



Home Office

Single Protection Interview

Version 1.0

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About this guidance

This guidance tells caseworkers how to identify and process protection claims that may be suitable for refusal following a single interview, which will replace the separate screening and substantive interviews. This guidance also sets out where the Single Protection Interview process will not, or will no longer, be suitable.

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 Asylum Policy.

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 **1.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **28 September 2026**

Changes from last version of this guidance

New guidance.

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Introduction

The guidance provides instructions to staff who are responsible for arranging or conducting screening appointments, as well as asylum decision-makers who will be conducting Single Protection Interviews and determining claims.

It sets out the criteria under which a claim may be identified as suitable for a Single Protection Interview, how suitability should be assessed, the process for conducting the interview and proceeding to make a decision, and the circumstances in which a claim should exit the process and be referred for a further asylum interview.

It must be read in conjunction with asylum policy guidance, in particular:

- Asylum screening and routing
- Asylum Interviews
- Assessing credibility and refugee status
- Humanitarian Protection
- EEA and EU asylum claims
- Inadmissibility
- Withdrawing asylum claims
- Medical evidence in asylum claims
- Discretionary leave

You must also refer to any relevant country specific guidance or information.

Official – sensitive: start of section

The information on this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

Official – sensitive: end of section

Policy intention

In her Restoring Order and Control policy statement, the Home Secretary set out that:

‘We will change our Immigration Rules so that the most egregious protection claims can be considered and refused following a single interview – conducted when the claim is first made. This will target citizens of manifestly safe countries who make unmeritorious protection claims to frustrate their removal.’

The Single Protection Interview delivers the intention by enabling a claimant’s case to be considered at the earliest opportunity, with the potential for a decision to follow directly from a single interview. This replaces the standard 2-stage process

(screening appointment followed by substantive interview) with a single personal interview at or shortly after the point a claim is made.

To ensure the effective functioning of the asylum system, it is important that claims which do not engage international protection obligations are identified and processed efficiently. The UK asylum system continues to receive asylum claims which are unfounded from the outset or intended to frustrate removal, affecting the timely determination of applications from those in need of protection.

Application in respect of children

Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 requires the Home Office to carry out, among others, its immigration and asylum functions in a way that takes into account the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the UK. You must not apply the actions set out in this guidance to children or to those with children without having due regard to Section 55. The instruction, [Every Child Matters - Change for Children](#) sets out the key principles to take into account in all activities.

The Single Protection Interview will not be applied to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), nor any person subject to an active age dispute which means that they may be concluded to be a UASC.

A child may be included in the Single Interview Process if they are part of a family group who has claimed asylum, and the eligibility criteria set out within this guidance is met. It is considered to be in the best interests of a child for any asylum claim to be concluded as soon as possible, which includes unmeritorious claims being refused swiftly, while ensuring decisions are fair, robust and taken following appropriate consideration of all relevant matters.

Children who are dependants within a family application may be included where there is no indication that they have a protection claim distinct from that of the principal claimant. Where a child may have an individual protection claim, the family should not be processed through the Single Protection Interview process unless that issue has been considered and it is appropriate to proceed.

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Relevant legislation

Immigration Rules

[Immigration Rule 339NA](#) sets out the specific circumstances in which a substantive interview may be omitted. The Single Protection Interview is intended to obtain the information necessary to determine the protection claim at or shortly after the point a claim is made.

Following a Single Protection Interview, a decision on the asylum claim may be made where sufficient information has been obtained and no further interviewing or enquiries are required. Where additional information, evidence gathering or interviewing is required, the claim must proceed through the standard asylum process.

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Policy framework

The Single Protection Interview combines asylum registration and full examination of the protection claim in a single interview. It replaces the separate screening appointment and later asylum interview ordinarily undertaken in the standard process.

It forms part of an asylum system designed to resolve clearly unfounded claims more efficiently, while ensuring that all claims continue to be considered on their individual merits.

The Single Protection Interview is intended for non-complex cases where the information available at the point of claim indicates that the claim may be capable of being refused and certified as clearly unfounded following a single personal interview.

The purpose of the interview is to determine whether the claim can properly be concluded on the information available, that the claim is clearly unfounded, and there is no further information that could be gathered through a separate asylum interview that could have a material impact on the decision. Where further exploration (including testing credibility), evidence gathering or safeguarding measures are required, the case must be routed to the standard asylum process.

Following the interview, a decision maker must determine whether:

- the claim can be decided on the information available
- further interviewing or enquiries are required and the case should proceed through standard asylum processes

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Eligibility for Single Protection Interview

Eligibility / case selection

A case may be considered for the Single Protection Interview where:

1. The claimant is a national of:
 - a Member State of the European Union (if not inadmissible)
 - Switzerland
 - an European Economic Area (EEA) state (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway)
 - Australia
 - Canada
 - New Zealand
 - Japan
 - South Korea
 - the United States

This includes where the claimant is a dual national.

2. The available information indicates that the claim appears to be clearly unfounded.
3. There are no indicators suggesting that a fuller examination of the claim is likely to be required (see: [Outcome of the Single Protection Interview](#)).
4. It is likely to be unnecessary to test the credibility of any claims made as they can be considered at their highest.
5. The claimant is fit to be interviewed (for further information see Asylum interview).
6. There are no safeguarding concerns or vulnerabilities that would make the process inappropriate. This includes, but is not limited to cases involving:
 - unaccompanied children and age disputes
 - vulnerability requiring a modified or enhanced interview approach
 - any safeguarding concern that requires additional support or processing
 - an arguable article 8 ECHR claim

Decision makers should have regard to existing asylum guidance relating to vulnerability, safeguarding, children, trafficking and modern slavery, and whether the claimant requires a modified interview approach or additional support (see: [Circumstances where further action may be required](#))

Selection for the Single Protection Interview process does not predetermine the outcome of the claim. The purpose of the interview is to establish whether sufficient information is available to determine the claim or whether the case should be routed to the standard asylum process.

EU claims should be considered under the inadmissibility process in the first instance. Where a claim is admitted to the UK asylum process, it may be considered for the Single Protection Interview if the eligibility criteria above are met.

Family groups

Claims made by nationals of countries listed above, and which meet the criteria stipulated under '[Eligibility / case selection](#)' are also eligible for processing through a Single Protection Interview where there are dependants listed on the claim, or linked family members.

Where the main claimant is not a national of one of the countries listed above, but a dependant is, the claim will only be suitable for a Single Protection Interview if the family could relocate to the dependant's country of nationality. Where this is not apparent, this is likely to mean that a fuller examination of the claim and evidence is necessary in order to reach a decision.

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Conducting the Interview

The Single Protection Interview is a personal interview conducted for the purposes of asylum registration and the full examination of the protection claim. It replaces the separate screening appointment and later asylum interview ordinarily undertaken in the standard process. The interview is intended to obtain the information necessary to determine the protection claim, unless further enquiries or interviewing are subsequently required. You must use the Single Protection Interview transcript to conduct this interview.

Procedural safeguards

The Single Protection Interview is an asylum interview and does not remove or reduce the procedural safeguards that apply to the consideration of protection claims.

Individuals being considered under this process must be provided with:

- information about the purpose of the interview
- an interpreter where required
- reasonable adjustments where required
- the opportunity to provide relevant information and evidence in support of their claim
- the opportunity to be accompanied by a legal representative
- a transcript of the interview in accordance with existing asylum interview policy
- a reasoned decision in accordance with existing asylum decision making guidance

Decision makers must ensure that the use of a Single Protection Interview does not prevent a claimant from explaining the basis of their claim or providing information relevant to the determination of that claim.

Recording the interview

Single Protection Interviews are asylum interviews and must be conducted in accordance with the interview recording policy set out in the Asylum Interviews guidance.

Interviewers must ensure that the interview is audio recorded using approved Home Office recording equipment and must inform the claimant at the start of the interview that the interview is being recorded. Where recording equipment is unavailable or fails, interviewers must follow the procedures set out in the Asylum Interviews guidance.

Registration

The interviewer must:

- confirm identity and basic biographical details
- verify nationality (where possible)
- collect contact and operational information
- confirm mandatory checks have been completed

Establishing the protection claim

The interviewer must establish the full basis of the claim, including:

- why the claimant fears return
- the events relied upon
- when those events occurred
- who was involved
- whether state protection was sought, and why it could not be sought on return
- whether internal relocation was considered or attempted, and why it could not be sought on return
- any supporting evidence available

Questions must be open and exploratory, focused on the claimant's personal account and free from assumptions based on nationality.

Country considerations

The interviewer should explore the claimant's individual circumstances and ascertain:

- why the claimant considers themselves at risk despite general country conditions
- whether the alleged harm is personal, localised, or systemic
- whether the claim engages a Convention reason
- whether there are exceptional individual circumstances

Interviewers should make clear that:

- conditions in the country of origin are likely to be well established
- the claimant should focus on explaining their individual circumstances

Before concluding the interview, the interviewer must provide the claimant with a reasonable opportunity to raise any additional matters they consider relevant to their protection claim.

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Outcome of the Single Protection Interview

The Single Protection Interview is intended to obtain the information necessary to determine a protection claim following a single personal interview. Following the interview the decision maker must determine whether sufficient information is available to determine the claim, or further investigation, evidence gathering, safeguarding measures or interviewing is required before a decision can be reached.

Where further action is required, the case should proceed through the standard asylum process and any additional steps, including a further interview where necessary, should be arranged in accordance with standard procedures.

The fact that a case proceeds through the standard asylum process following a Single Protection Interview does not indicate that the claim lacks merit, cannot be certified, or should be determined in a particular way. All claims must continue to be considered on their individual merits and in accordance with the relevant asylum guidance.

Circumstances where further action may be required

Examples of circumstances where further investigation or consideration may be required include, but are not limited to:

- information emerges that suggests the claim may amount to a well-founded fear of persecution or otherwise requires further exploration through an additional interview
- safeguarding concerns are identified which require specialist consideration or support
- an age dispute is identified;
- vulnerabilities are identified which mean that a fuller examination of the claim, additional safeguards, or a modified interview approach is required;
- an arguable protection or human rights claim emerges that requires further investigation
- additional evidence gathering or enquiries are required
- the case otherwise becomes unsuitable for determination through the SPI process

Trafficking and Modern Slavery

Indicators of trafficking or modern slavery do not automatically make a case unsuitable for the Single Protection Interview process. The interview may continue and any appropriate National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral should be made in accordance with the [Modern Slavery: Statutory Guidance for England and Wales \(under s49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015\)](#) and [Non-Statutory Guidance for Scotland and Northern Ireland](#), including the [First Responder Toolkit](#).

Where an NRM referral has been made, decision-makers must consider any information arising from the NRM process that is relevant to the protection claim, in accordance with existing asylum and modern slavery guidance. A referral to the NRM, or a positive Reasonable Grounds decision, does not determine the outcome of the protection claim. The protection claim must be considered separately and on its individual merits in light of all available evidence.

Decision makers must also be mindful of any implications that NRM decisions may have for removal action in accordance with existing modern slavery policy and guidance. A positive or negative Conclusive Grounds decision does not determine the outcome of the asylum claim and does not prevent a claim being refused or certified as clearly unfounded where the statutory and policy requirements for certification are otherwise met.

Submission of further evidence

Where further representations are made after a Single Protection Interview decision, these should be handled in line with standard processes for further submissions.

Claimants must be given at least 5 full working days following their Single Protection interview to submit any further representations before a decision is made on their asylum application. An earlier decision may only be made where the claimant has expressly requested this.

The claimant, or their representative, may request additional time to submit further representations. Requests may be made during the interview or at any point before a decision is taken and must be considered on their individual merits, taking account of the circumstances of the case and the overriding requirement to ensure a fair decision-making process

Where a claimant indicates that they are seeking a Medico-Legal Report, decision makers must consider whether it would be reasonable to allow additional time for that evidence to be obtained before a decision is made. For further information see: Medical evidence in asylum claims.

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