



Home Office

Funding to Local Authorities Financial Year 2018/19

Home Office Funding:
Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children
(UASC)

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1. Scope

- 1.1 The Home Office has been reviewing the current funding arrangements for local authorities caring for UASC. Whilst the outcome of the review is concluded, the existing arrangements, as set out in this instruction, will remain in place. If the review results in any changes to the current arrangements, a revised funding instruction will be published.
- 1.2 This document sets out the terms under which the Home Office will make funding available to local authorities in respect to their costs of supporting unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) during the financial year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, subject to any changes that may result through the funding review. The document should be read in conjunction with the UASC LA Funding Excel workbook, which contains the relevant forms (Annexes A & B) and notes for their completion, and with the National UASC Transfer Protocol.

2. Definition

- 2.1 A UASC is defined as an individual, who is under 18 when the asylum application is submitted, is not being cared for by an adult who by law or custom has responsibility to do so, is separated from both parents and has applied for asylum in the United Kingdom in his/her own right. All children in local authority care and being accommodated by the local authority who satisfy these criteria may be included in an application for funding unless they fall into one or more of the exclusion categories listed below.
- 2.2 For the purposes of this funding agreement an unaccompanied child resettled under the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme will also be included within the definition of UASC within this instruction
- 2.3 For the purposes of this funding agreement the definition of a UASC does not include someone who arrived in the UK on any other grounds that provides the LA with a basis on which funding may be claimed from the Home Office.

3. Exclusions

- 3.1 The following children are excluded:
 - a) Children who have the nationality of an EEA State – including those who have been granted British Citizenship
 - b) Children who marry or form a civil partnership
 - c) Children of a UASC

- d) Applicants who are receiving asylum support from the Home Office are not eligible under this funding agreement. Local authorities are expected to ensure that they do not claim the UASC funding for individuals supported under other mechanisms

4. Reimbursement 2018/19

- 4.1 Payments for each eligible UASC will be at the rates set out in the table below. A “legacy” case is a UASC who entered the UK on or before 30 June 2016 and who has not been transferred to another local authority under the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). National rates apply to UASC who either entered the UK on 1 July 2016 or who entered before that date but were subsequently transferred to another local authority through the NTS:

Category	£ daily
Legacy UASC Under 16	£95.00
Legacy UASC 16/17	£71.00
National Rate UASC Under 16 (UK arrivals from 1 July 2016)	£114.00
National Rate UASC 16/17 (UK arrivals from 1 July 2016)	£91.00

- 4.2 If a local authority’s actual expenditure (for all eligible UASC supported) is less than a sum calculated by applying the standard rates, payments will be capped at the level of actual expenditure.
- 4.3 The Home Office should be notified at the earliest opportunity if the local authority expects its actual expenditure to be lower than would be allowed under the standard rates in order to avoid overpayments.

5. Cessation of payment

- 5.1 The Home Office will automatically cease payments under this Funding Instruction the day before the UASC turns 18:
- 5.2 Payment will also cease in the following circumstances:
- a) When a child is absent or in long term care (e.g. missing from local authority care/ hospital) for more than 28 days consecutively. In these circumstances the local authority must promptly inform the relevant contact(s) immediately and reflect this on the application for payment form (Annex A). If the child returns to the local authority the Annex A should be updated. When the child is absent for a short period of time, that is for 28 days or less, the funding may be payable during the absence period. If a UASC is absent for a consecutive period of 28 days funding will automatically cease.

- b) If the UASC is placed in a Young Offenders Institute (YOI), the local authority must promptly inform the relevant contact(s) and reflect this on the application for payment form (Annex A). If the child returns to the local authority the Annex A should be updated. When the child is in a YOI for a short period of time, that is for 28 days or less, the funding may be payable during the absence period

6. Transfers and notifications

- 6.1 Where responsibility for a UASC is transferred between local authorities through the NTS, funding eligibility passes from the entry local authority to the receiving local authority from the day the UASC transfers into the care of the receiving authority. The costs of the transfer will, unless mutually agreed between the authorities, and evidenced to the Home Office, be treated as borne by the receiving local authority.
- 6.2 Under the terms of the NTS protocol, local authorities are expected to continue to notify the Home Office of each relevant change in their supported UASC population by sending the relevant Unique Unaccompanied Child Record proforma to the UASC transfer team as set out in the [transfer protocol](#).

7. Data reconciliation and payments

- 7.1 Local authorities are required to complete a bi-monthly application, **by the 15th of each bi-monthly period**, for payment in form set out in Annex A, which includes up to date accurate details of each supposed child and the support days applied for.
- 7.2 Specific instructions for the completion of an Annex A are included in the UASC LA funding Excel workbook. The Annex A should only be submitted to the UASC LA Funding team via the Home Office's secure data transfer portal, "MoveIT DMZ" to ensure compliance with 1998 Data Protection Legislation and GDPR.
- 7.3 Where a UASC becomes looked after by a local authority before the child has registered their asylum claim with the Home Office, the local authority should ensure that all asylum claims from children are registered as soon as possible. Where there is a gap of more than twelve weeks between the dates on which a local authority claims to be looking after a child and the date on which the child registers his/her asylum claim, the local authority must provide evidence of:
 - a) the steps it has taken to register the child's asylum application; and
 - b) how it has been supporting the child since the relevant start date.
- 7.4 The April 2018 Annex A application for payment shall be a new submission, and not simply a continuation of the last monthly submission in the 2017/18 financial year. Subsequent Annex As must clearly highlight any additions and updates to the

previous month's application. The UASC LA Funding team will reconcile this data every month against Home Office records.

- 7.5 The monthly Annex A for payment must be received by the Home Office by **no later than the 15th of the month following the month to which the application relates**; late returns will result in payment being delayed. The submission must contain the data for the latest period, e.g. data received on 15 February must contain December & January data. Payments will be withheld if Annex A applications are not submitted on a bi-monthly basis.
- 7.6 Once the information on the Annex A has been reconciled, local authorities will be advised of the individuals that will be paid for and the number of days. In some cases it will be necessary to seek further information from local authorities. Where this happens local authorities will be notified that these cases are 'under review' until it has been clarified that the claim made is eligible for funding under the terms of this Funding Instruction. Payments will reflect the number of children agreed for support for the relevant period, with adjustments made at a later stage for those cases which are 'under review', if the further information submitted shows that the individuals are, in fact, eligible. Any evidence to resolve anomalies, including 'Not Valid' forms and 'Merton-compliant' age assessments, must be forwarded by local authorities to the UASC LA Funding team within two weeks of that month's payment being received. Failure to provide 'Not Valid' information forms within this timescale will result in future payments being delayed. The UASC LA Funding team will aim to conclude all under review cases within 60 days.
- 7.7 A maximum of 28 days' funding will be payable (i.e. from the start of care) where a prompt Merton-compliant age assessment is conducted and the person claiming to be a child is found to be over the age of 18.
- 7.8 Local authorities are required to submit a local authority age assessment report or, at the very least an 'Age Assessment Information Sharing Proforma' for confirmation of all age assessments (which is on the ADCS website - ADCS Link). The proforma sets out the minimum information required to inform the Home Office of the outcome of the age assessment and to ensure that it is Merton and case law compliant. Payments cannot be made by the Home Office to local authorities until the age assessment has been completed and the required information has been received.
- 7.9 Local authorities will have the opportunity to make representations if they believe that they have not received the funding to which they are entitled to under the terms of this Funding Instruction. Any discrepancies regarding the amounts paid must be notified by the relevant local authority to the UASC LA Funding team within a month of the Annex A response being sent, following reconciliation against Home Office records. Back payments for individuals not promptly included on the Annex A will only be agreed where exceptional circumstances are shown.

- 7.10 Payments will be made by BACS using the account details already held by the Home Office for payments in previous years. If the local authority's bank details change, it must immediately email the new information to:
UASCLAFundingTeam@homeoffice.gov.uk.
- 7.11 Payments will be referenced "unique regional code/regions name/year/work stream/POA/month/LA Name". For example, the payment made for the period 1st April – 31st December will be referenced as "UASC Asylum 18/19 POA Mth 9". Local authorities should advise their cashiers' department accordingly.
- 7.12 At the end of the financial year, final checks will be carried out to ensure that the payments already made accurately reflect the number of agreed support days. Payments made as a result of monthly applications are to be regarded as payments on account, which will be finalised when the final claim (which shall be in the form set out in Annex B) is confirmed by the Home Office. The final claim forms (Annex B) and specific instructions for its completion are included in the UASC LA funding Excel workbooks for each of the two types of funding i.e. UASC Legacy and National Rate. An electronically signed Excel version of the final claim, together with an unsigned Excel spreadsheet (this is because some scanned copies cannot be filed) must be returned **on 1 August 2019** by email to:
UASCLAFundingTeam@homeoffice.gov.uk. No paper copy is necessary.

8. Audits

- 8.1 Local authorities should record expenditure in their accounting records under generally accepted accounting standards in a way that the relevant costs can be simply extracted if required. Throughout the year, the UASC LA Funding team will work with local authorities to ensure the accuracy of claims, thereby reducing the need for audits at year-end.
- 8.2 Visits may be made from time to time by the Home Office or its appointed representatives, including National Audit Office, where HO feels it necessary to conduct a visit we will provide advanced notification of who will be visiting. Whilst there is no requirement for submission of detailed costings, Local authorities must be able to provide the costs for individual cases, if required, and will be expected to justify and explain costs, where necessary.

9. Contact details

- 9.1 For queries relating to this Funding Instruction or the submission of Annex A payment applications, please email your UASC LA Funding Team contact. If your query relates to the Annex B, please email
UASCLAFundingTeam@homeoffice.gov.uk.

10. 2018/19 Timetable

10.1 For the 2018/19 financial year the following timetable will apply:

Period	Annex A Submission Deadline	Payment Received by LA
April & May 2018	15 June 2018	31 August 2018
June & July 2018	15 August 2018	31 October 2018
August & September 2018	15 October 2018	31 December 2018
October & November 2018	15 December 2018	28 February 2019
December & January 2019	15 February 2019	30 April 2019
February & March 2019	15 April 2019	31 July 2019*

* To allow for final claim to be submitted

Annexes

The annexes to these instructions are contained in the UASC LA funding Excel workbook with the following contents:

- Notes – Annex A
- Annex A (monthly claim)
- Notes – not valid form
- Not valid form
- Classifications