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# Welcome Pack

for arrivals on  
the Afghanistan  
Locally Employed  
Staff Scheme

This publication was withdrawn on 6 November 2023



## Foreword from the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom



It is my privilege to be the first to wish you the very warmest of welcomes to the United Kingdom.

The United Kingdom owes a debt of gratitude to all the Afghan people who worked alongside the British Government and risked their lives in Afghanistan alongside our Armed Forces. Standing side by side with the British Government, you have shared and endured the hardships of this effort. Your contribution to our work in Afghanistan has been exceptional. We have a moral obligation to recognise the risks that you have faced, and it is our duty to reward your efforts by offering you and your family the safety and sanctuary of a home in the United Kingdom.

Some of those already evacuated, include people who have assisted UK efforts in Afghanistan and stood up for UK values such as democracy, women's rights, freedom of speech and rule of law; and vulnerable people such as women and girls at risk, and members of minority groups.

We are honoured that you have chosen to accept this offer and make the United Kingdom your home.

This pack has been written to support you and your family in settling in and beginning a new life. It is only right that you should be welcomed here and that from day one you feel able to treat this country as your home. I know that in time, you will feel at home here, and that life in the United Kingdom will provide you and your family with new opportunities and horizons. I also know that you will want to share this country's language and culture and traditions, and to understand its history.

Your safety and right to live a full and contented life are the guiding principles for this guide and this offer.

I extend wholehearted thanks for your service and wish you and your family all the very best as you start life in the United Kingdom

**Foreword from Lord Richard Harrington,  
Minister of State for Refugees**

We are committed to fulfilling our moral obligation to those who have served this country, vulnerable people under the ACRS scheme and eligible British nationals. Bringing you to safety and supporting you to build a life here in the UK is a priority of our Government and the British people.



We recognise how complex it can be to leave your country and we will do everything in our power to help you take full advantage of the opportunities available to you in the United Kingdom.

It is our hope that in time the United Kingdom will feel like your home and that you will live life here with a deeply felt sense of belonging in your local community.

After some time you will be able to apply for permanent residence in the United Kingdom. This means you can start laying the foundations to build a successful life and rewarding future here.

This guide is here to help you find the information and support you need to help build that life and home here, from housing and employment to education, health and community groups.

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# Welcome Pack for arrivals from Afghanistan on the Afghanistan resettlement schemes

This Welcome Pack applies to those arriving in the UK under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP), Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), Ex-Gratia Scheme (EGS) and eligible British nationals.

As an introduction to life in the UK, this guide contains useful descriptions of the responsibilities we have to all groups in our society, explanations of processes to navigate everyday living, and links to several resources to assist in taking advantage of the opportunities available in UK.

Although more detailed information about specific services or regions may be available through your local council or community support groups, it is hoped that the resources in this pack will be a useful starting point to seek further information from essential services. The content reflects the latest information at the point of publication. It will be kept under constant review, and when new information becomes available, such changes will be reflected in an updated version.

The content of this pack is designed to ensure you have information that's needed for you to establish life here in the UK. In some sections advice is specific to England. If you are based in Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales, there will be weblinks for where you can find information that is relevant for these nations.

All general information for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland can be found here:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk>

<https://www.gov.scot/>

<https://gov.wales/>

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## Glossary

**Accident and Emergency Department** – A medical treatment facility in a hospital specialising in emergency treatment for patients. The department provides treatment for illnesses and injuries which require immediate attention and, in some cases, may be life-threatening. These departments operate 24 hours a day and patients often arrive by ambulance following a call to the emergency 999 telephone number.

**Biometric Residence Permit** – Is proof of evidence of your right to live, work and study in the UK. This can be used as proof of identity when opening a bank account or renting a property. The electronic chip holds information such as name, date of birth and place of birth. It will also have your photograph, fingerprints, and your immigration status. You can work whilst you wait for your British Residence Permit.

**Bridging hotel / accommodation** – Temporary accommodation where you will be housed whilst you wait to be moved into more permanent housing.

**Child Benefit** – A payment made to a parent or guardian of a child or children by the government every four weeks. You will be entitled to receive this benefit if you have a child or children under the age of 16 or under the age of 20 if they stay in approved education or training.

**Citizens Advice** – An independent charity specialising in providing confidential advice to help people with legal problems, debt management, housing and other problems in the United Kingdom. This is a free service with offices in most areas of the country.

**Council Tax** – A tax paid to the local council to fund services within the area. The tax is based on the value of the house and the number of people living in it. The rate is a fixed amount depending on the value and is reviewed every 12 months.

**Debit Card** – A card issued by a bank allowing the holder to transfer money electronically from their bank account when making a purchase.

**Direct Debit** – An arrangement made with your bank that allows a third party to transfer money from a person's account on agreed dates typically to pay bills.

**Direct Payment** – A system to allow you to receive cash payments from your local council. If the local council decides you are entitled to community care services, a direct payment will allow you to arrange your own care services.

**Disability Benefits** – A range of disability related financial support which includes payments, grants, tax credits and benefits. Your local employment centre (Job Centre Plus) will be able to help you with these.

**Education** - there are 6 stages of education in the UK:

- early years or nursery (under 5 years old),
- infant (5 – 7 or 8 years old)
- junior (up to 11 or 12 years old)
- secondary (11 or 12 up to 16 years old)
- further education (16 – 19 years old)

- higher education (post 18 years old)

**Emergency Services** – The police, fire and rescue and ambulance service are all called using an emergency telephone number which in the UK is 999. You will be asked which service you need, and your call will be directed to the correct agency.

**English for Speakers of Other Languages Classes (ESOL)** – Classes to help you learn or improve your knowledge of the English language.

**General Practitioner (GP)** – A medical doctor based in your community that treats patients with minor or chronic illnesses and will refer patients with serious conditions to specialist consultants in a hospital.

**Help to Claim** – This service is provided by Citizens Advice and is confidential advice on how to claim Universal Credit

**Homelessness** – a person is classed as homeless if they have no accommodation in the UK. A person is also classed homeless if they have accommodation but cannot live there for example because of violence or has been evicted

**Home fee status** – The amount of money you will pay for university / higher education courses

**Job Centre Plus** – A government funded employment agency and social security office found in most towns and cities. Their aim is to help people to find employment in the UK and they are also responsible for all benefit claims.

**Letting agents** – A letting agent is responsible for leasing houses/flats for private landlords, finding prospective tenants and very often collecting the rent on behalf of the landlord.

**Local Councils** – A body of people elected to manage the affairs of a town, county or district rather than the state. The council provides vital services such as social care, schools, housing and waste collection.

**Medical Exemption Certificate** – People with certain medical conditions, pregnant women and women who have had a baby in the last 12 months can get free National Health Service prescriptions with a valid exemption certificate. You must complete a form to apply for this benefit.

**National Careers Service** – A government funded agency providing careers information, advice, learning and training in your career. This service is for anyone aged 13 years and over.

**National Health Service (NHS)** – A government funded national medical and health care service that everyone in the UK can use without being asked to pay the cost of the service. This is funded by the National Insurance contribution tax in the UK.

**National Insurance (NI) Number** – A unique 'personal' account number ensuring all National Insurance (social security) contributions and tax are recorded on your individual tax account. Everyone over the age of 16 has one and you will need to provide your National Insurance (NI) number when you start a job.

**National Rail** – The national train service providing travel information and services around the UK. Although run by privately owned train companies, you can buy tickets across the whole network.

**Protection for Whistleblowing** – If you are a worker, and you are concerned over something you feel is wrong such as someone's health and safety is in danger, you are protected by law. This can be raised in confidence with your employer, and you should not be treated unfairly or lose your job.

**Right to Work** – The legal right to work once in the UK. All Afghans under the ARAP and ACRS schemes have the legal right to work full-time if they are over 18 years old.

**School Term Times** – They vary depending on your local area, however, they tend to follow this pattern:

- Summer Term: March/April – July
- Autumn Term: September – December
- Winter Term: Jan – March/April

**Sponsored accommodation** – The accommodation you receive as part of the support the UK government provides to you.

**State Pension Credit** – A financial benefit providing extra money for pensioners to help with living costs if you are over the UK State pension age and on a low income.

**The UK Centre for Professional Qualifications (UK CPQ)** – Is designated by the UK Government to provide advice and guidance on the recognition of professional qualifications in an international context.

**Universal Credit** – The payment is made up of a basic 'standard allowance' and extra payments that might apply to you depending on your circumstances.

**Urgent Treatment Centre** – Are medical centres for urgent care that isn't immediately life threatening. Appointments can be booked via dialling 111 or through your General Practitioner (GP).



## Section 1 – Arrival in the UK

The UK Government has been running a scheme which offers relocation or other assistance to current and former Locally Employed Staff (LES) in Afghanistan since 2013. The UK government has also recently introduced the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) which provides protection for people identified as in need.

### 1.1 Your status

Under the Afghanistan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP), Ex-Gratia Scheme (EGS), and the ACRS, beneficiaries and their eligible dependents will receive indefinite leave to remain (ILR)

As a beneficiary of the UK ARAP/ACRS scheme, you and your eligible family members:

- Will be able to relocate to the UK, live, study and work in virtually any capacity, on a pathway to citizenship.
- Will receive ILR immediately (and those already here in the UK are being supported to apply). This does not apply to those on EGS. More information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/indefinite-leave-to-remain-in-the-uk>
- Will then be able to apply for UK citizenship after living in the UK for 5 years.

For EGS, after five years in the UK, you and your family members will be able to apply for settlement, followed by citizenship after a further twelve months.

Please be aware:

- It is not a requirement to stay in the UK for this entire period, and you can travel outside of the UK (see indefinite leave to remain link above for more information).
- If you have ILR there is no time limit on your ability to stay in the UK.
- If you have ILR and your home is in the UK, you are regarded as settled in the UK.
- You will have access to public services e.g., healthcare and schools and support with finding accommodation.
- Where relevant eligibility conditions are met you will be able to access the following benefits:
  - Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) means-tested benefits, including Universal Credit and Housing Benefit;
  - Disability and carer benefits
  - Child Benefit;
  - Homelessness assistance; and

For information on how to apply for British citizenship and guidance on aspects of living in the UK including registering to vote, please see here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/browse/citizenship/citizenship>

The schemes provide initial support to ensure you can create a successful life in the UK and become self-sufficient.

## **1.2 After arrival**

You will be issued with a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP). These permits provide evidence of your right to stay in the UK and enable you to confirm your identity, which will be required when opening a UK bank account.

Your BRP will include:

- Your name, date, and place of birth.
- Your fingerprints and a photo of your face (this is your biometric information);
- Your immigration status and any conditions of your stay, and
- Whether you can access public funds, for example benefits and health services.

Please keep this important document safe as it is evidence of your legal status in the UK and shows evidence of the duration of your stay. If you travel outside of the UK, please take the Biometric Residence Permit with you.

We are supporting all those in bridging hotels to access a BRP card.

## **1.3 Coronavirus (Covid) Vaccines**

The majority of people in the UK have received at least one of their coronavirus vaccine and it is likely that all adults in your hosts household will have received theirs.

For the latest guidance on what to do if you have or suspect you have the virus, please visit the UK Government's COVID-19 advice webpage:  
<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>.

### ***Booking a coronavirus vaccination***

You are eligible for a free COVID-19 vaccination through the NHS.

If you are registered with a GP, you can book your vaccination through this web link if you are in England <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>

'Walk in' sites are also available and able to offer help to those who have not yet registered with a GP. A list of locations can be found at this web link:  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/find-a-walk-in-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-site/>

Please visit <https://www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine> if you are in Scotland

If you have already had a Covid-19 vaccine elsewhere, speak to your GP about which further doses you should have in the UK and when you should have them.

You should also tell the NHS about any Covid-19 vaccinations that you have had outside of the UK. This is so the NHS can update your vaccination record. Bookings to make an appointment to get your previous vaccinations recorded can be made online using the National Booking Service or by calling 119. 119 will also have translators available.

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## Section 2 - Getting used to life in the UK

This section of the guide aims to help you take the first steps towards this by providing some basic information about some key characteristics of the UK and important services you will want to access.

These services include:

- Opening a bank account
- Claiming benefits and getting a National Insurance Number
- Local council services
- Healthcare services
- Finding a job and paying tax
- Childcare and education services
- Finding accommodation after your initial sponsorship period comes to an end

### 2.1 Opening your bank account

There are a variety of banks, and you can choose one that suits you and your family best. There are also online-only providers which you can use.

To open a bank account, you will usually need to show a form of identification such as your passport, BRP or a driver's licence or a recognised identity card as well as proof of your address, such as your tenancy agreement or a gas, electric or phone bill.

You should ask about any charges when you open a bank account, however once the process is complete, it is usual that a debit card will be issued. Many cards are contactless - some shops will only accept contactless payment as will some transport providers, for example in London. You can also arrange for bills to be paid directly from your account using 'direct debit' - ask your bank about this.

You may have been assisted in opening a bank account by your council, if not further information on how to open a bank account is available at:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/banking/getting-a-bank-account/>

### 2.2 Claiming benefits and getting a National Insurance Number

#### **Access to benefits**

The UK has a welfare system which is designed to help those who face financial hardship, or who have specific needs. Your local [Job Centre Plus](#) will be able to help you find out which benefits you may be able to access. This may include:

- Universal Credit – a payment for those of working age, to help with your living costs if you're on a low income. You could be working (including self-employed or part time) or be out of work;

- Pension Credit - extra money to help with your living costs if you are over the age of 66 and on a low income. Applications for Pensions is online or via telephone
- Disability benefits – extra money to help with additional costs if you have a long term physical or mental health condition or disability
- Carer's Allowance – extra money if you care for someone at least 35 hours a week.
- Child Benefit – extra money to help with the cost of raising a child.

A link to the different types of benefits you could receive can be found [here](#).

If you are in Scotland advice can be found here <https://www.mygov.scot/benefits-support>

### ***Applying for Universal Credit online***

You will need to create an account to make a claim. You must complete your claim within 28 days of creating your account or you will have to start again.

To apply online you'll need:

- An email address
- Access to a mobile phone

You'll also have to prove your identity. You'll need some identity documents for this, for example your:

- Passport
- Debit or credit card

There are two ways to get help with your Universal Credit claim. You can either call the Universal Credit helpline or use the Help to Claim service. Calls to the Universal Credit helpline are free - Telephone: 0800 328 5644

You can get free support from trained advisers to make a Universal Credit claim. They can help you with things like online applications or preparing for your first jobcentre appointment.

The Help to Claim service is provided by Citizens Advice and is confidential. They will not share your personal information unless you agree. For further information - <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/helptoclaim>

The main method of paying benefits is into a bank account by direct credit transfer (called 'direct payment'). This means the money goes straight into a bank account in your name. If you make a claim, you will be asked for details of the bank account you

want to use for your benefit. You will need to set up a bank account before your first payment is paid.

You can have benefit paid into:

- a standard bank or building society account (for example, a current account)
- a basic bank account (also called an introductory account)

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>

### **National Insurance Number**

A National Insurance (NI) number is used to make sure your National Insurance contributions and tax are recorded against your name only. This is a code with letters and numbers and never changes.

If you do not have a National Insurance number you can find information on how to get one at: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number>. When you make an application you will need to give a copy of your passport and proof that you have the right to work. The employer you want to work for will tell you what documents you need to show. When you make an application you will need to give a copy of your passport and proof that you have the right to work. The employer you want to work for will tell you what documents you need to show.

Employers must do Right to Work checks on everyone they hire. Having a National Insurance number is not part of these checks and having a National Insurance number does not prove that someone has a right to work.

## **2.3 Accessing essential public services**

### **Your Local Council**

A local authority (also called a 'council' e.g., Sheffield City Council) is the local governing body of a particular area of the UK and is responsible for local public services and facilities. The link here can help you find your local council:

<https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

After you have completed your stay in a bridging hotel if you move into local authority housing, your council will support you and your dependents through the first twelve months in the UK. All homes provided are fully furnished.

Your council will look to help you settle and start a new life in the UK regardless of whether you are in temporary or permanent housing. They will provide you with a package of advice and assistance covering employment, benefits, housing, health, and education. They will help you to:

- Register with your local general practitioner (GP) surgery who provides medical advice and a wide range of health services.

- Register with your local Jobcentre Plus, who will be able to provide you with a National Insurance Number and help you find employment in the UK;
- Secure school places for the school aged children you may have with you in the UK.
- Provide advice and referrals to specialist public health services. These services support you if you have specific needs e.g., mental health services, adult social care, and children's services.
- Support you should you become homeless.
- Support you to integrate into your local communities.

## 2.4 Accessing Healthcare

### ***Registering with a Doctor - a General Practitioner (GP)***

A General Practitioner, commonly known as a GP, is the first doctor you will usually visit for routine health problems in the UK. A GP can offer medical advice, provide a diagnosis and prescribe medicines. They might be your first point of contact for many physical and mental health concerns. The GP practice is also responsible for coordinating and managing your long-term healthcare and they can refer you if you need more specialised hospital services

Everyone has a right to register with a GP and you do not need proof of address, immigration status, ID or an NHS number (you may be asked to provide ID but it is not a requirement). We strongly recommend that you register with a GP as soon as possible after you arrive. You can also register temporarily if you expect to be in an area for more than 24 hours but less than 3 months. If you have ID this can help make sure your name is spelled correctly in your NHS records.

To find your nearest GP service and for more information please see [www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery](http://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery)

You can find out how to register with a GP surgery in Scotland - <https://www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/nhs-services/doctors/registering-with-a-gp-practice>

### ***Accessing Medication***

Most GP practices are not co-located with a pharmacy. If your GP wants you to take a particular medication, he or she will provide you with a prescription that you will need to take to your local pharmacy. The GP surgery will be able to advise you about where you should go to collect your medicine. You can also find information about the location of local pharmacies online at: <http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Pharmacy/LocationSearch/10>

There is normally a charge for prescriptions, which you will be asked to pay when you collect your medication at the pharmacy. However, prescriptions are provided free of charge if you meet certain requirements. There is some variation in what prescriptions are provided depending on where in the UK you are living, but in general, your prescription will be free if you are:

- Age 60 or over
- Age 16 or under
- Age 16 to 18 and in full-time education
- Pregnant (or have had a baby in the previous 12 months)
- An inpatient receiving care in an NHS hospital

This list is not exhaustive; free prescriptions may also be available if you have certain specified medical conditions or a continuing physical disability. If you think this may apply to you, you should ask your GP who will be able to provide you with advice.

As well as providing you with any prescribed medication, a pharmacist can also give you free advice on treating minor health problems, such as colds and coughs. Some very common medications, such as painkillers and cough medicines, are available for sale over the counter. You will not need a prescription for these types of medication, but you will have to pay for them yourself.

### ***Access to medical support in an emergency***

If you or a family member has a serious accident or a sudden serious illness you should go to your nearest hospital with an Accident and Emergency department. Emergency treatment at Accident and Emergency services at NHS hospitals is free for everyone.

If it is an extreme emergency, call **999 or 112** and ask for an ambulance to transport you to a hospital. This service is free of charge but should only be used in an emergency. If you are able to do so, you may also make your own way to the **Accident and Emergency** department.

You can find out more information at [www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care-services/when-to-call-999](http://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care-services/when-to-call-999).

### ***Walk-in or Urgent Treatment centre***

If you need treatment or advice that is not an emergency, but cannot wait until you next see your GP, you can obtain advice by calling **111**. This is a service operated by the NHS. NHS 111 will be able to refer you to a doctor or to a local Urgent Treatment Centre or provide you other guidance, depending on your circumstances and needs.

In many parts of the country, NHS also provides Walk-In or Urgent Treatment Centres where you can receive treatment for minor injuries such as cuts, sprains and



small fractures, or receive urgent medical advice, without having made an appointment. These centres are usually open during daytime hours. You can find your nearest Urgent Treatment Centre here: [https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-services/Urgent Treatment Centre/LocationSearch/10022](https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-services/Urgent-Treatment-Centre/LocationSearch/10022).

### **Mental Health Services**

Mental health problems range from the worries we all experience as part of everyday life to serious long-term conditions. We understand that you have been through a very traumatic time and been exposed to a huge mental stress. There are Mental Health Services available throughout the country that can help you if you are struggling. If you, or someone you love, need help this is best arranged through making an appointment with your GP.

If you are struggling but do not want to talk to a GP, there are a wide-range of support organisations that offer helplines where you can talk in confidence to a trained advisor. These include:

- Lifeline 0808 808 8000 - (Textphone :18001 0808 808 8000)
- Samaritans on 08457 90 90 90 to talk to a trained volunteer
- Lifeline - <https://www.lifelinehelpline.info/>
- Mental health organisations
  - Northern Ireland - <https://www.mindingyourhead.info/services>
  - Scotland - <https://www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk/>
  - Wales - <https://www.mind.org.uk/about-us/mind-cymru/>
  - England - <https://www.mind.org.uk/>

Further information on these and other support organisations and helpline services is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/> for England or <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/mental-health/> if you are in Scotland. To find support in your local area, you can also use the Hub of Hope. You can access some services directly, without going to your GP for a referral first. Please see <https://hubofhope.co.uk/>.

### **Maternity care and services**

You will be offered free care when you are pregnant and after you give birth. This is likely to be arranged through your GP. Maternity services cover care from the beginning of pregnancy through to sign off by a midwife: this is usually around 10 days after the birth but can be up to 6 weeks postnatally. Midwives ensure that personalised care is provided throughout pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period. Much of this care will be provided directly by midwives, who will also coordinate the provision of obstetric or other medical involvement if necessary.

You should contact a GP or midwife as soon as you find out you're pregnant. It's important to see a midwife or GP as early as possible to get the pregnancy (antenatal) care and information you need to have a healthy pregnancy.

You are also entitled to support from a health visitor. A health visitor is a qualified nurse or midwife who has had extra training. They're there to help you, your family and children up to the age of five years old to stay healthy.

Information on all you need to know about pregnancy, labour, birth and NHS maternity services can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/browse/childcare-parenting/pregnancy-birth>.

For Scotland: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/ready-steady-baby>

### ***Dentistry/dental care and services***

You are entitled to NHS dental care to help keep your mouth, teeth and gums free of pain. If your tooth is painful you should call NHS 111 for Urgent Dental Care Services.

You can search for local dentists and ask to register for an appointment. NHS dentistry is only free by exemption (for example, if you are aged under 18 or in receipt of low income benefits). Costs for dental appointments depend on what treatment you are having. Search for a dentist at <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/dentists/how-to-find-an-nhs-dentist/> and find a breakdown of costs here: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/dentists/dental-costs/how-much-will-i-pay-for-nhs-dental-treatment/>

Scotland provides free dental checks. You can find a dentist near you - <https://www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/nhs-services/dental/receiving-nhs-dental-treatment-in-scotland>

### ***Eye Care***

You can make an appointment with any high street optician to have an eyesight test or get help with your glasses or contact lenses. There may be costs unless you are eligible for a free [NHS eyesight test or optical vouchers](#).

Scotland is the only country in the UK to provide free universal NHS-funded eye examinations. These are available to anyone ordinarily resident in the UK and to eligible overseas visitors. In some cases, the NHS will also give an optical voucher towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses - <https://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/publications/documents/fact%20sheets/guide%20to%20eye%20examinations%20scotland.pdf>

### ***Protection against infectious diseases***

NHS vaccinations are free to everyone and give the best protection to children and adults against infectious diseases such as meningitis, mumps, measles, and rubella. Speak to your GP if you think you or your child have missed any vaccinations and an appointment can be arranged.

## 2.5 Finding a Job and Paying Tax

### ***Finding a job***

We know that many Afghans will want to work. You have the right to work as soon as you arrive in the UK. You need to be 16-years-old to work full time.

To look for a job, you can use a free government website called 'Find a Job' - <https://www.gov.uk/find-a-job> to be connected with thousands of employers across the UK. You can search for jobs without an account. But to apply for a job you will need to create an account or sign in.

You can also find a job through the following approaches:

- You will have an individual work coach assigned through your local Job Centre Plus office who can help you find and apply for local employment opportunities.
- Look in local and national newspapers or websites where jobs are advertised
- Register with a recruitment agency
- Visit local companies to ask about jobs

You can also register with job agencies on these websites:

- Indeed - <https://uk.indeed.com/>
- Reed - <https://www.reed.co.uk/>
- CV Library - <https://www.cv-library.co.uk/>
- The Guardian Jobs - <https://jobs.theguardian.com/jobs/>
- Total Jobs - <https://www.totaljobs.com/>
- Monster - <https://www.monster.co.uk/>
- Job Centre - <https://www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus>

Employers must check that you are allowed to work for them in the UK before employing them. You will be able to use your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) as evidence of your immigration status in the UK, including your right to work.

You can look for and apply for work before you receive your BRP, your Job Centre Work Coach will help your employer check your employment status.

To prove your status digitally to an employer you can use the online service, which is found at: <https://www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-work>

In the UK, workers are entitled to certain employment rights, including the [national Minimum Wage](#).

For more information on Employment rights, do visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/employment-status/worker>

Should you require further assistance in understanding your employment rights, contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/rights-at-work>

### **Getting a job**

To apply for a job, you can send an application form, or a CV ('curriculum vitae' - a list of your qualifications and experience) and a letter with some information about yourself and the job you are looking for.

### **Careers advice**

#### **England**

You can get careers advice and support from the National Careers Service which gives careers information to adults in England – in the community, online and on the phone. Young people aged 13+ can call the telephone number 0800 100 900 for help. There is more information here: <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>

#### **Scotland**

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) is Scotland's national skills body. The Individual Helpline can be reached on 0800 917 8000 or more information is here: <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/>

#### **Wales**

Careers Wales can help you to plan your career, prepare to get a job, and find and apply for the right apprenticeships, courses and training. More information is here: <https://careerswales.gov.wales/>

#### **Northern Ireland**

Careers Service provide careers information, advice and guidance to people living in Northern Ireland. More information is here: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers-service>

### **Get your professional qualification recognised in the UK**

If you have a professional qualification, you will need to have this qualification officially recognised if you want to work in a profession that is regulated in the UK. It will need to be recognised by the appropriate regulator for your profession. You will need to do this even if you are doing temporary or one-off work.

The UK Centre for Professional Qualifications (UK CPQ) is a free service that can provide you with information to help get your qualifications recognised in the UK. You can look at the UK CPQ website for more information like whether a profession is regulated and the entry requirements: <https://cpq.ecctis.com/>. Or you can ring their enquiry service on 0871 226 2850.

There are over 200 regulated professions in the UK. A list of the regulated professions and the associated regulators is also on the UK Government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/professions-regulated-by-law-in-the-uk-and-their-regulators>.

### **Your rights and protection at work**

The UK is proud to extend to you all of the rights and protections in law that we extend to our own citizens.

When you go to work, you have the right to be treated fairly and work in a safe place. You also have the right to be able to work without fear or harassment from your employer, colleagues or customers.

In the UK, when you get a job, you should also get a job contract or a job agreement. The terms and conditions of your work will be in your contract or agreement. Make sure you read this carefully, with an interpreter, if necessary, before you sign. Your employment rights at work - like the minimum amount you should be paid, or whether you're entitled to take paid leave from work for holidays or maternity leave - are determined by your "employment status".

In the UK, we have three main types of employment status:

- **Employees** get all employment rights subject to some conditions (for example, some rights need you to have been working continuously in the same job for a certain amount of time to qualify) and have responsibilities towards your employer.
- **Workers** get certain core employment rights (minimum wage or national living wage, holiday pay and protection against discrimination), but have more flexibility over when, how much, and where they work.
- **Self-employed** workers have no employment rights but have complete flexibility in deciding how and when they work

If you are a worker, you will be entitled to employment rights such as:

- A minimum wage of £9.50 for people aged 23 and over
- Protection against your employer taking money from your wages
- One 20-minute break if you work more than six hours a day
- To work a maximum of 48 hours on average in a week or to opt out of this right if you choose
- Being protected against illegal discrimination
- Being protected if reporting wrongdoing in a workplace
- Being treated the same if you work part-time as someone who works full time

If you are an employee, you may also get:

- Sick pay
- Maternity Pay
- Paternity Pay
- Adoption Pay
- Shared Parental Pay

More detail on employment status can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/employment-status>.

If you work as an agency worker you will also have rights from the first day of your employment.

If you think you are not getting all your employment rights, you can speak to an organisation called ACAS on 0300 123 1100. They have translators that can help. You can find more information on Employment rights, here: <https://www.gov.uk/employment-status/worker>

Every employer in the country must pay their employees or workers a minimum amount per hour. How much this is, depends on how old you are. Please check <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates> for the most up-to-date information. The rates increase on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. You can also find out more information at <https://checkyourpay.campaign.gov.uk/>.

### ***Equality and discrimination at work***

Employers must treat everyone fairly at work, and in the way they recruit people for jobs. It is illegal to discriminate against anyone applying for a job or at work on the basis of sex and gender reassignment, race, religion, being married or in a civil partnership, disability, age, sexual orientation or if they are pregnant.

If you think you have been unfairly discriminated against you can get information and support from a website called the Equality Advisory Service:

[www.equalityadvisoryservice.com](http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com)

If you are being forced to work or your employer is not respecting your rights, you can also get advice from the Modern Slavery Helpline by calling 0800 0121 700.

### ***Paying tax***

Your employment status for tax purposes is not the same as your employment status for employment rights purposes. You can use HMRC's employment status for tax tool to check your employment status for tax purposes.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-employment-status-for-tax>

In the UK the Government (through Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)) collects tax on labour and assets. More information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs>

Taxpayer's income is assessed for tax according to a prescribed order, with income from employment using up the personal allowance and being taxed first, followed by savings income (from interest or otherwise unearned) and then dividends. You have a responsibility to pay the right amount of income tax. Income tax is a set percentage of your yearly income. If you are employed by someone else, it is often deducted directly from your monthly salary through a system called Pay As You Earn (PAYE).

If you are not employed by a company or another person but earn an income, you have a responsibility to declare that income and pay the right amount of tax. The amount of tax you pay depends on how much you earn. You can check this at <https://www.gov.uk/estimate-income-tax>

For further advice, you can contact HMRC directly, or Citizens Advice, as well as professional accountants.

### ***Paying National Insurance contributions (NICs)***

You pay National Insurance contributions to qualify for certain benefits and the State Pension. You pay mandatory National Insurance if you're 16 or over and are either:

- An employee earning above £184 a week
- Self-employed and making a profit of £6,515 or more a year

More information on National Insurance can be found on the GOV.UK website at: [National Insurance.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/national-insurance)

### ***Setting up a business in the UK***

The UK offers a robust and secure business environment, global connectivity, a breadth of industries with a highly educated workforce that helps companies succeed.

The GOV.UK website at: <https://www.gov.uk/browse/business> is the main source of advice and guidance – including employee support, tools to identify the right finance, and checklists for setting up the business in line with regulations.

Other sources of advice and resources that can help you start a business include:

- Local growth hubs in England or chambers of commerce can provide tailored advice and help you finance and grow your business here. A list of these in your area can be found at: [www.gov.uk/business-finance-support](https://www.gov.uk/business-finance-support).
- Online resources for writing business plans. For example, you can download business plan templates from The Prince's Trust website ([www.princes-trust.org.uk](https://www.princes-trust.org.uk)) or obtain detailed information on how to write a business plan on Start Up Donut ([www.startupdonut.co.uk](https://www.startupdonut.co.uk)).

### **Find Business Support Scotland**

Online at <https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/>

Telephone: 0300 303 0660  
Textphone: 0800 023 2071  
Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:30pm

### **Business Wales**

Online at <https://businesswales.gov.wales/>

Telephone: 0300 060 3000

Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:30pm

Support is also available via the Business Support Helpline (England only) on Freephone 0800 998 1098 and the UK-wide British Business Bank.

Further information relevant for Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland can be found here:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk>

<https://www.mygov.scot/browse/business>

<https://gov.wales/>

## **2.6 Childcare and Education Services**

Childcare and education provision vary across the different nations that make up the UK.

### **Childcare**

Childcare choices is a useful website to take you through your option:

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

#### **England**

You can get help towards childcare depending on your circumstances, including:

- Free childcare places for children aged 3 and 4.
- Extra free childcare if you are working and your child is aged 3 and 4.
- Free childcare if your child is 2 and you are on a very low income.

You may also be able to get money off your childcare bills if you are working or are on Universal Credit.

- For more information, please speak to your local authority or go to:  
<https://www.gov.uk/get-childcare>



## **Wales**

You can get help towards childcare including:

- Childcare for children aged three and four
- Childcare support for parents whilst training or looking for work
- Your local Family Information Service (FIS) provides free advice on childcare.

For more information, please go to: <https://gov.wales/help-paying-childcare>

## **Northern Ireland**

You can access a specified amount of free childcare for children depending on your circumstances. For more information, please go to:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/parenting-and-childcare/childcare>

## **Scotland**

In Scotland childcare is free of charge for eligible children. Currently, if your child is three or four years old, you can get up to 600 hours of funded early learning and childcare a year. This is equivalent to 16 hours a week if taken in term time or around 12 hours a week if taken all year round.

The Scottish Government increased the number of hours of funded early learning and childcare to 1,140 hours a year from August 2021. That's about 30 hours a week if taken over school term time or around 22 hours a week if taken all year round. In some areas, the extra hours might already be available so it's best to check with the local authority where you live.

Your child may be able to access funded early learning and childcare earlier than 3 but this is more limited and depends more on local rules. Please speak to your local authority to discuss you and your child's circumstances to see if there is anything available before the universal offer locally.

You can find out more information on early learning and childcare at <https://www.parentclub.scot/>

## **Education**

### **England**

In England, children aged 5 to 16 are required to be in full-time education. The local authority supporting you and your family will assist you with accessing this.

This can either be:

- Within a free state-funded school
- Within an independent school (otherwise known as a private school or public school), which will normally charge fees for your child's education; or
- You can choose to home-educate your child.

Children from the age of four can be enrolled in a local primary school which usually teaches children from the ages of 4 to 11.

Children 11 and older can join a local secondary school which teaches children from the ages of 11 to 16 or 11 to 18. There are sixth form colleges in some areas which teach young-people aged 16 to 18. Please see the 'Further Education' section below for more information.

Contact your local council <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council> to find:

- State-funded schools in your area
- Admissions criteria <https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions/admissions-criteria> for the schools you are interested in

Detailed guidance on how to apply for a school is at Annex A.

It is likely, when you first arrive in England, that your application will be under the in-year process, so pay special attention to that section of Annex A.

### **Wales**

Parents and carers should contact the local authority for guidance on applying for a school.

Primary School places - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-primary-school-place>

Secondary School places - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-secondary-school-place>

### **Northern Ireland**

Every child aged between four and 16 is entitled to a school place. If your child is eligible for primary or post-primary school, you must apply for their place.

For more information: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/applying-school-place>

### **Scotland**

Scotland provides free school education for all children from the age of around four and a half years old, up to the age of 18.

Your local council is responsible for providing school education in the area you live.

You can find full information on applying for all school places and placing requests in <https://www.scis.org.uk/information-for-parents/>

## **Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)**

Most schools and colleges are expected to identify and meet the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities. Your local council will be able to offer more support and information. You can find your local council here -

<https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

### **For Scotland**

Additional Support for Learning (ASL) in Scotland is different to Special Educational Needs & Disability in England (SEND), but your child will still receive support if they need it. <https://enquire.org.uk/>

Additional Support Needs (ASN) are broadly defined, including those which might impact on children from Armed Forces families, such as transitions, interrupted learning and dealing with separation and loss. They can be of short or long-term duration and occur for a variety of reasons. ASN in Scotland includes needs defined as SEND in England.

There is a Scottish advice service for additional support for learning, where you will find useful information about when your child might be entitled to extra support. This can be found at <https://enquire.org.uk/>

### **Further Education to 19 years old**

Further education (FE) includes any study after secondary education (normally for young people 16 or over) that's not part of higher education - that is, not taken as part of an undergraduate or graduate degree.

All young people in England are required to continue in education or training or take part in an apprenticeship or traineeship until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and most continue until the end of the academic year in which they turn 18. Local authorities (LAs) have a statutory duty to support 16- and 17-year-olds to move into education and training. You should contact your LA for support in finding suitable education.

As an individual living in the UK under the [ACRS or ARAP scheme](#), you are eligible to enrol as a student, although colleges (but not state-funded schools) may ask to see evidence of your eligibility.

Further information on Further Education courses and funding is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/further-education-courses>

Further information on Further Education courses and qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/courses-qualifications>

If you are in Scotland you may wish to contact the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) for further information on your eligibility and access to funding support: <https://www.saas.gov.uk/contact-us>

### **Further Education and training for adults**

You will be eligible to access further education and training including English language courses funded through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) if you meet the published residency eligibility criteria including the 3 years ordinary residency requirement. The AEB funding rules set out the general eligibility and residency criteria: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/adult-education-budget-aeb-funding-rules-2020-to-2021>

Education and training will either be fully funded or co-funded (approximate 50% Government contribution) depending upon your age, prior attainment, and circumstances.

**For more information, please contact your [local council](#) or visit the website: [Improve your English, Maths and IT skills](#)**

Privately run English language courses if you are wishing to pay a fee can be accessed via the British Council - [Learn English | British Council](#)

Information on proving your English language abilities with a secure English Language Test can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prove-your-english-language-abilities-with-a-secure-english-language-test-self>

### **Apprenticeships**

An apprenticeship allows you to work and earn money, as an employee, with a contract of employment and holiday leave, while learning and receiving training. It can take between one and six years to complete an apprenticeship depending on which one you choose, what level it is and your previous experience. Apprenticeships are funded from contributions made by the government and your employer.

To become an apprentice, you must:

- Be 16 or over
- Not already be in full-time education
- Live in England

If you don't live in England, please see apprenticeship options in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland - <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk>

### **Higher Education**

You can search and apply for most higher education courses online.

You usually have to be 18 or older to take a higher education course. Courses can be taught in:

- Universities.
- Colleges.
- Specialist institutions like art schools or agricultural colleges.

Higher education qualifications include:

- Diplomas.
- Bachelor degrees.
- Foundation degrees.
- Postgraduate degrees.

Universities control their own admissions policies and requirements, so you should contact the relevant higher education provider you are interested in directly if you have any questions.

Generally, to qualify for home fee status in the UK, a person must have settled status or a recognised connection to the UK. There are also requirements associated with ordinary residence in the UK. Subject to meeting the normal eligibility requirements, you will be able to qualify for home fee status once you have acquired settled status in the UK. This also applies to any dependants.

From 1 August 2022, persons who have been granted leave under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) will qualify for student support and home fee status in relation to new higher education courses if they have been resident in the UK and Islands since the grant of such leave. They will also qualify for advanced learner loans for further education courses. Students who are in this category will not need to demonstrate three years ordinary residence in the UK and Islands before the start of a course.

Information on UK study options and the application process can be accessed via [Study in the UK | British Council](#).

### ***Recognition of qualification***

The UK European Network Information Centre (UK ENIC, and formerly UK NARIC) provides expert advice on behalf of the UK Government on the comparability of international qualifications to those from the UK. It also includes qualifications obtained from Afghanistan.

UK ENIC assist UK universities, colleges as well as individuals in the understanding and acceptance of overseas qualifications and learning experiences. The Statements of Comparability issued by UK ENIC provide detailed comparison information. The advice offered by UK ENIC also includes partial and/or incomplete qualifications to help guide schools and colleges on A level enrolment, 16-19 funding exemptions and admission to higher education.

For more information, please visit [www.enic.org.uk](http://www.enic.org.uk) or email [info@enic.org.uk](mailto:info@enic.org.uk)

### ***Teachers from Afghanistan***

To teach in state schools in England, first, you will need to obtain a qualified teacher status (QTS) - by completing a teacher training course in England.

However, if you already have a degree (or equivalent qualification), you can do a one-year postgraduate course to gain the QTS. If you are interested in the teaching profession but do not have a degree or equivalent qualification, there is the option to take up an undergraduate teaching course which should last for 3 years on average.

If you already have teaching experience in Afghanistan; another route may be to apply for a shorter 'assessment only' course. In general, these courses are approximately 12 weeks in duration and should give you QTS. In addition, some schools may allow teachers to work without QTS, especially if you have teaching qualifications in Afghanistan.

You can contact schools in your area to discuss your options as there may also be opportunities to take on other roles or volunteering in schools. You can contact schools in your area to discuss your options – which may include arranging an in-class or virtual school experience through the Department for Education's (DfE) Get school experience service.

Further information is available at the following links

<https://schoolexperience.education.gov.uk/>[https://schoolexperience.education.gov.uk](https://schoolexperience.education.gov.uk/)

<https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/ways-to-train>

<https://schoolexperience.education.gov.uk/>

## **2.7 Finding accommodation**

### ***Renting a home***

You have the right to rent in the UK. You will be able to use your BRP to evidence your indefinite leave to remain (ILR) status in the UK, including your right to rent. To prove your status digitally to a landlord or letting agent you can use the online service, which is found at: <https://www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-rent>. Information about renting in Scotland can be found at <https://www.mygov.scot/browse/housing-local-services/renting-property>

Letting agents are free to carry out any referencing checks within the law, as they deem appropriate, before accepting a new tenant. This may include income requirements or the need for a guarantor, dependent upon the decision of the individual landlord. If providing references proves challenging for you, we would encourage you to discuss your personal circumstances with the letting agent or landlord about alternative forms of reference that might be acceptable.

Rented housing can be found through local lettings agents and on property listings websites. The types of privately rented housing available is different across the country.

When you find a house or flat you will probably need to pay a deposit. You will then need to sign a 'tenancy agreement'. This is a legal contract between you and the landlord. Your tenancy agreement will set out how much rent needs to be paid and how often, a list of repairs and maintenance that are your responsibility and which are the landlord's responsibility, and any other rules or restrictions e.g. smoking restrictions. Deposits paid for renting a property, need to be placed in a [tenancy deposit protection](#) scheme by your letting agent or landlord within 30 days of receiving your payment. You are entitled to ask which scheme your deposit is protected under. The scheme ensures you will get your deposit back if you meet the

terms of your tenancy agreement, do not damage the property, and pay the rent and bills.

The tenancy will usually be for a fixed period of 6 or 12 months. The landlord must allow you to stay in the property for a minimum of 6 months. If you want a longer initial fixed period, you can ask whether the landlord is willing to agree to this. You will be obliged to pay the rent for the duration of the tenancy.

You can find out about your responsibilities and rights as a tenant in the Government's 'How to Rent Guide', which is at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-rent/how-to-rent-the-checklist-for-renting-in-england>. Information on renting in Scotland can be found at the following link: <https://www.mygov.scot/browse/housing-local-services/renting-property>

In addition, advice, including checking your housing contract, is available via the [Citizens Advice Bureau](#).

You should check if you are entitled to Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. If you are, you may get help with all or part of your rent. If you are renting from a private landlord you may receive up to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate to cover or help with the cost of rent. Check with this [online calculator](#) to see if you can afford to live in the area you want. You should also look at this advice about [managing rent payments on Universal Credit](#).

You can find your own accommodation whilst continuing to receive resettlement support.

### **Council Tax**

If you move out of sponsored accommodation into privately rented property or a home of your own, you will become liable for paying Council Tax. This is a set amount for the financial year which runs from April to March, and you can pay this monthly. Council Tax is a tax which goes to your local authority for local services such as care, social services, police and local facilities.

### **Homelessness Assistance**

If you become at risk of homelessness, you should contact your local authority as soon as possible.

Other contact details for support:

- Citizens Advice - <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/housing/finding-a-place-to-live1/if-youre-homeless-or-at-risk-of-homelessness/>
- Shelter - <https://www.shelter.org.uk/>

There are different types of support your local authority could offer you. For example, they may offer you advice, emergency housing, support to find longer-term housing or help so you can stay in your home. The type of help that is offered depends on

your eligibility for assistance, if you are in “priority need”, and what caused you to become homeless.

### ***Buying your own home***

If you are considering **buying your own home**, please see the Government’s detailed guide here; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-buy-a-home/how-to-buy>

Before you begin viewing properties you should get a mortgage ‘decision in principle’. The decision in principle from one lender does not mean you have to take out a mortgage with them, it is a written statement from a lender giving an estimate of what you can borrow. It gives you some indication of your budget and signals to sellers that you are serious about buying a property.

As part of the decision in principle, most lenders will carry out a credit search. You should find out what type of enquiry lenders use, as some carry out an initial enquiry that will not affect your credit score whilst other will undertake a hard enquiry that may affect your credit score. Please note, too many hard enquiries into your credit history could affect your credit score negatively.

A verbal offer for a house can be renegotiated at any time up to until contracts are exchanged, but you should think carefully before renegotiating and only do so when a change is justified; for example, if the home survey identifies significant issues. Attempts to renegotiate the offer when a sale nears completion may cause delays and could risk the sale falling through.

For more information on buying a home in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland please see:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk>

<https://www.mygov.scot/buying-a-home>

<https://gov.wales/>



## Section 3 - What to do if things go wrong

### 3.1 Protecting and caring for your children

The UK takes the welfare of all children very seriously. If you are worried about your child or another child, you can contact:

- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) on 0800 800 5000
- Childline on 0800 1111

You can contact us outside of these hours by email at [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). It's free and you don't have to say who you are. If you think that a child is at immediate risk of harm, please call the Police on **999 or 112**.

### 3.2 Acting on discrimination

We are confident that Afghans who choose to make the UK their home, and move here with their families, will be welcomed and able to integrate.

It is unacceptable to discriminate against anyone due to their age, disability, transgender identity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. For example, racism involves discriminating against a person or treating a group of people differently because of their race. It is a serious offence to stir up racial hatred, injure, harass, damage property or verbally abuse someone or a group of people because of their race.

You should not be treated any differently because of the above characteristics (parts of a person's identity) when applying for a job, looking for somewhere to live, using the National Health Service (NHS) or just buying something in a shop.

#### ***If you are a victim of crime***

Everyone in the UK has the right to be protected from all forms of crime. Anyone who thinks they have been the victim of, or witnessed, a crime can report this to the police by calling 101 (non-emergency), 999 (in an emergency) or online to the local police force.

Any criminal offence can be a hate crime if it involves hostility which targets a person based on their **race** (which includes race colour, nationality, citizenship or ethnic or national origins), **religion** (which includes both religious belief and a lack of religious belief), **sexual orientation, disability, or transgender identity**. Typical examples of hate crime could include assault, criminal damage, harassment, and verbal abuse.

The police take hate crime very seriously and anyone who feels that they have been targeted for these aspects of their identity is encouraged to report it.

For anyone wishing to report a hate crime online, there are dedicated websites to help you:

- If you live in England, you can use:
  - <https://www.report-it.org.uk/>
- If you live in Northern Ireland, you can use: <https://www.psni.police.uk/crime/hate-crime/>
- If you live in Wales, you can use - <https://gov.wales/hate-hurts-wales>
- In Scotland, you can use - <https://www.scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information/hate-crime/>
- For support across the UK: <https://tellmamauk.org/>).

These websites also include details of a range of charitable organisations that victims of hate crime can contact to seek support and assistance.

Further information about the support available if you are a victim of any crime is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/get-support-as-a-victim-of-crime>.

### **Domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse is a serious crime in the UK. Anyone who is violent or abusive towards their partner, spouse or another family member, whether they are a man or a woman, married or living together, or separated can be prosecuted.

Domestic abuse can include a wide range of behaviours and is not limited to physical violence; it can include emotional, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse. Domestic abuse can continue and may escalate after a relationship ends so it is important to seek help at the earliest opportunity.

Domestic abuse can have a significant impact on children and young people and families may need support from children's social care to help ensure children are not at risk of harm and to help them to stay safe and address any trauma they have experienced through abuse.

For further information and help:

Freephone 24-Hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247  
or visit (access live chat Mon-Fri 3-10pm)

<https://www.refuge.org.uk/get-help-now/phone-the-helpline>

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help>

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/gender-violence/domestic-violence-and-abuse-getting-help>

### **Emergency services**

#### **Police**

The police are there to help and assist you as part of their role to keep people safe and uphold the law you should not be afraid to approach them if you are the victim of

a crime, see a crime happening, or for general assistance; for example, if you are lost.

To report a crime, you should call the following telephone numbers:

- **999** – This is the number to call in an emergency. For example, if you are the victim of an assault or see a crime taking place. Ask for the ‘police’ when you get through. This is also the number to call if you need an ambulance or if there is a fire.
- **112** - is a common emergency telephone number that can be dialled free of charge from most mobile telephones, and in some countries, fixed telephones in order to reach emergency services - ambulance, fire and rescue, police.
- **101** – This is the number to call for less urgent situations. For example, if your property has been damaged.

If you are not satisfied with the service you have received from the police, you can complain directly to the police unit or office in question or the Independent Office for Police Conduct, which is responsible for overseeing the system for handling complaints made against police forces in England and Wales, or the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner in Scotland. The role of these institutions is to impartially, independent of the police, investigate conduct and behaviour.

### **Fire**

If you need to report a fire you should call **999**.

## Section 4: Legal Rights and Responsibilities

### 4.1 Rights and freedoms

Every person in the UK has the same basic human rights and freedoms, which are protected in law. These underpin how people live in the UK. For example:

- Every person has a right to liberty.
- Every person has freedom of thought and the right to practice their religion.

Alongside these freedoms, you have a duty to behave responsibly and respect the rights of others. As such, it is **illegal** to take part in activities which break UK laws, such as discrimination against, or persecution of a person or group of people because of their beliefs, ethnicity, or gender.

### 4.2 Values and responsibilities in the UK

Based on the rights and freedoms protected in law, everyone living in or visiting the UK is expected to adhere to a set of shared values and responsibilities:

- Respect and obey the law
- Respect the rights of others, including their right to their own opinions
- Treat others with fairness

### 4.3 Marriage

Any marriage should be entered into with the full and free consent of both people involved.

The legal minimum age to marry in the UK is 16. In England you need parental consent to marry between the ages of 16 and 18.

In England it is legal and accepted for men and women to marry, for women and women to marry and for men and men to marry. All these marriages are protected by law.

There is a distinction between civil and religious marriages. Religious marriages are not recognised unless they are registered by the state. Some religious marriages are not recognised in the UK and couples entering them must have a civil marriage as well. For more information on the legal requirement for a valid marriage in England and Wales see: <https://www.gov.uk/marriages-civil-partnerships>

For information relevant for Northern Ireland and Scotland please see:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk>

<https://www.mygov.scot/getting-married>

## Section 5: General information on life in the UK

### 5.1 Population

Around 66 million people live in the UK. We are a country committed to mutual respect, freedom, liberty and tolerance; where people from all backgrounds live and work together. Some areas of the UK are more diverse than others, especially larger cities. In 2011, at the time of the last Census, over 14% of the population identified themselves as being part of an ethnic group other than White.

A national census takes place every 10 years. The most recent one was completed in 2021, and the initial findings are published one year after the census and the main releases two years after. More details are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements/initial-findings-from-the-2021-census-in-england-and-wales> and <https://census.gov.uk/>

### 5.2 Places of worship

The UK is a multi-faith society; as such there are temples, churches, mosques and synagogues and other places of worship in larger towns or cities.

The largest religion in the UK is Christianity, with 33.2 million people (59% of the population). The second largest religion is Islam, with 2.7 million people (5% of the population). Around a quarter of the UK population do not practice a religion.

Many newcomers to the UK have found that they have had support and help through their place of worship and have also made friends who have helped them to adapt and made them feel welcome. There are groups like the Inter Faith Network for the UK (<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/>) which may help you to find a place of worship such as a local church, mosque, synagogue, or Buddhist temple.

### 5.3 Languages

English is spoken in all regions of the UK. There are many different regional accents across the UK. Welsh is also widely used and taught in Wales and there are other recognised regional languages such as Scots Gaelic, Scots, Irish/Gaelic, and Cornish.

Free resources to improve your language skills are available on several websites or phone apps.

The UK uses British spelling, which differs slightly to US English. For example, colour/strategise (British spelling) vs color/strategize (American spelling).

### 5.4 Weekends & public holidays

The weekend falls on Saturday and Sunday in the UK, when most offices close. Banks and post offices are usually open Monday-Friday and on Saturday morning, but close on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. However, most shops and restaurants remain open on Saturday and for much of Sunday (in bigger towns and cities).

There are several public holidays throughout the year: some apply across all the UK, and others are specific to England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. On such days, most shops, restaurants, and leisure facilities may remain open, whilst most businesses will be closed.

More information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/bank-holidays>

## **5.5 Culture**

Throughout the year there are festivals of art, music, and culture, such as the Notting Hill Carnival in London and the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland. The main Christian celebrations are Christmas and Easter, and there are also celebrations for customs and traditions from various religions, such as Diwali (Hindu), Eid (Muslim), and Hanukkah and Passover (Jewish) that are widely recognised and celebrated amongst these communities in the UK.

The UK is home to some of the world's top museums and art galleries – many of which are free to visit – music venues and theatres. Outside the cities there is beautiful countryside and many castles, historic houses, parks, and gardens. More information about this heritage is available at: <https://www.parksandgardens.org/>

- Visit Britain - [Visit Britain](#) The official tourism website of Great Britain, which gives an overview of opportunities to enjoy British arts, culture, outdoor activities and more.
- National Trust [National Trust](#) - A national charity which looks after nature, beauty, and history for the nation to enjoy. They care for miles of coastline, woodlands, countryside and the hundreds of historic buildings, gardens and precious collections across the UK.
- BBC British History [BBC British History](#) - An overview of British history through the ages.

## **5.6 Your local neighbourhood**

Your local area should have a range of facilities and amenities. There may be a leisure centre or gym where you can play sport or exercise, local parks, and libraries where you can borrow books and access the internet if you do not have it at home.

Parks and libraries are free to everyone. Local leisure centres are often cheap to use, and you can make enquiries about women only or men only activities as well. In addition, Churches, Gurdwaras, Synagogues, Temples and Mosques make up a strong network of places of worship in local neighbourhoods.

Large cities and towns will have a local post-office, pharmacy, supermarkets and a variety of food catering for a range of tastes. This may include Halal food which is also available in some smaller towns where there are Muslim communities.

## **5.7 Volunteering**

Volunteering through a charity organisation or associated fund-raising body is a great way to meet new people and learn about your area. To find out more about

volunteering, visit: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/> or for volunteering as part of COVID-19 vaccination, visit: <https://nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk/>.

## **5.8 Political system**

The UK is both a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary democracy.

Queen Elizabeth II – the Monarch – is the Head of State; but power rests in the democratically elected parliament in which the Prime Minister leads the government. Government is usually formed by the largest political party.

The power to make laws rests in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. More information can be found here: <https://www.parliament.uk/>

The House of Lords is made up of appointed members, whilst the House of Commons is made up of 650 representatives (Members of Parliament or MPs) from geographical constituencies, elected every five years by the public through free and fair elections. Your local MP is listed on the UK parliament website at: <https://members.parliament.uk/members/commons>

Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales also each have their own government, and while their responsibilities differ, they have responsibility for some issues such as healthcare and education.

You can find out more about those nations via these links:

Northern Ireland: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/>

Scotland: [www.mygov.scot](http://www.mygov.scot)

Wales: <https://gov.wales/>

Voting allows the public to decide on issues such as health, education and housing. To vote in a general election you must be registered. More information about how to register to vote is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>.

## **5.9 Money**

The currency in the UK is the Pound Sterling (£). £1 (one pound) = 100p (100 pennies, or pence). Cash is accepted in most places but increasingly people use debit/credit cards to pay for goods and services. Northern Ireland and Scotland also issue bank notes, which can be used and accepted throughout the United Kingdom.

## **5.10 The Post Office**

Post offices provide a crucial service where you can send letters and parcels (both nationally and internationally, pay council tax, apply for a driving licence, etc. They are found across the UK in every town and city. They also provide other services such as banking, savings accounts and sales of stamps. The unique UK red post boxes are available in every local area; you can use them to post letters and small parcels. If you want the item to arrive by a particular date, it is a good idea to check the collection time information (available on the red post box), or ensure that you have attached the correct postage cost a local post office.

You can find your nearest post office and the available services at the following website: <https://www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder>

### **5.11 Travelling with cash into the UK**

You can bring cash with you when travelling to the UK. However, if it is £10,000 or more (or the equivalent in any currency), you must make a declaration about it when you enter the UK. More details of how to find and fill in the declaration can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/bringing-cash-into-uk>

### **5.12 Public transport**

There is an extensive train and bus network across the UK. Some areas such as London also have an underground and tram system. There are a range of free mobile phone apps and information online, to help plan your journey. You must buy a ticket before travelling on public transport. For national trains or buses, tickets are usually much cheaper if bought in advance. You can find out more information on the national rail website: [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk).

You are not required to show identification to travel between England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland unless you are travelling by plane or ferry.

### **5.13 Driving**

You must have motor insurance to drive your vehicle on UK roads. This requires Third Party insurance which is the legal minimum. This ensures that you will insurance cover if you have an accident-causing damage or injury to any other person, vehicle, animal or property. However, it does not cover any other costs like repair to your own vehicle.

If you have a full driving licence issued in Afghanistan, you may use this licence to drive small vehicles (such as motorcycles, cars, and vehicles up to 3500kgs or with up to 8 passenger seats) for up to a year in the UK. The licence must still be valid and cover the vehicle that you are driving.

To obtain your first provisional driving licence for a car, motorbike, moped or other vehicle from DVLA online. To apply you must:

- be at least 15 years and 9 months old
- be able to [read a number plate from 20 metres away](#)
- have legally lived in the UK for at least 185 days in total in the past 12 months

More information is available at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-first-provisional-driving-licence>

Applicants for a provisional driving licence will need to complete a D1 application form available from Post Offices: <https://www.postoffice.co.uk/>, or from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-licensing-agency>, and send it together with supporting documentation including proof of identity and proof of lawful residency.

If the document(s) you provide is not in English, you will need to provide a translation issued in the UK and signed by an official translator belonging to the Institute of



Linguists or the Institute of Translation & Interpreting. In addition, a translator who is employed by a recognised Translation company - being a member of the Association of Translation Companies is also, acceptable.

Please note that passports containing a visa/residency stamp must show indefinite leave to remain. Applicants in possession of a BRP card must send them with the application. The application should be sent to:

*The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, Swansea, SA99 1BT*

If you took your driving test in another country, other rules may apply if Further information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/exchange-foreign-driving-licence>

This publication was withdrawn on 6 November 2023

## Annex A: Applying for a School place in England

### Introduction

If you are settling in England and have a child aged 5 but under 16 you are required to ensure that they receive a full-time education. This can either be:

- Within a state-funded school, which cannot charge you for your child's education.
- An independent school (otherwise known as a private school or public school), which will normally charge fees for your child's education; or
- You may choose to home-education for your child.

Children will normally begin to attend school, full-time, in the September after their fourth birthday but you have the option of taking up a place part-time until the start of the term<sup>1</sup> immediately after the child turns 5. Alternatively, you can apply for your child to start school from the start of the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Some schools will also provide education for young people aged 16-18. These young people can also apply to sixth form colleges - which normally provide education for young people aged 16-19 - or colleges of further education which can provide education for anyone aged 16 and over (and, exceptionally, for some children under that age).

The following guidance concentrates mainly on advising you how to apply for a state-funded school in England. If you are settling in Scotland advice on applying for a school is [here](#). If you are settling in Wales advice is [here](#) and if you are settling in Northern Ireland advice is [here](#).

### Guidance

We provide information for parents on the English school admissions process [here](#).

We provide information on the rights of foreign national children to enter the UK to access a school in England [here](#).

You cannot normally apply for state-funded school places significantly ahead of the date you want to take up a place. The exceptions are for 'co-ordinated' admissions for admission into a 'relevant age group' before the start of the school year (see below and guidance [here](#)).

You are entitled to access a state funded school for your children if you live in the UK. You should normally, therefore, be resident within the UK before you apply for a school place. You can apply for a school place just before you move, but the place would not normally be allocated before you live in the country.

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<sup>1</sup> Terms: the school year is normally divided into 3. Although dates may vary from area to area, Autumn Term will begin after 31 August, Spring Term after 31 December and Summer Term after 31 March. Each term normally includes a short half-term break with a longer break between terms. The longest break is normally about 6 weeks between the end of Summer Term and the start of the next school year.

### ***The co-ordinated admissions process***

There is a process called the 'co-ordination of admissions' run by the local authority ('LA') where you live. You can find your home LA [here](#).

The co-ordinated process will apply when you are looking for a place for your child in a 'relevant age group for admission<sup>2</sup>' for the following September.

The relevant age groups are normally reception (for children who will be 4 years old by the following September) or year 7 (for children who will be 11 years old by the following September).

You apply for places to your home local authority on the common application form which it will publish on the 'school admissions' or 'schools' section of its website. You can set out at least 3 choices of school on the form and apply for schools in your own local authority and in other local authorities. You can express a preference for any state-funded school but in general, the closer to your home a school is, the better chance you have of being offered a place there. However, this is not the case with every school as it will depend on what admission arrangements the admission authority has put in place. Searching for the school on the internet and looking at its published admission arrangements should give you an indication of whether your child is likely to be offered a place.

You will be offered your highest available preference by your home local authority. If you cannot be offered any of your preferences, you will be offered an alternative school which has vacancies.

The closing dates for submitting applications for admission in the following September are:

- secondary – 31 October.
- primary – 15 January.

The national offer dates are:

- secondary – 1 March.
- primary – 16 April.

The co-ordinated process, with the local authority offering places in the above year groups, continues until 31 August for late applicants and those who cannot be offered a chosen school on the dates above.

### ***Applications outside the above timeframe – 'in-year' admissions***

Most applications from Afghanistan families, at least in their first year in England, are likely to be what are called 'in-year' admissions.

An in-year admission is:

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<sup>2</sup> The normal admission year group for the school, usually its lowest year group. The most common relevant age groups are reception and year 7.

- an application for a relevant age group (normally reception and year 7) after the start of the school year; or
- an application for any other year group at any time.

Although some schools will have places available throughout the year, your choice of school is likely to be limited by the fact that some of the most popular schools will be full when you are applying for an in-year place.

You can obtain information on which schools have places still available from the local authority within which the schools are located.

You would normally apply directly to the admission authority of the school for an in-year place but in some areas the local authority will manage the process. You will need to speak to your local authority about which system applies in your area. One difference you will notice is that, even where local authorities co-ordinate in-year applications for schools, if you want to apply for a school outside your own local authority area, you will have to apply directly to the neighbouring local authority, or the school, depending upon what system is in operation in that area to allocate in-year places.

If the area in which you live has a system where you apply directly to schools you will need to know who the admission authority is, and how to contact it in order to apply for a place. Advice on who the admission authority would be for a school is set out at the end of this annex. The admission authority will either be contactable via the school's website or, in the case of community or voluntary controlled schools, you can contact the local authority.

### ***How are places allocated?***

Each school has a finite number of places available. Its admission authority sets this out in its admission policy. If there are more applicants than places available, the school must apply its published admission arrangements in order to determine who is admitted. [Here](#) is an example of an admission policy.

### ***What admission authorities may request before offering a place***

School admission authorities may ask for evidence of your address with your application. This is important because some schools operate catchment areas (prioritising children for admission who live close to the school) and distance from home to school is also often used as a tie-break to determine who is offered a place if two children are tied for the last place a school can offer.

Schools with a religious designation may prioritise children from their religion for admission. Admission authorities for these schools may ask you to complete a supplementary application form to ascertain whether you are a practitioner or member of the relevant faith group in order to apply their faith criteria. Common measures of faith membership and practice are baptism into the faith (commonly used in Roman Catholic schools) or attendance at church, temple, mosque or synagogue -depending on the faith designation of the particular school.

An admission authority cannot ask you for personal information about your child or family, during the admissions process, such as the child's school record, your immigration status or your passport. The only exceptions to this rule are:

- where the child is looked after by a local authority<sup>3</sup>, or has previously been looked after (these children always receive top priority for admission to a school)
- when required to determine whether the family practises a relevant religion or is a member of a relevant religious group, for admission to a school with a religious designation; or
- when required to determine whether the child is eligible for the pupil premium<sup>4</sup>, if the school prioritises such children for admission.

Schools may ask for evidence of your child's date of birth once a place is offered.

### ***What to do if you do not get the school you want***

If you are refused a place, you can ask the admission authority for the school to place your child on the school's waiting list if it has a waiting list at that time. Waiting lists are ordered in accordance with the school's published admission arrangements rather than date order. This means that your child can move up or down the waiting list over time.

Whenever you are refused a place, the admission authority for the school must offer an appeal. The appeal panel is independent of the school. Guidance for parents on the appeals process is set out [here](#). You can ask someone to represent you at the appeal or you can present your own case. The appeal will consider whether the admission authority was right to refuse your child a place and whether your reasons for needing that place outweighs the admission authority's reasons for refusing.

You can accept a place at a school and still appeal the decision to refuse a place at another school if you would prefer a place at that other school.

Different processes for appeals are in place during the COVID-19 pandemic. Broadly speaking, appeals can be held virtually rather than in person. Advice is set out [here](#).

### ***Choosing a school***

There are several resources which parents can use to help them choose a school.

You can search for schools near your home by searching on '[Get information about schools](#)'. You can filter your search by distance from your address and type of school.

Each local authority also publishes an admissions guide on its website listing all local schools. [Here](#) and [here](#) are a couple of examples.

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<sup>3</sup> In England the term 'looked after children' is defined in law under the Children Act 1989. A child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or is provided with accommodation (for example a 'children's home' for children in care) for more than 24 hours by the authority.

<sup>4</sup> Certain disadvantaged children attract the pupil premium and some schools choose to give them a high priority for admission. You can see which children are eligible on this website, by scrolling down the page: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium>

You may find it useful to compare the performance of the schools you are considering by looking on the [compare school performance website](#). The progress 8 score measures how far children progress across 8 subjects between entering and leaving a secondary school. The progress score in reading, writing and maths is a similar measure for primary schools.

If you want to look at this in more detail, all but the very newest schools will have an Ofsted inspection report, and you can search for these on [this website](#).

### **Applying for a sixth form place**

Sixth form study is normally undertaken by young people aged 16 and over. This is offered in some schools in addition to:

- Sixth form colleges; or
- Colleges of further education.

The National Careers Service maintains a [website](#) which sets out which post-16 courses are offered by individual schools and colleges.

Local authorities rarely take a direct role in allocating sixth form places (e.g., places for young people aged 16 but under 19) for schools. Some local authorities will, however, advise parents about schools with vacancies in their sixth forms. You can therefore contact your local authority to discuss where vacancies might exist.

The [‘Get information about schools’](#) website will show you which local schools provide for young people aged 16-18. You should then search on their websites for how to apply and for any deadlines for applications.

Most places will be allocated before the start of the school year. The same will normally apply to sixth form colleges but local colleges of further education are likely to offer places throughout the year, depending on course availability.

### **Types of state funded school**

There are a wide range of state-funded schools in England. What they all have in common is that they will deliver a broad and balanced education for your children, although the small number of University Technical Colleges (UTCs) and Studio Schools will offer a more vocationally oriented education, for children aged 14 and over.

The 163 grammar schools available in England will offer an education targeted towards the most academically able children. Your children will need to pass a selection test to be considered for admission. These are administered by the admission authority for the individual school, or the local authority. Not every area has a grammar school.

In England, the most common form of secondary school (nearly 3,200) is comprehensive, in which children of all abilities are educated. Every one of the (just under 17,000) primary schools educate children of all abilities.

Some schools can also have a religious designation and may prioritise children of their faith above other children for admission. You will need to check their websites.

### **School Admission Authorities**

Whilst applications for reception and year 7 made by the closing dates set out above are made to the local authority, in-year applications in most areas should be made directly to the admission authority. These are:

Type	Admission authority
Community School (over 6,000 schools)	Local authority, contact details on their website.
Foundation School (over 700 schools)	The governing body, contact details on the school's website
Voluntary Controlled School (nearly 1,700 schools)	Local authority, contact details on their website
Voluntary Aided School (nearly 2,700 schools)	The governing body, contact details on the school's website
Academy School (over 8,600 schools)	The academy trust, contact details on the school's website
Free School (over 450 schools)	The academy trust, contact details on the school's website
Studio School (over 20 schools)	The academy trust, contact details on the school's website
UTC (nearly 50 schools)	The academy trust, contact details on the school's website

This publication was withdrawn on 16 November 2023

## Annex B: Other resources

### *Citizens' Advice Bureau*

This network of independent charities offers confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person, for free for any problem

You can use these links and telephone numbers to access their services:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

England: 0800 144 8848

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales/>

Wales: 0800 702 2020

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/>

Scotland: 0800 028 1456

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/northern-ireland/>

These agencies are independent from Citizens Advice, but they can still give you advice.

Several community and support groups provide information to help with your integration into the UK. The following list of organisations seem to represent Afghan community interests about different aspects of life in the UK and may not have been mentioned in this pack.

[Afghan Association \(London\)](#)

[Association of Afghan Healthcare Professionals-UK \(AAHPUK\)](#)

[Afghan and Central Asian Association \(London - Feltham\)](#)

[Afghan Radio \(Online-Live\)](#)

[Afghan TV - YouTube Channel](#)

[Bahar Women's Association \(Leeds\)](#)

[British & Irish Agencies Afghanistan Group \(BAAG\)](#)

[Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation \(IWRO\)](#)

[Multilingual Wellbeing Services](#)

[Paiwand](#)

[Salisbury World](#)

[Supporting homeless, assisting refugees everywhere \(SHARE Aid\)](#)



[The Cotton Tree Trust](#)

[Young Roots](#)

### **National:**

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland: <https://ctbi.org.uk/>

Refugee Action: <https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/>

Refugee Council: <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/>

The British Red Cross: <https://www.redcross.org.uk/>

World Vision : <https://www.worldvision.org.uk/>

Welcome Churches: <https://welcomechurches.org/>

### **East Midlands:**

Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum:  
<http://www.nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk/>

Refugee Roots (Nottingham): <https://www.refugeeroots.org.uk/>

Leicester City of Sanctuary: <https://leicester.cityofsanctuary.org/>

Upbeat Communities (Derby): <https://www.upbeatcommunities.org/>

### **Scholarships**

The University of [Essex Sanctuary scholarships to Afghan students | University of Essex](#)

The programme includes six new 'Sanctuary scholarships' for Afghan students. These scholarships offer a full fee waiver for undergraduate students - for up to three years - or postgraduate students, plus free University accommodation and £5,000 to support living and study costs.

### **Wellbeing**

<https://thrivedn.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Thrive-LDN-Afghan-wellbeing-brochure-singles.pdf>

<https://thrivedn.co.uk/resources/supporting-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-of-afghan-refugees/>

For further wellbeing support, speak to your GP for additional information on support available.