

Asylum Advice

Claiming Asylum



Section 1: Claiming Asylum

1.1 Do you need to apply for asylum?

You should only make a claim for asylum (international protection) if you fear returning to your country. To be recognised as a refugee under the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, you must have left your country and be unable to go back because you have a well-founded fear of persecution, based on one of the following reasons:

- Your race
- Your religion
- Your nationality
- Your political opinion; or
- Your membership of a particular social group.

If it is decided that you are not a refugee, because your claim is not based on one of the five reasons listed above, but there are other grounds for believing that you would face a real risk of suffering serious harm if you return to your country, then you may qualify for humanitarian protection.

If you do not think you have a claim for international protection (asylum or Humanitarian Protection) but would still like to remain in the United Kingdom (UK) for other reasons, you should seek legal advice.

If your claim for international protection is refused it may affect any further applications for leave to visit the UK.

1.2 Where can I claim for asylum?

Are you at an airport, seaport or international train station?

If you intend to claim asylum it is important that you do so as soon as possible when you enter the United Kingdom. If you have fled persecution and are in need of protection then you must ask to see an immigration officer. When you speak to the immigration officer you will need to confirm that you are applying for asylum in the United Kingdom because you are at risk.

Are you already in the United Kingdom?

If you want to claim asylum and you are already in the UK, you must book an appointment to attend the Asylum Intake Unit in Croydon (South-East London). You

must attend with any dependants who form part of your asylum claim. It is important that you make a claim for asylum as soon as possible after you arrival in the United Kingdom or as soon you have found out that your circumstances have changed and that you now require international protection. Please note that the Home Office will not pay for your travel to Croydon.

In addition to the above appointment system, the Asylum Intake Unit will assess applicants who attend via the walk-in service. However, there is no guarantee that your application will be dealt with on the same day. You may be advised to make an appointment for your application to be processed on another day.

Appointment line for the Asylum Intake Unit: 020 8196 4524

Opening times: Monday to Thursday 9am to 4.45pm and Friday 9am to 4.30pm.

Asylum Intake Unit is located in Lunar House, 40 Wellesley Road, Croydon CR9 2BY

If you need to change or cancel your appointment, please telephone as soon as possible on 020 8196 4524.

If you are vulnerable and are in Scotland you may be allowed to have your screening interview in Glasgow. This however is at the Home Office discretion and is decided on case by case basis.

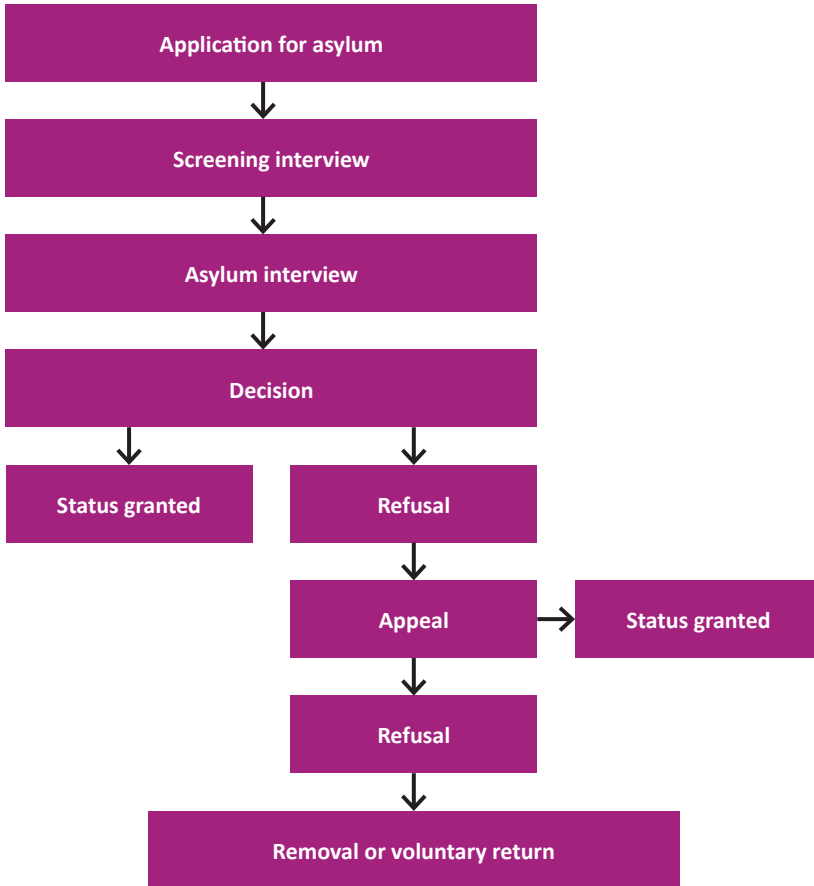
1.3 Advice and guidance on claiming asylum and the asylum process

Asylum Help is part of the Migrant Help charity. Through Asylum Help the organisation provides advice and guidance to asylum seekers. Asylum Help can provide FREE independent advice, guidance and information on claiming asylum, the asylum process, accommodation, financial support, finding legal representation, and other asylum support matters.

Information on the asylum screening process, on the substantive interview and about what happens once a decision has been made on your case, can be found in both audio and written format on the asylum advice UK website. These are available in 15 key languages. Please visit our website www.asylumhelpuk.org.

If you would like to speak directly to an adviser, please call our FREE Asylum Advice UK helpline on: 0808 8000 630. Please note that Asylum Help is unable to give any legal advice regarding your claim for asylum.

Asylum Process Diagram



1.4 Do you need Asylum Support?

If you need to apply for asylum support once your claim is registered or you have been given an appointment then you need to call our FREE helpline:

Asylum Support Application UK on 0808 8000 631

This service can be provided in a language you understand.

Further information regarding asylum support can be found at:

www.asylumhelpuk.org

If you are homeless or unable to support yourself please ensure that you make this clear during the asylum screening process. The Home Office will assess whether you require temporary accommodation, which they can provide immediately after screening.

If you have been refused entry to accommodation in your screening appointment Asylum Help will not be able to assist you to obtain immediate accommodation but can assist you to apply for long term support.

If you have entered the UK on a visa or been self supporting you must give a full account of how you have been supporting yourself and where any monies have been spent. You will need to show why this support is no longer available. You will need to provide all available evidence of this in your screening interview.

1.5 Assisted Voluntary Return

If you decide that you do not want to claim asylum, and are an irregular migrant and wish to return home, you may be able to get help from the Home Office Assisted Voluntary Return programme.

For more information please visit:

www.gov.uk/return-home-voluntarily
Voluntary Departures Team: 0300 004 0202

For further information regarding any part of this section please contact Asylum Help.

www.asylumhelpuk.org

Asylum Advice UK 0808 8000 630

Asylum Support Application UK 0808 8000 631