



Home Office

Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP)

Version 8.0

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About this guidance

This guidance tells you about the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP), designed to help Afghans who worked for, or with, the UK government in Afghanistan. Where Afghan citizens and their family members are eligible for relocation, it provides guidance on the requirements for those applying for entry clearance to the UK or settlement in the UK under the ARAP. For further information on the ARAP scheme see: [Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy: further information on eligibility criteria and offer details](#).

The guidance explains to decision makers:

- how the ARAP works
- how to consider applications under the ARAP
- how to deal with individuals previously granted 5 years permission to stay under the ex-gratia scheme (EGS) or the ARAP and who are now entitled to upgrade that to settlement

Contacts

If you have any questions about the guidance and your line manager or senior caseworker cannot help you or you think that the guidance has factual errors, then email the Afghanistan Policy and Strategy Unit.

If you notice any formatting errors in this guidance (broken links, spelling mistakes and so on) or have any comments about the layout or navigability of the guidance then you can email the Guidance Rules and Forms team.

Publication

Below is information on when this version of the guidance was published:

- version **8.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **16 July 2026**

Changes from last version of this guidance

The guidance has been updated to:

- add new information relating to assessing fraud and withdrawing eligibility from those who have yet to relocate to the UK
- clarify who can apply to ARAP under the concession for deceased principals

Related content

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Introduction

Background

The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) is for Afghan citizens who worked for or with the UK Government in Afghanistan in exposed or meaningful roles and may include an offer of relocation to the UK for those deemed eligible by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and who are deemed suitable for relocation by the Home Office.

The ARAP was implemented on 1 April 2021 under Appendix Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (Appendix ARAP) of the Immigration Rules. It followed the former Intimidation Policy and Ex-gratia scheme (EGS) which were policies designed to support those who worked with or alongside British Forces in Afghanistan, often in dangerous and challenging situations, offering relocation to those at risk as a result of their work.

The ARAP route closed to new principal applications at 15:00 BST on 1 July 2025. Applications submitted before this time will be considered in accordance with this guidance. Applications submitted to the MOD after 15:00BST on 01 July 2025 will not be accepted or considered.

For customer guidance and further information on the ARAP scheme see: [Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy: further information on eligibility criteria and offer details](#). In December 2024, the Defence Secretary announced that the ARAP scheme has been brought into the Afghan Resettlement Programme (ARP): [Afghan Resettlement Programme](#).

Policy intention

The policy intention is to:

- honour the service of eligible principal applicants by providing support that properly reflects their work and the risks involved
- ensure that eligible principal applicants, their partner, dependent children and eligible additional family members (AFM), who relocate to the UK, can do so permanently to build their lives and their future in the UK

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Definitions / terms

Additional family members (AFM): Family members of the principal applicants and / or their spouse / partner who do not fall within the category of those defined as an immediate family member as set out in paragraphs 10.1-10.2 and 13.1-13.4 in Appendix Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) of the Immigration Rules

DARR: The Defence Afghan Relocation and Resettlement (DARR) team in the MOD.

Date of application: The date a principal applicant submits an ARAP application to the MOD.

Eligibility letter: Written communication from DARR (normally in the form of an electronic letter) in which principal applicants and / or their AFM are informed that they have been deemed eligible for relocation to the UK under the ARAP. An eligibility letter is specific to the eligible person notified.

Eligibility stage: The first stage of the ARAP as set out by Appendix ARAP, where a decision is made on whether an individual is eligible for the ARAP.

Entry clearance stage: The second stage of the ARAP as set out by Appendix ARAP, where the MOD makes an application for processing entry clearance to the Home Office on behalf of an eligible principal applicant and family member / members and in their names. The Home Office grants an individual entry clearance to the UK, if they are both eligible and suitable for relocation to the UK.

Existing and confirmed link to the UK Government: Having been directly employed in Afghanistan by a UK Government department; or provided goods or services in Afghanistan under contract to a UK Government department (whether as, or on behalf of, a party to the contract); or worked in Afghanistan alongside a UK Government department, in partnership with or closely supporting and assisting that department.

Immediate family member (IFM): One spouse or partner of a principal applicant, and the principal applicant's dependent children under the age of 18 as set out in paragraphs 8.1-8.7 and 11.1-12.4 in Appendix ARAP.

Principal applicant: Individuals who make an application to the ARAP scheme who must meet the Eligibility criteria set out in paragraphs 3.1-3.7 in Appendix ARAP.

Applications in respect of those with children

When applying this guidance, you must take into account the circumstances of each case and the impact on children, or those with children, in the UK. Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 places an obligation on the Secretary of State for the Home Department to take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the UK when carrying out immigration, asylum and nationality functions.

In practice, this requires you to consider the best interests of the child in decisions that have an impact on that child. This is particularly important where the decision may result in the child having to leave the UK, where there are obvious factors that adversely affect the child, or where a child or a person caring for the child ask us to take particular circumstances into account. All decisions must demonstrate that the child's best interests have been considered as a primary, but not necessarily the only, consideration. You must be vigilant that a child may be at risk of harm and be prepared to refer cases immediately to a relevant safeguarding agency where any child protection issues arise.

Those who qualify for relocation to the UK under either the ARAP or the EGS can bring their one partner, minor dependent child or children and eligible AFM. Settlement applications on this route are also free of charge. Any applications involving children must be processed in a timely way.

A child born in the UK to a settled parent (where the child is born in the UK after their principal applicant parent enters the UK with indefinite leave to enter or is born in the UK after their parent is granted indefinite leave to remain) is automatically British in accordance with the British Nationality Act 1981 and can apply for a British passport or ask for a letter confirming citizenship to show their immigration status. Those who are automatically British do not need to apply for leave. For guidance on British citizenship see: [Check if you can become a British citizen](#).

A child born in the UK to an Afghan citizen who relocated to the UK under the EGS and who holds limited permission to enter or remain can be granted permission in line with their parents on request. There is no fee associated with this application. Such children may apply for settlement when their parent does.

Requests for leave in line for UK born children should be sent to:

RCM Leave in Line Team
7th Floor
The Capital Building
Liverpool
L2 0QN

with the following information:

- a covering letter requesting leave in line with the details of the parent that has relocated and their Home Office reference number
- the original long birth certificate for the UK born child
- 2 recent passport photographs with the name of the child on the back

The original biometric residence permit (BRP) for the parents is not needed.

Where there are child welfare or protection concerns that may involve safeguarding issues within the family unit the case must be referred immediately to the local safeguarding team, who will refer the case to the relevant local authority in accordance with guidance on making safeguarding referrals. In an emergency the

case must be referred to the police. The Office of the Children's Champion can also offer advice on issues relating to children, including family court proceedings and complex cases.

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The ARAP data incident

On 15 July 2025 the Secretary of State for Defence announced to the House of Commons that there had been an incident concerning the sharing of data of ARAP and EGS applicants. For further information see: [Data incident affecting applicants to the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy Scheme and Afghanistan Locally Employed Staff Ex-Gratia Scheme](#).

The Home Office has not changed its wider immigration rules and policies as a result of this data incident.

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Relevant legislation

This section tells you which section of the Immigration Rules relates to the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP).

Immigration Rules

[Appendix Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy \(ARAP\)](#) provides the legal framework for Afghan citizens, their IFM and AFM who are eligible to relocate to, or settle in, the UK where they do not fall for refusal under [Part Suitability](#) (the ARAP suitability decision).

Those who are eligible for relocation are granted entry clearance which is conferred as settlement on arrival in the UK, or as settlement if they are already in the UK.

[Part 8](#), paragraphs 304-309 set out the provisions relating to UK born children who are not British citizens.

Validity requirements for dependent family members and AFM are set out in [Appendix Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy \(ARAP\)](#).

The ARAP application process

There is a 2-stage application process.

An application must first be made by or on behalf of the **principal applicant** to the DARR team in the MOD regardless of for which UK government department an individual worked. If appropriate, checks will be made with the UK Government department by whom the applicant was employed, contracted to or worked alongside, in partnership with or closely supported or assisted. ARAP closed to new principal applications at 15:00 BST on 1 July 2025.

Once eligibility of the principal applicant has been confirmed, DARR will electronically notify the individual of their eligibility and request details of their family members.

From 5 June 2025, eligible principal applicants will have 30 days from the date they respond to their eligibility letter to submit an AFM application. Principal applicants can only add to or amend their AFM application if it is within those 30 days. Additional applications to relocate family members will not be accepted outside of this period except where there are compelling circumstances which have prevented principal applicants from meeting this deadline. This policy applies to all eligible principal applicants, even if they received their eligibility letter prior to 5 June 2025.

From 28 April 2026, principal applicants and their IFM have 12 months from when they are sent their eligibility letter to attend a Visa Application Centre (VAC) in a third country and enrol their biometrics, where the MOD will finalise making an application

for entry clearance on their behalf. Principal applicants who received their eligibility letter before 28 April 2026, will have 12 months from 28 April 2026 to attend a VAC.

From 28 April 2026, eligible AFM will also have 12 months from when they are sent their own eligibility letter to attend a VAC in a third country and enrol their biometrics, where the MOD will finalise making an application for entry clearance on their behalf. AFM who received their eligibility letter before 28 April 2026 will have 12 months from 28 April 2026 to attend a VAC.

So that the MOD can finalise making an application for entry clearance, eligible individuals are required to take the following steps in the order set out below:

1. For IFM: provide the required documentation to corroborate their identity and their relation to their principal applicant.
2. Inform the MOD of their planned travel in advance.
3. Travel to a third country.
4. Provide the required information to the MOD so that the MOD can book an appointment on their behalf at a VAC.
5. Attend the VAC appointment.

All of these steps must be completed within the relevant 12-months period, starting from the date of the relevant eligibility letter being sent (or from 28 April 2026, where applicable).

If the above steps are not completed within the required 12-month period, the MOD will not make a UK entry clearance application on behalf of the eligible person. As a result, they will not be able to relocate to the UK under the ARAP. This requirement will be rigorously enforced, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

An ARAP application which is made by family members that does not include a principal applicant, save for where the principal applicant is deceased will be rejected as invalid, and will not be considered. Family who seek to accompany or join a principal applicant already granted entry clearance for relocation to the UK, or settlement in the UK, under the ARAP, can instead consider whether they meet the requirements of the [Appendix FM: Family members](#), [other Immigration Rules](#) or [resettlement policies](#), to enter or remain in the UK.

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ARAP eligibility decision

An ARAP application is made to the MOD and the eligibility decision is made by the DARR team following checks with a relevant UK government department where necessary.

ARAP eligibility assessment

The DARR team considers eligibility in accordance with Appendix ARAP.

It is the responsibility of a principal applicant to provide truthful and sufficient evidence to demonstrate their eligibility to ARAP. Failure to do so may result in their eligibility being refused or withdrawn. Further detail can be found in the Assessing evidence: fraud and Withdrawing eligibility sections.

Eligibility of the principal applicant is considered by the DARR team. Those who are deemed ineligible are informed of that decision in an electronic refusal letter from the MOD. Where this is the case, no entry clearance application is made to the Home Office. An ARAP eligibility application will not be considered as an application for entry clearance, permission to stay or settlement on any other basis, including outside the Immigration Rules.

For those found eligible, the DARR team submits an application to the Home Office on their behalf, in their name.

Right to review

Those who are assessed to be ineligible under the ARAP have the right to seek a review of their decision if one or both of the following conditions are met:

- they believe the decision was not made in accordance with the policy
- they can supply new evidence to support their case that was not available when the decision was made

Those who wish to request a review must use the [request a review form](#).

From 28 April 2026, Principal applicants who are deemed ineligible and receive an refusal letter advising them of this may seek a review of the decision within 28 calendar days of the date of that letter, save for where there are compelling circumstances which have prevented them from meeting this deadline.

Principal applicants who were sent an ineligible decision before 28 April 2026 have 90 calendar days from the date of the decision letter to make a request for review, save for where there are compelling circumstances which have prevented them from meeting this deadline.

Applicants have one right of review of the outcome decision.

ARAP immediate family members (IFM)

The criteria for IFM are set out in paragraph 8.1 – 12.4 of Appendix ARAP.

An eligible principal applicant can apply for support or relocation under the ARAP for a partner (who must be aged 18 or over at the date of application) and minor dependent children (under 18 years at the date of application) who meet the eligibility requirements under Appendix ARAP. To be eligible for relocation the suitability requirements of Appendix ARAP must also be met.

IFM's identity and relationship to their principal applicant is considered by the DARR team. It is the responsibility of a principal applicant to provide truthful and sufficient evidence to demonstrate the IFM's identity as well as their relation to their IFM. Failure to do so may result in their IFM being refused or their ARAP offer withdrawn. Where principal applicants provide either:

- false information
- false evidence
- false representations

in relation to their IFM, the principal applicant's eligibility offer may also be withdrawn.

For those found eligible, the DARR team submits an application to the Home Office on their behalf, in their name.

Where an eligible principal applicant and their IFM relocate to the UK under the ARAP, other family members who were not included in the ARAP application, who wish to join them in the UK, will not be considered retrospectively under the ARAP. They must instead make an application directly to the Home Office to join family in the UK under a relevant immigration route. For further information on joining family in the UK see: [Family visas: apply, extend or switch](#).

ARAP additional family members (AFM)

The relationship criteria for AFM are set out in paragraphs 13.1-13.4 of Appendix ARAP.

An eligible principal applicant can apply for relocation of AFM. Eligibility of the AFM is considered by the DARR team against the eligibility requirements under Appendix ARAP. To be eligible for relocation the suitability requirements of Appendix ARAP must also be met. From 5 June 2025, eligible principal applicants will have 30 days from the date they respond to their eligibility letter to submit an AFM application. Principal applicants can only add to or amend their AFM application if it is within those 30 days. Additional applications to relocate family members will not be accepted outside of this period except where there are compelling circumstances which have prevented principal applicants from meeting this deadline. This policy applies to all eligible principal applicants, even if they received their eligibility letter prior to 5 June 2025.

It is the responsibility of a principal applicant to provide truthful and sufficient evidence to demonstrate the AFM's eligibility to ARAP. Failure to do so may result in their AFM's eligibility being refused. Where principal applicants provide either:

- false information
- false evidence
- false representations

in relation to their AFM's eligibility, the principal applicant's eligibility offer may also be withdrawn.

In the case of AFM, eligibility must be based on either vulnerabilities leading to exceptional dependence or threat of risk to life as a result of the work of the principal applicant for or with the UK government in Afghanistan, as set out in paragraph 13.3 of Appendix ARAP:

- as a result of the eligible principal applicant's work for or with a UK government department, the AFM must be at an elevated risk of targeted attacks, specific threats or intimidation, putting them at a high risk of death or serious injury
- the AFM must face specific vulnerabilities which have led to an exceptional level of family dependence, and would be unable, even with the practical and financial help of the eligible principal applicant or their partner, to obtain the required level of care or protection outside the UK, either because it is not available, there is no other person who can reasonably provide it, or because it is not affordable

If the AFM is found eligible, the DARR team submits an application to the Home Office on their behalf, in their name.

Elevated risk

Compelling reasons, along with any supporting documentation to confirm the relationship between the eligible principal applicants and the AFM, must be provided why the AFM would be at an elevated level of risk due to the work of the eligible principal applicant for or with the UK government in Afghanistan. This must be beyond any existing risk levels present in the country and must be connected directly to the work the eligible principal applicant carried out for, or with, the UK government in Afghanistan.

Any documents submitted by individuals in support of their application must be considered in the context of what individuals are able to access, bearing in mind the situation in Afghanistan.

Vulnerability

Compelling reasons must be provided, along with any supporting documentation to confirm both the relationship between the eligible principal applicants and the AFM and the nature and extent of any dependency. Any documents submitted by

individuals in support of their application must be considered in the context of what individuals are able to access, bearing in mind the situation in Afghanistan.

The MOD will assess whether the individual is sufficiently dependent on the eligible principal applicant in circumstances that are exceptional and compelling.

In particular, cases will be considered where there are specific vulnerabilities or specific circumstances faced by that AFM which have led to an exceptional level of family dependence, and that the family member would be unable, even with the practical and financial help of the eligible principal applicant or their partner, to obtain the required level of care or protection in Afghanistan because it is not available and there is no person there who can reasonably provide it.

The expectation is that the normal rules on dependency set out in [Appendix FM](#) will apply in all but the most exceptional and unusual circumstances which the relevant principal applicant must be able to demonstrate.

Assessing evidence: fraud

Assessing evidence and potential fraud for the purpose of establishing eligibility to the ARAP is undertaken by the MOD and so, this section does **not** extend to, or inform, decision-making by other departments involved in subsequent stages of the process, including entry clearance or suitability assessments.

False information, false evidence and false representations refer to information, documentation, statements or material that are either not true or misleading, whether provided expressly or by omission. These concepts are distinct but overlapping:

- information or evidence may be not true where it is factually incorrect
- information or evidence may be misleading where, although not demonstrably incorrect, it creates a false impression or conceals material facts

False information, false evidence and false representations refer to information, documentation, statements or material that are not true or are misleading. This includes inaccuracies arising from deliberate deception, errors, or omissions. A finding of deception requires evidence of a deliberate intention to mislead. Deception means an act which deliberately causes another to believe something that is not true.

Considering the circumstances of each individual case

DARR recognises that individuals may provide information in challenging circumstances, including limited access to documentation, fear, stress, or reliance on third parties. Applications must therefore be assessed on a fair and reasonable basis, having regard to the circumstances of the individual case and all relevant information available.

False information, false evidence or false representations may arise with or without deliberate intent. A finding that information is false or misleading does not, of itself,

require a conclusion that the principal applicant intended to mislead. In line with this approach, DARR caseworkers must consider whether inaccuracies or omissions may reasonably be attributable to an innocent mistake, misunderstanding, or lack of access to information, before reaching any conclusion about deception.

Deception refers to conduct involving a deliberate intention to cause another to believe something that is not true. Allegations or findings of deception must only be made where, on the balance of probabilities, there is evidence of such deliberate intent.

To support consistent and proportionate decision-making, DARR applies a structured framework of severity indicators:

- **Low-severity indicators:** reflect minor or contextual inaccuracies that do not undermine the overall assessment of eligibility and do not indicate deception. These should normally be addressed through clarification and appropriate record-keeping
- **Medium-severity indicators:** may indicate uncertainty, misunderstanding, or partial inaccuracy in relation to material facts. These require proportionate further enquiries to determine whether the information can be substantiated
- **High-severity indicators:** reflect strong evidence that false information or representations have been provided and may include evidence capable of supporting a finding of deliberate deception

This framework enables decision-makers to distinguish between innocent error, false information without intent, and deliberate deception, ensuring that decisions are taken consistently, fairly, and in accordance with the civil standard of proof on the balance of probabilities.

Where an individual would otherwise appear to meet the ARAP eligibility criteria, but has provided false information, false evidence or false representations in support of their application (including in relation to their IFM and / or AFM), this may be treated as a relevant consideration in the eligibility assessment.

DARR decision makers must consider:

- whether the false information, false evidence or false representations are material to the assessment of eligibility
- whether, when the false information, false evidence or false representations are discounted, the applicant has demonstrated on the balance of probabilities that they meet the eligibility criteria
- whether the nature and circumstances of the false information, false evidence or false representations indicate a deliberate attempt to influence the eligibility decision

Not all instances of false or misleading information will justify refusal of eligibility where eligibility would otherwise be met. However, where, on the balance of probabilities, there is evidence of deliberate deception, a refusal of eligibility may be justified and proportionate in order to protect the integrity of the scheme.

All such decisions must be taken on a case-by-case basis and be clearly reasoned. Where false information, false evidence or false representations are identified, this policy applies equally whether the information relates to either:

- the principal applicant
- persons claimed as IFMs or AFM in support of the principal applicant's application

False information provided about IFM or AFM may be treated as false information provided in support of the principal applicant's eligibility and may therefore be relevant to the overall eligibility determination to the ARAP.

Decision standards for fraud-based eligibility rejections

These decision standards apply equally to decisions to refuse eligibility on fraud-related grounds and to decisions to withdraw an existing eligibility determination where false information, false evidence or false representations are identified after an initial eligibility decision has been made.

Where concerns arise in relation to the accuracy, reliability or consistency of documents or information, decision makers must first consider whether these may reasonably be attributable to innocent or honest mistake, misunderstanding, or the practical difficulties of obtaining documentation in Afghanistan.

When communicating a rejection, decision makers must clearly state the reasons for the decision and the policy basis on which eligibility has been refused. If a principal applicant or family member is rejected or their eligibility is withdrawn on the basis of fraud, they do not get a right of review.

Withdrawing eligibility

Withdrawing eligibility under ARAP is undertaken by the MOD, and its relevant guidance only applies to eligibility decisions made under the first stage of the ARAP.

Where evidence emerges which indicates that the principal applicant – or their family members where the principal applicant is deceased – has provided false information or evidence in relation to their eligibility or has not disclosed relevant information and / or evidence in relation to their or their family members' eligibility, it is appropriate to consider withdrawing theirs and / or their family members' eligibility if they have not yet relocated to the UK.

The MOD may withdraw eligibility of a principal applicant, who has yet to relocate to the UK, where they:

- provide false information and / or evidence in relation to either:
 - their eligibility
 - their family members' eligibility
- make false representations in relation to either:
 - their eligibility

- their family members' eligibility
- do not disclose relevant information and / or evidence which would have otherwise made them and / or their family members ineligible to ARAP in relation to either:
 - their eligibility
 - their family members' eligibility
- no longer wish to be relocated to the UK (including where an individual has previously made this clear)
- stop responding to communications for over 12 months from the date their eligibility letter is sent

The MOD may withdraw eligibility of a family member, who has yet to relocate to the UK:

- Where the family member's principal applicant:
 - provides false information and / or evidence in relation to their family members' eligibility
 - makes false representations in relation to their family members' eligibility
 - does not disclose relevant information and/or evidence in relation to their family members' eligibility which would have otherwise made the family member ineligible to ARAP
 - no longer wishes to be relocated to the UK.
 - stops responding to communications for over 12 months from the date the PA's eligibility letter is sent
- Where the family member
 - no longer wishes to be relocated to the UK

Cases with circumstances not covered by this list may present themselves. The MOD reserves the right to withdraw eligibility from individuals who have yet to relocate to the UK wherever justified and reserves the right to revisit decisions on eligibility. Exceptional cases will be treated on a case-by-case basis.

Deceased principals

Where applications are made from an alleged bereaved family member of deceased principal applicants, their eligibility may be withdrawn if:

- the principal applicant is not deceased as claimed
- the alleged bereaved family member:
 - provides false information and / or evidence in relation to their eligibility
 - makes false representations in relation to their eligibility
 - does not disclose relevant information and / or evidence in relation to their eligibility which would have otherwise made them ineligible to ARAP

Right to make representations

In cases where refusing or withdrawing eligibility is considered, individuals should be given the opportunity to provide further information or explanations or make representations in relation to a proposed decision to refuse or withdraw eligibility.

Any relevant information provided must be taken into account before a final decision on whether to refuse or withdraw eligibility is reached.

In these instances, caseworkers should send out a Request for Further Information before referring the case to their team leaders. Individuals will have 14 days to respond to requests for information. Failure to respond to any request for information within this timescale, unless exceptional circumstances apply, will result in caseworkers using the evidence already available.

A decision to refuse or withdraw eligibility cannot be appealed, and individuals will not have the right to a review of the decision by the MOD.

Eligible family members travelling later

Family members, who qualify for relocation under either the ARAP or ex-gratia scheme (EGS), can travel to the UK separately to the main applicant. The requirement for dependants to travel to the UK at the same time was removed through the [Statement of changes to the Immigration Rules](#) dated 7 March 2019, which came into force on 6 April 2019.

Paragraph 10.1 of Appendix ARAP requires the eligible principal applicant to include all dependants who intend to relocate to the UK in their ARAP application, regardless of when the dependants intend to travel.

All eligible children under the age of 18 who meet the criteria as an IFM or AFM must travel at the same time as one or both of their eligible parents. Children under 18 will not be relocated if unaccompanied.

DNA evidence

Applicants cannot be required to provide DNA evidence to support an immigration application. However, in some circumstances applicants may choose to do so as it may be the simplest and most effective means for them to prove their claimed relationship. Applicants may choose to do so proactively, or, where evidence already provided is insufficient to demonstrate the claimed relationship, they may choose to include DNA evidence following a request for further information, as one of a range of options to prove the relationship. It must be entirely voluntary, and it is the applicant's choice whether to provide DNA evidence.

Any DNA evidence which is provided must be from an ISO-accredited testing laboratory, and it is strongly recommended that the applicant provide evidence that the DNA sampling process met adequate collection standards. Every person aged over 16 who has agreed to provide a DNA sample must provide evidence of their consent in writing to the DNA testing laboratory. The person who has parental responsibility for the child must provide written consent to the testing laboratory on behalf of children who are aged under 16.

Where a decision can be made on whether the claimed biological relationship exists without further evidence, such as DNA evidence, the applicant must not be invited to volunteer further evidence. If an applicant chooses not to provide DNA evidence, no

negative inferences can be drawn from this. In the absence of DNA evidence, an application must be determined by carefully considering the available evidence.

Where DNA evidence is voluntarily provided to prove paternity, it is advised that DNA samples from both parents and the child are tested, as this produces more accurate results. However, there may be circumstances where this is not always possible.

For further detailed guidance on the Home Office DNA policy, see DNA policy guidance.

Adopted children

For applications involving adopted children, you must refer to Adoption guidance.

[Appendix Adoption](#) provides detail on the requirements that must be met.

You might also encounter what is known as a de facto adoption where a child has been incorporated into another family than the one into which they were born and has been cared for in that family, but where no formal adoption has taken place. A de facto adoption allows the admission of de facto adopted children from countries where no legal adoption procedure exists, or where the system operating is not recognised by the UK.

Unlike formal adoptions which can be established on the basis of documentary evidence, the eligible principal applicant must be asked to produce evidence to demonstrate that the child has been incorporated into their family. It is likely that a variety of documentation will be produced and that the type of evidence produced might vary from case to case.

The requirements of Appendix ARAP paragraph 12 must be met before any child, including one who is subject of a de facto adoption, can be granted entry clearance. If you have insufficient information to enable a decision to be made where a de facto adoption is claimed, you must ask for additional information to be produced.

If you conclude that the de facto adopted child qualifies as the dependant of an eligible principal applicant under paragraph 12 of Appendix ARAP, you must contact the local authority child services to ensure that appropriate safeguarding processes can be put in place.

Polygamous relationships

Paragraphs 11.4 and 13 of Appendix ARAP state that if the relevant principal applicant has more than one partner, only one partner can apply for entry clearance or settlement in the UK under the ARAP.

Where the principal applicant is in a polygamous or polyandrous marriage, only one partner can be eligible for relocation under the ARAP as the IFM. Any remaining partner – beside the one considered as the IFM – of the principal applicant will not be considered under the ARAP as IFM nor AFM.

For applications involving polygamous or polyandrous relationships, you must refer to Partners, divorce and dissolution guidance.

Eligible principal applicant is deceased

Appendix ARAP does not provide for bereaved family members. However, bereaved IFM may make an application on the principal applicant's behalf. The family members of the deceased applicant will be considered under Appendix ARAP on a concessionary basis, as if the principal applicant had not died, if all of the following apply:

- the principal applicant applied for support or relocation under the ARAP before they died
- the IFM and AFM were included in the application
- the principal applicant was deemed eligible for relocation to the UK including where that decision was made after they died
- the application process and the requirements for relocation to the UK under Appendix ARAP are otherwise met

In cases where the principal applicant did not submit an application while they were alive, bereaved IFM may make an application on the principal applicant's behalf. In those cases, the family members of the deceased principal applicant will also be considered under Appendix ARAP on a concessionary basis if the following apply:

- the principal applicant would have been deemed eligible for relocation to the UK under the ARAP if they were still alive
- the application process and the requirements for relocation to the UK under Appendix ARAP are otherwise met
- the IFM and AFM must have been related to the deceased principal applicant or the bereaved spouse prior to the principal applicant's death

In addition, both of the following clauses must be met:

- change of circumstances: the bereaved IFM must demonstrate that the principal applicant is deceased - they must also demonstrate that they and the AFM were related to the principal applicant as claimed
- proximity to the death: the bereaved IFM must demonstrate that the death of the principal applicant has had a direct impact upon the level of risk they and the AFM face or their level of vulnerability

Cases with circumstances not covered by this guidance may present themselves, these will be treated on a case-by-case basis.

These concessions are in recognition of the exceptional limited circumstances of the death of an eligible Afghan citizen and the debt of gratitude we owe to those who worked for or with UK forces in Afghanistan and their family members.

Divorced partners

For applications involving divorced relevant principal applicant, you must refer to Partners, divorce and dissolution guidance to establish how to evidence that a divorce has taken place. Family members are not eligible to apply for ARAP in their own right.

Under 18 partner

For applications involving a marriage or civil partnership contracted whilst one or the other applicant was under 18 you must refer to Partners, divorce and dissolution guidance. A person cannot be eligible under the ARAP as a partner if they are under 18 at the date of application – including where the partnership is between AFM.

A marriage or civil partnership that is lawfully contracted before the age of 18 overseas, can only be taken into account under the Immigration Rules for entry clearance or settlement in the UK as a partner once the applicant and the sponsor are both 18 or older.

A marriage which was contracted when one or both partners was aged under 18 is recognised once both partners are over 18, if:

- the marriage was valid in the country it took place
- both parties to the marriage had the legal capacity under the law of their domicile to marry each other or enter into a civil partnership

An under 18 partner who is therefore ineligible for support or relocation under the ARAP cannot otherwise be considered as an AFM under the ARAP.

Applicant is pregnant

Appendix ARAP does not provide for an unborn child of an ARAP applicant. However, a child who is born after the ARAP application is made will be considered under Appendix ARAP on a concessionary basis, as if they had been born at the date of application, if all of the following apply:

- the principal applicant applied for support or relocation under the ARAP before the child was born
- the mother was included in the application as a family member or AFM
- the principal applicant and the child's mother were deemed eligible for relocation to the UK including where that decision was made before the child was born
- the application process and the requirements for relocation to the UK under Appendix ARAP are otherwise met

This is in recognition of the exceptional limited circumstances of the post-application birth of an eligible principal applicant's, their partner's, or AFM's child and the debt of gratitude we owe to those who worked for or with UK forces in Afghanistan and their family members.

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ARAP suitability

Once the DARR team has submitted the application for entry clearance or settlement to the Home Office, it will be considered by the Resettlement Entry Clearance and Afghan Separated Families team following biometric enrolment and security checks.

If the biometric and security checks do not reveal adverse information, an entry clearance will be granted that confers settlement on arrival in the UK, or the applicant will be granted settlement if they are in the UK.

Cases where biometric, security and other checks do reveal adverse information will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. For details of suitability requirements see: [Part Suitability](#).

Tuberculosis evidence

The requirement under ARAP 5.3 and 15.3 for a valid TB medical certificate to be produced and submitted to the ECO in line with Appendix Tuberculosis has been updated for those that are supported by the IOM. Eligible persons being supported by IOM before their travel to the UK, and who require TB testing before travel to the UK in line with Appendix Tuberculosis, are no longer required to provide a TB certificate to the ECO in order to progress their entry clearance application. TB5 of Appendix Tuberculosis permits the waiving of the requirement of the certificate in certain circumstances. All eligible persons supported by IOM, will continue to be tested for active pulmonary tuberculosis and the results of those tests will be shared by way of a standalone document recording the TB test results. Those with inconclusive or positive tests results will be subject to further testing by IOM and will not be issued with entry clearance until their TB test result is negative.

Those eligible persons not supported by IOM and who require TB testing in line with Appendix Tuberculosis will still be required to provide TB certificates in order to progress their entry clearance applications.

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Ex-gratia scheme

This section explains the ex-gratia scheme (EGS), which was available to individuals who worked with or alongside a UK government department or Unit in Afghanistan. Eligibility for the scheme was initially assessed by the government department or unit responsible for the member of staff.

This scheme closed on 30 November 2022, at which point the ARAP scheme became the sole route for eligible principal applicants and their family members to apply for assistance, including relocation to the UK. The ARAP route closed to new principal applications on 1 July 2025.

Ex-gratia scheme overview

On 4 June 2013, the Secretary of State for Defence announced the scheme to make ex-gratia offers to eligible individuals who have been or would be made redundant as a direct consequence of the UK's military drawdown from Afghanistan.

In October 2020, the scheme was expanded to make ex-gratia offers to eligible individuals who resigned having worked for the UK government in Afghanistan.

Eligibility under the EGS was set out in paragraph 276BB6 of [Part 7 of the Immigration Rules](#) (HC252):

276BB6. A person falls within paragraph 276BB1 under the Afghanistan Locally Employed Staff Ex-Gratia Scheme if:

- (i) the person was directly employed in Afghanistan by a UK government department; and
- (ii) the person was made redundant or resigned on or after 1 May 2006; and
- (iii) the person served for a minimum of 12 months prior to either redundancy or resignation and served on frontline duties in an exposed role; and
- (iv) the person submits an application for consideration not later than 30 November 2022; and
- (v) a UK government department has determined that the person should qualify for relocation under the ex-gratia redundancy or resignation package including confirmation that they served on frontline duties in an exposed role.

The [Ex-Gratia Scheme guidance](#) provides further detail regarding the 3 offers that were available under the scheme and the eligibility criteria, which was assessed by the sponsoring government department. Eligible individuals could only accept one of the offers available under the scheme.

Settlement applications

This section provides information on the route to settlement for those who arrived under the EGS or the ARAP prior to 1 September 2021 and who have not been contacted by the Home Office to convert limited permission to stay to settlement.

Those with limited permission can apply at any point for settlement during the tenure of their limited permission.

The Immigration Rules (Appendix ARAP paragraphs 7.1-7.2 and 17.1-17.2) set out the provision for an eligible principal applicant and their family members to be granted settlement.

Only applications for settlement from individuals in one of the following categories can be accepted:

- a person who was granted entry clearance for 5 years' limited permission to stay under the EGS or the ARAP prior to 1 September 2021
- a dependant granted limited permission to stay under the EGS, intimidation or the ARAP in line with the relevant Afghan citizen prior to 1 September 2021 including any child born in the UK to a parent who did not hold settlement, or citizenship at the time of their birth

Fee exemption

Relevant Afghan citizens with limited leave to enter the UK can apply for settlement free of charge. Whilst applications are normally subject to a charge there is specific provision within Immigration and Nationality Fees legislation that enables relevant Afghan citizens to apply without charge. This is in recognition of the unique contribution they made in Afghanistan.

How to submit a settlement application in the UK

Those with limited permission to stay under the EGS who believe they are eligible to apply for settlement must send their details to:

- Afghanresettlementinforequests@homeoffice.gov.uk

Applications made in the UK for settlement after limited permission to enter or remain has expired

Where a relevant Afghan citizen does not make an application for settlement before their permission to enter or stay expires, they become an overstayer and can no longer benefit from any conditions that accompanied their grant of leave – such as the right to work or access to mainstream benefits. They should seek to regularise their immigration status in a route available to them or leave the UK.

If you encounter EGS applications from individuals with no permission to stay, you must contact the Afghanistan Policy and Strategy Unit for further guidance.

Criminality checks

If there is a positive result on criminality checks, you must contact the Afghanistan Policy and Strategy Unit for further guidance.

Granting settlement

Where the relevant Afghan citizen and any qualifying dependants meet the requirements, they will be granted settlement.

Refusing settlement

Settlement can only be refused on the grounds set out in Paragraph 6.1 of Appendix ARAP.

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