also be eligible for income support and housing benefit if they are lawfully present in the United Kingdom.

Hard cases fund

For those who have come to the end of the asylum process but who cannot be removed for practical or health reasons, or where a judicial review is pending, NASS operates a Hard Cases Fund. This support is restricted to board and lodging which is usually located outside London. This may be the only form of support available to destitute asylum seekers and advisers should ensure that legal representation is obtained to apply for this support to NASS. NASS and the voluntary organisations assisting with support applications have been instructed by the High Court to make access to this support more readily available.

Exclusion from the support system

- In-country applicants – late claims

Some applicants who are considered to have made a late claim for asylum are excluded from NASS support (known as s55 cases). NASS support will be refused where the Home Office is ‘not satisfied that the claim was made as soon as reasonably practicable after the person’s arrival in the United Kingdom’. The Home Office interprets this as ‘as soon as they arrive’. Refusal of NASS under this provision (s55 NIAA) cannot be appealed to an Asylum Support

Adjudicator and can only be challenged by way of judicial review. Claimants under 18, those with minor dependants or where exclusion would breach the European Convention on Human Rights cannot be denied NASS support on the basis of a late claim.

Immigration, housing and welfare lawyers will assist claimants with judicial review challenges to the refusal of NASS support on the basis of a late claim as there is no right of appeal to an Asylum Support Adjudicator.

Particular problems will arise if a child's age is wrongly disputed by both the Home Office and the local social services department and will result in the child being denied support under NASS and the Children Act 1989.

- 'Application not made'

Asylum seekers who fail to satisfy the Secretary of State that the information they have provided is complete and accurate. In such cases, he could just refuse to 'entertain' the application and it would be deemed not to have been made. There is nothing to prevent this being applied to asylum seekers who have minor dependent children, minors or where such exclusion would be a breach of the European Convention on Human Rights. There is no right of appeal to an Asylum Support Adjudicator and challenge is by way of judicial review.

- Failed asylum seekers, those who have been granted refugee status elsewhere in the EEA, EEA nationals who do not qualify for support under European community law and those who are unlawfully in the United Kingdom cannot be provided with accommodation or support by local authorities.

This does not apply to unaccompanied minors or where refusal of support would lead to a breach of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Secretary of State or local authority has power to provide travel expenses and temporary accommodation to some individuals in these categories if they are co-operating with the plans for their removal and have dependent children. If they do not co-operate they cannot seek support under s17 of the Children Act 1989 for accommodation and support for the whole family but their children could be provided with accommodation under s20.

Support for unaccompanied minors

(See also Chapter 7)

Unaccompanied minors are not the responsibility of NASS but are looked after by the relevant local authority. If there are child protection issues, it is likely that support will be provided under s31 of the Children Act 1989 and the child will be taken into care.

If there is no responsible adult to care for them and they have no access to accommodation, there is a presumption that they should be accommodated under s20 of the Children Act 1989. A local authority may only decide to merely offer unaccompanied minors between the ages of 16 and 18 assistance under s17 of the Children Act 1989 in exceptional circumstances.

Unaccompanied minors who subsequently reach 18

Unaccompanied minors who were provided with accommodation before 7 November 2002 under either s17 or s20 of the Children Act 1989 qualify as ‘looked after’ children and on this basis are entitled to the support available as a result of the amendments to the Children Act 1989 made by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, including the provision of a pathway plan and a personal adviser and assistance with any cost incidental to undertaking further or higher education or finding employment. This can include assistance with travel costs, books and the cost of accommodation and can be accessed even if the young person has subsequently been granted some form of residence status in the UK. There is a presumption that unaccompanied minors should be accommodated under s20 of the Children Act 1989 and an attempt after 7 November 2002 to merely assist them under s17 should be challenged.

If he or she is still awaiting the determination of his or her asylum application at age 18, NASS will pay the relevant local authority to continue to accommodate him or her within their area and will not disperse them.

Children who have been looked after are also deemed to be in priority need for housing if they are homeless under Article 4 of the *Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002*.

Age disputed children

Assessing the precise age of a child is always going to be difficult. A large number of unaccompanied minors are in the 14–18 age range. Physical, mental and emotional development will depend on a large number of variables including health, heredity, ethnic origin, cultural background, diet, experience of trauma and much else. The Royal College of Paediatricians and Child Health accept that the margin of error for medical assessments may be as much as two years. Therefore a child of 17 could be 15, 17 or 19. What it recommends, as an alternative, is a holistic examination of the child taking into account physical, mental, social and emotional development and maturity. It also warns against making any cultural or other assumptions about the physical development of a child or his/her life experiences.

The Home Office has not followed that guidance (and its own guidance has now been withdrawn). Immigration officers were advised to treat a child as an adult if his or her appearance alone strongly suggests that he or she is over 18. This decision was only to be reversed by them if credible medical or other documentary evidence is subsequently produced to demonstrate that he or she is in fact fewer than 18. One difficulty about this policy is that the Home Office is generally sceptical of most documentary evidence obtained abroad.

The Association of Directors of Social Services has piloted Practice Guidelines for Age Assessment of Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers and are about to circulate them nationwide. It is now the policy of the Home Office to accept an age

assessment made by social services if such guidelines have been followed. The Home Office is obliged to refer any person claiming to be an unaccompanied minor to the Refugee Council's Panel of Advisers although at present only one in six children are provided with a named adviser. There is no indication that this referral rate will improve. It or the Refugee Council's Children's Team will usually refer age disputed children to social services for a second opinion on their age.

Support: rights of appeal

People who are held to have made a late claim for asylum have no right of appeal to the Asylum Support Adjudicator. The only means of challenge is by way of judicial review. Specialist legal help should be sought.

Otherwise, if the Secretary of State decides that an asylum seeker does not qualify for asylum support either at the time of claim or subsequently for reasons other than those referred to above he or she can appeal to an Asylum Support Adjudicator. The time limits are very short and Controlled Legal Representation is not available for the hearing, although solicitors can submit written representations to the Adjudicator. Detailed representations supported by as much documentary evidence as possible will increase the chances of a successful outcome.

CHAPTER 4

Making an asylum application

Where and how applications for asylum are made

Applications for asylum can be made at a number of places:

- On arrival in the UK at the air or sea port
- After arrival in the UK
- After arrest or detection as an illegal entrant or overstayer

The Asylum process

Having claimed asylum, there are a number of stages in the process of seeking asylum in the UK. The process varies slightly depending on whether the asylum seeker is a port or in-country applicant, whether she or he has been put into an induction centre or into the Oakington procedure, or some other special project. The options are:

- Induction centre process and/or
- Screening and registration of the application
- Return to another 'safe third country' without the application being considered or
- 'Detention' in Easington or other 'removal centre'
- Completion of the Statement of Evidence Form (SEF) – self completion and/or
- Interview and completion of the Statement of Evidence Form (SEF) – interview and
- Completion of passport application for undocumented applicants to facilitate removal if refused. This has only recently been introduced. It is not compulsory and should be resisted. However, note that the government intends to introduce a criminal offence of failing to co-operate in this way, and/or
- Other special project

- Decision by the Asylum Casework Group within the Home Office IND leading to
- Grant of refugee or other status or appeal or removal.

There are a number of pilot programmes within this general scheme. For example, a SEF-less procedure, whereby the person is interviewed without first completing a Statement of Evidence Form.

Unaccompanied children are dealt with differently. Until very recently, children were not interviewed, but the Rules have recently changed to permit interviewing of children (see Chapter 7).

Making applications

Applications for asylum can either be made at the port of entry or direct to the Home Office after arrival in the United Kingdom. If an application is not made ‘as soon as reasonably practicable’ then the applicant may be denied financial support by NASS. (See Chapter 3).

Encouraging asylum seekers to apply at the port rather than in-country means that the chance of the asylum seeker getting legal advice before he or she claims asylum is very low. As a result, many people will claim asylum when they may be better advised to seek leave to enter in another capacity.

Port applicants

People who apply for asylum when they arrive in the UK, either at the sea or the air port are termed port applicants. Provided they applied immediately on arrival they will be eligible for NASS support.

Port applicants can be detained and/or fast tracked (see Chapter 3, Chapter 8). Currently the majority are granted ‘temporary admission’. This is granted on a form numbered ‘IS 96’. It is not a formal grant of leave to enter the UK, merely permission to be in the country whilst the application for asylum is examined. The applicant and his or her dependants will be screened, photographed and fingerprinted and issued with an ARC (Application Registration Card) in the same way as in-country applicants are at the Asylum Screening Unit.

One significant difference is that port applicants are frequently interviewed soon after arrival without first being given a Statement of Evidence Form to complete.

In-country applications

For people who apply after they have come into the United Kingdom (‘in-country applicants’) it is no longer possible to make an application by post. Applications for asylum have to be made in person to the Home Office Immigration and Nationality Directorate and can be made at Lunar House, 40 Wellesley Road, Croydon CR9 2BY. (See the IND website – www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk).

Accommodation

Induction centres

Eventually it is intended that all asylum seekers will have to attend an induction centre for up to 14 days to undergo identity screening and health checks before being dispersed elsewhere. At present this is only at the pilot stage (in Dover). Before being dispersed they will be given a Statement of Evidence Form for self-completion or interviewed. They will not be provided with any legal advice during the induction process but will be inducted into the application procedure and access to support. There is nothing to prevent an adviser being instructed.

Post-induction accommodation

When induction centres and accommodation centres are fully operational, an asylum seeker who has been through the induction process will be sent to either:

- an accommodation centre
- accommodation in a dispersal area.
- a removal centre
- or will be able to stay with friends or family although this could mean loss of voucher support in the future.

Accommodation centres

Accommodation centres in their pilot phase, which has yet to begin, will provide places, with medical and educational provision, for no more than 3,000 asylum seekers and dependants. They are unlikely to be given much additional cash. There will be strict conditions of residence to ensure that occupants spend the majority of their time at the centre and do not travel to visit and stay with family members or friends living outside the centre. There will be Home Office officials on site and the courts may be close by.

Removal centres

A minority of asylum seekers will be transferred from induction centres to removal centres (formerly known as detention centres).

There are 1,600 potential places in removal centres. Oakington and Harmondsworth are used for asylum seekers whose applications are being 'fast tracked' or which are seen to be without foundation (see fast track appeals) as well as for 'ordinary' detention. Detention can still be in excess of six months. (See Chapter 8, Chapter 5).

Yarls Wood re-opened in September 2003 to house 50 single women detainees and further places for families with children will open there in 2004.

Screening

In order to apply for asylum the applicant (and his or her spouse and any dependant children) have to go through a screening process at the Asylum Screening Unit (ASU). Queues at the ASU can be very lengthy, particularly in Croydon.

The first part of the screening process involves completion of basic information about the applicant's identity. This interview takes place in a large, noisy room, with the Home Office officers behind a glass screen. It is a bit like a large, busy post office. There is very little privacy. The applicant should take with him or her:

- Passport or if this is not available, any other form of identity document, eg birth certificate
- Similar identity documents for any dependants
- Proof of address
- Proof of financial position, if available
- A letter from their solicitor/adviser, if they have one, confirming that s/he acts for the applicant and his/her family.

In most cases four photos of the applicant and dependants will be required.

The Home Office will provide an interpreter, if necessary.

At the first stage, a 14 page questionnaire is completed called 'Screening Form Level 1'; no questions about the substantive asylum claim should be asked. Questions are asked about the person's name, date of birth, nationality, marital status and full details of the spouse, dependants, passport details if available, health, last employer, journey details (these are very detailed, including for example, questions about the number of meals provided on the plane, identifying features on the lorry etc), parents' details, educational history, immigration history, information on other family members who have applied for asylum or leave to enter or remain in the UK and any other country. The applicant has to write in his or her own language and script his or her name, date and place of birth and last address in his/her country of origin and the telephone number. At this stage, a temporary Home Office reference number is given. One aim is to identify those applicants who can be removed to another country who will examine the asylum claim instead of the United Kingdom. This is known as a 'safe third country'.

Usually on the same day as the initial claim for asylum, the applicant (and dependants) will be fingerprinted and photographed. An 'Application Registration Card' (ARC) will be issued for each. This is a plastic card the same size as a credit card. It includes the applicant's photograph and is endorsed with a prohibition on employment. On the reverse is a magnetic strip which can be used for the storage of 'bio data' or other information. A permanent Home Office reference number is issued.

The applicant will also be assessed for eligibility for NASS support. A second 'Screening Form Level 2' form is completed. Although questions should only be asked about identity, status and travel route to the UK, interviewing officers are

reminded that they have to ‘give consideration to Article 3 ECHR throughout the interview’ as this can be relevant to whether a person should receive NASS support even if he or she failed to make his/her application for asylum promptly. (see Chapter 3). As a result, questions that relate to the substantive claim for asylum are frequently asked, and if there are discrepancies between the account given at this interview, and at any later interview, this will frequently be used by the Home Office to attack the applicant’s credibility.

More detailed questions are asked about the applicant’s financial position, and about the possibility of support being given by relatives already in the UK. Further information is asked about the journey to the UK, with a stress on what other countries the applicant travelled through to get here, and why he or she did not make an application for asylum in those countries. If an agent was used, detailed questions are asked.

The applicant is asked whether he or she intended to apply for asylum on arrival. If s/he did, and didn’t apply for asylum, then s/he is effectively admitting illegal entry. The practical effect may be to prevent entitlement to NASS support. S/he is therefore asked what his/her state of mind was on arrival, as if s/he were very distressed, or if s/he had been told by the agent to apply after arrival, then this may bring him/her back into entitlement for NASS support. It is important for advisers to ensure that applicants are aware that they will be asked questions and the reasons why.

If there has been a change in circumstances in the applicant’s home country since s/he came to the UK, which has led him or her to apply for asylum, full details have to be given.

If any part of the applicant’s account is incredible or not fully explained, then the applicant will be warned that this is the case and that she or he is likely to be refused NASS support.

If it is accepted that the applicant made his or her application for asylum ‘as soon as reasonably practicable after arrival’ then he or she will be given an endorsed ‘Grant Letter’ which will facilitate access to emergency accommodation and should be attached to the NASS application form.

If the ASU is very busy, full screening at Level 2 will not take place, and the applicant will be told to return later (usually one week later). Until a full screening has taken place and a decision under s55 of the NIAA 2002 has been made, the applicant can access emergency accommodation under s98 of IAA 1999 from the voluntary sector suppliers, and he or she will be given an endorsed letter which confirms this.

If the applicant was not given a copy of the Screening Forms, the adviser should write to the Home Office to obtain a copy, and any mistakes should be corrected in writing. Failure to include the correct details of, for example, dependants, can lead to problems with family reunion in the future.

Screening unaccompanied minor asylum seekers

Unaccompanied children have to register their asylum claims in the same way as adult applicants. They are screened, fingerprinted and photographed. However, they should not be interviewed, even for screening purposes, unless a responsible adult is present. The Refugee Council's Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seeker Panel may well be able to provide a panel member who will act as the child's advocate and act as the responsible adult. Currently, there is legal aid for a solicitor to accompany a child to a screening interview (see Chapter 2). A 'responsible adult is not the same as a legal representative'. Financial support is not the responsibility of NASS but of the Local Authority in which the child lives.

A recent change to the Immigration Rules means that child asylum seekers may now be interviewed substantively about their asylum claims. There is presently a pilot project interviewing children of 12 and over. The Home Office has an ongoing programme of training for the immigration officers who are going to conduct these interviews.

Representation at ASU

Apart from for unaccompanied minors, there is no legal aid available to enable an asylum seeker to have a representative present at the ASU screening interviews. Occasionally, the Legal Services Commission will authorise the attendance of a solicitor with a very vulnerable adult (see Chapter 2).

The fast track processes

- As part of the screening process, applicants from some countries are referred to Oakington Reception Centre. (Oakington is also being used for 'ordinary' detention as well). These are nationals of certain countries where the Home Office considers the case can be dealt with quickly. The countries involved change. If an applicant is detained at Oakington he or she will be interviewed and have a decision made on his/her application within seven to ten days. If refused, the applicant has the usual rights although it is likely to move through the system quicker than other refusals. If an appeal is lodged, the majority of people are released on temporary admission/release and dispersed. This process is often known as the 'Oakington fast track process'.
- Another group of nationalities may be detained and interviewed (at Harmondsworth) and a decision made within five days. Any appeal will be heard very quickly. This is sometimes known as the 'Harmondsworth 'or 'super fast track process'. The Legal Services Commission has a special 'duty solicitor' scheme to advise this group of asylum seekers (see Chapter 8).

Non-suspensive appeals

If an asylum applicant comes from a country where he/she is presumed to have 'clearly unfounded' asylum applications (see Chapter 8) or the case is clearly without merit and is certified as such by the Home Office, the applicant will not have an in-country appeal. The only challenge will be by way of judicial review.

Reporting and residence conditions

Any asylum seeker can have conditions imposed on him or her. She or he can be told to live in an accommodation or removal centre or at a certain address. Normally, asylum seekers are prohibited from working (but see Chapter 6). Most are required to report regularly, either to a port or another immigration office or police station. The Home Office intends to set up more reporting centres regionally, where asylum seekers will have to report regularly. These centres (and it is proposed to have mobile centres for some areas) will have detention facilities.

Bail applications for detained asylum seekers

Bail is a complex area and it is strongly recommended that you read the Bail for Immigration Detainees/ILPA/Law Society Best Practice Guide for further information and prior to making any application for bail. BID has also published note-books for detainees who are unable to access legal representation, whilst recommending that detainees should always seek legal representation rather than applying for bail themselves.

Although there is no right not to be detained in law, there is a presumption that a person will not be detained. There have been a number of government pronouncements over the years that detention will only be authorised where there is no alternative. The UNHCR take the view that detention of asylum seekers is inherently undesirable. There is considerable caselaw that indicates that liberty is only restricted if essential and that is judged by having regard to all the factors that are properly considered in the particular case. Despite this the number of people being detained is increasing and now also includes minors whose age is disputed who appear to be vulnerable.

It is now possible to apply for bail for anyone who is detained under immigration powers. If someone is currently serving a prison sentence bail cannot be obtained using immigration procedures.

The Immigration Service policy on detention and temporary release used to be set out in Chapter 38 of the Service's Operation Enforcement Manual. This is no longer available on the Home Office website although a section of it is in the BID/ILPA/Law Society Best Practice Guide.

An application for bail has to be submitted using the correct form fully completed. If it is not fully completed there is a risk, depending on the extent to which it has not been filled in, that the bail hearing will either be adjourned or bail will be refused, requiring a fresh application to be made. The Immigration Appellate

Authority guidelines on bail (May 2003) state that a hearing will be listed within three days of submission of the form.

Sureties' details should be provided to enable them to be checked out by the Home Office. Sureties should usually attend court with ID documents and evidence they are able to provide sufficient surety. Sureties should be made fully aware of their liability if the applicant absconds; they will not be required to lodge the funds. Representatives do **not and should not** obtain and hold the money because of the risk of money laundering allegations.

The Home Office is supposed to provide a bail summary not later than 2.00pm on the day before the hearing. The representative should ensure that the facts related are correct; they are frequently not.

If bail is granted conditions of residence and reporting may be imposed. If bail is refused there is no prohibition on further applications being made although it is advisable to be able to identify a change of circumstances to increase the chances of bail being granted. If bail is refused a written notice of the decision will be given including the reasons for refusal.

It is strongly recommended that guidance is sought from either a specialist adviser or the BID/ILPA/Law Society Bail Best Practice Guide before submitting an application.

Access to health care, employment and education

Access to health care

Refugees and asylum seekers suffer poor health. This is compounded by inequalities in access to health services either through ignorance of how to access health services or the way in which health services are provided for them. There is considerable evidence that communication problems affect accessibility. Extensive reliance is placed on relatives, frequently young children, to interpret. Many primary care teams have access to Language Line (a commercial provider of telephone interpreting) or access to other telephone or interpreting services. Specific enquiries should be made of primary care teams as to whether the particular team has access to interpreters and if so how.

All asylum seekers, whether port applicants or in-country applicants, all dependants of asylum seekers, all refugees and all those with exceptional humanitarian/discretionary leave to enter/remain and any person who has been in the United Kingdom for 12 months or more is ‘ordinarily resident’.

A person who is ‘ordinarily resident’ in the UK is entitled to receive free medical treatment including free prescriptions, eye tests, glasses and dental treatment. All asylum seekers are entitled to free medical treatment within the NHS whether from a GP or hospital, optician or dentist.

‘Overseas Visitors exempt from charges:

4. No charge shall be made in respect of any services forming part of the health service provided for an overseas visitor, being a person, or the spouse or child of a person – c) who has been accepted as a refugee in the United Kingdom, or who has made a formal application for leave to stay as a refugee in the United Kingdom...’

Statutory Instrument no 306: The National Health Service (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 1989

‘A refugee given leave to remain in the UK should be regarded as ordinarily resident. A refugee who is in the UK awaiting the result of his application to remain in this country should also be regarded as ordinarily resident because he or she is residing lawfully for a settled purpose.’

Excerpt from Health Service Circular HSC 1990/018 Overseas Visitors’ eligibility to receive free primary care.

A BMA publication ‘Asylum Seekers: Meeting their healthcare needs’ published in October 2002 sets out in detail the various health concerns relating to asylum seekers and refugees and is a useful overview.

The BMA’s most recent guidance note (January 2001) relating to access to health care for asylum seekers states:

- all asylum seekers are entitled to free health care
- all asylum seekers have the right to be fully registered with a doctor
- health professionals must not discriminate against asylum seekers or unfairly prioritise other patients in preference to them

Guidelines have been produced for GPs and for paediatricians to assist them in dealing with refugees and asylum seekers. This guidance refers specifically to full as opposed to temporary registration and to the specific problems that may be faced by refugee communities. Attention is also drawn to the assessment of age in the guidelines for paediatricians:

‘The assessment of age is a complex and often inexact set of skills, where various types of physical, social and cultural factors all play their part, although none can provide a wholly exact or reliable indication of age, especially for older children. Assessments of age should only be made in the context of a holistic examination of the whole child.’

At the time of writing the Home Office Asylum Policy Instruction on children ‘is being extensively rewritten’. If the Home Office disputes the age of a child specialist legal help should be sought.

There are proposals to change the 1989 Regulations but only in relation to hospital treatment. Health services provided by GPs at primary care level are unaffected. The proposals are intended to deny NHS hospital treatment to those who have had leave to enter for private medical treatment and those with no authority to enter or remain ie failed asylum seekers who have exhausted all due process, overstayers and illegal entrants.

Charges for prescriptions, NHS sight tests and vouchers for glasses and NHS dental treatment

‘Passporting’ through to these benefits will not apply unless the individual is claiming income support/job seekers allowance or a similar benefit. A very few asylum seekers will still be entitled to these benefits. If the asylum seeker is not claiming one of these benefits, assistance with NHS charges is obtained by completing form HC1 (available from the local health authority). This leads to the issue of a certificate HC2 (NHS Charges Certificate for Full Financial Help) or HC3 (NHS Charges Certificate for Limited Financial Help) which is valid for six

months. The application and renewal can take several weeks. It should therefore be applied for as soon as possible.

Confidentiality

It is important to remember that an asylum seeker is entitled to confidentiality. The problems that may arise through the use of interpreters and the use to which information may be put are strictly regulated. There are particular issues where a person is in detention or where an examination is carried out at port at the request of the immigration service. The Home Office is currently considering compulsory screening for particular groups of people. The individual may be asked to sign an authority enabling disclosure of the information obtained to – for example an immigration officer. There are strict criteria in relation to confidentiality laid down by the General Medical Council:

Para 1. Patients have a right to expect that information about them will be held in confidence by their doctors. Confidentiality is central to trust between doctors and patients....If you are asked to provide information about patients you should seek the patients consent to disclosure of information wherever possible, whether or not you judge that patient's can be identified from the disclosure. Para 11... Information about patients is requested for a wide variety of purposes including....monitoring,... public health surveillance....When asked to provide information you should follow the guidance in paragraph 1.....Para 14 You must obtain express consent where patients may be personally affected by the disclosure for example when disclosing personal information to a patient's employer. When seeking express consent you must make sure that patients are given enough information on which to base their decision, the reasons for the disclosure and the likely consequences of the disclosure. You should also explain how much information will be disclosed and to whom it will be given. If the patient withholds consent or consent cannot be obtained, disclosures may only be made where they can be justified in the public interest, usually where disclosure is essential to protect the patient, or someone else, from risk of death or serious harm. Para 34... if you are asked to write a report about and/or examine a patient, or to disclose information from existing records for a third party to whom you have contractual obligations you must...be satisfied that the patient has been told at the earliest opportunity about the purpose of the examination and/or disclosure, the extent of the information to be disclosed and the fact that relevant information cannot be concealed or withheld'.

It may be appropriate in order to support an asylum claim to obtain disclosure of medical records held when an individual was detained. Checks may also have to be made as to the extent to which records were disclosed to the Immigration Service and whether consent had been given.

Denial of free treatment

Applications by individuals for leave to remain eg for mental health treatment or treatment for HIV/AIDS may well raise questions of access to free treatment. The central issue is whether the person is 'ordinarily resident' ie living in the United Kingdom from choice and for a settled purpose will be sufficient. Asylum seekers fall into this category. Visitors and some others staying for less than six months will not qualify for free treatment. If health care is denied, expert legal advice should be sought.

Reference to hospital for treatment will probably result in a person being assessed by the hospital as to his/her residence in order to determine eligibility for NHS care. Three general questions may be asked: Have you been living here for the last 12 months? On what date did you arrive in the United Kingdom? What is the basis of your stay in the United Kingdom? No other questions are required. A person who has been in the United Kingdom for 12 months or more or is 'ordinarily resident' is entitled to free hospital treatment. Letters from the Home Office or other 'official bodies' showing current status/ordinary residence should be sufficient. If there are continuing problems expert legal advice should be sought.

Employment

It is not possible for foreign nationals (save for EU nationals) to work legally in the United Kingdom unless they either have specific permission to work (which may be granted under various categories set out in the Immigration Rules) or they have indefinite leave to remain in the United Kingdom or their passport or travel document is endorsed that there is no prohibition on working. Work need not be employment but may be self-employment.

A person or organisation that employs someone who does not have permission to work is committing a criminal offence. Guidance is provided to employers by the Home Office on how to identify whether a person is permitted to work. A list of acceptable documents is set out in the guidance and includes production of a full (not temporary) National Insurance card. There is no requirement to produce a passport. If additional identity over and above that requested from other potential employees is required by an employer, expert legal advice should be sought with a view to a potential discrimination.

Asylum seekers

Asylum seekers are no longer able to obtain permission to work if their application for asylum has been outstanding for more than six months. There may be a few 'old' cases where the permission to work has not been revoked (in which case they will have a letter or their IS96 will not have a prohibition endorsed on it) but these will be few and far between. It may be that an asylum seeker has a particular skill that is considered in short supply in the United Kingdom (eg nursing, teaching) in which case the asylum seeker may be able to obtain a job offer and an application for leave to remain under another category of the Immigration Rules may be made (eg work permit). On 22 July 2003 it was confirmed that there remained a discretion to allow asylum seekers to work, eg 'because their application remained outstanding for over one year without a decision'.

Students

Students on courses of more than six months are considered to have permission during the period of their studies to work part-time during term time and in

the holidays, and do not have to apply for specific permission. There are now provisions for certain students to obtain work permits in the UK when they have completed their course. Specialist help should be sought from UKCOSA or a specialist legal adviser.

Work permits

Apart from the exceptions outlined above, a person coming to the United Kingdom to seek or take up employment must have a valid work permit issued by Work Permits (UK). There are various programmes (Highly Skilled Migrant Programme, Sectors Based Scheme) as well as straightforward work permits (including teachers, health professionals, IT specialists, managers etc). They will need permission to enter the UK in that capacity from a post abroad. Although work permits are meant to have been issued prior to seeking entry to the United Kingdom, there are occasions when a variation will be permitted or discretion exercised to permit leave to remain to be given without leaving the United Kingdom even though the Immigration Rules appear to require otherwise. There have been numerous announcements about the need to fill jobs deemed to be in short supply eg health workers. Expert legal advice should be sought as to whether an asylum seeker should apply for a work permit and make the appropriate immigration application. Information is available on Work Permits UK website.

Other employment

There are numerous other ways in which individuals can apply to come to the United Kingdom or be granted leave to remain in the United Kingdom for employment. The requirements that have to be complied with are set out in the Immigration Rules and include au pairs, working holiday makers, private servants in diplomatic or other households, ministers of religion, persons with United Kingdom ancestry, innovators, writers, sector based schemes, and others. Again although in some of these categories, prior entry clearance is required, in some this is not the case and in others discretion can be requested and obtained. Expert legal advice should be sought.

EU nationals and association agreements

Individuals from the EU are permitted to work without specific permission. They can come and go freely. Spouses of EU citizens exercising treaty rights eg by working in the United Kingdom will, on application be granted leave to enter/remain with no prohibition on working for five years.

The UK has entered into agreements – Association Agreements – with a number of countries. Nationals of those countries may seek leave to enter to establish themselves in business (ie in self employment). Some of these countries will form part of the enlarged EU from May 2004 and their nationals will then be permitted to enter the labour market. Nationals of the remaining countries will continue to be able to seek entry for the purposes of self employment. There is no prohibition on spouses working.

The Turkey–EC Association Agreement can assist some Turkish nationals where a Turkish national has been lawfully employed (but not whilst on temporary admission or as an au pair) he or she may be eligible for leave to remain and removal would then only be justifiable on public policy grounds. The Turkey Association Agreement also permits entry for self employment with no minimum level of investment or obligation to provide employment for others under special conditions. The law is complex and currently being litigated. Expert advice should be sought.

Expert legal advice should be sought as to whether an asylum seeker (including failed asylum seekers) from one of these countries may benefit from the Association Agreements and be granted leave to remain/enter on this basis.

Education

Primary/secondary education

All children of school age are legally required to attend primary/secondary school. The local authority is under an obligation to ensure that education is provided whether evidence of immigration status can be provided or not. The children of asylum seekers who are not in detention are entitled to attend full time at state primary and secondary school without restriction. In reality many children are not allocated a school place immediately. In those cases expert legal advice should be obtained.

The Government states that if a child is in detention adequate schooling will be provided ‘on site’. It is doubtful that this will indeed be the case and specialist legal advice should be sought as to remedies.

Further education

The Learning and Skills Council has a duty to provide:

- proper facilities for education (other than higher education ie university) training and organised leisure time occupation... who are above compulsory school age but have not attained the age of 19
- reasonable facilities for education (other than higher education) training and organised leisure time occupation ...suitable for those who have attained the age of 19.

For funding purposes the Learning and Skills Council regards as ‘ordinarily resident’ any person

‘who habitually, normally and lawfully resides from choice and for a settled purpose in that country. Temporary absences from the relevant area should be ignored. If someone has not been ordinarily resident because he or she, their parent or their spouse were working temporarily abroad, they will be treated as though they have been ordinarily resident in the relevant area’.

The Education (Fees and Awards) Regulations 1997 set out the categories of people eligible for funding:

- a person who is settled (ILR/E right of abode, British Citizen, British Overseas Territory Citizen) and has been ordinarily resident for three years preceding the relevant date (1 September, 1 January or 1 April) immediately prior to the first term of learning.
- EU or child of EU national ordinarily resident for three years (not for the purpose of receiving full time education during any part of the three years) as above.
- EEA or child of EEA migrant worker ordinarily resident as above.
- If recognised as a refugee including spouse or child of recognised refugee.
- If refused refugee status but granted exceptional leave to enter/remain (although the Regulations refer to ELTE/R it is probable that humanitarian/discretionary leave can be read in the same way), including spouse or child.
- Learners studying under reciprocal exchange agreements.

The Learning and Skills Council will also consider funding other groups of learners under ‘concessions’.

Asylum seekers do not have an entitlement to be assessed at the ‘home rate’ of fees under the Education (Fees and Awards) Regulations 1997. But if studying on a course that is funded by the Learning and Skills Council an asylum seeker may be eligible for the ‘home fee’ through ‘concessions’ that apply as set out below. In addition asylum seekers may be charged significantly less than the ‘home fee’ if they also qualify for ‘fees remission’.

The Learning and Skills Council Concessions – in England only

The Learning and Skills Council will fund courses for certain categories of student from abroad even if they are entitled to ‘home fees’. This applies where all of the following apply:

- the student is not entitled to home fees (under the Fees and Awards Regulations) and
- the course is funded by the Learning and Skills Council (England) and
- the student falls within one of the ‘concession’ categories (outlined below) and
- the institution charges home fees.

The ‘concession’ categories

- Individuals who have been legally living in England for three years (other than those on time limited leave as students)
- Asylum seekers and their dependants under 19 in receipt of
 - income based benefits or
 - assistance under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (as amended by NIAA 2002) or the Children Act 1989 or National Assistance Act 1948) or
 - financial assistance from NASS
- persons with exceptional leave (not after having been refused asylum), spouse and dependants
- any 16–18 year olds placed in the care of social services or accompanying parents who have the right of abode

- ‘recently settled persons’, anyone who has lived in England for less than three years preceding the course and ‘exceptional circumstances’.

Effect on benefits/asylum support if studying

Eligibility to any support from NASS or under the Children Act 1989 is **not** affected by studies of any kind.

Studying may affect any entitlement to means tested social security benefits and may also result in a review of eg disability living allowance and the loss of the benefit. If an asylum seeker is receiving benefits due to transitional provisions, cessation of benefits due to studying may result in him/her not being able to reclaim the same benefits.

Expert legal advice should be obtained where an asylum seeker over the compulsory schooling age wishes to undertake studies or is having difficulty accessing further education.

Student financial assistance

An individual is eligible for access to student loan provisions and fees assistance:

- 1 If settled (ILR, British Citizen or EU national) and ordinarily resident in UK on first day of academic year of the course, and has been ordinarily resident for the three year period preceding this or
- 2 Is recognised as a refugee, and ordinarily resident on first day of the first academic year of the course or
- 3 She/he, his/her parents or spouse are British Citizens and have returned to the United Kingdom having worked in an EEA country, or are nationals of an EEA country and have migrant worker status in the United Kingdom, and have been living in the EEA country for three years prior to coming to the United Kingdom or
- 4 Has leave to remain eg exceptional/humanitarian/discretionary, is ordinarily resident on the first day of the first academic year and has been ordinarily resident for the preceding three year period.

Even if an individual does not meet the three year residence qualification there may be circumstances where assistance will still be available.

Nursing bursaries. It is now difficult to get a nursing bursary for overseas nationals but there are some circumstances where it is possible. Expert advice should be sought.

Student finance and eligibility is complex. The UKCOSA manual and the UKCOSA advice line/website provide assistance or expert legal advice should be sought (see Directory listings at back of book).

Vulnerable categories

Many migrants find adapting to a new country challenging but forced migration is a very different experience from voluntary migration. The vast majority of asylum seekers are vulnerable: they are people who have been forced to leave their own countries, often very rapidly, and they may have suffered very difficult experiences both in their home countries and on route to the country of safety. If the asylum seeker is joining a small or relatively new community in the UK, it may not yet be well organised and able to offer support to newcomers. Even those joining well-established communities may still find it difficult to access help in a wide range of areas for reasons of language, culture and lack of knowledge of how the system works.

Although all asylum seekers are vulnerable, there are some groups that have specific problems. This section will look at six particularly vulnerable groups: children, women, victims of torture, people with mental and other health problems, detainees and those who have been trafficked.

Children

(See also Chapter 3, Chapter 4).

The UN estimates that over half the world's refugees are children. Many asylum seekers flee with their families, or are later joined by their families. Asylum seeking children may be particularly traumatised by their forced migration and by what they have witnessed or lived through. They may find it difficult to get placed in a school, and once in school, may have behavioural problems that are rooted in their background. They may need specialist physical or psychological therapy, including family therapy. Most children do not make independent claims for asylum, instead being dependent on an older relative or carer. Whilst this may be appropriate for the majority of children, advisers should be aware that a child, even if here with his or her family may have his or her own story to tell. For older children, it could be appropriate for them to make a claim for asylum in their own right.

A child may come in to the UK as part of a family unit but that family unit may break down resulting in the child having to deal with even more trauma or possibly becoming unaccompanied. Some children, as a result of neglect or abuse, may

end up in local authority care. Their immigration status must be considered and attempts made to resolve it before the child reaches the age of 18.

There are a number of Home Office policies that affect children, particularly where they have been in the United Kingdom for a number of years. The implementation of these policies and the evidence required to support applications under them, irrespective of the merits of an asylum claim need to be considered and specialist advice should be obtained well before any hearing.

Unaccompanied minors

Each year many unaccompanied children and young people under the age of 18 arrive in the UK and claim asylum. They face an uncertain future, and find themselves in a country where customs, language and lifestyles are unfamiliar. As a result, they can be frightened, confused and disorientated. Since 1994 the Refugee Council has run a Panel of Advisers for unaccompanied child asylum seekers which advises and assists each child. Every unaccompanied child asylum seeker should be referred automatically to the Panel but some slip through the net. On referral the child will be allocated an advocate who ensures that the child accesses legal representation, accommodation and care, education and contact with his/her own community. Advisers should consider referring a child to the Panel if there has not yet been a referral.

Local authorities have a duty to all children and young people, whatever their citizenship or immigration status. Frequently, local social services departments are so hard pressed that asylum-seeking children fall low on the list of priorities. Nevertheless, local authorities can be forced to fulfil their obligations to a child, and a proper assessment should be carried out. Advisers should consider getting specialist help from a children's solicitor if the local authority is not carrying out its statutory obligations to a child.

Children's own views are often overlooked. It is very important that children are given the time and information to enable them to develop an awareness of their situation and to help them form their own views about their position. Advisers can help by accompanying a child to all interviews with his or her lawyer, and asking the child's permission to be copied in on any correspondence so as to be able to discuss advice given at a later stage.

Interviewing children

The Home Office did not previously interview children as a general practice. Paragraph 352 of the Immigration Rules now permits children of any age to be interviewed either about the substance of the claim or to determine age/identity. A pilot project started in October 2003.

If a child does not attend for an interview, his/her application can be refused on the basis of non compliance, just as an adult's application would be. A responsible adult will have to be present during the interview, but he or she will only be able to intervene in the interview if the child becomes distressed or tired and break is

required. A responsible adult is not the same as a child's legal representative. His or her role is to provide support and advocacy to the child, not to give legal advice.

A revised Statement of Evidence form (SEF) has also been produced which is very similar to that used for adults. The form and content of the questions do very little to assist a child's understanding about the information required of him or her.

Returning unaccompanied minors to their country of origin

The Home Office now proposes (contrary to its earlier policy granting exceptional leave until the child's 18th birthday to return unaccompanied minor asylum seekers to those countries deemed to be generally safe by s94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 at a much earlier stage and most probably at the time at which their asylum application is refused and any appeal rights have been exhausted. Home Office officials have visited Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania with a view to commencing removals to those locations in 2004.

The Home Office does not intend to concentrate on reuniting these children with their families of origin. Instead the aim will be to ensure there are reception facilities for them. It is proposed to ask social workers to give their opinion on whether it would be in the children's best interests to be returned, despite the fact that in many cases, the local authority in question will not have any parental responsibility for the child and the question will never have been considered by a family court.

The detention of children

An increasing number of children are being detained both with their parents and where their age has been wrongly disputed and despite the fact that in July 2002, the HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, stated in the introduction to her report on Dungavel Removal Centre that:

'the detention of children should be an exceptional measure, and should not in any event exceed a very short period – no more than a matter of days. The key principle is not the precise number of days – whether it is the seven days we proposed for short-term removal centres in England, or the two weeks beyond which even their educational needs cannot be guaranteed....it is that the welfare and development of children is likely to be compromised by detention, however humane the provisions, and that this will increase the longer detention is maintained...'

If a child is in detention it is essential that she or he receives specialist legal advice about the possibility of securing release.

Women

Access to the asylum determination process

Women are frequently invisible asylum seekers. The first problem for many women asylum seekers is accessing the asylum determination process. Some women asylum seekers arrive alone. Others accompany their fathers, husbands and

brothers and are treated as dependants. Immigration officers normally assume a woman is a dependant on her male relative, and many women do not know that they can apply for asylum in their own right. Although in many cases a separate screening interview is carried out this is not always done in private and women will not be aware of the implications before agreeing to be treated as a dependant. Unless the adviser is aware of the issue, women are frequently not interviewed about their experiences or they are only interviewed in a cursory way, when it is possible that they, rather than their male relatives or associates, have been persecuted. Frequently, they are not given an opportunity to describe their experiences in private, apart from their male relatives. Many women are reluctant to disclose what has happened to them in front of male relatives, or through male interpreters or interpreters (male or female) from their own community. This is often the case for women from societies where preservation of virginity or marital dignity is important or lesbian women from countries where choice of sexual preference outside societal norms is unacceptable. Many men do not raise what has happened to their female family members either because they are unaware of the details or of their importance, or they are ashamed to report them.

Women may not understand the importance of disclosing their experiences, particularly those of sexual violence or familial abuse. There may be good reasons not to tell: these can range from the fact that it is very hard to do so to the fear that her experiences may become known to others and this in turn could lead to her being ostracised from her family or community. Being subject to sexual violence is often perceived as a failure on the part of the woman to preserve her virginity or marital dignity.

Advisers should always ask women, in private, if they want to be interviewed outside the hearing of their family members, particularly male family members and children. Advisers should ask a woman, in private, if she wants to make an asylum claim in her own right and she should be advised as to the pros and cons of doing so. A claim for asylum can be made at any stage, but preferably as soon as possible after arrival in the United Kingdom as otherwise adverse inferences can be drawn about the woman's credibility.

A woman should always be given an opportunity to have access to a female interpreter and, ideally, to a woman adviser. In reality, this can be problematic, as even in metropolitan areas there are not enough competent advisers, and finding a competent female adviser may be very difficult. Just being female does not guarantee an awareness of gender issues by the adviser.

Further problems about accessing advice are raised when women have children or other caring responsibilities. They may not be able to make arrangements for their children to be cared for when they see an adviser, and this may make it difficult to disclose what has happened to her. Having children in the same room may distract the woman, or she may be reluctant to give details of what has happened to her, for fear of upsetting the child.

Relationship breakdown

If a woman is in the UK as a dependant of her husband and the relationship falters, then she can be left in a difficult position if she has not made an independent claim for asylum. For example, if a woman's husband has been refused asylum but granted exceptional/ humanitarian or discretionary leave to remain, and she has been granted leave to remain as his dependant, then if she divorces him, she will no longer be dependent on him, and thus may have difficulties when she needs to apply for settlement. In reality, this will probably not be a significant problem if the couple has children, but the woman should be referred to specialist legal advice on her position.

The position of a woman who is dependent on a male asylum seeker is more complex. Once again, after a relationship has broken down, she has no basis for remaining in the UK as she is no longer dependent on him. She should be referred to specialist legal advice as soon as possible, and may need to consider making a claim for asylum in her own right.

Victims of torture

Many asylum seekers have suffered torture or state organised/condoned violence. They may require medical treatment, which can be given through the NHS. They may also need professional help in coming to terms with what has happened to them. Many GPs have no experience of treating people who have been tortured. Accessing specialist help is not easy, but most major hospitals are able to treat people who are traumatised. Contact by the adviser with the GP or directly with one of the specialist centres, for example the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture may be appropriate.

If an asylum seeker has been tortured or maltreated it can be very helpful to have a medical report to support the asylum application. These can be obtained from the asylum seeker's GP, although the courts do not place very much weight on a GP report. There is frequently no physical evidence of torture, particularly those involving rape or sexual violence. Torturers often choose methods precisely because they do not leave marks. There are, however, common psychological after effects of torture and state organised violence which specialists can detect.

It is important to ensure that victims of torture or maltreatment can document this fact as early as possible after arrival in the UK. At a minimum photos may be useful. This can assist in various stages of the asylum determination process. Specialist legal advice should be sought to ensure that an appropriate expert is instructed to prepare a medical report if required.

If a person is receiving medical treatment this may affect whether he or she can or should be dispersed.

Torture and other persecutory treatment can produce a profound shame response; humiliation and shame are often desired goals of the perpetrator. Advisers should

be aware that this shame and self-blame response can be a major block on disclosure. Frequently, incidents of sexual abuse may not come to light for months or even years. This is true for both men and women who have been sexually abused.

People with health problems

Many asylum seekers are profoundly traumatised by the events that have forced them into exile, their flight to the UK, and sometimes, by their treatment at the hands of the authorities in the UK. Others may have unrelated mental health problems that emerge or are exacerbated by their exile. Advisers should be alert to the fact that behaviour may be misinterpreted due to cultural differences, but if there are signs that an asylum seeker may have mental health problems he or she should be referred for professional help. This may not be straightforward. Language difficulties may make it difficult for an asylum seeker both to express his or her problems, or to obtain effective treatment. In addition, in some cultures mental illness is shaming and as a result, people may be discouraged from seeking medical help.

If an asylum seeker is not capable of expressing his or her history, then it may be possible to find out what has happened to him or her from family members or associates. Witness statements can be submitted together with a medical report to explain why the asylum seeker is not giving a first hand account. A medical report should also be obtained if an asylum seeker is called for an interview and is unable to attend. Otherwise the asylum seeker risks being refused asylum on non-compliance grounds. If an asylum seeker with mental health problems has been refused asylum then consideration should be given as to whether his or her problems would be exacerbated by giving evidence in an appeal. In such cases, it may be preferable to submit written evidence, including medical evidence, alone.

If a person has been sectioned under the Mental Health Acts or is subject to special control under these Acts (eg following conviction) there may be specific arguments that can be raised in support of a person remaining in the United Kingdom either for short or long term treatment.

Some physical illnesses may only manifest themselves after arrival in the United Kingdom for example HIV/AIDS/TB. Some children may have particular inherited diseases that are receiving specialist treatment in the United Kingdom. The existence of these health problems may affect the advice given.

Mental or other health problems may mean that a person can remain in the United Kingdom irrespective of whether they are refugees. It may be a breach of their human rights to send them back to their country of origin for example because of lack of treatment facilities or simply because the act of removal is too dangerous for their mental state.

Specialist legal advice should be sought on the nature of applications that can be made in these circumstances and the evidence required.

If an asylum seeker appears to have mental or physical health problems, then advisers should assist him or her in accessing NHS medical and psychiatric services through his or her GP (see Chapter 6).

Detainees

The numbers of Immigration Act detainees, including many newly arrived or failed asylum seekers is set to rise. In particular specific detention places are being allocated for single women and families. It is possible to apply for temporary admission or bail. Immigration Act detainees are amongst the most vulnerable of asylum seekers. As a result of their detention they may find it extremely difficult to access advice. Each day lasts a long time for a person in detention, and advisers should deal with detainees as a priority. Getting an asylum seeker out of detention is often the first priority, and advisers should obtain specialist legal advice or help from one of the specialist agencies such as the Detention Advice Service (DAS – who provide first aid advice for people in Immigration Act detention, including referring detainees to competent advisers) or Bail for Immigration Act Detainees (BID).

See also Chapter 5.

Trafficking

There are an increasing number of adults, particularly women and children, both boys and girls, who have been trafficked. Traffickers use violence, coercion and deception to move people away from their homes and then force them to work against their will. The only internationally recognised definition of trafficking is in the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, November 2000. It defines trafficking as:

‘the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery or servitude or the removal of organs.’

The UN definition makes clear that trafficking is not limited to sexual exploitation and also takes place for other forms of labour exploitation. This means that people who migrate for work in areas like agriculture, catering, construction or domestic work, but then find themselves coerced into working in conditions they did not agree to, are also trafficked persons.

Many individuals will not volunteer information that they have been trafficked for any purpose for fear of what will happen to their families at home. Expert advice is required to enable the individual to decide whether to involve the police and if

so to what extent and the extent of information to be disclosed. There are numerous accounts (albeit anecdotal because of the nature of the incidents) of victims of trafficking being killed, mutilated or transported to other countries. Suspicions that an individual has been trafficked have to be handled very sensitively in order to avoid the victim simply disappearing. Specialist assistance should be sought.

Appeals

Appeals against negative immigration and asylum decisions continue to be made first to an adjudicator and then, with permission, to the Immigration Appeal Tribunal. However, at the time of writing, the Government has introduced legislation to provide only a one-tier appeals system and it plans to abolish the Tribunal.

Part 5 of the NIAA replaces the previous appeals provisions under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1996. The new appeals provisions have much in common with the old ones, in terms of the sorts of decisions that may be appealed and the grounds on which the appeals can be considered.

The new appeals provisions preserve the system whereby an adjudicator considers all potentially appealable issues in one, comprehensive appeal. An adjudicator will consider the application made by an appellant to the Home Office and any additional reasons that the appellant has put forward for remaining in the UK in a 'statement of additional grounds'. An adjudicator does not consider matters raised in a statement of additional grounds that do not trigger a right of appeal. Failure to raise all possible matters at the appeal may prevent the appellant raising those matters later unless there was a very good reason for such failure.

The Immigration and Asylum Appeals (Procedure) Rules 2003 came into force on 1 April 2003 and completely replace the old procedure Rules. The Rules set out the appeals process in detail, including time limits for appeals and submission of documents.

Removal of appeal rights

Under the new appeals provisions, there is no longer any right of appeal against:

- Refusal of asylum where leave to remain (such as humanitarian protection) is granted for one year or less. Once a second year's leave has been granted, there will be a right of appeal.
- Decisions taken outside the rules ie under concessions and policies.
- The destination to which the person is to be removed.
- The validity of removal directions.

Non-suspensive appeals

There is no longer a right of appeal from within the UK if the Home Office certifies that an asylum or human rights claim is ‘clearly unfounded’. A clearly unfounded claim is one that is so clearly without substance that it is bound to fail. For example, a claim under the Refugee Convention will be clearly unfounded if it does not raise a fear of persecution for one of the reasons set out in the Convention (race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion). In cases certified as clearly unfounded, an appeal must be made from abroad (in the country of origin) because these appeal rights do not lead to suspension of removal from the UK. Such appeals are known as ‘non-suspensive appeals’. It is possible to apply to the High Court for a judicial review of the decision that the claim is ‘clearly unfounded’. If successful, the applicant gains a right of appeal whilst in the UK, ‘in-country’.

NIAA enables the Home Office to presume that certain cases are clearly unfounded. These are cases where the applicant is entitled to reside in a country that is considered to be safe. NIAA itself sets out a list of safe countries. These are the countries that will be members of the European Union from April 2004: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Asylum or human rights claims from nationals of these countries will be assessed but considered to be clearly unfounded unless the Home Office is satisfied that the claim ‘is not clearly unfounded’. The Home Office can add states, or part of a state, to the list if it considers it to be generally safe. Fourteen have been added to the list: Albania, Bulgaria, Jamaica, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Brazil, Ecuador, Bolivia, South Africa, Ukraine, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. In addition, part of Somalia, Somaliland, has been added. Others may be added.

In addition, the Home Office may consider that an applicant from any country has made a claim without merit and decide that it is (or certify it as) ‘clearly unfounded’.

These applicants are detained and their claims are subject to very speedy decisions.

If they wish to appeal a decision to refuse their application, the appeal forms can be lodged by the appellant from abroad or by representatives in the UK (once the appellant has signed the form and has left the UK). As a matter of good practice the representative should have taken a statement from the appellant and done some preparatory work for the appeal before she/he leaves the UK. The appeal before the adjudicator takes place in the absence of the appellant but witnesses can give evidence. Documents and other evidence will be presented in the same way as in other appeals.

Safe third countries

Asylum claims may be refused without consideration of the merits of the claim if the applicant can be returned to a safe third country. NIAA sets down various ways in which third countries will be regarded as safe countries to send asylum seekers. This is not the country of which the applicant is a national or is entitled to reside in. It is usually a country through which she/he has travelled to reach the UK and which is considered safe for her/him to be returned to for the asylum application to be dealt with there. The following are considered to be safe third countries:

- EU member states.
- Other states, designated by order made by the Home Secretary (currently Norway, Switzerland, Canada and USA).
- Non-designated states if the Home Office certifies (in effect) that expulsion will not breach the Refugee Convention.

There is no right of appeal from within the UK against a decision to remove an asylum claimant to a safe third country: claimants can only appeal from the third country. The only exceptions are:

- Where the third country is neither an EU member state nor a state designated by an order. In practice, it is very rare for the Home Office to attempt to remove someone to this kind of third country and so advisers are unlikely to come across appeals on this basis.
- Where the asylum claimant has alleged that expulsion to a third country will breach his or her human rights although if that claim is rejected and certified as clearly unfounded the right of in-country appeal will be removed. The High Court may overrule a decision by the Home Office that a claim is 'clearly unfounded' and in-country appeal right would then be gained.

The Immigration Appeal Tribunal (IAT)

An appeal from an adjudicator to the Immigration Appeal Tribunal requires the IAT to give permission to appeal on a point of law only, followed (if successful) by a hearing which can include consideration of factual and legal matters. There are no longer restrictions on who can apply for leave to appeal to the IAT against an unsuccessful adjudicator's determination. The Tribunal can re-determine the whole or part of the appeal itself, or remit the case to an adjudicator for rehearing.

The time limit for lodging an application for permission to appeal is 10 working days for appellants in the United Kingdom, five days if detained. An appellant outside the United Kingdom (for example, in entry clearance cases and in non-suspensive appeals), the time limit for lodging an application is 28 days.

Grounds of appeal must identify the alleged errors of law in the adjudicator's determination and explain why such errors made a material difference to the decision.

An appeal on a point of law in a Tribunal determination is made to the Court of Appeal. Permission to appeal must be obtained from the Tribunal or, if the Tribunal refuses permission, from the Court of Appeal itself.

Statutory review

Refusal to grant permission to appeal to the Tribunal or to challenge the grant of permission is by way of statutory review (not judicial review as previously).

An application for statutory review is:

- An application to the High Court, made within 14 days from receipt of the Tribunal decision
- On the papers only (ie there is no hearing)
- With no right of appeal to the Court of Appeal.

Legal aid is available (subject to the usual financial and merits tests) for both judicial and statutory review.

Fast track appeals

The new fast track appeals system that covers Harmondsworth cases (see above) came into effect on 10 April 2003. The Asylum Appeals (Fast Track Procedure) Rules 2003 govern time limits (which are shorter than the time limits in ordinary appeals) and also incorporate much of the ordinary procedure rules. At the time of writing, it applies potentially to all asylum claimants from: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Botswana, China, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somaliland, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Turkey, who will be detained at Harmondsworth while their application and appeal are dealt with. Other countries may be added.

The current processing time for fast track cases is about 19 days from the claimant's arrival at Harmondsworth to exhaustion of appeal rights. It is possible to make a detailed written request for the case to be taken out of the fast track.

The Legal Services Commission has set up a duty scheme for solicitors to represent persons who are processed through the fast track. The LSC contacts an approved solicitor directly and allocates a fast track case to him or her.

Glossary

Accommodation centre Still at pilot stage although it is intended that eventually these centres will house up to 3000 asylum seekers prior to a decision on their claim.

APIs Asylum Policy Instructions to Immigration Officers and other Home Office officials dealing with asylum claims. Available on the Home Office website.

Adjudicator Arbiter at first level of appeal structure for appeals against refusal of asylum, refusals against variation of leave, appeals where a breach of the Human Rights Act 1998 is alleged; appeal against refusal of entry clearance. There are appeals centres throughout the UK.

Administrative removal See Removal.

After entry applicant See in-country applicant.

Appeals Group IND department that deals with cases after an appeal has been filed against refusal. Formerly called the Appeals Support Section (ASS).

Appeals Procedure Rules Rules published in the form of statutory instruments, which specify how an appeal should be conducted.

Appellate Authority The name given to the court structures that have been established to hear immigration appeals.

Appropriate adult An adult person, usually a parent or relative, but where necessary another adult such as a social worker or member of the Refugee Council's Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seeker Panel, who supports a child or person with learning difficulties at official interviews. This person's role should not be confused with that of a legal adviser.

ARC Application registration card. The credit card sized card given to asylum seekers giving biographical details, photo and fingerprints.

Association Agreements Agreements between some Central and Eastern European countries and the EU that permit entry and residence in the EU states for purposes of self-employment. There are also Agreements, which give less rights, with Turkey and the Maghreb countries.

ASU See asylum screening unit.

Asylum One of the words used to mean refuge in accordance with the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees.

Asylum appellant A person whose asylum claim has been refused but has an appeal pending.

Asylum Policy Instructions See APIs.

Asylum Screening Unit The Home Office Department where in-country asylum seekers register claims for asylum. Fingerprints and photographs are taken for the ARC card and checks carried out as to the person's identity and means of entry into the UK. More detailed interviews may take place and there is always a separate interview for support.

Asylum seeker A person who has applied for asylum including those who may be entitled to protection under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Asylum Support Adjudicator Decides appeals – oral or written – against NASS refusal to support in some circumstances.

Authority to carry scheme A scheme requiring airlines and other carriers to obtain authority before bringing certain classes of passenger to the UK or face a penalty.

Bail Release from detention. A person in detention is usually able to apply for bail either to the Chief Immigration Officer (CIO bail) or to an Adjudicator. Bail can be made subject to reporting and residence restrictions.

Becket House/Status Park Two of the immigration service enforcement offices. Their duties include all aspects of enforcement: arrests, detention and release from custody, marriage interviews and reporting.

Ceasing to be an asylum seeker A person who had claimed asylum but has been refused and has no appeals pending.

Certificate/Certification/Certified cases Where a case is certified as clearly unfounded there will be no in-country appeal right. See also non-suspensive appeal rights.

Cessation Clauses The Refugee Convention (Article 1C) prescribes a number of circumstances where a refugee may cease to qualify for international recognition.

Chief Immigration Officer (CIO) A member of the Immigration Service. Inspector is the rank above, immigration officer the rank below.

Clandestine entrant Illegal entrants who enter the UK without passing through any form of immigration control eg in the back of a lorry.

CLR See controlled legal representation.

Controlled Legal Representation Means and merits tested free legal advice and representation granted by legal advisors who hold a contract with the Legal Services Commission.

Convention grounds A refugee has to have a well founded fear of persecution for one of the five grounds set out in the Refugee Convention: race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

Country in upheaval A country declared as such by the Secretary of State. A declaration has implications for nationals of that country who claim asylum.

Curtailment Where a person is served with a notice curtailing, ie bringing to an end, current leave. In the past it was usually accompanied by a decision to make a deportation order but is now likely to be accompanied by removal directions.

Deportation Order An order signed by the Secretary of State that a person be deported and prohibited from re-entering the UK. Since the coming into force of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 such Orders have been replaced with removal orders save where an application was made under the Regularisation Scheme for Overstayers prior to October 2000 and also in the case of criminals.

Designated Country A country designated by the Secretary of State as safe for asylum seekers to be returned to without their asylum application having been considered in the UK, if s/he travelled through that country on his/her way to the UK. Currently Norway, Switzerland, USA, Sri Lanka and Canada are designated countries.

Discretionary leave A short term leave granted where neither humanitarian leave, or refugee status or leave within the Immigration Rules is granted. One of the replacements of exceptional leave.

Dispersal Since the coming into force of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, applicants for asylum who need financial support and accommodation have to apply to the National Asylum Support Service and can be sent to places outside London.

Dublin Convention An agreement between all EU member states to delineate responsibility for determining asylum applications.

ECHR See European Convention on Human Rights.

EEA See European Economic Area.

Enforcement action Action that is taken by the IND to enforce removal from the United Kingdom. May be preceded by detention.

Entry Clearance Prior authority to enter the UK. Sometimes in the form of a visa. Functions as a leave to enter and includes details of any conditions and dates for which it is valid.

Entry Clearance Officer (ECO) The Officer at the British Post abroad who decides whether or not a person should be

granted an entry clearance to come to the UK. They can grant leave to enter prior to actually physically seeking entry to the UK; the conditions of leave will be imposed on the passport.

EU See European Union.

European Convention on Human Rights 1951 International instrument of the Council of Europe. The ECHR was incorporated into UK law by the Human Rights Act 1998.

European Union Previously the European Economic Community (EEC)/ European Community (EC). Countries are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, UK. Nationals of these countries and their family dependants have freedom of movement within the territory of the member states. As from 01.05.04 will also include Latvia, Estonia, Cyprus, Malta, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Poland. Citizens of Malta and Cyprus will have full freedom of movement rights throughout the EU. The other countries will be subject to transitional provisions, but will have full freedom of movement within the UK.

European Economic Area The EU member states plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Nationals of the EEA have freedom of movement rights within the territory of all these states.

Exceptional Leave To Enter/Remain (ELTE or ELTR) Permission to remain or enter the UK formerly given by the port or caseworker outside the immigration rules. Now replaced by humanitarian or discretionary leave or leave outside the rules.

Fast track appeals Asylum applicants from specified group of countries, whose claims are assumed to be simple to process, who are detained at Harmondsworth, interviewed and a decision taken within five days. Appeals are governed by the Immigration and Asylum (Fast Track Procedure) Rules 2003, take place very quickly and the determination promulgated within 24 hours.

Human Rights Act 1998 Came into force on 2 October 2000 when the ECHR was incorporated into United Kingdom law. Enables an appeal to be brought on the grounds that removal would be a fundamental breach of an individual's human rights.

Humanitarian leave Leave granted after a successful application that removal would breach the United Kingdom's obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 eg under Article 3 or 8.

Geneva Convention The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

Illegal entrant A person who is physically in the UK who has entered in breach of immigration laws, eg a visitor who actually came intending to work or study, a student who actually came intending to work, as well as someone who entered clandestinely, eg in the back of a lorry.

'Illegal immigrant' A term used by police and the tabloid press. Not a correct term in immigration law.

Immigration Appellate Authority (IAA) The branch of the Department for Constitutional Affairs that runs the immigration court system. There are hearing centres throughout the UK.

Immigration Appeal Tribunal (IAT) The second level of the appeal structure. Either party can apply for leave to appeal ie permission to appeal against the adjudicator (the first) decision *except* in certified cases when only the respondent ie the Home Office can apply.

Immigration Officer (IO) A member of the immigration service.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) The branch of the Home Office that deals with immigration, asylum and nationality issues.

Immigration Rules Rules made by the Secretary of State under powers given to him by Statute to control entry and stay in the UK of non-British nationals.

Immigration Service Part of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate of the Home Office which deals with entry at ports and enforcement ie removal.

In-country appeal An appeal during the course of which the appellant is permitted to remain in the UK.

In-country applicant A person who applies for a change in immigration status whilst in the UK whether lawfully or unlawfully present. Also used to identify an asylum applicant who has applied after having already entered the U.K. Such asylum applicants are, save for a few exceptions, not eligible for benefits other than that provided under NASS National Assistance.

IND See Immigration and Nationality Directorate.

Indefinite leave to remain/enter (ILR or ILE) The grant of indefinite leave to remain following variation of stay in the UK in compliance with various immigration rules or the grant of indefinite leave to enter on arrival in the UK. No time limits attached to stay in the UK but remain subject to immigration control. Two years absence will usually result in removal of status but it can also be lost after shorter periods away. Can be revoked but on limited grounds. Also referred to as settled status, permanent residence.

Induction centre Still at pilot stage but intended that eventually all asylum seekers will pass through such centres and be health screened prior to being granted temporary admission or formally detained.

Internal flight Also referred to as internal relocation. Where a person facing persecution in one part of their country may be able to relocate to another part of the country without facing similar treatment, he/she may be said to have an 'internal flight' option which may preclude him/her from an entitlement to refugee status.

IO See immigration officer.

IS96 See temporary admission.

Judicial review Administrative Court proceedings to challenge administrative decisions of the Home Office.

Juxtaposed controls Refers to reciprocal arrangements whereby the UK and another EEA member state carry out immigration controls in each other's territory.

Lawfully resident A person who has current permission to remain in the UK or is in the UK awaiting the outcome of an appeal.

Leave outside the Rules A residual form of leave to enter or remain in the UK outside the Immigration Rules. May be granted in limited circumstances where a person does not qualify for any other sort of leave.

Leave to enter The permission given at a port to a person to enter the U.K. It will normally be limited as to time and may have a prohibition as to working or receiving public funds.

Leave to remain The permission given to someone to extend an existing permission to stay in the UK. It may be limited as to time and may have a prohibition on working or claiming public funds.

Limited leave Permission to remain in the UK that is time-limited and sometimes with other conditions imposed, eg prohibition on working without permission.

LSC Legal Services Commission responsible for administering public funding for asylum and immigration work by issuing contracts to solicitors and not for profit organisations.

Lunar House, Croydon The name of the IND office in Croydon that takes decisions on the vast majority of immigration matters except leave to enter at a Port.

NASS National Asylum Support System established under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. Responsible for destitute asylum seekers who applied for asylum and/or became destitute after conclusion of all appeal procedures. Provides financial support and accommodation. The eligibility rules are very complex.

National assistance A shorthand term for the limited financial assistance that used to be administered by local authorities for asylum applicants who were not eligible for benefits administered by the DSS. Very few asylum applicants now receive this assistance.

NIAA 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

NI's Nationality Instructions available on the Home Office website.

Non-compliance refusal A refusal of asylum on the grounds that the asylum seeker has failed to comply with a direction made by the Home Office. If served with a refusal on non-compliance grounds s/he will have a right of appeal.

Non-state agent An agent of persecution who is not connected with the state eg a member of the local populace.

Non-suspensive appeal An appeal that can only be commenced outside the UK: appeal papers lodged within the UK will be invalid.

Oakington fast track Asylum applicants who have been detained at Oakington whose application is dealt with in 7–10 days.

Overstayer A person who was lawfully in the UK whose permission has now expired and is in the UK in breach of immigration rules and liable to removal.

Permanent residence Used to signify settled status. See indefinite leave to remain/enter.

Port The point of entry to the UK, eg Heathrow, Dover, Waterloo.

Port applicant An asylum applicant who applied for asylum at the Port on entry.

Post abroad The British Consulate/Embassy to which applications for visas/entry clearance to permit entry to the UK are submitted.

Public Caller Unit/Public Enquiry Office The IND office open to the public. Main office is in Croydon, other offices in Glasgow, Liverpool and Solihull.

Public funds Income support, job seekers allowance, family credit, child benefit, council tax benefit, emergency housing (ie housing provided under the homelessness provisions of the Housing Acts), housing benefit, Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Invalid Care Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance, Disability Working Allowance. It does not include eg student grants, NHS treatment.

Refugee status Recognition by the Home Office of an asylum seeker as a refugee under the 1951 Convention leads to the grant of indefinite leave to remain/enter. Bestows various rights eg family reunion, issue of travel documents.

Removal The procedure by which a person is sent away from the UK. No appeal from within the UK save where asylum has been claimed and refused or where it is alleged that removal would breach the Human Rights Act 1998.

Removal Centre formerly known as detention centres. Asylum applicants at all stages of procedure may be detained there.

Safe third country Asylum seekers who have links (for example, through family or previous stay) with a country that is considered safe (in that it will not return the asylum seeker to his or her home country without considering the claim) can be sent to the safe country without the UK considering the merits of the asylum claim.

Section 17 money A shorthand term used by immigration lawyers to identify support under s17 of the Children Act 1989 from local authorities to individuals with children.

Settlement/Settled Status See indefinite leave to remain/enter.

SEF Statement of Evidence Form. The form that is completed with details of the basis of claim for asylum. There are very strict time limits and failure to complete on time can lead to refusal on non-compliance grounds. Not all applicants for asylum are issued with one.

Statutory review A judicial process whereby a High Court Judge will decide on the papers whether to overturn a decision of the Immigration Appeal Tribunal to grant or refuse permission to appeal to the Tribunal from an adjudicator.

Subject to immigration control Any person who needs leave to enter or remain in the UK. The leave may be conditional on prohibiting recourse to public funds or have been granted leave as a result of an undertaking in connection with maintenance.

Temporary admission (TA) The person is permitted out of detention but is not considered to be in the UK for immigration purposes. Release from detention is authorised by the port and is often subject to conditions of residence, etc. A person on TA will be issued with an IS96 form.

Temporary release The person is released from detention pending removal proceedings, such release usually being subject to conditions of residence and reporting.

Third country A country which an asylum seeker has travelled through in order to get to the U.K. which is not the asylum seeker's country of origin, eg a Turkish asylum seeker travelling by rail to Waterloo may have come through the third country of France.

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Unlawfully resident A person who is in the UK either after his/her leave to remain has expired and who is now awaiting the outcome of an appeal, or who has entered the UK illegally.

Further reading

Challenging immigration detention: a Best Practice Guide
BID/ILPA/Law Society 2002

Making an asylum application: a best practice guide
ILPA 2003

Health Circular HC(82)15 para 20, updated in Statutory Instrument 306 (NHS Charges for Overseas Visitors) Regulations 1989 updated in circular HSC 1990/018 para 27 Dept of Health 1999 (Chapter 6)

www.bma.org.uk Access to health care for asylum seekers January 2001 (Chapter 6)

The Health of Refugee children. 1999 the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health and the King's Fund; *The Health of Refugees, A Guide for GPs* 1999 Levenson and Coker.
Both available from the King's Fund bookshop.

Consultation on proposed amendments to the 1989 Regulations, due to conclude end October 2003,
see www.doh.gov.uk/overseasvisitors
See also ILPA response www.ilpa.org.uk (Chapter 6)

Code of Practice for employers available from Home Office website also see s8 of the Asylum and Immigration and Asylum Act 1996 and s22 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (Chapter 6)

Employment of asylum seekers, letter Beverley Hughes to Andrew Mackinlay MP 03.11.06, EU Directive on Reception Arrangements for Asylum Seekers coming into force February 2005 also refers to employment of asylum seekers. (Chapter 6)

Learning and Skills Council www.lsc.gov.uk (Chapter 6)

Student financial support
www.dfes.gov.uk/studentsupport (Chapter 6)

UKCOSA manual (Chapter 6)

IAA gender guidelines www.iaa.gov.uk (Chapter 7)

Trafficking see Anti Slavery International, www.antislavery.org (Chapter 7)

UKCOSA website www.ukcosa.org.uk (Chapter 6)

Advisory Centre for Education website www.ace-ed.org.uk (Chapter 6)

AIRE website www.airecentre.org (Chapter 8, Chapter 4)

NACAB website www.adviceguide.org.uk (Chapter 1, Chapter 3)

www.iaa.gov.uk (Chapter 8)

www.oisc.gov.uk (Chapter 4)

Advice services for asylum seekers and refugees

Africa Educational Trust (AET)

38 King Street, London WC2E 8JR
020 7836 5075, 7836 7940

aet@boltblue.com www.africaed.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–1pm, 2pm–5pm.

Client group African refugees, asylum seekers and students.

Area served UK.

Services offered Advice on education and training for African students and refugees. Volunteering and mentoring project. Carries out and supports research studies into the needs of refugees and students from Africa. Provides grants and scholarships to African students and refugees. Education advice drop-in for women students Wednesday 2pm–4pm and men on Thursday 2pm–4pm.

How to contact Drop-in, phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Hausa and Twi.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets, stairs to 3rd floor.

ARIB – Africa Research and Information Bureau

2nd Floor, 5 Westminster Bridge Road,
London SE1 7XW

020 7928 8728, 020 7620 1430

arib@aol.com

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–5pm.

Client group African refugees and migrants. People concerned with development issues in Africa.

Area served UK.

Services offered Forum made up of African refugees and migrants focusing on human rights and welfare issues. Range of information and research about Africa and African refugees. Runs development education seminars. Publishes the Africa World Review. Develops education and employment projects in Africa with and for ex-combatants.

How to contact Phone or write for an appointment.

Languages spoken Ewe, Twi and other Ghanaian languages. French, Hausa and Swahili.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets.

Asylum Aid

28 Commercial Street, London E1 6LS

020 7377 5123 advice line

info@asylumaid.org.uk

www.asylumaid.org.uk

Opening hours Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 2pm–4.30pm advice line; Wednesday 9.30am–5.30pm

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served All London. Advice line – UK wide.

Services offered Legal advice and assistance for refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. Prioritises marginalised and vulnerable clients such as those refused asylum, women and asylum seekers with disabilities. Advice line, outreach services and visits to people in detention centres. Training for community groups and advice services. Campaigns on behalf of refugees and asylum seekers

How to contact Phone the advice line or contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Farsi, Kurdish (Sorani), Turkish, Spanish. Access to phone interpreting service.

Access Full wheelchair access, no adapted toilets, access to ground floor interview room. Lift. Home visits can be arranged for people unable to attend the office.

Asylumlink

109 Harefields, Oxford OX2 8NR

01865 516521

asylumlinkuk@aol.com

www.asylumlink.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9am–6pm

Client group Asylum seekers, including detainees.

Area served UK wide.

Services offered Advice and information on sources of help and support for asylum seekers and other immigrants, particularly from Africa. Assist with visa applications and extensions. Assistance with communication with solicitors, sureties and bail accommodation. Sessions at Campsfield House Immigration Detention Centre on 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month.

How to contact Phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters and Language Line.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets, 2" step at entrance.

AVID – Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees

PO Box 7, Oxted, Surrey RH8 0YT

01883 717275

coordinator@aviddetention.org.uk

www.aviddetention.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9am–5pm.

Client group Groups who visit immigration detainees.

Area served UK.

Services offered Umbrella organisation supporting visitors groups to immigration detainees. Provides training, a visitors handbook, a quarterly periodical with immigration legislation and policy updates. Supports visitors in providing information to detainees. Represents visitors groups and advocates on legal and legislative issues. Runs conferences and seminars.

How to contact Phone, email or write. Some out of hours emergency phone cover.

Access Contact by phone or letter. Conferences and meetings held at accessible venues.

Bail for Immigration Detainees – London Office

28 Commercial Street, London E1 6LS

020 7247 3590

bailforimmigrationdetainees@yahoo.co.uk

www.biduk.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday

1.30am–4.30pm.

Client group Immigrants and asylum seekers who are detained or in prison.

Area served England, Scotland and Wales, (Haslar and Campsfield are covered by Portsmouth and Oxford offices).

Services offered Prepares bail applications on behalf of immigrants and asylum seekers in detention or prison where solicitor is not covering bail. Bail applications are presented by barristers who represent detained immigrants and asylum seekers on a pro bono basis. Covers detention centres and prisons across the UK excluding Northern Ireland, Haslar and Campsfield, which are covered by covered by Portsmouth and Oxford BID.

How to contact Phone or write.

Languages spoken Volunteers speak a range of languages.

Access All contact is carried out over the phone and by letter.

Bail for Immigration Detainees – Oxford Office for Campsfield

BID Oxford, 53 West Way, Oxford OX2 0JE

0845 330 4536

info@bidoxford.org www.biduk.org

Opening hours Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11am–4pm

Client group Immigrants and asylum seekers who are or have been detained at Campsfield Detention Centre.

Area served Oxford.

Services offered Prepares bail applications on behalf of immigrants and asylum seekers in detention at Campsfield Detention Centre. Bail applications are presented by barristers who represent detained immigrants and asylum seekers on a pro bono basis. Bail advice sessions at Campsfield on 1st Wednesday of the month 10am–12 noon.

How to contact Phone, leave a message.

Languages spoken Chinese, French, Kurdish and access to interpreters.

Access Contact by phone. Visits people in detention.

Bail for Immigration Detainees – Portsmouth Office for Haslar

BID South, 247 Fratton Road,

Portsmouth PO1 5PA

023 9229 1916

bidsouth@bidsouth.fsnet.co.uk

www.biduk.org

Opening hours Tuesday to Friday 10am–4pm

Client group Immigrants and asylum seekers who are detained at Haslar Detention Centre.

Area served Gosport.

Services offered Prepares bail applications on behalf of immigrants and asylum seekers in detention at Haslar Detention Centre. Bail applications are presented by barristers who represent detained immigrants and asylum seekers on a pro bono basis.

How to contact Phone.

Languages spoken French, Spanish. Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets.

Black Women's Health and Family Support

1st Floor, 82 Russia Lane, London E2 9LU
020 8980 3503
bwhafs@btconnect.com

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5pm.

Client group Black women, children, young people and families.

Area served All London.

Services offered Promote the health of black women in London, particularly in relation to female genital mutilation. Advice and information on the health hazards of female mutilation. Health advocacy service. Counselling and HIV/AIDS prevention work. Promote research, organise workshops, seminars and conferences on women's health issues. (Formerly called London Black Women's Health Action Project).

How to contact Drop-in, phone or contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Somali, Arabic, Twi and Ga.

Access Full wheelchair access, no adapted toilets, lifts in building.

British Red Cross

9 Grosvenor Crescent, London SW1X 7EJ
020 7235 5454
information@redcross.org.uk
www.redcross.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9am–5.30pm.

Client group General public, refugees, people displaced by war and wanting to trace relatives or return home.

Area served UK and world-wide.

Services offered HQ for the British Red Cross. Range of practical health and social care services in the UK for vulnerable people in crisis. Helps in major emergencies. First aid for public events. International tracing service for families separated by war and message service where communications have broken down. Advice on family reunion, and sources of funds for family reunion.

How to contact Phone or write. Emergency out of hours service (telephone number on answerphone message).

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets.

British Red Cross – Refugee Unit

Aztec Row, 5 Berners Road, London N1 0PW
020 7704 5670

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5pm.

Client group Recently arrived refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served Greater London.

Services offered Services for recently arrived refugees and asylum seekers. Refugee orientation programme provides short term practical help and support to help refugees settle into a new area. Provide essential supplies of clothing. Information and signposting to other services.

How to contact Phone, call in, contact for an appointment, or by referral from another agency.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets.

Confederation of Indian Organisations (UK)

5 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7XW
020 7928 9889
cioheadoffice@aol.com

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5pm.

Client group The South Asian community and South Asian community groups.

Area served UK. Walking promotion for health project – Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark.

Services offered Umbrella body representing the South Asian community in the UK. Research and development of models of good practice. Helps the development of South Asian voluntary organisations. Vishwas Project helps Asian women with mental health needs in Southwark and Lambeth access information and support services. Health awareness and promotion project.

How to contact Contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Sylheti, Tamil and Urdu.

Access Limited wheelchair access, no adapted toilets.

Detainee Support and Help Unit

54 Camberwell Road, London SE5 0EN
020 7703 5435
info@dshu.org.uk www.dshu.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–5pm.

Client group Detainees, their families and friends.

Area served UK.

Services offered Support and information for detainees in detention centres and for their families and friends. Services include regular visits to detention centres through the UK, counselling and advice from an ex-detainee point of view, assisting with money queries, arranging visits to detention centres for detainees' families and friends, transporting detainees' belongings to and from detention centres.

How to contact Drop-in, phone or contact for an appointment.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets.

Detention Advice Service

308 Seven Sisters Road, London N4 2AG
020 8802 3422

das@detentionadvice.org.uk
www.detentionadvice.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5.30pm.

Client group Foreign nationals in UK prisons and detention centres.

Area served UK

Services offered Immigration advice and general advice and support to foreign nationals in UK prisons and detention centres. Advice and support for other agencies and community groups on casework with detainees and around detention issues.

How to contact Phone, email or write.

Languages spoken Language Line.

Access Visits occur in detention centres and prisons.

Dover Detainee Visitors Group

PO Box 366, Ashford TN27 0XQ
01233 840161

ewanmichie@aol.com

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9am–5pm.

Client group Detainees at Dover Immigration Removals Unit.

Area served Dover Immigration Removals Centre.

Services offered Volunteers visit and befriend detainees at Dover Immigration Removals Unit. Liaise with family members, contact solicitors and offer support. Detainees are visited weekly.

How to contact Phone.

Languages spoken French, Polish, Russian and access to interpreters.

Access Visits take place at Dover Immigration Removals Unit or contact by phone.

Evelyn Oldfield Unit

356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA
020 7700 0100 ext 226

administrator@evelynoldfield.co.uk
www.evelynoldfield.co.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5.30pm.

Client group Established, service-providing refugee community organisations.

Area served UK.

Services offered Information, advice, support and training on technical and managerial issues for service-providing refugee community organisations. Subjects covered include financial management, personnel issues, legal structures and charity law. Run a number of specialist forums including refugee mental health forum, West London women's forum, refugee coordinators forum. Consultancy and training service.

How to contact Phone or write.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets.

Foundation for Women's Health, Research and Development (FORWARD)

Unit 4, 765–767 Harrow Road,
London NW10 5NY

020 8960 4000

forward@forwarduk.org.uk
www.forwarduk.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5.30pm.

Client group Anyone needing advice, information or training on female genital mutilation.

Area served UK and Africa.

Services offered Advice, information and training on female genital mutilation (FGM). Can put women in touch with counsellors and medical care specifically for FGM. Campaign to promote awareness of FGM and to counter gender discriminatory practices that endanger the health of women and children.

How to contact Phone, email or write.

Languages spoken Access to Somali, Amharic and Arabic speaking interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Two steps at the entrance, stairs inside. Meetings can be arranged at accessible venues.

GHWARWEG Advice, Training and Careers Centre

5 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7XW
020 7620 1430

gharweg@aol.com www.gharweg.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5.30pm.

Client group African refugees and asylum seekers and people from other migrant communities.

Area served All London. ESOL classes
Elephant and Castle area only.

Services offered One stop centre providing training, support and advice for mainly African refugees and asylum seekers. Provides advice on housing, immigration, education and welfare rights. Legal advice service. Careers, employment and training services. IT, business technology. ESOL classes for people in Elephant and Castle area only. Translation and interpreting.

How to contact Drop-in, phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Ga, Hausa, Swahili, Twi, Yoruba and access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. Level entrance. Lifts to all floors.

Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit

1 Delaunays Road, Manchester M8 4QS
0161 741 2641 advice

gmiau@ein.org.uk

Opening hours Phone advice on Monday,
Wednesday and Friday 10am–4.30pm.

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers,
people seeking help on immigration issues.

Area served Manchester, Tameside, Bury and
surrounding areas, but not Trafford or Oldham.

Services offered Advice, telephone advice,
legal advice and representation on
immigration, nationality and asylum issues.
New cases taken on each Wednesday from
9.30am at advice session at 100 Cheetham Hill
Road, M8 9LE – 1st 10 cases taken on – bring
an interpreter if needed. Training and
campaigning on immigration, nationality and
asylum issues. Produces publications and
multi-lingual advice leaflets.

How to contact Drop-in to Wednesday advice
session or phone.

Languages spoken Punjabi, Urdu and access
to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted
toilets. Arrangements can be made to park
outside the office. Full access for wheelchair
users to ground floor (reception, interview
room, meeting room). Access to signers.

Immigration Advisory Service – Birmingham Central Office

Third Floor, King Edward House, 135a New
Street, Birmingham B2 4QJ

0121 616 3587 advice line

www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–2pm
advice line.

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers.
Anyone with an immigration or nationality
problem.

Area served West Midlands and North Wales.

Services offered Advice, information and legal
advice on immigration, nationality and asylum
issues. Telephone advice Monday to Friday
10am–2pm. Representation at immigration
appeals and tribunals.

How to contact Drop-in, phone or contact for
an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted
toilets. Steps to entrance. Lift to 3rd floor
offices. Can arrange an accessible venue for
wheelchair users.

Immigration Advisory Service – Cardiff

211a City Road, Roath, Cardiff CF24 3JD

029 2049 6662

iasuk@gn.apc.org www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5.30pm (5pm Friday)

Client group Immigrants and asylum seekers.

Area served South Wales, Gloucestershire,
Avon, Bristol, Somerset, Dorset, Devon,
Cornwall, Wiltshire.

Services offered Advice, information and legal
advice on immigration, nationality and asylum
issues. Representation at immigration appeals
and tribunals.

How to contact Phone, contact for an
appointment or write.

Languages spoken Bengali, Urdu and access
to interpreters.

Access Limited wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. Ramped entrance. Arrangements can be made to see people on the ground floor.

Immigration Advisory Service – Derby

Ground Floor Office, 49 Friar Gate,
Derby DE1 1DF
01332 371385
www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–12 noon.

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers, people seeking help on immigration issues.

Area served Derby and surrounding areas.

Services offered Advice, information and legal advice on immigration, nationality and asylum issues. Representation at immigration appeals.

How to contact Phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Immigration Advisory Service – Ebury

Unit 3 Ebury Business Centre,
161–163 Staines Road, Hounslow TW3 3JD
020 8607 6570
www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5pm.

Client group Anyone with problems with UK immigration, nationality and asylum law.

Area served Hounslow and surrounding areas.

Services offered Advice, information and legal advice on immigration, nationality and asylum issues. Outreach services in Slough – phone for more information.

How to contact Phone or contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Wide range of community languages, access to interpreters, Language Line.

Access No wheelchair access, have adapted toilets. Parking. Stepped entrance. Alternative office with ground floor interview rooms – 10 minutes walk.

Immigration Advisory Service – Glasgow

115 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 2SZ
0141 248 2956
glasgow@iasuk.org www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9am–5pm. Telephone service on Wednesdays
10am–11am, 2pm–4pm

Client group Immigrants to the UK, including asylum seekers.

Area served Scotland.

Services offered Advice, information and legal advice on immigration, nationality and asylum issues. Representation at immigration appeals and tribunals.

How to contact Phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Steps at entrance. Ground floor office.

Immigration Advisory Service – Hounslow

71 Grove Road, Hounslow, Middlesex TW3 3PR
020 8814 1115
allstaff.hounslowgrov@iasuk.org
www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5pm.

Client group Anyone with problems with immigration and nationality law.

Area served West and North London, Middlesex, Bucks, Berks, Surrey, Oxfordshire.

Services offered Advice, information and legal advice on immigration, nationality and asylum. Representation at immigration appeals, tribunals and casework for Judicial Reviews of appeals. General advice on immigration and asylum for people qualifying for CLS funded help.

How to contact Contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Chinese, Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu. Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Parking at front and rear of building. Ramped entrance.

Immigration Advisory Service – Leeds

Basement Suite, Coverdale House,
14–15 East Parade, Leeds LS1 2BH
0113 244 2460 advice line
leeds@iasuk.org
www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–4pm
advice line

Client group Anyone with problems due to UK immigration, nationality and asylum law.

Area served Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Humberside.

Services offered Advice, information and legal advice on immigration, nationality and asylum issues. Representation at immigration appeals. Telephone advice Monday to Friday 10am–4pm.

How to contact Call in or phone for an appointment, phone the advice line or write.

Languages spoken Urdu and access to interpreters.

Access Limited wheelchair access, adapted toilets. Car park. Steps to main entrance. Level entrance at rear of the building.

Immigration Advisory Service – Leicester

11 Millstone Lane, Leicester LE1 5JN
0116 262 9899
www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–12 noon drop-in or phone.

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers, people seeking help on immigration issues.

Area served Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Coventry.

Services offered Advice, information and legal advice on immigration, nationality and asylum issues. Representation at immigration appeals in Nottingham, Sheldon (Birmingham), Stoke on Trent and Milton Keynes.

How to contact Phone or drop-in.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Alternative arrangements can be made.

Immigration Advisory Service – Liverpool

Lower Ground Floor, Beetham House,
59/61 Tithebarn Street, Liverpool L2 2SB
0161 214 4310 Advice Line
www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–10am drop-in.

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers, people seeking help on immigration issues.

Area served Liverpool, Merseyside and Cheshire.

Services offered Advice, information and legal advice on immigration, nationality and asylum. Representation at immigration tribunals and appeals. Telephone advice line. Drop-in advice sessions for the first ten people arriving between 9.30am–10am. Surgery held at the Chinese Pagoda Community Centre, phone 0151 233 8833 for details.

How to contact Drop-in during set times or phone the advice line Monday to Friday 9.30am–12.30pm.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Two steps to entrance. Ground floor premises in an old listed building.

Immigration Advisory Service – London Office

County House, 190 Great Dover Street,
London SE1 4YB
020 7967 1200
advice@iasuk.org www.iasuk.org

Opening hours 10am–12.30pm phone advice

Client group Immigrants, asylum seekers, detainees, those with any immigration status, seeking to come to the UK.

Area served South and East London, East Anglia (not Peterborough), Essex, Kent, East Sussex.

Services offered Advice, information and legal advice on immigration, nationality and asylum issues. Telephone advice Wednesday mornings. Representation at immigration appeals.

How to contact Phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Clients need to bring their own interpreters for the 1st interview. Leaflets in different languages.

Access Full wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. Level entrance, lifts.

Immigration Advisory Service – Manchester

Lower Ground Floor Suite, Cloister House,
Riverside, New Bailey Street, Salford M3 5AG
0161 214 4310 advice line
manchester@ias.uk.org
www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday, Wednesday,
Thursday, Friday 8.30am–9.30am drop-in
(closed Tuesdays)

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers, people seeking help on immigration issues.

Area served Greater Manchester, Lancaster, Cumbria, Northumberland and North Wales.

Services offered Advice, information and legal advice on immigration, nationality and asylum issues. Representation at immigration appeals. Telephone advice line. Drop-in advice sessions for the first ten people arriving between 8.30am–9.30am. Surgeries held in Blackburn, Wigan, Bolton and Berwick – phone the Manchester office for days, time and addresses.

How to contact Drop-in during set times or phone the advice line Monday to Friday 9.30am–12.30pm.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Limited wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. NCP car park opposite office. Ramp at rear of building.

Immigration Advisory Service – Middlesbrough

First Floor Rear Suite, Newham House,
96–98 Borough Road, Middlesbrough TS1 2HJ
01642 219222

middlesbrough@iasuk.org www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–4pm.

Client group Anyone with problems under UK immigration, nationality and asylum law.

Area served North East England.

Services offered Advice, information and legal advice on immigration, nationality and asylum issues. Telephone advice Monday to Friday 10am–4pm. Representation at immigration appeals and tribunals and casework for Judicial Reviews of appeal decisions.

How to contact Call in or phone for advice, contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters by arrangement.

Access Limited wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. Step into building. Lift to 1st floor.

Immigration Advisory Service – Norwich

Advice Arcade, 4 Guildhall Hill,
Norwich NR2 1JH

01603 496623

www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9am–5pm
(Monday: 10am–12.30pm drop-in)

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers, people seeking help on immigration issues.

Area served Norwich, Norfolk, Ipswich, Suffolk.

Services offered Advice, information and legal advice on immigration, nationality and asylum issues. Representation at immigration appeals.

How to contact Phone, contact for an appointment or write. Contact for details of drop-in times at other offices.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Lift. Contact for access details for other venues.

Immigration Advisory Service – Oakington

Oakington Reception Centre, Block 26,
Rampton Road, Longstanton,
Cambridgeshire CB4 5EJ

01954 783333

www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday to Sunday
9.15am–5.15pm.

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers detained at Oakington Reception Centre.

Area served Detainees at Oakington Reception Centre.

Services offered Advice, information and legal advice on immigration, nationality and asylum issues for detainees at Oakington Reception Centre, Cambridgeshire.

How to contact Phone.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets.

Immigration Advisory Service – Peterborough

Gladstone House, 316–318 Gladstone Street,
Peterborough PE1 2BX

01733 555317

www.iasuk.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5pm, Tuesday 2pm–3pm phone
advice

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers, people seeking help on immigration issues.

Area served Peterborough postcodes.

Services offered Advice, information and legal advice on immigration, nationality and asylum issues by appointment. Telephone advice Tuesday 2pm–3.30pm. Representation at immigration appeals and tribunals. Advice on Judicial Reviews.

How to contact Phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters for LSC funded clients.

Access Limited wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Stairs to 1st floor office. Ground floor interview can be made available by arrangement.

International Social Service of the UK

Cranmer House, 39 Brixton Road,
London SW9 6DD
020 7735 8941
issuk@charity.vfree.com

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–1pm, 2pm–5.30pm

Client group General public, professionals.

Area served UK and international.

Services offered International social work organisation offering advice and information to members of the general public and professionals. Deals with problems that cross international boundaries. Provides a tracing service for relatives with overseas connections and advice for people wishing to return to their country of origin.

How to contact Phone, email or write.

Access Limited wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. On street parking in nearby road. Lift available. Large step at entrance.

Jesuit Refugee Service

112 Thornbury Road, Osterley,
Middlesex TW7 4NN
020 8847 3555
uk@jrs.net www.jrsuk.net

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–4pm.

Client group Asylum seekers in detention and those recently released from detention.

Area served Detention centres and prisons in London and the South East.

Services offered Visiting service for asylum seekers in detention, particularly those detained in Belmarsh, Campsfield, Harmondsworth, Winchester and Rochester. Also offer support and information for former detainees.

How to contact Call in, phone or write.

Languages spoken Access to speakers of a range of languages, depending on current visitors.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. 10 steps at the entrance.

Jewish Council for Racial Equality

33 Seymour Place, London W1N 5AU
020 8455 0896
jcore@btconnect.com

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9am–3.30pm

Client group Asylum seekers and refugees. Jewish people and non-Jews involved in race relations.

Area served UK, but most work London based.

Services offered Promotes equality of opportunity, the elimination of racial discrimination and good race relations. Campaigning work around the rights of refugees and asylum seekers. Produce an anti-racist pack for primary and secondary schools. Co-ordinate a project to help refugee doctors re-qualify. Race relations training for Jewish people.

How to contact Phone or write.

Access Not applicable. Contact by phone or letter only.

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI)

115 Old Street, London EC1V 9RT
020 7251 8706 general advice line
info@jcwi.org.uk www.jcwi.org.uk

Opening hours Tuesday and Thursday
2pm–5pm general advice.

Client group People with problems caused by immigration, refugee, nationality law, agencies working with them.

Area served UK.

Services offered Campaigns for justice in immigration, nationality and refugee law and policy. Undertakes strategic casework and acts as an expert training resource for other agencies who work in the field

How to contact Phone or write.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters and BSL.

Access Limited wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Level entrance. Wheelchair user access to reception only. Access to signers.

Kalayaan (Justice for Migrant Domestic Workers from Overseas)

St Francis Community Centre,
13 Hippodrome Place, London W11 4SF
020 7243 2942
kalayaanuk@aol.com

Opening hours Monday to
Friday 10am–5.30pm (to 8pm on Wednesdays,
emergencies only on Fridays)

Client group Migrant domestic workers of any nationality who are in the UK on domestic worker visas.

Area served UK.

Services offered Lobbying and campaigning for the rights of migrant domestic workers of any nationality who are in the UK on domestic

worker visas. Provide referrals to immigration lawyers and, where possible, support individual cases through the courts. Monthly legal advice surgeries (contact for details of times). Literacy classes. Self help group.

How to contact Phone for an appointment.

Languages spoken Bengali, Hindi, Tagalog and access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Office on 1st floor. Can arrange to meet people with disabilities in an accessible part of the building.

Kent Refugee Action Network

PO Box 294, Dover CT17 9GY

01304 201131

kran@actionnetwork.freesevice.co.uk

Opening hours Monday, Wednesday, Friday
10.30am–5pm

Client group Support groups working with refugees and asylum seekers. Refugees with leave to remain.

Area served Kent.

Services offered Umbrella organisation for independent voluntary support groups working with refugees and asylum seekers. Offer befriending, support and practical help, by sharing information and resources with groups working with refugees and asylum seekers. Mentoring project providing those with leave to remain or refugee status, help to integrate in the community.

How to contact Phone, email or write.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Steps at the entrance. Visits for people unable to attend the office. Meetings can be arranged at accessible venues.

London Detainee Support Group

77 Holloway Road, London N7 8JZ

020 7700 0606

ldsg@lineone.net

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–5pm.

Client group Immigration detainees in London.

Area served Greater London.

Services offered Volunteers befriend detainees and former detainees who are or have been held under the Immigration Act and offer support and referral to other services.

How to contact Phone.

Languages spoken Wide range of languages – depends on current volunteers and visitors.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Steps at entrance, on 2nd floor.

Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture

96–98 Grafton Road, London NW5 3EJ

020 7813 7777

clinical@torturecare.org.uk

www.torturecare.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday

9am–6.30pm appointments

Client group Victims of torture and organised violence.

Area served London and working with groups outside London in the UK.

Services offered Medical treatment, social assistance and psychotherapeutic support for survivors of torture. Documents evidence of torture for asylum purposes. Provides training for health professionals. Educates the public and decision makers about torture and its consequences. Aims to ensure that Britain honours its international obligations towards survivors of torture, asylum seekers and refugees.

How to contact Contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters and Language Line.

Access Full wheelchair access, ramped entrance at the rear of the building.

Midland Refugee Council

Fifth Floor, Smithfield House, Digbeth,

Birmingham B5 6BS

0121 622 8850

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5.30pm (Appointments only on Tuesdays)

Client group Asylum seekers and refugees who have ELR or ILR.

Area served West Midlands.

Services offered Advice for asylum seekers and refugees who have Exceptional Leave to Remain (ELR) or Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR). Services include advice and support around health, welfare, housing, education and training, employment and community development. Provide housing for refugees.

How to contact Contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters for most refugee community languages.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets.

Midland Refugee Council (Coventry)

Rooms 10 & 11 Harp Place, 2 Sandy Lane,
Radford, Coventry CV1 4DX
024 7663 1936

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–1pm, 2pm–5.30pm (Appointments
only on Tuesdays)

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served Coventry and Warwickshire.

Services offered Advice for asylum seekers
and refugees. Subjects covered include
housing support, welfare rights advice and
representation, health advice and advocacy,
community development, employment and
training, access to education, legal advice and
counselling.

How to contact Drop-in, phone or contact for
an appointment.

Languages spoken Farsi, French, Ibo, Kurdish,
Punjabi, Somali, Urdu and access to
interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted
toilets. Parking available. Ramped entrance.
Lift.

Migrant Advisory and Advocacy Service

Town Hall, High Street, Southall UB1 3HA
020 8571 7950
southalllegalcentre@msn.com

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9am–6pm.
Saturday 9am–1pm

Client group Migrants and refugees.

Area served Mainly Southall and London
Borough of Ealing, but also for all London and
UK.

Services offered Information, advice and
advocacy services for migrants and refugees on
immigration and nationality issues, asylum
and refugee law, welfare benefits, employment
and housing rights. Representation at appeals
and tribunals and in the County Court.

How to contact Call in, phone or contact for an
appointment.

Languages spoken Farsi, Hindi, Punjabi
and Urdu.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted
toilets. Level entrance. Lifts.

Migrant Helpline

The Rendezvous Building, Freight Services
Approach Road, Eastern Docks, Dover CT16 1JA
01304 203977
dover@migranthepline.org
www.migranthepline.org

Opening hours Monday to Sunday
8.30am–11pm

Client group Newly arrived asylum seekers
and their dependents.

Area served Kent.

Services offered Advice and support for newly
arrived asylum seekers. Induction centres
provide emergency accommodation and
support through detailed information briefings.
Briefings cover information about the locality,
National Asylum Support Service (NASS)
applications, the asylum process, rights and
responsibilities and dispersal procedures.
Advice on welfare, health and legal provision.
English classes.

How to contact Call in, phone or contact for an
appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted
toilets.

Migrant Helpline – Croydon

45 Friends Road, Croydon CR0 1ED
020 8774 0002

Opening hours Monday to Friday
10am–10.45pm

Client group Newly arrived asylum seekers.

Area served South London and Surrey.

Services offered Advice and support for newly
arrived asylum seekers. Emergency
accommodation whilst awaiting a move on
address. Help with National Assistance
Support Service (NASS) applications. Advice on
welfare and health issues. Advice on accessing
legal advice. English classes.

How to contact Drop-in, phone or contact for
an appointment.

Languages spoken Arabic, Dari, Dutch, Farsi,
French, Italian, Kurdish, Tamil and access to
interpreters.

Access Limited wheelchair access, adapted
toilets. Level entrance. Access to ground floor
only.

Migrant Helpline One Stop Service – Brighton

7a Church Street, Brighton BN1 1US
01273 671711

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–12
noon, 2pm–4pm

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served Brighton, Hove and West Sussex.

Services offered Advice and support for
refugees and asylum seekers. Information on

applying for asylum and on how to obtain legal advice. Help for newly arrived asylum seekers with applying for support from the National Asylum Support Service (NASS). Advice, information and advocacy on NASS, benefits, housing, education, health services. Outreach services in Crawley.

How to contact Call in, phone or contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets.

Migrant Helpline One Stop Service – Dover

89 Folkestone Road, Dover CT17 9SD

01304 203074

Opening hours Monday, Tuesday, Friday 9.30am–3.30pm, closed Wednesday, Thursday 9.30am–12.30pm.

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served Dover and surrounding areas in Kent.

Services offered Advice and support for refugees and asylum seekers. Help with finding accommodation. Advice on benefits, housing and employment issues. Help with accessing education and health services.

How to contact Drop-in, phone or write.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Steps down to entrance.

Migrant Helpline One Stop Service – Hastings

48 Havelock Road, Hastings TN34 1BE

01424 717011

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9.30am–1pm, 2.15pm–4.30pm.

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served East Sussex.

Services offered Advice and support for refugees and asylum seekers. Help with finding accommodation. Advice on benefits, housing and employment issues. Help with accessing education and health services. Weekly outreach service in Eastbourne.

How to contact Drop-in, phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets, stepped entrance.

Migrant Helpline One Stop Service – Margate

1 Cecil Street, Margate CT9 1NX

01843 292921

migrant@freeuk.com

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9.30am–3.30pm (to 12.30 on Thursdays)

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served Kent.

Services offered Advice and support for refugees and asylum seekers. Advice on benefits, housing and National Asylum Support (NASS) applications. Referrals to legal advice. Outreach services in Ashford, Canterbury and Gravesend.

How to contact Drop-in, phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Albanian, Czech, Dari, Farsi, French, Kurdish, Pashto and access to interpreters.

Access Limited wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. Level entrance. Home visits for people unable to attend the office.

Migrants Resource Centre

24 Churton Street, London SW1V 2LP

020 7834 2505 or 7834 6650

info@migrants.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–1pm, 2pm–5pm (emergencies only on Wednesdays)

Client group Migrant and refugee communities.

Area served All London.

Services offered Multi-lingual advice centre for migrants and refugees, giving advice on benefits and immigration issues. Education and training courses, including IT and English. Volunteering opportunities.

How to contact Make an appointment for advice, otherwise drop-in or phone.

Languages spoken Arabic, Bengali, Farsi, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Turkish. Interpreters for immigration matters.

Access Limited wheelchair access, adapted toilets. Level entrance, wheelchair user access to ground floor only.

Multi-Cultural Resource Centre

9 Lower Crescent, Belfast BT7 1NR

028 9024 4639

mcrc@mcrc-ni.org www.mcrc-ni.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9am–5pm. (Drop-in on Wednesdays 10am–12.30pm).

Client group Minority ethnic communities and individuals. Children and young people. Immigration detainees.

Area served Northern Ireland.

Services offered Resource centre for minority ethnic individuals and communities, refugees and asylum seekers. Community health/social wellbeing project. Women's drop-in and social support. Active citizenship project with volunteer mentors for vulnerable people and community groups. Outreach for immigration detainees in prison. Children and youth project, support for youth groups. Race relations training. Library.

How to contact Drop-in (Wednesday morning), phone or contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Arabic, Farsi, French, Mandarin, Portuguese, Spanish, Sylheti and Urdu.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Audio tapes for visually impaired.

National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns

1 Delaunays Road, Manchester M8 4QS
0121 554 6947 Enquiries
ncadc@ncadc.org.uk www.ncadc.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9am–5pm, emergency phone 6am–9pm, Saturday and Sunday emergency phone 6am–9pm

Client group People with immigration or asylum problems, families split up by deportation.

Area served UK.

Services offered Practical help and advice for people facing deportation on how to launch and run anti-deportation campaigns. Brings together families and individuals facing deportation. National meetings, public meetings and monthly social events. Lesbian and gay asylum seekers group. Offices in Manchester (0161 740 8206), London (020 7701 5197), Birmingham (0121 554 6947) and in the North East (01642 679298).

How to contact Email or write.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Venues for meetings vary, contact for details.

North of England Refugee Service – Bigg Market

19 Bigg Market, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 1UN
0191 245 7311

biggmarket@refugee.org.uk

www.refugee.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9am–4.30pm (to 1pm Wednesdays)

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers, refugee community groups.

Area served Newcastle, Gateshead, South Tyneside.

Services offered One stop service for asylum seekers providing advice, support and referrals. National Asylum Support Services (NASS), including help with housing and subsistence, help with accessing health, education, support services and legal assistance. Development work with refugee community groups. Campaigning work and liaison with other agencies to improve understanding and policy on refugee issues.

How to contact Drop-in, phone or contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Stairs to first floor offices.

North of England Refugee Service – Newcastle upon Tyne

2 Jesmond Road West,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 4PQ
0191 245 7311

info@refugee.org.uk www.refugee.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9am–5pm

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers, refugee community groups.

Area served Newcastle, Gateshead, South Tyneside.

Services offered Advice and information for refugees and asylum seekers. Issues dealt with include housing rights, homelessness, finding accommodation, benefits, education, training and employment. Community development work. Interpreting services for outside agencies – charges made.

How to contact Drop-in, phone or contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Stepped entrance. Home visits for people unable to attend the office.

North of England Refugee Service – Sunderland

Ground Floor, 19 Villiers Street,
Sunderland SR1 1EJ
0191 510 8695
sunderland@refugee.org.uk
www.refugee.org.uk

Opening hours Monday, Thursday, Friday 9.30am–4.30pm, Tuesday 11am–4.30pm, Wednesday 9.30am–1pm.

Client group Asylum seekers and refugee community groups.

Area served Sunderland.

Services offered One stop service for asylum seekers providing advice, support and referrals. National Asylum Support Services (NASS), including help with housing and subsistence, help with accessing health, education, support services and legal assistance. Development work with refugee community groups. Campaigning work and liaison with other agencies to improve understanding and policy on refugee issues.

How to contact Call in or phone.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Steps at entrance. Home visits or meetings in a more accessible venue can be arranged.

North of England Refugee Service – Tees Valley

27 Borough Road, Middlesbrough TS1 4AD
01642 217447
teesvalley@refugee.org.uk
www.refugee.org.uk

Opening hours Monday 10.30am–5pm, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9.30am–5pm, Wednesday 9.30am–1pm

Client group Asylum seekers and refugee community groups.

Area served Tees Valley.

Services offered One stop service for asylum seekers providing advice, support and referrals. National Asylum Support Services (NASS), including help with housing and subsistence, help with accessing health, education, support services and legal assistance. Development work with refugee community groups. Campaigning work and liaison with other agencies to improve understanding and policy on refugee issues.

How to contact Call in or phone.

Languages spoken Interpreting and

translation services for most languages.

Access Limited wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. Access to reception area and interview room, narrow corridors. Home visits or meetings in a more accessible venue can be arranged.

North of England Refugee Service – Wallsend

3rd Floor, Forum House, The Forum,
Wallsend NE28 8LX
0191 200 1199
wallsend@refugee.org.uk
www.refugee.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9am–5pm (to 12.30pm Wednesdays, to 3pm on Fridays)

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served Wallsend, North and South Shields, Newcastle East.

Services offered One stop service for asylum seekers providing advice, support and referrals. National Asylum Support Services (NASS), including help with housing and subsistence, help with accessing health, education, support services and legal assistance. Development work with refugee community groups. Campaigning work and liaison with other agencies to improve understanding and policy on refugee issues.

How to contact Drop-in, phone or contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Parking. Lift. Home visits for people unable to attend the office.

Northern Refugee Centre

Carver House, 2 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS
0114 275 3114
info@nrcentre.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–12 noon, 2pm–4pm advice

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served Some projects cover Yorkshire region, others are Sheffield only.

Services offered Advice and support for refugees and asylum seekers on a range of issues including welfare benefits, housing, health, education, employment, asylum. Community development for refugee groups. Information service open to the general public. Library on refugee issues. Volunteering programme.

How to contact Phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Limited wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. Heavy front door. All visitors must use entryphone to gain entrance. Lift to 3rd floor offices. Home visits for people who cannot attend the office because of disability.

Praxis

Pott Street, London E2 0EF
020 7729 7985

advice@praxis.org.uk www.praxis.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–5pm.

Client group Refugees and migrants.

Area served All London, but mainly Inner London.

Services offered Range of services for refugees and displaced people, particularly people from Asia, Africa and Latin America. Advice and casework on housing, welfare benefits and education. Support the development of refugee community groups. Education and training unit for migrants and refugees, focusing on retraining nurses and midwives. Counselling for young French speakers and Somalis.

How to contact Contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, French, Italian, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog and Thai.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Level entrance. Lift to all floors. Home visits for people unable to attend the office.

Prisoners of Conscience Appeal Fund (POC)

Unit 3, The Stable Yard, Broomgrove Road,
London SW9 9TL
020 7738 7511

info@prisonersofconscience.org

www.prisonersofconscience.org

Opening hours

Monday to Friday 9am–5pm

Client group Prisoners of conscience – people who have been persecuted for their conscientiously held beliefs.

Area served UK and overseas.

Services offered One-off relief grants for prisoners of conscience – people who have been persecuted for their conscientiously held beliefs, provided they have not used or advocated violence. Relief grant applications must be made through a third party referral agency, eg a solicitor, community organisation or refugee group.

How to contact Phone, email or write.

Languages spoken French and Spanish.

Access Contact by phone or letter only.

Reading Refugee Support Group

First Floor, RISC, 35–39 London Street,
Reading RG1 4PS

0118 950 5356

rbrsg@btclick.com

Opening hours Monday 10am–1pm

appointments. Closed Tuesdays and Fridays.

Wednesday 10am–1pm drop-in, Thursday

10am–1pm drop-in, 2pm–4pm appointments.

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served Reading, West Berkshire, Wokingham, Bracknell Forest, Windsor and Maidenhead, Slough.

Services offered Range of services for refugees and asylum seekers. Help with accessing health care, English language courses, social services, accommodation and benefits.

Advocacy and help with job seeking.

Translation and interpreting. Also offer

befriending and social events. Aim to raise

public awareness of asylum issues and give

talks in schools and churches.

How to contact Drop-in, phone or contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Yes – full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Ramp to car park at rear of building. Wheelchair user access at rear.

Redress

3rd Floor, 87 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HJ
020 7793 1777

redresstrust@gn.apc.org www.redress.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9am–5pm.

Client group Torture survivors, their families and representatives.

Area served UK and international.

Services offered Helps torture survivors to obtain justice and reparation. Advocacy, advice, referrals, casework, litigation support and representation. Research and information on issues around reparation and access to justice. Awareness raising on issues relating to torture.

How to contact Phone, write or contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Lift to 3rd floor offices.

Refugee Action – Head Office and Choices

3rd Floor, The Old Fire Station, 150 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8SB
020 7654 7700

www.refugee-action.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5.30pm.

Client group Refugees, asylum seekers and community groups across the UK.

Area served UK.

Services offered Head office for Refugee Action. Regional offices provide support services for asylum seekers and refugees across the UK. A range of projects include services focusing on mental health issues, the needs of women and young people and advice for refugees considering a voluntary return to their country of origin. Development for refugee groups.

How to contact Call in or phone for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Steps at entrance. Lift inside. Arrangements can be made to visit people who are unable to attend the office.

Refugee Action – Directorate of Development and Integration

240a Clapham Road, London SW9 0PZ
020 7735 5361

www.refugee-action.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–5pm.

Client group Refugee groups.

Area served All London.

Services offered Support for refugee groups in developing their services. Training, consultancy, advice and advocacy for refugee community groups. Works to raise awareness of refugee issues, influence policy and campaigns for refugee rights.

How to contact Phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets.

Refugee Action – East Midlands (Leicester)

Melbourne Centre, Melbourne Road,
Leicester LE2 0GU
0116 261 4830

www.refugee-action.org.uk

Opening hours Monday, Tuesday, Thursday
10am–12.30pm, 2pm–3.30pm, Closed
Wednesdays, Friday 10am–12.30pm.

Client group Asylum seekers receiving or eligible for NASS support.

Area served Leicestershire and Northamptonshire.

Services offered Advice and information for asylum seekers receiving or eligible for support under the National Asylum Support Service (NASS). Help with access to health care including GPs and dentists. Signposting and contacts for local organisations including education, faith and community groups. Development and support for refugee community groups.

How to contact Phone for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Parking for disabled drivers. Lift.

Refugee Action – East Midlands (Nottingham)

3rd Floor, Albion House, 5–13 Canal Street,
Nottingham NG1 7EG
0115 941 8552

www.refugee-action.org.uk

Opening hours Monday, Tuesday, Thursday
10am–1pm, 2pm–4pm; closed Wednesdays;
Friday 10am–1pm.

Client group NASS supported asylum seekers only.

Area served Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire.

Services offered Advice and information for asylum seekers supported under the National Asylum Support Service (NASS). Advice on issues relating to NASS and other sources of financial help for people moving on from NASS. Signposting to refugee and community organisations, faith groups, sources of advice and help. Women's group and drop-in. Information for refugees considering returning to their country of origin.

How to contact Drop-in or phone.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. Lift in building.

Refugee Action – Leeds

Suite 7, Floor C, Hanover Walk, Josephs Well,
Leeds LS3 1AB

0113 244 5345

www.refugee-action.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5pm.

Client group Refugee community
organisations. Asylum seekers and refugees.

Area served Leeds and surrounding areas in
Yorkshire and Humberside.

Services offered Development support for
refugee community organisations. Helps
groups to deal with long term settlement
issues. Employment project for refugees and
asylum seekers – works closely with other
agencies to help with access to employment
and training. Choices project offers advice and
counselling to help refugees decide if they
should return to their country of origin.

How to contact Phone for an appointment or
write.

Access Full wheelchair access, no adapted
toilets. Level entrance. Lift to 2nd floor
premises.

Refugee Action – North West (Liverpool)

34 Princes Road, Liverpool L8 1TH

0151 702 6300

Opening hours Monday 11am–4pm, Tuesday,
Wednesday, Friday 10am–4pm. Thursday, new
arrivals only 11am–4pm.

Client group Newly arrived and dispersed
asylum seekers, refugee community groups.

Area served Merseyside and West Cheshire.

Services offered Advice for asylum seekers
who are newly arrived or recently dispersed
into the area. Drop-in advice on the National
Asylum Support Service (NASS) Fridays
1pm–3pm at Great Homer Street Medical
Centre, 25 Conway St, Liverpool L5 3SF.
Welcome project links asylum seekers with
volunteers, who help new arrivals with
settlement and access to services. Youth
project. Support for refugee community groups.

How to contact Call in mornings, phone or
make an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted
toilets. Venues vary. Contact for details.

Refugee Action – North West (Manchester)

Dale House, 35 Dale Street, Manchester M1 2HF

0800 917 2719 advice line

www.refugee-action.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday
2pm–4.30pm phone (closed Wednesdays).

Client group Newly arrived asylum seekers.

Area served Greater Manchester and
surrounding areas.

Services offered Advice and support for newly
arrived asylum seekers in the Greater
Manchester area. Help with securing
emergency accommodation. Drop-in at 1 Tariff
Street, Manchester M1 2HF. Signposting to
other services. Choices project offers advice
and counselling to help refugees decide if they
should return to their country of origin
voluntarily.

How to contact Phone or write.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters by
arrangement.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted
toilets.

Refugee Action – South Central (Southampton)

50 Oxford Street, Southampton SO14 3DL

023 8024 8130

www.refugee-action.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–12
noon, 2pm–4pm drop-in (closed Wednesdays).

Client group Asylum seekers needing NASS
support.

Area served Hampshire, Dorset.

Services offered Support services for asylum
seekers who require support from the National
Asylum Support Service (NASS) system.
Reception centre for new arrivals. Help with
access to local services, advocacy and support
with appointments. Liaise with local refugee
support services.

How to contact Drop-in or phone to make an
appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access, no adapted
toilets.

Refugee Action – South West (Bristol)

36 Stokes Croft, Bristol BS1 3QD

0117 989 2100

bristol@refugee-action.org.uk

www.refugee-action.org.uk

Opening hours Monday, Tuesday, Thursday drop-in 10am–12.30pm, 2pm–3.30pm. Closed Wednesday. Friday drop-in 11am–12.30pm.

Client group Recently arrived asylum seekers and refugee community groups.

Area served Bristol and South West England.

Services offered One stop advice service for recently arrived asylum seekers supported under the National Asylum Support Service (NASS). Advice and information on financial support, accommodation, travel assistance to asylum interviews. Help with access to legal advice, health and education and other local services. Development support for community groups Advice line for advisers 0117 989202.

How to contact Call in, phone, make an appointment or write. Advisers – phone the advice line or leave a message.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Small step at the entrance. Home visit for people who are unable to attend the office or an appointment at a suitable and fully accessible venue.

Refugee Action – South West (Plymouth)

Virginia House, 40 Looe Street,

Plymouth PL4 0EB

01752 519860

www.refugee-action.org

Opening hours Monday 12.30pm–3.30pm drop-in, Appointments only Tuesday and Friday. Closed Wednesday. Thursday 9.30am–1pm drop-in

Client group Asylum seekers who are being supported by the National Asylum Support Scheme (NASS).

Area served Devon and Cornwall.

Services offered One stop advice service for asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS). Advice on accommodation, vouchers, travel assistance for asylum interviews, access to legal advice, health, education and other local services.

How to contact Drop-in Monday and Thursday or phone for an appointment. Emergencies – call in for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Wheelchair user access by arrangement. Adapted toilets elsewhere in building.

Refugee Action – West Midlands

Wardlow Road Centre, Wardlow Road, Nechells, Birmingham B7 4JH

0121 464 3548

www.refugee-action.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9am–5pm

Client group Refugees and asylum seeker community organisations.

Area served Birmingham and surrounding areas in the West Midlands.

Services offered Assists the development of refugee community organisations. Promote better service provision for refugees and asylum seekers.

How to contact Phone, make an appointment or write.

Languages spoken French, Russian, Spanish and access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets.

Refugee Council

3 Bondway, London SW8 1SJ

020 7820 3085 information line

info@refugeecouncil.org.uk

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Opening hours Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10am–1pm information line

Client group People working with refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served All London/UK. Regional offices in Leeds, Ipswich and Birmingham.

Services offered Head office for the Refugee Council. Telephone advice on education, employment, housing, health and welfare issues on 020 7346 6777 (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 10am–4pm, Wednesday 2pm–4pm). Information service available on subscription basis. Produces briefings, fact sheets, research reports and leaflets in refugee community languages. Builds links with refugee community organisations.

How to contact Phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters for advice sessions.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets. Main entrance has 2 sets of large, heavy double doors and 2 steps up from pavement level. Lifts to all floors.

Refugee Council – Eastern Region

1st Floor, 4–8 Museum Street, Ipswich IP1 1HT
01473 221560
www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–1pm, 2pm–4pm (closed Wednesdays)

Client group Newly arrived asylum seekers, asylum seekers awaiting asylum decisions, refugees and those with ELR.

Area served Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire.

Services offered Advice, phone advice and referral for asylum seekers. Assists newly arrived asylum seekers with advice on options for support, including applications to the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) for support and accommodation. Advice for asylum seekers on issues related to NASS, accommodation, sources of immigration advice, health care, employment and language lessons. Emergency clothing provided.

How to contact Phone for advice during opening hours, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Albanian, Farsi, French and access to interpreters.

Access Limited wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. Parking available with prior notice. 3 steps at front entrance, 1 at rear. Lifts in building.

Refugee Council – London One Stop Service

240–250 Ferndale Road, Brixton,
London SW9 8BB

020 7346 6777 advice line

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–1pm, 2pm–4pm advice line (advice line only on Wednesday)

Client group Newly arrived asylum seekers and vulnerable refugees.

Area served All London.

Services offered Advice, helpline and day centre for refugees/asylum seekers. Asylum Support Unit assists newly arrived asylum seekers with applications for the National Asylum Support Service (NASS), help with access to health and social and educational services. Day centre provides free meals, laundry and showers, clothing, baby and maternity supplies. Specialist mental health team.

How to contact Drop-in during office hours. Phone the advice line.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Level entrance to ground floor premises.

Refugee Council – Oakington Reception Centre

Building 25, Oakington Barracks, Longstanton,
Nr Cambridge CB4 5EJ

01954 789444

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9.30am–5.30pm. Saturday and Sunday 9.30am–5.30pm

Client group Asylum seekers detained at Oakington Reception Centre.

Area served Detainees at Oakington Reception Centre.

Services offered Help for asylum seekers detained at Oakington Detention Centre. Advice on the Oakington process and possible outcomes, help with access to legal advice, health care, on-site education services, religious facilities and contacting friends and relatives. Help with applications to the National Asylum Support Service for asylum seekers leaving Oakington and advice on support services on release.

How to contact 1st interview arranged on arrival. At other times phone or ask Group 4 staff to contact the office.

Languages spoken Extensive range of languages.

Refugee Council – Panel of Advisers for Unaccompanied Refugee Children

240–250 Ferndale Road, Brixton,
London SW9 8BB

020 7582 4947 advice line

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 9.30am–5.30pm advice line.

Client group Asylum seekers/refugees under 18 years old and in the UK without parents or close relatives.

Area served All London and UK.

Services offered Services for asylum seekers/refugees under 18 years old and in the UK without parents or close relatives. Advice line and drop-in service offer support and advice on issues including sources of support, legal advice, finding accommodation, housing

problems, health and education. Hot meals, clothing and showers. Some children/young people may be allocated an adviser. Social activities.

How to contact Drop-in Monday to Friday 9.30am–5pm. Phone the advice line.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Level entrance. Lift to 1st and 2nd floors.

Refugee Council – Training and Employment Section

164 Clapham Park Road, London SW4 7DE
020 7501 0990

training@refugeecouncil.org.uk

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

How to contact Monday to Friday 9.30am–5.30pm.

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served London.

Services offered Advice about training, education and employment for refugees and asylum seekers. Language, basic skills and work related training including IT and accountancy. Jobsearch support and mentoring scheme to enable refugees to obtain paid work. Open Learning Centre for computer training and ESOL training. Evening classes when available. Travel expenses for courses, assessments and interviews.

How to contact Phone for more information, to enrol or to arrange an appointment with a careers adviser.

Languages spoken French, Spanish, German, Russian. Access to BSL signers.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Parking for disabled people. Ramped entrance, lift. BSL signers available.

Refugee Council – West Midlands Asylum Seekers Support Team

1st Floor, Smithfield House, Digbeth,
Birmingham B5 6BS

0121 622 1515 Helpline

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–12 noon, 2pm–4pm helpline (closed Tuesdays)

Client group Asylum seekers and refugees who are destitute and require support from NASS.

Area served West Midlands.

Services offered Advice, helpline and referral for asylum seekers. Assists newly arrived asylum seekers with advice on options for

support, including applications to the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) for support and accommodation. Advice for asylum seekers on issues related to NASS, accommodation, sources of immigration advice, local services including befriending and advocacy services.

How to contact Phone the helpline or arrange an appointment.

Languages spoken Albanian, Bosnian, Farsi, French, Kurdish, Pashto, Urdu and access to interpreters.

Access Limited wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. Small ramp to ground floor, lift.

Refugee Council – Yorkshire and Humberside (Leeds)

Ground Floor, Hurley House, 1 Dewsbury Road,
Leeds LS11 5DQ

0113 386 2210 advice line

refugeecouncil.leeds@charity.vfree.com

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

How to contact Monday to Friday 9am–4pm drop-in (closed Wednesdays)

Client group People claiming asylum and refugee community groups.

Area served Yorkshire and Humberside.

Services offered Drop-in advice service, telephone advice and referral for asylum seekers. Assists newly arrived asylum seekers with advice on options for support, including applications to the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) for support and accommodation. Advice for asylum seekers on NASS, accommodation, domestic violence, sources of immigration advice.

How to contact Drop-in or phone.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Flat entrance. Ground floor premises.

Refugee Education Training and Advisory Service – RETAS

14 Dufferin Street, London EC1Y 8PD

020 7426 5801 advice line

retas@education-action.org

www.education-action.org

Opening hours Tuesday and Thursday 10am–12.30, phone 2.30pm–5pm.

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served All London.

Services offered RETAS provides education, training and employment advice for refugees and asylum seekers. Drop-in advice Tuesday and Thursday 10am–12.30pm for first 12 people

only. Advice line Tuesday and Thursday 2.30pm–5pm. Business start up and jobsearch courses. Drop-in for refugees/asylum seekers who are qualified health professionals Tues and Thurs 2–4pm. Part of Education Action International.

How to contact Drop-in, phone, email or write.

Languages spoken Croatian, French, Serbian, Spanish and Swahili. Interpreters by prior arrangement.

Access Limited wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. Wheelchair user access by arrangement, via the rear entrance. Home visits for refugee women and people with disabilities.

Refugee Education Training and Advisory Service – RETAS (Leeds)

335 Roundhay Road, Harehills, Leeds LS8 4HT

0113 240 7320 advice line

retas-leeds@education-action.org

www.education-action.org

Opening hours Monday to Friday

9.30am–5pm.

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served Yorkshire.

Services offered Advice for refugees and asylum seekers on education, training, re-training and employment. Focuses particularly on helping refugee professionals re-train and re-qualify. Part of Education Action International.

How to contact Phone for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access No wheelchair access or adapted toilets.

Refugee Legal Centre

Nelson House, 153–157 Commercial Road,
London E1 2DA

020 7780 3220 advice line

rlc@refugee-legal-centre.org.uk

www.refugee-legal-centre.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday

9.30am–1.30pm advice line (closed Thursdays)

Client group Asylum seekers and refugees.

Area served All London and South East England.

Services offered Legal advice and representation for refugees and asylum seekers and advocacy at asylum appeals.

Advice for detained asylum seekers on 0800 592398 between 9.30am–1pm on Mon, Tues, Weds, Fri. Out of hours telephone advice for

asylum seekers threatened with removal from the UK 6pm–7am on 07831 598057.

How to contact Call the advice line, contact for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Level entrance. Lifts to all floors.

Refugee Legal Centre – Dover Office

Charlton House, Dour Street, Dover CT16 1AT
01304 203003

RLC@Refugee-Legal-Centre.org.uk

www.refugee-legal-centre.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10am–4pm.

Client group Asylum seekers.

Area served South East England.

Services offered Advice and assistance for asylum seekers in the south east of England. Visits for prisoners or detainees who are asylum seekers. Representation and appeals work.

How to contact Phone or visit to arrange an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Limited wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. Small step at front of building. Lift to office.

Refugee Legal Centre – Leeds Office

5 Butts Court, Leeds LS1 5JS

0113 245 2819

RLC@Refugee-Legal-Centre.org.uk

www.refugee-legal-centre.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday

9.30am–4pm (closed Thursdays).

Client group Asylum seekers.

Area served Leeds and surrounding areas.

Services offered Advice, assistance and representation for asylum seekers.

How to contact Phone or call in to arrange an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Refugee Legal Centre – Oakington Office

Oakington Barracks, Longstanton,

Nr Cambridge CB4 5EJ

01954 783300

rlc@refugee-legal-centre.org.uk

www.refugee-legal-centre.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Sunday

10am–4pm.

Client group Asylum seekers detained at Oakington Reception Centre (mainly new arrivals in the UK).

Area served Detainees at Oakington Reception Centre.

Services offered Legal advice, advocacy and representation for asylum seekers who have no legal representative and who are detained at Oakington. (Asylum claims considered to be straightforward on the basis of nationality are processed at Oakington.)

How to contact Phone.

Languages spoken Extensive range of languages.

Access Visits take place in the interview block at Oakington.

Refugee Women's Association

The Print House, 18 Ashwin Street,
London E8 3DL
020 7923 2412

rwa@womensassociation.freemove.co.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–5.30pm.

Client group Women refugees and asylum seekers.

Area served All London.

Services offered Advice and support for refugee women on gaining access to training, employment and education. Mentoring and jobsearch advice. English language classes and childcare support. Travel and childcare expenses for classes and training. Networking and development work with refugee women. Development work with refugee women's groups. Bi-monthly newsletter.

How to contact Call in, phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Farsi, Serbian, Turkish and access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Parking at front and rear with ramps. Lift to all floors, with ramps on each floor.

Scottish Refugee Council – Edinburgh

1st Floor, Wellgate House, 200 Cowgate,
Edinburgh EH1 1NQ
0131 225 9994

info@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Opening hours Monday, Wednesday, Friday
10am–1pm

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland.

Area served Whole of Scotland – offices in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Services offered Advice, information and support with settlement for asylum seekers and refugees. Advice services on issues including the National Asylum Support Service (NASS), education and housing. Campaigning and training. Work towards a co-ordinated approach to refugee settlement.

How to contact Call in or phone for an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets. Ramped entrance, lift.

Scottish Refugee Council – Glasgow

5 Cadogan Square, 170 Blythswood Court,
Glasgow G2 7PH

0800 085 6087 freephone advice line

info@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday
9.30am–1pm, 2pm–4pm (closed Wednesday mornings)

Client group Refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland.

Area served Whole of Scotland – offices in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Services offered Advice, information and support with settlement for asylum seekers and refugees. Drop-in services on Wednesdays: One stop shop 1pm–4pm for advice and support on the National Asylum Support Service, access to health care, legal advice and other issues; housing advice 9.30am–1pm; education advice 10am–4pm. Campaigning and training. Work towards a co-ordinated approach to refugee settlement.

How to contact Phone the advice line, call in or make an appointment.

Languages spoken Access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access and adapted toilets.

UKCOSA The Council for International Education

9–17 St Albans Place, London N1 0NX

020 7107 9922 Student Advice Line

enquiries@ukcosa.org.uk

www.ukcosa.org.uk

Opening hours Monday to Friday 1pm–4pm
phone advice

Client group International/overseas students and professionals working with them.

Area served UK.

Services offered Advice and telephone helpline for international students and prospective students studying at post-secondary level. Subjects covered include financial aid, benefits, sources of funding, fee status, immigration, rights as a European Economic Area student. Information, publications and training for professionals working with international students.

How to contact Phone or write.

Welsh Refugee Council

Phoenix House, 389 Newport Road,
Cardiff CF24 1TP
029 2048 9800

info@welshrefugeecouncil.org

www.welshrefugeecouncil.org

Opening hours Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 10.30am–12.30pm, 2pm–3.30pm. Closed Wednesday. Friday 10.30am–1pm.

Client group Asylum seekers, refugees and refugee community groups.

Area served Wales.

Services offered Advice, support, casework and advocacy for asylum seekers and refugees. One stop services provide help with National Asylum Support Service (NASS) applications, advice on accommodation, travel assistance for asylum interviews, benefits, housing, health, immigration and education. Development support for refugee community groups. Translation service. Offices in Newport, Swansea and Wrexham.

How to contact Call in, phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Languages spoken Arabic, French, Somali, Sudanese, Urdu, Welsh and access to interpreters.

Access Full wheelchair access, no adapted toilets. Parking available. Ramped entrance. Interview rooms and toilets on ground floor.

Other useful organisations

Advice Services Alliance (ASA)

12th Floor New London Bridge House,
25 London Bridge Street
London SE1 9ST
Phone 020 7378 6428
Fax 020 7407 6822
info@asauk.org.uk
www.asauk.org.uk

Umbrella organisation for independent advice services in the UK. ASA hosts forums, seminars and conferences on behalf of its members. Produces mailings, written briefings and guidance, and respond to government policy initiatives in the advice and legal services field.

Advice UK

12th Floor, New London Bridge House,
25 London Bridge Street, London SE1 9ST
Phone 020 7407 4070
Fax 020 7407 4071
general@adviceuk.org.uk
www.adviceuk.org.uk

Co-ordinating body for independent advice centres, with a membership of around 900 agencies across the UK. Provides training, information, publications, consultancy and recruitment services for members.

Amnesty International UK

99–119 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4RE
Phone 020 7814 6200
Fax 020 7833 1510
info@amnesty.org.uk
www.amnesty.org.uk

International organisation involved with appeals and campaigns against human rights violations. Carries out educational activities about human rights, promoting the values contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international agreed human rights standards. Undertakes research and action focused on stopping grave abuses of human rights.

Association of Independent Advice Centres – Northern Ireland

303 Ormeau Road
Belfast BT7 3GG
Phone 028 9064 5919
Fax 020 9049 2313
info@aiac.net
www.aiac.net

Umbrella organisation for independent advice centres in Northern Ireland. Promotes and co-ordinates their work and provides information about local specialist and generalist advice services for members of the public.

Asylum Support Adjudicators

Christopher Wren House, 113 High Street,
Croydon CR0 1QG
Phone 020 8688 3977
Fax 020 8688 6075
www.asylum-support-adjudicators.org.uk

Independent body which considers appeals against refusal of termination of NASS support. Do not deal with asylum claims, or any other immigration matters, and can only consider appeals against a refusal or termination of support by NASS.

Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG)

94 White Lion Street, London N1 9PF
Phone 020 7837 7979
Fax 020 7837 6414
staff@cpag.org.uk
www.cpag.org.uk

Campaigns against poverty amongst children and families with children. Publishes handbooks and welfare rights bulletins for advisers and the general public. Phone advice (020 7833 4627) and training for advisers on benefits.

Citizens Advice

Myddleton House, 115–123 Pentonville Road,
London N1 9LZ
Phone 020 7833 2181
Fax 020 7833 4371
www.citizensadvice.org.uk

National co-ordinating body providing free, impartial and confidential advice through local Citizens Advice Bureaux in England and Wales.

Citizens Advice Northern Ireland

Regional Office, 11 Upper Crescent,
Belfast BT7 1NT
Phone 028 9023 1120
Fax 028 9023 6522
enquiries@niacab.org
www.citizensadvice.co.uk

Northern Ireland office for the network of Citizens Advice Bureaux. Provides support and training for the local CABx and information about local bureaux.

Citizens Advice Scotland

Spectrum House, 2 Powder Hall Road,
Edinburgh EH7 4GB
Phone 0131 550 1000
www.cas.org.uk

Supports a network of advice services throughout Scotland. Administration only service at this office – for advice contact local CABx, which can be found on the website.

Commission for Racial Equality

St Dunstan's House, 201–211 Borough High Street, London SE1 1GZ
Phone 020 7939 0000
info@cre.gov.uk
www.cre.gov.uk

Conducts research and provides information on racial discrimination. Assists with fighting racial discrimination through the courts and works closely with a network of local Racial Equality Councils.

Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations – CEMVO

Boardman House, 64 Broadway,
London, E15 1NG
Phone 020 8432 0000
Fax 020 8432 0319
enquires@emf-cemvo.co.uk
www.ethnicminorityfund.org.uk

Operational arm of Ethnic Minority Foundation. Supports the work of ethnic minority voluntary organisations, assists with management, development and acts as a broker for funding. Finds professionals who are able to sit on committees and boards, supports training to MBA level. Mentoring scheme. Database of organisations and professionals who can contribute to the sector.

Equal Opportunities Commission

Arndale House, Arndale Centre,
Manchester M4 3EQ
Phone 0845 605 5901
info@eoc.org.uk
www.eoc.org.uk

Works to remove unlawful sex discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity for women and men. Provides advice to anyone wanting help with issues involving sex discrimination and equal pay.
Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

Equality House

7–9 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast BT2 7DP
Phone 028 9050 0600
information@equality.org
www.equality.org

Works towards the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of sex, religion, race and disability. Gives information to anyone who brings a complaint to the Commission. General advice on other discrimination or harassment in the workplace.

Immigration Appellate Authority

The Arnhem Support Centre, PO Box 6987,
Leicester LE1 6ZX
Phone 0845 6000 877
www.iaa.gov.uk

Tribunal which hears appeals against decisions made by the Home Secretary (and his/her officials) in asylum and immigration matters.

Language Line

Swallow House, 11–21 Northdown Street,
London N1 9BN
Phone 020 7520 1430
Fax 020 7520 1450
info@languageline.co.uk
www.languageline.co.uk

Telephone interpreting in over 100 languages through direct dialling or conference calls. Available for public sector and voluntary organisations by subscription. Subscribers pay a management charge and charges per minute.

Law Centres Federation

Duchess House, 18–19 Warren Street,
London W1T 5LR
020 7387 8570 020 7387 8368
info@lawcentres.org.uk
www.lawcentres.org.uk

National umbrella organisation for the development and support of Law Centres. Encourages the development of publicly funded legal services for those most disadvantaged in society. Promotes good Law Centre practice in the delivery of legal services to the community. Does not offer legal advice.

Legal Services Commission

www.legalservices.gov.uk

Public body created under the Access to Justice Act 1999 to replace the Legal Aid Board.

Responsible for the development and administration of the Community Legal Service and the Criminal Defence Service.

www.justask.org.uk

Community Legal Service website with a directory of approved solicitors, advice agencies and information providers in England and Wales. Downloadable leaflets on key areas of law.

Migrant Organisations Development Agency (MODA)

87 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HJ

020 7840 0637

020 7840 0793

info@moda.org.uk

www.moda.org.uk

Co-ordination and support for migrant community organisations and other minority ethnic community groups. Provides technical, managerial and developmental support to enhance the sector's capacity to deliver quality services to their communities and develop sustainable community projects.

Multi-Lingual Interpreting Service

Chase Business Centre

39–41 Chase Side

London, N14 5BP

020 8242 5557

020 8242 5559

Mlistd@aol.com

Interpreting and translation services in and around London and the UK for voluntary and statutory sector agencies. Costs vary per hour for interpreting, (lower rates for voluntary organisations). Covers over 100 languages.

National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

Regent's Wharf, 8 All Saints Street,
London N1 9RL

Phone 0800 279 8789 help desk

Fax 020 7713 6300

ncvo@ncvo-vol.org.uk

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk

Umbrella body for the voluntary sector in England. Provide information and advice through the helpdesk, publications and networks. Represent the interests of member organisations to the government, the Charity Commission etc.

Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner

Fleetbank House, 2–6 Salisbury Square,
London EC4Y 8JX

Phone 020 7211 1500

Fax 020 7211 1553

www.oisc.gov.uk

Independent public body set up under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. Responsible for ensuring that all immigration advisers fulfill the requirements of good practice. Website intended for immigration advisers and their clients and for anyone wanting to know more about OISC's work. Please note the OISC does not give advice on immigration and asylum.

Refugee Women's Legal Group

c/o ILPA, Lindsey House,

40–42 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6JN

www.rwlg.org.uk

The Refugee Women's Legal Group (RWLG) was established at the beginning of 1996 by individuals and organisations concerned about the impact of changes in immigration law on women seeking asylum in the UK. Central among its aims is the development of a gendered perspective on refugee law and policy.

The aim of the website is to provide practitioners and others working with refugee women access to appropriate sources of information and support to assist in the presentation of individual cases. Please note that the RWLG does not provide direct advice and assistance to those seeking asylum in the UK.

Shelter

88 Old Street, London EC1V 9HU
020 7505 4699
020 7505 2030
info@shelter.org.uk
www.shelter.org.uk

Campaigns on housing issues for people who are homeless or badly housed. Research on housing issues, lobbying. Network of Housing Aid Centres. Training on housing and related issues.

Terrence Higgins Trust

52–54 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8JU
Phone 020 7831 0330
Fax 020 7242 0121
info@tht.org.uk
www.tht.org.uk

Services for people affected by HIV/AIDS. National helpline 0845 1221 200. Information and advice centre. Gay men's and African people's health promotion teams. Community support including buddies befriending services. Complementary therapies.

The Monitoring Group

14 Featherstone Road, Southall, UB2 5AA
Phone 0800 374618 Freephone,
020 8843 2333 Admin
Fax 020 8813 9734
www.monitoring-group.co.uk
admin@monitoring-group.co.uk

Advice, legal advocacy and support for victims of racial harassment and police misconduct. 24 hour helpline. Free legal advice available on Wednesday 5.30pm–7pm on a first come first serve basis. Offices also in Devon and Nottingham.