



Home Office

# Asylum screening and routing

Version 11.0

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# About this guidance

This guidance is for staff in UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), Immigration Enforcement (IE) and Border Force (BF) who register asylum claims and complete the screening process for asylum claimants. **The term ‘you’ in this context is used in reference to the officer who is responsible for completing the registration and screening process in UKVI, IE or BF.** Where the guidance refers to a unit that does not normally complete the screening process but may interact with the screening process in some way, the team name will be referenced in the guidance.

## 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 Asylum policy team.

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 **11.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **18 April 2024**

## Changes from last version of this guidance

- change of service provider

### Related content

[Contents](#)

# Purpose of asylum screening guidance

This guidance is to support staff who register asylum claims and complete the screening process for asylum claimants.

You will find the component parts of the screening process such as fingerprinting, determining immigration status, setting immigration bail and determining nationality where nationality is doubted are set out in detail in the asylum guidance, the A-Z of immigration guidance for Border Force, and the Immigration Enforcement: general instructions. This screening guidance complements these sources but does not replace them. It also provides specific advice on the initial contact and asylum registration questionnaire (screening questionnaire) and related asylum-specific parts of the process. This guidance must be followed by anyone carrying out asylum screening to ensure consistency in all screening locations.

This guidance must be read in conjunction with all other applicable guidance, including:

- Liability to administrative removal under section 10 (non-European Economic Area (EEA))
- Dependants and family members in asylum claims
- Family asylum claims
- Nationality: disputed, unknown and other cases
- Biometric data-sharing process (Five Country Conference (FCC) data-sharing process)
- Multiple applications
- Visa matches: handing asylum claims from UK visa applicants
- Requests made to the UK under the Dublin III Regulation prior to the end of the Transition Period at 11:00pm on 31 December 2020
- EU / EEA asylum claims
- Inadmissibility
- Assessing age
- Detained asylum process
- Detention guidance
- The family returns process (see the section 'family welfare form')
- Children's asylum claims
- Victims of modern slavery (home page)
- [Victims of modern slavery: a guide for frontline staff](#)
- Modern slavery victims: referral
- Country information and guidance (home page)
- Further submissions
- Identifying people at risk
- Identity management (enforcement)
- Immigration bail

This is not an exhaustive list.

## Background

'Screening' is the general term for the process of registering the asylum claim, completing an initial contact and asylum registration questionnaire (during the screening interview) in the case of adults (children claiming asylum will have a welfare interview instead). This process includes:

- capturing the claimant's fingerprints and facial image
- completing mandatory security and identity checks both to establish, as far as possible the claimant's identity, and to biometrically link them to their given biographic identity

The screening process is designed to capture basic information about the individual's protection claim, their immigration history, and details about their family members including in the case of a dependent child, if the child has the same grounds for asylum as their parent, their own grounds or no independent claim for asylum. This supports an efficient and effective asylum process for the UK and ensures that the claim is subsequently handled in a manner that is appropriate to the individual, including ensuring any reasonable adjustments and safeguarding needs are considered.

As part of that process, there is a need to assess whether what a person is saying amounts to a protection claim and if so, whether the claim is admissible to the decision-making process.

Inadmissibility is a concept by which the Home Office can decline to consider an asylum claim if the claimant passed through one or more safe countries in order to come to the UK, or they have a connection to a safe country, and it would be reasonable for them to go there to claim protection. The claimant may be removed to one of the countries that lead to the claim being considered as inadmissible or to another safe country, provided it is reasonable to do so and the country is willing to accept them. For full details regarding inadmissibility, see guidance: [Inadmissibility: safe third country cases](#).

In the case of EU nationals, a claim for asylum will be registered but then declared inadmissible as EU member states are regarded to be safe countries. We would only make substantive decisions on asylum claims from EU nationals in very exceptional circumstances, see [EU / EEA asylum claims](#).

An individual can only make an initial asylum claim as a primary claimant on one occasion. Any representations made subsequently will need to be lodged under the further submissions process. See the guidance on [when to register an asylum claim](#) and the further submissions guidance.

## Casework Information Database (CID), DocGen and Atlas

The Home Office is transitioning its electronic immigration data records to the Atlas system. During the transition from CID to Atlas you may need to check both systems and double key some information. You must follow the latest Atlas instructions as to



how and what to record in Atlas and discontinue completing CID as instructed. This guidance will be updated in due course to remove CID processes when the transition has been completed.

Additionally, where possible you should be using Atlas templates rather than DocGen templates.

## Policy intention

The policy objective in screening and routing is to deliver an effective mechanism to register asylum claims and route individuals into the asylum process by:

- providing the means for an individual to lodge an asylum claim in person
- establishing, and as far as possible, confirming their identity
- ensuring mandatory security checks are completed to confirm identity, link identity to their biometric details for the purpose of immigration, security and criminality checks
- ensuring that claims are only routed into the UK asylum decision making process if they are particularised and amount to a claim for international protection, or assist the UK in identifying whether a claim may be considered inadmissible
- capturing basic details about the claim and basic information that will aid an individual's transition onto mainstream services and support integration if they are granted status, such as details for a National Insurance number (NINo), in relation to their immediate family members for family reunion, or to support the returns process if they are refused leave or considered inadmissible
- creating a secure and positive environment that supports claimants to disclose as much relevant information as possible, including medical conditions, disabilities or experience of trauma that may make the person vulnerable
- ensuring that those who are particularly vulnerable are signposted to and or given help in accessing appropriate services over and above those aimed at all asylum seekers

## Application in respect of children

[Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009](#) requires the Secretary of State to make arrangements to ensure that immigration, asylum and nationality functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are in the UK. See: [section 55](#) statutory guidance. It does not impose any new functions, or override existing functions.

The main ways in which the Home Office gives effect to this are:

- staff must be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect, be alert to risks which abusers may pose to children, and be ready and able to share relevant information with other public bodies with a responsibility towards children to meet our safeguarding responsibilities

- staff who have face to face contact with children must be able to conduct business in a child sensitive manner, and staff with roles involving regular contact with children, such as interviewing, must receive appropriate training

Provision is made in the asylum registration and screening process for the essential safeguarding and well-being needs of children, whether they are claiming asylum in their own right, or with their parent, included as dependants on their parent's asylum claim or as part of a Family Asylum claim. Such needs are met, where necessary, through appropriate support, referrals to appropriate bodies and accommodation arrangements. If the child is part of a family group, then the child should generally be understood to have made an application for asylum in their own right. Additionally, a family welfare form (ICD.3629) must be opened to record welfare concerns, medical issues and the family's behaviour and engagement throughout the process. See guidance: dependants and family members in asylum claims, Family Asylum Claims and the family returns process.

You must follow the policy as set out in the asylum guidance children's asylum claims and assessing age as the primary source of policy and process when the asylum seeker is a child or claims to be a child but their age has been disputed. You must complete the welfare interview for children, where the child is not accompanied by their parent, and not the screening questionnaire.

## Definitions

The terms 'asylum application' and 'asylum applicant' are interchangeable with 'asylum claim' and 'asylum claimant'. The Immigration Rules refer to asylum applicants, so the same term has been used when referring to the Immigration Rules, otherwise claimant is used.

## Transitional arrangements and the Nationality and Borders Act 2022

The [Nationality and Borders Act 2022](#) (the act) came into force on 28 June 2022. For the purposes of the transitional arrangements described in other asylum guidance, individuals who sought to register an asylum claim before the commencement of the act but were provided with an appointment to attend a designated place to register their asylum application on or after 28 June will be considered to have 'made an asylum claim' before the commencement date in respect of how the asylum policies amended by the act will apply to them. For example, version 10 of assessing credibility and assessing refugee status will apply for those that 'made an asylum claim' before the 28 June 2022 and version 11 to those that made a claim after the 27 June 2022.

However, if the individual does not attend their appointment, but later wishes to register a claim for asylum on or after commencement, they will not be considered to have 'made an asylum claim' unless (a) there were circumstances beyond their control that made it impossible for them to attend the appointment scheduled for them, (b) they contacted the Home Office as soon as reasonably practicable to warn / explain of the said circumstances

and apply for a new appointment and (c) they provided the Home Office, as soon as reasonably practicable, with evidence to demonstrate their inability to attend the scheduled appointment which they say they were unable to attend.

**Related content**

[Contents](#)

# Relevant legislation

## The Refugee Convention

The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the subsequent 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees are collectively referred to as the '[Refugee Convention](#)'. The Refugee Convention provides the main international refugee protection framework. The protection routes have been further defined through the development of international human rights law. In the European Union, subsidiary protection is a similar concept to humanitarian protection (as granted in the UK); other regions may also have defined their own protection routes outside of the Refugee Convention.

## Domestic legislation

[Section 141 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#), as amended, sets out the powers to fingerprint asylum claimants and their dependants.

As amended by the Nationality and Borders Act 2022, the inadmissible asylum claims provisions are to be found in [Part 4A of the Nationality and Immigration Act 2002](#). Section 80A sets out the requirements for declaring that an asylum claim is inadmissible when an EU national makes such a claim. Sub-sections 80B to 80C sets the requirements when an asylum claim may be treated as inadmissible where the claimant has a connection to a safe third state.

[Section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration \(Treatment of Claimants, etc.\) Act 2004](#), requires officers to take account of certain behaviours that appear to damage an individual's credibility.

[Section 14 of the Nationality and Borders Act 2022](#), sets out the requirement that an asylum claim must be made at a designated place.

A "designated place" means any of the following places in the United Kingdom:

- a place identified in a notice published by the Secretary of State as an asylum intake unit
- a removal centre (within the meaning of section 147 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999)
- a port (within the meaning of section 33 of the Immigration Act 1971)
- a place where there is a person present who, for the purposes of the immigration rules, is authorised to accept an asylum claim on behalf of the Secretary of State (excluding the UK territorial sea)
- a place to which the claimant has been directed by the Secretary of State or an immigration officer to make the claim
- such other place, or a place of such other description, as the Secretary of State may by regulations designate

14 (6) defines that an “asylum claim” means a claim made in accordance with the immigration rules by a person to the Secretary of State that to remove the person from, or require the person to leave, the United Kingdom would breach the United Kingdom’s obligations under the Refugee Convention.

## The Immigration Rules

The following [Immigration Rules](#) in parts [11](#), [11B](#) and [12](#) are particularly relevant to the registration of asylum claims:

- paragraph 327 sets out that an “application for asylum” (or an “asylum application”) is a claim by a person to be recognised as a refugee under the Refugee Convention on the basis that it would be contrary to the United Kingdom’s obligations under the Refugee Convention for them to be removed from or required to leave the United Kingdom, and which is recorded as valid or a claim deemed to be an application for asylum in accordance with paragraph 327EC
- paragraph 327AB sets out that such a claim will only be recorded as valid if:
  - i) It is made at a designated place as defined in section 14 of the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 unless subsequently or otherwise accepted by the Secretary of State; and
  - ii) it is made in person; and
  - iii) it is made by a person who is not a British Citizen; and
  - iv) it is particularised (if the applicant is 18 or over); and
  - v) it does not fall for consideration under paragraph 353 of the Immigration Rules, unless and until it has been accepted as a fresh claim under paragraph 353 of the Immigration Rules.
- paragraph 327AC sets out that if a claim does not meet the requirements of 327AB, it will not be recorded as a valid asylum application.
- paragraphs 327EA to EC define a claim for humanitarian protection as:
  - a request by a person for international protection due to a claim that if they are removed from or required to leave the UK, they would face a real risk of suffering serious harm (as defined in paragraph 339CA) in their country of origin, and they are unable, or owing to such risk, unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country
  - such a claim must meet the requirements of paragraphs 327AB(i) to (iv) otherwise it will not be recorded as a valid claim
  - if someone makes a claim for humanitarian protection, they will be deemed to be an asylum applicant and to have made an application for asylum for the purposes of the Immigration Rules
- paragraph 333C on when an asylum claim can be treated as either explicitly or implicitly withdrawn:
  - some asylum seekers may choose to withdraw their claim during the screening process, this means that any further ‘claim’ must be considered in line with the further submissions policy
  - if the claimant refuses to assist in the completion of the screening questionnaire, the claim may be treated as implicitly withdrawn

- paragraph 339I on the requirement to provide all material factors to substantiate a claim as soon as possible:
  - this is relevant to the screening process because the material factors include all documentation available to the asylum claimant regarding their age, background (including background details of relevant relatives), identity, nationalities they may hold or be entitled to hold, countries and places of previous residence, previous asylum claims, travel routes, identity documents and travel documents
- paragraph 339M on the process of considering non-compliance where an asylum claimant fails, without reasonable explanation, to make a prompt and full disclosure of material facts, or otherwise to assist in establishing the facts of the case, for example failure to report to a designated place to be fingerprinted
- paragraph 349 on who may be considered to be a dependant of an asylum applicant, including provision that a dependant may register a claim in their own right, whilst also remaining as a dependant of the principal claimant
- paragraph 350 on the ability of unaccompanied children (under 18) to apply for asylum and because of their potential vulnerability, particular priority and care is given to the handling of their cases
- paragraph 353 on the consideration of fresh claims under the further submissions process
- paragraph 357 on reception conditions for non-EU nationals
- paragraph 357A to 358A on information to be provided to asylum applicants
- paragraph 358B on the requirement for an asylum applicant to provide their current address and notify and of any change to his address or residential status
- paragraph 359 to 359C on the requirement to provide an asylum applicant a document issued in their name, certifying their status as an asylum applicant, within 3 days of recording an asylum claim

## **Related content**

[Contents](#)

# The screening process: general principles

## Your role in the screening process

All asylum claimants must be treated with dignity and fairness regardless of their age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief.

The screening process must provide a positive and secure environment in which the claimant feels able, as far as possible, to disclose relevant sensitive and other information necessary to register their asylum claim. You must act professionally and sensitively to engender trust with asylum claimants to help encourage them to give full disclosure to the questions asked, including any special needs they or their dependants (including those who make Family Asylum Claims) may have. You should be aware of both their verbal and non-verbal communication. Body language should be open, relaxed and non-threatening. However, in some circumstances, and particularly in relation to highly sensitive information, disclosure may not happen despite your best efforts to create an environment of trust.

You must remember that culturally, the UK may be very different from the claimant's country of origin. For example, the claimant may be informing someone in authority about their sexual orientation for the first time and may feel uncomfortable in doing so, or they may have been poorly treated because, for example, of their race, religion, disability or gender. The claimant may be reluctant to speak to officials due to their past experiences with people in positions of authority in the country of origin.

In addition, due to the claimant's disability or medical condition, you may need to make reasonable adjustments to ensure the claimant can engage with the process as much as possible. This could mean, for example, giving them additional breaks. See the [health, disability and other special needs](#) section.

Some claimants may also have encountered people on their journey to the UK who took advantage of their situation, about which they may feel ashamed, and they may be reluctant to explain their experiences to you. This could relate to incidents of rape, violence or prostitution. Or the journey was traumatic for some other reason, for example because they witnessed the death of friends in a boat that capsized. You must also be mindful of the effects that the impact of torture or trauma can have on the memory and recall of people who have experienced it, as well as the impact the claimant's cultural and educational background may have.

When completing the initial contact and asylum registration questionnaire (screening) interview you should aim to have a general awareness of the situation in claimant's country of origin to assist you in understanding their situation. This ranges from the political context and current events to the cultural and social aspects of their country. This does not mean you need to be overly familiar with a country but by



regularly reviewing country information reports it should build your knowledge and understanding.

You must ask appropriate and focused questions to encourage full disclosure to the questions asked. However, the basis of the asylum claim must not be challenged or substantively probed at screening.

Claimants may try to withhold details that they believe would show an unfavourable immigration history that would detract from their claim. You should remain vigilant to indicators of trauma and impact on memory, recall and other behaviours, and note any indicators on the screening questionnaire. To support the claimant, it may be appropriate to just rephrase a question. However, where you consider the claimant is trying to conceal relevant information or mislead then a '[credibility warning](#)' may be given. For example, if the claimant is unable to provide a reasonable explanation of how they travelled on a plane without needing to use a passport or travel document and the rest of their account has been coherent, then a credibility warning may be appropriate. However, a credibility warning **must not** be given in relation to the grounds given by the claimant for the basis of the asylum claim.

As part of the screening process all asylum claimants must be provided with the leaflet '[Information about your asylum claim](#)', known as the 'point of claim leaflet', and potentially vulnerable claimants must be signposted to appropriate services and as appropriate referred to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) safeguarding leads. This may mean, for example, directing a victim of sexual violence to one of the organisations referred to in the point of claim leaflet or making a referral to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) if there are indicators of trafficking or other forms of modern slavery. See [Victims of modern slavery: a guide for frontline staff](#).

## Important functions of the asylum screening process

Each of the functions of the asylum screening process below must be completed to identify the claimant, register the claim and appropriately route the claimant into the asylum process:

- gather biometrics - fingerprints and photographs, see [system and security checks](#)
- carry out, record and act on identity and security checks, see [system and security checks](#)
- establish immigration status - this may happen as part of the enforcement or port encounter
- establish, as far as possible, any health or medical concerns, disabilities, vulnerability indicators or other safeguarding concerns including if they may potentially pose a risk to themselves or others- these are to be noted along with any reasonable adjustments made for the claimant to access the asylum procedure including provision of suitable accommodation and any safeguarding actions undertaken
- where such concerns or indicators are established which may require additional provision by the accommodation provider or may need a safeguarding referral, the NAAU safeguarding form should be completed along with the NAAU referral



- complete an initial contact and registration (screening) questionnaire (ASL.3211Main), which includes:
  - taking personal details - including name, aliases, gender, date of birth, nationality, language and dialect
  - establishing a brief basis of claim by succinctly capturing the main basis of the claimant's fear of return, including who they fear, why and key dates
  - in the case of a child dependant if the child has the same grounds for asylum as they do, differing and or additional grounds, or no grounds to claim asylum
  - establishing what documents the claimant has and if they relate to their identity, their journey to the UK or supports their claim
  - obtaining important health information as well as information about the claimant or their dependants that may have access needs, perceived vulnerabilities, safeguarding concerns or modern slavery indicators
  - asking criminality and security questions
  - establishing, where applicable, what the person was doing in the UK prior to claiming asylum, their method of entry and travel route to the UK, including third country (a country that they are not a national of) details for consideration of whether the claim may be inadmissible
  - if they did claim asylum in a third country, what was the outcome, if they did not claim why not, length of time spent in third countries and the basis of their presence there, what other countries do they have connections with
  - establishing details of any partner, children and other relatives and their whereabouts assists with evidence gathering for any future family reunion application or inadmissibility
  - establishing, where applicable, suitability for detention
- gather information to assist with onward routing including information pertinent to any decision to detain or to continue to detain
- register an application for a biometric residence permit (BRP)

See [the asylum screening interview](#). The children's asylum process is to be followed and a welfare interview completed where the claimant is a child.

By gathering this information, you will assist with and enable:

- the case progression process - including case management, interview preparation and decision making
- the identification and prevention of potential abuse of the asylum process, for example preventing multiple claims or nationality swapping
- the identification of individuals who are a threat to the UK's national security or vulnerable to being drawn into such activity
- establishing whether a claimant is known to the Home Office or other authorities
- establishing immigration status
- assessing the possible need for intervention and signposting, including for those who are potential victims of modern slavery, children at risk, victims of sexual violence and other people in need of safeguarding
- identifying other special needs, including any disabilities which may limit the claimant's ability to access the asylum procedure

- assessing the need for accommodation and any access requirements, so that appropriate and accessible accommodation such as ground floor accommodation can be provided
- assisting with the routing process, whether a referral should be made to the [National Asylum Allocations Unit \(NAAU\)](#) or the [Detention Gatekeeper](#) and whether the case is suitable for consideration by the National Removal Centre Glasgow - Third Country Unit, detained asylum casework or non-detained casework
- providing intelligence, for example, travel routes or cases of national interest
- the decision-making process so all responses given by the claimant must be accurately reflected in the screening record
- future decision making on entry clearance, or in country applications for family reunion for claimants granted either refugee status or humanitarian protection
- future decision making on settlement (protection) applications for claimants granted refugee status or humanitarian protection

All mandatory security checks **must** be undertaken and the results fully recorded on Atlas (and CID whilst required). See [System and security checks](#). Any additional checks required either by Border Force under their operating mandate, or by Immigration Enforcement under their Immigration Enforcement instructions must also be recorded.

A failure to either conduct or record checks increases the probability of:

- errors in case handling
- abuse not being detected
- likely threat posed to the UK not being detected
- duplication of effort

## Contingency measures

Outside of those individual cases where a full screening process is not possible, for example where the claimant is taken ill, the screening process may be abridged where this is necessary in order to deal with (i) an increased level of intake and / or (ii) to protect the health of the claimant, other claimants or staff. Approval is required at Grade 6 level within the area wanting to abridge the interview and requires the agreement of the asylum operations grade 6 for intake. Once the abridged screening process is completed the case must still be referred for routing (see [Referral to the National Asylum Allocations Unit or Detention Gatekeeper](#)).

## Minimum requirements

In addition to the requirements of Immigration Rule 327AB mandatory checks relating to identity and biometrics must be completed. In respect of the screening questionnaire, the questions in parts 1 (personal details and identity), 2 (health / special needs), part 4 (details of the claimant's basis of claim taken sufficiently to particularise the claim) and 5 (criminality and security) must be asked, and from part 3 (travel and third country), the questions, 'Why have you come to the UK?' and 'Please outline your journey to the UK'. These two questions in part 3 (travel and

third country), are asked for more than one reason, including to help identify someone who is potentially a victim of modern slavery (including trafficking).

Under the normal process the whole screening procedure may happen as separate elements on different days, and this can also be the case for claims that are in a contingency process. This would normally mean that biometric capture and associated checks (see system and security checks) and registering the claim happen in the first instance with the screening interview occurring on another day. Where the screening process is split into capturing biographic information and the screening interview on different days, it remains the responsibility of the business area operating contingency measures to complete the process.

Where the screening interview has been abridged the claimant should still be issued with a copy of their partially completed interview. Claimants should be given a Preliminary Information Questionnaire to complete that includes any questions they have not been asked.

## Phone interview

It is preferable to interview face to face or by videoconferencing. If capacity to do either is exhausted, then the screening interview can take place over a phone. Where the interview takes place over the phone it should be a full interview unless abridged interviews have been agreed by the grade 6 who authorised the contingency measures.

Where it is proposed that the screening interview is to take place over a phone the claimant should be asked if they are content for the interview to take place by that method. Interviews that take place by phone (or videoconference) may need to be stopped as a reasonable adjustment and the interview will need to take place in the physical presence of an officer. Where an interview takes place over the phone, the officer must arrange for the claimant to receive a copy of the interview.

## Asylum screening procedures checklist and file management

When you have completed the screening questionnaire (ASL.3211Main) you must provide a copy of the questionnaire to the claimant. This enables the claimant to review what has been recorded and allows them to provide a copy of the interview to their legal representative.

To assist you with making sure all actions required have been completed, an asylum screening procedures checklist is available ASL.5212 which lists the documents and leaflets to be given to the claimant.

Checklists must be placed on the left-hand side of the file.

### Related content

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# What constitutes an asylum claim?

An asylum claim is to be registered where the requirements of paragraph 327AB of the Immigration Rules are met, namely:

- it is made at a designated place as defined in section 14 of the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 unless subsequently or otherwise accepted by the Secretary of State
- it is made in person
- it is made by a person who is not a British Citizen
- it is particularised (if the applicant is 18 or over)  
it does not fall for consideration under paragraph 353 of the Immigration Rules, unless and until it has been accepted as a fresh claim under paragraph 353 of the Immigration Rules

If a claim does not meet these requirements, it **should not** be recorded as a valid asylum application.

Where a claim is mistakenly recorded, the individual will be informed that the asylum claim is not valid.

A designated place is defined in section 14 of the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 as:

- a place identified in a notice published by the Secretary of State as an asylum intake unit
- a removal centre (within the meaning of section 147 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999)
- a port (within the meaning of section 33 of the Immigration Act 1971)
- a place where there is a person present who, for the purposes of the immigration rules, is authorised to accept an asylum claim on behalf of the Secretary of State (excluding in the UK's territorial sea)
- a place to which the claimant has been directed by the Secretary of State or an immigration officer to make the claim
- such other place, or a place of such other description, as the Secretary of State may by regulations designate

To be recognised as a refugee under the Refugee Convention, the claimant must be outside their country of origin or habitual residence (if they are stateless) and be unable or unwilling to go back to that country, because they have a well-founded fear of persecution based on one of the following reasons:

- race
- religion
- nationality
- political opinion
- membership of a particular social group

Additionally, where the claim does not fall within the scope of the Refugee Convention, the claimant may still fall within the humanitarian protection policy. The policy applies to claimants who would face a real risk of suffering serious harm (for a reason not covered by the Refugee Convention) if they return to their country of origin (or habitual residence if they are stateless).

You only need to check that a claim can be particularised, not whether the claim is a well-founded asylum or humanitarian protection claim. It is the role of the decision maker to determine whether the claim falls within the Refugee Convention and then whether it is well-founded under the Refugee Convention or whether there are substantial grounds for believing that the claimant qualifies for humanitarian protection as they would face a real risk of suffering serious harm if returned to their country.

If the claimant cannot particularise their claim - that is give a basic reason why they fear persecution or serious harm on return - or the grounds given are very clearly not related to any protection matter, then you should consider not accepting that a claim for asylum has been made. However, if you are in doubt about the claimant's ability to communicate (which will likely be apparent across the whole interview) due to a health condition or disability, then the asylum claim must be accepted. See: [Claim made for a non-protection reason or is not particularised](#).

It is important to note that the claimant may not use the term 'asylum'. Instead, the claimant may use a variety of terms to express the reason why they fear returning to their country of origin or habitual residence. It is also important to note that the term 'asylum' in of itself does not constitute a claim if it cannot be particularised.

## Protection based claim but the individual does not want to claim asylum

Very occasionally an individual may indicate to you that they want protection but do not want you to register a claim for asylum. They may rightly be of the view that their claim is not one based on one of the five reasons covered by the Refugee Convention or they may be unaware that their claim falls within the scope of the Refugee Convention. However, it is not for the claimant to decide the type of protection status they are seeking. Anyone wanting to submit a protection claim is to follow the in-person asylum registration process and you must register a particularised protection claim as an asylum claim. You can highlight [paragraph 327EA - EC of the Immigration Rules](#), which informs the individual that a protection claim will be recorded as an application for asylum and must be made in the same way as an asylum application.

## Claim made for a non-protection reason or is not particularised

An asylum claim should not be accepted if the individual is applying to remain in the UK for reasons which are clearly not protection based or there is a mere assertion that cannot be particularised, which means that they cannot say why they fear return. However, this is likely to happen very exceptionally and the threshold for accepting a

claim for asylum must be taken as very low. For example, an individual stating that they have no fear of return to their home country but cannot access educational opportunities due to cost, or they cannot find work, should not be accepted as meeting this threshold. However, if the individual says they are denied education, or are not allowed by their country to work or access benefits because of their religious belief, political opinion or any other reason including discrimination that may engage the Refugee Convention. Similarly, where the basis of claim does not engage the Refugee Convention, but the claimant fears serious harm which may engage the humanitarian protection policy, then such grounds must be accepted as an asylum claim.

You must always be mindful that some claimants, due to a medical condition or disability, will not be able to articulate their claim. Where this is the case the claim for asylum must be accepted.

If a claim for asylum is made during removal, you must follow the process as set out in the guidance; asylum screening and routing - request for asylum made during the removal process. If the attempted claim is made somewhere else, for example the Asylum Intake Unit (AIU), and you are minded not to accept a claim, you must discuss with a duty Chief Immigration Officer (CIO) or equivalent before informing the individual. Details of the attempted claim must be noted on their case record.

Where circumstances allow, you can signpost individuals to the UK Visas and Immigration section of [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

It may also be appropriate to signpost individuals to the [Voluntary Returns Service](#).

You must **not** instruct the individual to make a particular application. They should be advised to seek independent legal advice on their options.

As well as informing them about the Voluntary Returns Service, the following sections may be relevant:

- if the individual claims to be stateless, or otherwise indicates that they are not considered to be a national of any state, and they do not have a protection claim, they should be directed to the webpage for [stateless leave applications](#):
  - where the claimed stateless person has a protection claim (as they fear serious harm or persecution in their former country of habitual residence), their asylum claim must be registered
- if the individual wants to stay in the UK because of ill health or on medical grounds, they can be directed to information on [making an application to extend their stay in the UK: FLR\(HRO\)](#)

If the individual does not have current leave to be in the UK and an asylum claim has not been accepted, and they are not detained you should set a reporting event in line with the guidance in the general instruction reporting and offender management (if the individual is not to be detained).

Where a claim for asylum is not accepted, the individual can make a claim for asylum in person at a future date if their circumstances change and they are able to provide a protection based reason why they cannot return to their home country.

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# When to register an asylum claim

An asylum claim will be registered where the requirements of Immigration Rule 327AB are met; see the section: [what constitutes an asylum claim?](#) If the claim is valid then it must be recorded on Atlas (and CID if necessary) as soon as possible.

Registering the claim does not mean that the UK will always be responsible for making a substantive decision. This section sets out the most common scenarios you are likely to encounter where you may not be sure if you should register a claim.

## Claims from nationals from EU states, the EEA states and Switzerland

As EU member states are regarded to be safe countries of origin, you must (after registering the claim) declare a claim from a national of an EU state as inadmissible unless there are exceptional circumstances for considering their claim. See EU/European Economic Area (EEA) asylum applications as to what the exceptional circumstances could be. To facilitate an inadmissible decision, you may need to liaise with a local asylum team if the claimant provides written representations when they claim asylum. When such a claim is being treated as inadmissible you will arrange before the claimant leaves the screening location to issue a letter, ASL.5052, declaring that the claim is inadmissible.

However, EU inadmissibility provisions cannot be applied to the nationals of the EEA states, Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland, or to Switzerland, as these countries are not member states of the EU. These cases must be admitted to the asylum process and will be considered on the basis that they are clearly unfounded. See guidance on EU/EEA asylum applications.

## Claims by persons with a connection to a safe third State inadmissible

If a claimant has a connection to a safe third State, they may be treated as inadmissible following registration of the asylum claim. For example, if there is a safe country which they travelled through that they claimed asylum in, or it is considered reasonable to expect them to have claimed in that country. Or if they have a sufficient connection to a safe country that they may not have travelled through on their journey to the UK, where it would not be unreasonable to have expected them to claim there. For full details regarding inadmissibility, see guidance: Inadmissibility: safe third country cases.

The screening questionnaire is the principal interview to gather the information necessary to identify if a claim may be considered to be inadmissible. The UK no longer participates in Eurodac so evidence of the claimant's time in the EU and other countries need to be established by other methods; the screening questionnaire, any documents the claimant may have, or evidence linking them to their departure from a safe country, such as an EU country. This evidence may include, immigration officer reports, HGV or vessel tracking data, police reports and other sources. This may



include where someone has been fingerprinted by Border Force officers when attempting to enter or apprehended in juxtaposed control areas in France. As much evidence as possible should be sought to assist the third country unit in their application of the inadmissibility policy.

## Implementing port transfers from the Dublin III Regulation countries

The Immigration, Nationality and Asylum (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 makes a 'saving' such that any Dublin III Regulation family reunion cases will continue to be processed after the UK leaves the Dublin Regulation in circumstances where 'a take charge' or 'take back' request was submitted prior to the end of the Transition Period (23h 00 on 31 December 2020). Hereafter, Dublin III Regulation and early iterations are referred to as Dublin Regulation.

Therefore, for a period after the UK has left the Dublin Regulation there will be occasions where the UK takes responsibility for considering an asylum claim from a third country national who has claimed asylum in a country operating the Dublin Regulation because that country had made a request to the UK prior to the end of the Transition Period based on the applicant's family links in the UK and the 'savings provisions' in the Immigration, Nationality and Asylum (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Once the requesting state has been formally notified of the decision to accept their request and the transfer details have been agreed, the European Intake Unit (EIU) will notify Border Force of the date, time and location of arrival to ensure that the transfer can be smoothly implemented. See the guidance: Request made to the UK under the Dublin III Regulation prior to the end of the Transition Period. On arrival into the UK, adult claimants must be screened in line with this guidance, and children with the guidance: Children's asylum claims.

## Where a claim for asylum has been registered previously

This section sets out the steps that should be taken where a claim for asylum has been registered in the UK previously.

If the claimant has not declared that they previously claimed asylum, [System and security checks](#) and [CID checks](#) will confirm whether they have done so.

## Claimant has been previously removed to a safe third country

Where the claimant has previously been removed to a safe third country and later returned to the UK and attempts to claim asylum again, they will require a third country interview. This interview must cover:

- any changes in circumstances since they were last in the UK
- the location of any family in the UK, the EU or any other safe third countries

The case must be referred to the National Asylum Allocations Unit (NAAU) who assess potential third country cases on behalf of National Removal Command Glasgow -Third Country Unit (NRC -TCU). Although these cases are recorded on CID with a TCU outcome, it is important to note that the UK had not taken a substantive decision as a safe third country was responsible for considering the claim.

If a case is not found to be suitable for inadmissibility action, then the case must be allocated for substantive consideration.

## Failed asylum seekers and previously withdrawn asylum claims

Further submissions cases **must not** be lodged as initial asylum claims.

If an individual attempts to claim asylum but has had a previous asylum claim refused or treated as withdrawn under [paragraph 333C of the Immigration Rules](#) and there is no outstanding right of appeal, the further submissions guidance must be followed. This includes individuals who have:

- not left the UK, but have stated that they want to claim asylum again
- returned to the UK, and stated that they want to claim asylum again – this applies regardless of the length of time the individual has spent outside the UK; such individuals are also known as repeat claimants or repeat applicants

Further submissions made on protection grounds must normally be made in person at the Further Submissions Unit (FSU) in Liverpool. Individuals must make an appointment to attend the FSU unless they fall into one of the exceptional categories and FSU have agreed to waive the in-person requirement. Individuals wishing to contact the FSU can be directed to the GOV.UK page on [submitting new evidence to support your asylum claim](#).

If the individual has previously claimed asylum in another identity and is now attempting to claim asylum in a new identity, refer to guidance on multiple applications and further submissions.

## Claimants re-establishing contact following service to file or the decision was unserved

If an asylum claimant re-establishes contact with the Home Office and says they have claimed asylum but are unaware of the decision, you must not raise a new claim or at that point inform them of the decision. You will need to arrange for the individual to be given a copy of the notice and the details of when and how it was given (by a notice placed on file) as soon as practicable. If service to file was invalid, you will need to transfer the case to an asylum team to consider. For further information on cases where 'service to file' has taken place, see drafting, implementing and serving asylum decisions.

Where the individual had left the UK and then attempts to claim asylum on their return, the further submissions process must be followed.

## Withdrawn asylum claims

Refer to the withdrawing asylum claims guidance. Where the individual wishes to access the further submissions process they can be directed to the section on GOV.UK for [submitting new evidence in your asylum claim](#).

### Explicit withdrawal

This section applies when the individual has previously signed and returned a withdrawal form issued by the Secretary of State, for example the IS.101PA or the Declaration of Withdrawal of Asylum Claim (ASL.4857). In such cases, you must not register a further claim for asylum but instead inform the individual that they will need to make a further submission to the Further Submissions Unit.

### Implicit withdrawal

Where an asylum claim has previously been treated as implicitly withdrawn, you must not register an asylum claim but inform the individual that they must make a further submission using the further submissions process. The implicit withdrawal policy came into effect on the 7 April 2008 and only applies to claims made on or after that date.

The claim may have been withdrawn where the claimant failed to complete an asylum questionnaire such as the statement of evidence form (SEF), the preliminary information questionnaire (PIQ) or the initial contact and asylum registration questionnaire (the questionnaire completed during the screening interview).

### Implicit withdrawal – evidence of leaving the UK

Asylum claims may be considered as impliedly withdrawn in line with paragraph 333C of the Immigration Rules when the claimant, either:

- requests that their passport is sent back to them for travel outside the Common Travel Area (CTA), unless permission to travel has been authorised prior to leaving the UK
- embarks for any destination outside the UK, (including within the CTA) without prior authorisation

An outstanding appeal against a decision is deemed to be abandoned if the claimant leaves the UK, in line with [section 104\(4\) of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002](#).

If an individual has an outstanding asylum claim at the point they are encountered (for example arriving at a port or lorry drop encounter) and it is evident that they had left the UK and their departure was not authorised, you may treat the claim as implicitly withdrawn. You must not register a further claim for asylum but instead follow the further submissions process.

## Requests to transfer refugee status

An individual in the UK who has been recognised as a refugee by a signatory of the [European Agreement on the Transfer of Responsibility for Refugees](#) (EATRR) can apply for transfer of refugee status by post under the terms of the EATRR. Individuals seeking a transfer of refugee status should not have an asylum claim registered and therefore do not need to be screened in the UK. Instead they should be pointed to the relevant application process – see the guidance [transfer of refugee status](#) available on GOV.UK. The exception to this is if the individual fears return to their host country for a protection reason. In this event, you must register a claim for asylum.

Where a claim for asylum has been registered it must be referred to NAAU for possible inadmissibility consideration.

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# Where to register an asylum claim

Individuals wishing to claim asylum should do so at the first available opportunity. This usually means claiming in the first safe country they reach. In the UK, individuals are to claim asylum at a place that has been designated to accept asylum claims.

Section 14 of the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 defines what a 'designated place' means:

- a) a place identified in a notice published by the Secretary of State as an asylum intake unit;
- b) a removal centre (within the meaning of section 147 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999);
- c) a port (within the meaning of section 33 of the Immigration Act 1971)
- d) a place where there is a person present who, for the purposes of the immigration rules, is authorised to accept an asylum claim on behalf of the Secretary of State;
- e) a place to which the claimant has been directed by the Secretary of State or an immigration officer to make the claim;
- f) such other place, or a place of such other description, as the Secretary of State may by regulations designate.

However, for the purposes of (d) it does not include reference to the territorial sea of the United Kingdom. Therefore, an asylum claim cannot be accepted in the UK's territorial sea.

If someone arrives in the UK and their intention is to claim asylum / protection, they should do so at the port of entry on arrival.

Those who have failed to claim asylum:

- at a port on arrival (or subsequent encounter with Immigration Enforcement (IE))
- believe that they have become a refugee sur place (so they qualify for refugee status because of a change of situation in their country of origin or personal circumstances since their departure)
- or who have otherwise entered the country illegally or overstayed a visa, and have protection reasons for remaining in the UK

are to claim asylum at the Asylum Intake Unit (AIU) located in Croydon (the AIU may also be operating at other locations and will inform the individual when they book their appointment the location that they need to attend to register a claim for asylum).

The AIU operates an appointment process and there is a walk-in service available for those needing immediate accommodation.

There is information about the AIU on GOV.UK under the section on [claiming asylum in the UK](#).

In certain situations, related to health, disability, or the fact the person wanting to claim asylum is a minor, they may request for screening to be undertaken locally in England and Wales. Such requests may be made directly to the Immigration Compliance and Enforcement (ICE) team or the AIU. Evidence of an individual's inability to travel to the AIU will be required and will be examined to determine whether local registration and screening would be justified.

This will apply to those who are unable to travel to AIU to lodge their claim because of:

- a health condition (documented or apparent if encountered in person) for which it would be unreasonable to expect a claimant to travel to the AIU – this also applies to the dependants of the main claimant
- a disability or other exceptional circumstance for which it would be unreasonable to expect a claimant to travel to the AIU – this also applies to the dependants of the main claimant
- their status as an unaccompanied asylum seeking child (UASC) - their claim must be registered at the nearest and most suitable Home Office premises (UASCs and their carers based in London and the South East can call the appointment line or email Child ASU appointment, those based in other parts of the country should email MIU minor and arrangements will be made so the UASC can claim asylum at a suitable location)

Evidence of an individual's inability to travel to the AIU will be required and will be examined to determine whether local registration and screening would be justified.

Postal requests to register an asylum claim must neither be accepted nor registered as an application, although if there is an electronic record (such as CID and or Atlas) for the individual a record of the attempted claim must be recorded. If it is agreed that the individual does not need to travel to the AIU, arrangements need to be made to register the claim locally in person, for example at a reporting centre. This is because mandatory biometric checks, including fingerprinting, must be completed in person.

Where a postal request for asylum (international protection) is received and the criteria for local screening has not been met, you must return the correspondence (and any supporting documents) accompanied by a 'Rejection of Postal Claim' letter (ASL.1036) informing the individual that they will need to attend the AIU to lodge a claim for asylum.

In Scotland, individuals who consider they have a valid reason why they cannot travel to the AIU can contact Migrant Help (a charity that assists asylum seekers) who will liaise with the screening team in Scotland before deciding if local screening is justified. This facility is for appointments only. There are no walk-in facilities.

Individuals in Northern Ireland who want to claim asylum should phone the AIU appointment line and they will book you an appointment to attend Drumkeen House, Belfast.

## Requests for asylum in UK territorial sea

Section 14 of the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 excludes the possibility of registering a claim whilst the person is in the UK territorial sea. When someone is intercepted in UK territorial sea and they ask an official for asylum, they are to be informed that they will be able to do so once they are brought ashore. Once ashore arrangements will be made so the person can claim asylum.

## Asylum claims made to Immigration Enforcement

As an officer in an Immigration, Compliance and Enforcement (ICE) team, you are responsible for preventing abuse of, and increasing compliance with, immigration law and pursuing immigration offenders. You also have a role in working with partners to regulate migration in line with the law and government policy. You will sometimes need to process asylum seekers encountered during operational visits and those notified to Immigration Enforcement by other agencies. These will often be notified by the police to the National Command and Control Unit (NCCU) and must be acted on as appropriate. By making sure the screening is completed at the time of encounter, or as soon as possible afterwards, you will be following your core responsibilities. This allows for the case to be transferred as quickly as possible to asylum operations.

The NCCU is the primary point of contact for police seeking immigration advice and assistance relating to a person in police custody. NCCU will log the enquiry, conduct status checks against the Police National Computer (PNC) and Home Office databases as required and notify the local ICE team to take forward the case. This is a 24/7 capability which is part of Immigration Enforcement.

You should be mindful that individuals encountered may be individuals at risk and you should look for any indicators of slavery, trafficking or any other potential risk. You must follow the [Victims of modern slavery: guidance for frontline staff](#).

You must also be aware of and follow the instructions [victims of modern slavery: referrals](#), enforcement interviews, and identifying people at risk.

In the case of children claiming asylum, you should also be following children's asylum process or Family Asylum Claim process as appropriate. The welfare assessment form (ASL.5097) is to be completed even if an unaccompanied child does not claim asylum.

## Clandestine arrivals

In order to minimise the time spent in police custody, and to reduce the burden on the local Immigration, Compliance and Enforcement (ICE) team, you may be able to transfer the claimant from the police station to an intake unit if the individual is a clandestine entrant who has arrived in the previous 72 hours. Arrivals in Kent can be referred to the Kent Intake Unit (KIU) and those arriving in the Midlands area (and surrounding regions) can be referred to the Midlands Intake Unit (MIU).

For more information see: [transfers to Midlands or Kent Intake Unit](#).

Also, see the Immigration Enforcement general instructions on clandestine entrants.

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## Request made at an Immigration Removal Centre

If an asylum claim is made while an individual is detained pending removal, but before the Operational Support and Certification Unit (OSCU) has responsibility to consider representations, the National Returns Command (NRC) detained hub must refer the case to the Detention Gatekeeper (DGK). If the request is made during the period OSCU would consider representations on behalf of your unit see: [Request for asylum made during the removal process](#).

The DGK will follow the process set out in the guidance: Detained Asylum Casework (DAC) asylum process.

If the screening process is conducted whilst the claimant is detained, it does not mean that the case will still be considered as suitable for detention post screening.

If the claimant is to be released before the screening process can be completed, then the claim for asylum must be registered and mandatory checks completed before release. You must also make arrangements for the screening process to be completed post release. If the bailed claimant then does not turn up to complete the screening process, see [incomplete asylum registration and screening questionnaire](#).

## Request for asylum made during the removal process

For information about the process to follow when someone makes an initial request for asylum during the removal process see the separate guidance: screening and routing – request for asylum made during the removal process.

For the purpose of this section ‘during the removal process’ is defined as the period that Operational Support and Certification Unit (OSCU) become responsible for a submission before a removal takes place. This will vary depending on your business areas Service Level Agreement with OSCU.

As an overview, where there appears to be a protection-based assertion; instead of immediately completing a screening interview you **must** conduct a brief interview using the particularisation questionnaire (ASL.5272). The questions asked provide the individual with an opportunity to provide information to support their assertion. Upon completion, you must upload to Atlas via Managed Documents. Once uploaded the matter should be referred to the OSCU who will consider whether the individual has particularised a claim.

Where OSCU determines that a claim for protection has been made then the removal must be cancelled and you should make arrangements for the individual to be screened.

Where OSCU determines that the reasons given in the particularisation questionnaire are not particularised or the request for asylum is clearly not based on any protection grounds, then removal can proceed.

## Detained in prison

An individual detained in prison can claim asylum through the Prison Operations and Prosecutions (POP). A POP team will be located in a 'hub' prison and will work from there in covering its 'spoke' prisons ('spoke' prison where a POP team is not located in but the 'hub' POP team cover immigration matters that arise in that prison). A prisoner can make a request for asylum during immigration surgeries held in prison or their request for asylum can be passed to the local POP hub team. As a member of a POP team, you will organise the registration of the asylum claim and the screening interview and ensure that all checks have been completed.

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# Transfers to Midlands or Kent Intake Units

It may be necessary to detain someone who has illegally entered the UK (a clandestine entry) for a short period in order to establish who they are, the reason why they avoided immigration control and the basis of why they want to remain in the UK. To minimise the time spent in police custody and to reduce the burden on the local Immigration Compliance and Enforcement (ICE) team, where possible, you should look to transfer recently arrived illegal entrants (within the last 72 hours) to the Kent or Midlands Intake Unit for the completion of the asylum screening process.

As applicable, ICE officers or police officers should contact the Kent or Midlands Intake Unit to establish whether they have capacity to accept the case. The relevant intake unit will usually provide you with an answer within 2 hours. Where space is not available, you must attend the relevant police station at the earliest opportunity in order to undertake screening.

## Midlands Intake Unit

ICE teams with embedded officers in police stations under Operation Nexus should usually complete the screening process where they are and are only to request a transfer to Midlands Intake Unit (MIU) in exceptional circumstances.

If you do need to transfer a case to MIU, you should first phone MIU to establish both whether they have capacity and if the individual is suitable to be transferred. Acceptance by MIU will take into consideration both the wellbeing of the individual and the potential journey time involved. If the individual is suitable, you will be asked to complete and send a Detention Gatekeeper (DGK) referral to the MIU inbox. MIU will then forward the referral to the DGK informing them that they have sufficient bed capacity.

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If the DGK accepts the referral, they will inform MIU and you (or nominate the ICE team inbox) by email and update Atlas (and if required CID) accordingly. The documents you will need to make available are:

- III En 101
- IS 91
- IS91R
- IS91RA (all cases including where no risk is identified)

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- IS 97M (disputed minors age assessed as adult only)
- BP7 (disputed minors age assessed as adult only)
- social services letter / report, must state Merton compliant and include details to show this (disputed minors age assessed as adult only)

MIU will also email the Detainee Escorting and Population Management Unit (DEPMU) to request a movement order. The claimant will then be collected by the detained transport provider at the earliest opportunity. At this point the MIU will assume ownership of the case.

Service of detention paperwork must be in line with guidance in Immigration Enforcement on detention. MIU will expect that the IS91R (reasons for detention) has the language that was explained to the claimant noted on the form, as well as details of the person who explained it to them. It is acceptable, where relevant, to insert language followed by 'statement issued by police using language line'.

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MIU do not retain case files. You are responsible for sending port files directly to the allocated asylum casework team. It is recommended that a diary action is placed on Calendar Events for one week's time, by which time the claimant should have been routed. Travel documents are to be scanned, copied and retained and must be recorded on Atlas.

## Kent Intake Unit

Arrangements exist with Kent Police to allow clandestine cases (including non-asylum cases) to be transferred and assessed at Kent Intake Unit (KIU). This is subject to agreed criteria of which cases are appropriate. KIU may, subject to holding room space and staff resources, be able to accept cases from ICE teams based in the south east outside of Kent. KIU, unlike MIU, can accept children including unaccompanied children. This is limited to children encountered in Kent.

### KIU: acceptance criteria

For a case to be accepted by KIU, immigration officers or police officers must seek agreement from KIU in advance of transfer. KIU will only accept if:

- they have capacity to receive and process the individual
- the circumstances of the detection make it clear that the individual is a clandestine entrant
- they are an unaccompanied child or age-disputed case that they were encountered in Kent (adults can be accepted from outside of Kent)

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## Transport and processing to KIU

If KIU accept a referral from the police, the claimant can be transported to KIU by the police. Upon arrival, they must supply a copy of their personal notebook entries for the incident to evidence the clandestine entry contention. KIU will then book in the individual using the DGK process. All police references should be cross-referenced with both KIU and the Command and Control Unit if any evidence needs to be assessed or accessed at a later date.

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# Dependants and Family Asylum Claims

## Dependant or Family Asylum Claim

You must refer to the asylum guidance: Family Asylum Claims, dependants and former dependants and [paragraph 349 of the Immigration Rules](#) for the requirements to be included as a dependant or as part of a Family Asylum Claim.

On 19 March 2021 the UK Supreme Court in [G \(Appellant\) v G \(Respondent\) UKSC 2020/0191](#) found that a child who is named as a dependant on an asylum application can and should (generally) be understood to have made a claim for asylum in their own right.

This means through the asylum process we must be satisfied that we have given the opportunity for a child who is a dependant on their parent's application to particularise their claim. In respect of the screening process this means that the parent (main applicant) will be asked if any of their minor dependants have their own grounds and should therefore have their own asylum application. If the child has no grounds to register an asylum claim in their own right, they will be a dependant on the main applicant's claim. If they have the same grounds as the main applicant, the Family Asylum Claim process should be followed.

Under a Family Asylum Claim, although the main claimant and any children are each an asylum claimant in their own right, the claims will be dealt with in a single consideration but with separate decisions issued. In most cases, the parent will be able to explain their circumstances on behalf of the family as a whole, and the child will not normally have their own separate protection needs.

A parent cannot be accepted as a dependant on a child's asylum claim.

Adult partners with legal capacity must consent to be treated as dependants at the time the claim is lodged, provided they are not British citizens and they meet the criteria to be a dependant.

A child is someone who is under 18 years of age or who, in the absence of documentary evidence establishing age, appears to be under that age. If the principal claimant is looking after a child but they are neither the parent nor have they adopted the child, then the child cannot be their dependant, even if the individual has responsibility for the child by law, custom or private fostering arrangement. The child can, however, claim asylum in their own right and may be considered as an accompanied asylum seeking child. Such cases are to be linked and considered together.

See children's asylum process for more detail on issues such as private fostering arrangements and definitions of accompanied and unaccompanied children.

An unmarried partner is a person who has been living together with the principal claimant in a subsisting relationship akin to marriage or a civil partnership for 2 years or more.

The asylum support provisions for who can be included as a dependant on an asylum support application are not the same as who can be included as a dependant on an asylum claim. See: dependants on a support application.

## Dependants' right to claim asylum in their own right

Adult dependants must be asked whether they want to claim asylum in their own right at screening and their response must be recorded. They must be asked this **separately** from the principal claimant. This is because the dependant may want to disclose sensitive information that they do not want their partner to know about such as rape. You must be sensitive to any possible protection needs or vulnerabilities within the context of the family unit, such as forced marriage or domestic violence and the dependant may request that they do not want to leave with their partner. You must use questionnaire ASL.3211Dep: dependant's screening questionnaire in this event.

Dependants, including children, may claim asylum in their own right at any time during their stay in the UK, including following a substantive decision on the main claimant's asylum claim. However, dependants are expected to make their own claim at the earliest opportunity. Failure to do so may damage their credibility. Claimants will have the opportunity to explain to the decision maker why they were not able to make their claim earlier and any credibility concerns arising from those actions.

Regardless of whether a dependant claims asylum in their own right or as part of a Family Asylum Claim you must issue them with an IS.75A (a combined IS.75 and IS.76) on which they can submit representations and advise them about their ongoing requirement to submit any additional grounds should they arise.

A child must be given their own IS.75A so they can submit, if they choose, any additional information to support their parent's claim.

## The family welfare form (FWF)

The family welfare form (FWF) (ICD.3629), is a multi-purpose document which must be updated throughout the asylum process. It forms the basis of consideration for the Independent Family Returns Panel (IFRP) should the case proceed to an ensured return stage and assists operational decision-making in how the family unit is handled. It may be the case that those who go through the asylum process are found neither to need international protection, or to have any other basis to remain in the UK. It is important to consider every possible outcome to ensure those with no legal basis to remain in the UK at the end of the process are supported to leave at the earliest opportunity.

The form covers:



- any welfare concerns or medical issues
- behaviour and engagement

The form **must** be opened by Home Office staff on the first contact with a family then fully updated following every interaction the Home Office has with the family. If a FWF has already been opened, you should update it at each relevant point. If it has not been opened, you will need to open and complete it as far as possible. See Immigration Enforcement: general Instruction – family returns process.

## Transfer of families from a police station

Every effort must be made to keep family units together throughout the asylum process. Care must be taken during the initial encounter to ensure that the claimant is not separated from their partner or children.

Scenarios where separation may be appropriate include where a member of the family unit has an extant Deportation Order in place, is wanted for a criminal offence, or is suspected of a criminal offence against the dependants (for example domestic violence or modern slavery). In the event of this being deemed necessary, a family separation where children are involved requires authorisation from a grade 7, or where no dependent children are involved authorisation can be from a senior executive officer (or equivalent) in line with the procedures set out in the family separations guidance.

In all other cases, the whole family should be placed in the most suitable waiting area that is available in the police station. If you (Immigration Enforcement officer) are in attendance at the police station, it will be your responsibility to supervise the welfare of the family until they are transferred. If you are not present, then the duty of care will fall to the police.

It is essential that families are moved out of the police station as quickly as possible. Although an acceptable initial place of safety, the police station is not a suitable location for children for any prolonged period. Police stations usually do not have suitable facilities or resources to accommodate and supervise families.

If you are available to attend the police station in a reasonable timeframe, you should do so to complete the actions required for referring the case to the National Asylum Allocations Unit (NAAU).

If it is not possible for you to attend in a reasonable timeframe, then you will need to liaise with the NAAU Intake team and depending on the time and requirements of the family you may also need to arrange for accommodation and transport there.

You will then need to complete the registration process and refer the case to NAAU as soon as reasonably practicable. This will normally be on the next working day.

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# Children claiming asylum and disputed age cases

## Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC)

You must follow the policy set out in the asylum guidance in processing children's asylum claims. This includes the requirement to conduct a welfare interview for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) on first encounter. You must update Atlas (and if required CID) with all actions taken, including any referrals to local authorities and contact details of the responsible adult and selecting the appropriate flag on the Special Conditions screen. The welfare of the child is paramount and UASC in most cases are to have their welfare interview and claim for asylum recorded in the area they are encountered. A welfare interview is to ensure that the child understands what is happening and why, and to ensure necessary information about the child's welfare is obtained for any onward referrals. UASC should not be expected to travel long distances to the Asylum Intake Unit in Croydon.

[Paragraph 352ZD of the Immigration Rules](#), defines a UASC as a person who is:

- under 18 years of age when the asylum claim is submitted
- applying for asylum in their own right
- separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult who in law or by custom has responsibility to do so

Children who are encountered by Immigration Enforcement in unsafe situations, such as on the hard shoulder of a motorway, should be transported to a designated place of safety which may be a police station, intake unit (if encountered in Kent) or taken directly into the care of Social Services. There is a statutory obligation upon local authorities to provide care to all children in need within their jurisdiction that require it. UASC entering the UK clandestinely fall within this remit.

## Disputed age cases

All asylum seekers and migrants who claim to be children must be asked for documentary evidence to help establish their age when they are first encountered. This is important for establishing their identity, and for ensuring that those who are accepted as being children are provided with the appropriate services. In addition, if an individual is detained because they are regarded as an adult, the resulting detention will be unlawful if that individual is in fact subsequently found to have been a child even it was reasonably believed that the individual was an adult at the time. Home Office policy therefore is to apply the age assessment process in such a way as to guard against the detention of children generally, including accidental detention of someone who is believed to be an adult but subsequently found to be a child.

Where credible and clear documentary evidence of age is not available and you doubt a person's claim to be under the age of 18, a decision on their age will need to be made. You must refer to the assessing age guidance.

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# System and security checks

Mandatory systems and security database checks **must** be completed during the screening process. Checks must be done when the claim for asylum is made. You must update Atlas (and as required CID) and the file with the results of the checks carried out.

When someone indicates that they want to claim asylum, you must establish if they have had any previous contact with the Home Office, such as applying for a visa, or encountered at the juxtaposed controls. Before opening a new person record, you must initially carry out system checks to establish whether the claimant is already known to the Home Office in any capacity. The Central Reference System (CRS) must also be checked and it is advisable to do as early as possible in the process.

By taking a claimant's fingerprints, you will 'lock' an identity to the claimant. You will also be identifying if they have previously been in contact with the UK authorities (for example when they applied for a visa or have a UK criminal record).

If the claimant is aged 16 years or over, their fingerprints will also be checked against those fingerprints held on the police biometric database, IDENT1. It is advisable therefore to fingerprint the asylum claimant as soon as possible and, if practical before the screening questionnaire is completed, as a positive fingerprint match will help to establish identity and may assist you in determining what questions to ask. See [fingerprinting](#) for further information.

Irrespective of who is conducting the screening process **all** checks must be completed. If additional operational procedures are required by the Border Force operating mandate (in port cases) or adding the case to PRONTO (police reporting and notebook organiser) then such checks and procedures must also be undertaken, and the outcome recorded.

The UK is no longer part of the Common European Asylum System and are no longer party to the Dublin and Eurodac Regulations. We will therefore no longer transmit fingerprints to Eurodac for storage and the related fingerprint comparison against the data stored in Eurodac.

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## **CID – recording mandatory checks**

You must record **all** mandatory checks in CID (whist there is a requirement to double key into CID from Atlas). This is to demonstrate clearly that they have been carried out and ensures consistency of checks undertaken.

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If you cannot complete all these checks at one time, you must provide reasons for the delay and ensure that they are carried out as soon as possible. A separate CID note will be required when the checks are completed. You can also use the asylum screening procedures checklist ASL.5212 which lists the documents and leaflets given to the claimant relating to asylum and immigration status, as well as any concerns you may have about the individual or their dependants.

The principles of file management found in immigration record management guidance must be followed. Where there are electronic and physical files, the physical copy is the primary record. Printouts of documents saved onto DocGen or Atlas do not need to be kept on file if they are not altered after printing from the claimant's case record. However, where a copy is not placed on file, service of the document **must** be recorded on the physical file and Atlas and as necessary CID, so a clear record of the documents given is preserved. For example, the IS.86 and IS.75 may fall into this category.

It is important to 'evidence' screening for potential audit purposes, including details about what was served and when. If the claimant has lost a document, a copy can be provided. It also allows managers, the UK Visas and Immigration Operational Assurance and Security Unit or external auditors to see evidence of what documents were served when they complete quality assurance on the screening process. This



helps to reassure ministers and the public that the immigration system is secure and effective.

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## Fingerprinting

[Section 141 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#) (as amended) gives the power to take fingerprints from individuals who have made a claim for asylum, or from an individual who is a dependant of someone who has made a claim for asylum. It is a legal requirement for a responsible adult to be present when the fingerprints of a child under the age of 16 are taken. Children under the age of 5 **are not** to be fingerprinted.

For guidance on fingerprinting the enforcement instructions and guidance: Identity management (enforcement).

### Who should be fingerprinted and when

All asylum claimants (and their dependants over the age of 5) **must** be fingerprinted. You should aim to receive results during the screening process but within 24 hours so effective identity management, routing of claimant, as well as you requesting an application registration card (ARC) can be completed.

### Notification to claimant of power to fingerprint (Form IS86)

All individuals fingerprinted under section 141 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 must be served with the form IS86 notifying them that they are to be fingerprinted, explaining why they are to be fingerprinted and when the fingerprints will be destroyed.

## Fingerprint record – (Form IFB1)

When a set of fingerprints are taken, all sections of the IFB1 form must be fully completed. If the fingerprints are captured electronically on a 'Live scan' workstation, all details must be fully completed before electronically transmitting. If the fingerprints are taken using the ink and paper method (IFB1 form) they should be transmitted through a 'Card scan' workstation. Sets of fingerprints on the IFB1 must not be retained on file. All original IFB1 forms must be submitted to the Immigration Fingerprint Bureau (IFB) within 24 hours of them being taken.

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## Refusal to provide fingerprints

The claimant can be informed that refusing to provide fingerprints may be taken to be a non-compliance issue under [paragraph 339M of the Immigration Rules](#). For further information on action to take if someone refuses to be fingerprinted see: Immigration Enforcement: general instructions – coercive powers.

## Damaged fingerprints

Self-inflicted damage, accidental trauma, inflicted damage caused by others (as part of torture), or an existing skin condition may prevent a suitable set of prints being taken when an asylum claim is made. However, claimants **must** still be fingerprinted. The Immigration Fingerprint Bureau (IFB) will inform you if a set of prints has been rejected by the IABS and request that the claimant is re-fingerprinted.

Where fingerprints of the required standard cannot be taken, arrangements will need to be put in place to establish identity. In some cases, it might be necessary to detain claimants until their identity can be satisfactorily established. You must discuss handling arrangements with the National Asylum Allocations Unit and as appropriate the Detention Gatekeeper and inform them of any reason you may believe that the claimant's prints are damaged or concerns that you may have about the individual, including those relating to mental health.

## Photographs

All asylum claimants and their dependants must be photographed and uploaded with the claimant's fingerprints to IABS. Biometric images are used for the application registration card (ARC) production, biometric residence permit (BRP) process, for re-documentation purposes and for identification purposes. A photograph of the

claimant and any dependants must be uploaded to live scan or card scan for the ARC production process.

The photograph should be of passport standard (International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standard). The photograph must:

- be facing forward and looking straight at the camera
- have a neutral expression and mouth closed
- have eyes open, visible and free from reflection or glare from glasses
- not have hair in front of the eyes
- not have a head covering (unless it is for medical or religious reasons, so a hijab or turban are acceptable, as long as the face is not covered)
- not have anything covering the face

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# Case Information Database

During the transition from the Case Information Database (CID) to Atlas you will need to check information in both systems and key some information that you enter into Atlas back into CID. Follow the latest Atlas instructions for requirements as to what to record on either system.

In respect of CID, whilst still required, once you have checked CID for previous records of the individual, for example a previous enforcement case or migration application, and confirmed that no previous record exists, then a personal record and asylum claim will need to be registered. If there is a record of the claimant and they have not previously claimed asylum, an asylum claim needs to be linked to their record. See [system and security checks](#) for further details on system checks.

Immigration Enforcement officers who do not have access to CID may either arrange for a colleague with access, or the National Control and Command Unit (NCCU) to create the record.

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The actions required are as follows:

1. Create a Port reference number.
2. Generate a Home Office reference number.
3. Input 'Personal Details' if not already recorded.
4. Record the asylum claim on CID.
5. Link the asylum claim to any other 'case types' associated with the individual for example 'Admin Removal: Overstayer'.
6. Update CID screens (see [CID screening scenario](#)) as far as possible.
7. Request an application registration card (ARC) – in the case of detained cases this can happen at the time of release if the person is not appeal rights exhausted.

Where you are unable to generate a Home Office reference number, you must forward the file to the team responsible for the claim. The team that has been allocated the case will generate the Home Office reference.

Where there is an earlier CID or Atlas record in another identity, see guidance: nationality: unknown, disputed and other cases and multiple applications.

You must bear in mind that the information entered will be used by other units such as the National Asylum Allocations Unit (NAAU) for assisting in determining where the case will be routed or allocated to. Where necessary NAAU, or the Detention Gatekeeper, may request further information. The information must be accurate. In particular, the spelling of names and places must be recorded as given by the claimant. Where responses are not clear, clarification must be sought from the claimant.

You must make sure that CID notes and documents, such as the IS.10, provide a record of the circumstances that led to an asylum claim being lodged, including their immigration history. For a port case, this may include whether they claimed at the first opportunity, when they were refused leave to enter, or whether they tried to enter the UK using a false document. An enforcement case may, for example, note that the person was a lorry drop who ran away when they were initially encountered, that they have been in the UK for an extended period and evidence of how they have supported themselves, which might include evidence of illegal working. This may have a bearing on whether the claimant should be detained whilst their asylum claim is considered, as well as whether a section 8 credibility warning is appropriate.

Once the main claimant has been registered on CID, you must add the accepted dependants. Each dependant's case must be linked and details completed.

## Application registration card

The application registration card (ARC) is issued to acknowledge that the individual is an asylum claimant or dependant of an asylum claimant. The ARC is **not** an identification card. It may be used by the claimant to demonstrate that they have an outstanding asylum claim with the Home Office and to present to other bodies that the claimant may want to access services from. It will also state whether the person had permission to work at the time of issue. This should be explained to the claimant.

You should request the ARC once the following elements of the screening event are completed: security checks, identity checks, and the screening questionnaire. Fingerprints (captured from those aged 5 and over) and photographs of the claimant and dependants must be enrolled onto a biometric recording station before you request the production of the ARC through the ARC process. There is a requirement to provide a document, which will normally be the ARC, within 3 days of the asylum claim being recorded (see: [paragraph 359 of the Immigration Rules](#)).

The ARC is produced by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and will be sent directly to the claimant at the address recorded on Atlas.

An ARC must not be issued to an EU national.

Where the claimant is detained, the ARC can be requested if the claimant is released and they are not appeal rights exhausted.

See guidance: Application registration card.

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# The asylum screening interview

Where possible you should complete the mandatory checks and have received the results of the checks before the screening interview commences, in case the claimant is already known to the authorities. However, due to the location and facilities available it may not be possible to receive fingerprint results before the screening interview commences. It may be necessary that a follow up interview is required if the results of a check do not match the statements made during the screening interview.

The screening questionnaire must summarise the basis of the asylum claim without exploring the substantive detail, as well as collecting a range of other information including how the claimant got to the UK and details of any family members. However, as asylum seekers may have witnessed, or directly experienced, traumatic events, you must follow the general principals of behaviour as set out in the asylum interview policy guidance. See the section 'investigating the asylum claim' that covers:

- individual factors that may affect the ability of the asylum seeker to communicate
- "listening to the unspoken", including pauses, phrases or euphemisms that may indicate the person is trying to say something of a sensitive nature, such as sexual violence or torture, without directly saying so
- when a claimant wants to show scarring
- checking for indicators of trafficking
- handling threats of self-harm and suicide
- offering breaks where required

## Health, disability and other special needs

Before you complete the screening questionnaire, due care must be taken to identify any illnesses or disabilities the claimant may have as well as any general welfare indicators presented such as tiredness, hunger, being unwell, distressed, agitated, or withdrawn. You should ensure that the claimant is content to commence with screening and remain aware that it may only become apparent during the screening process that the claimant has a medical condition, welfare or care need, or other concern.

The demeanour of the claimant or statements made before or during the screening interview may indicate that the claimant has special procedural or reception needs including a welfare or safeguarding issue. You must decide on the basis of the information available how to progress the case through screening. For example, this may include a referral to another body, such as the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) where there are indicators of modern slavery, including trafficking. It may also include directing the claimant to a support organisation listed in the point of claim leaflet, and putting a minute on the file and Atlas to notify other officers dealing with the case. For example, the minute may say that the claimant appeared withdrawn throughout the interview.

The subjective nature of how a special need manifests itself means that you will need to remain vigilant to ensure that any person with a special need within the asylum process is identified and afforded an appropriate level of support and reasonable adjustments. Where appropriate, you should offer extra breaks, a slower pace of screening and access to facilities, for example to those who are elderly or nursing mothers. You may need to pause the line of questioning if the claimant's behaviour changes, for example they become withdrawn, and ask questions about how they are coping and note any responses and any concerns you may have. The possibility of stopping the interview and continuing another day may be appropriate on occasion.

The screening questionnaire has a number of questions that directly relate to potential special needs within the asylum procedure, for example age and pregnancy. It also has several questions that have a dual function where the response is designed to bring out any indicators of a special need. For example, the response to the question 'Why have you come to the UK?' could be, 'I had no choice I was brought here to work', indicating they may have been a victim of modern slavery. You must consider the evidence being given as they proceed through the interview and ask appropriate follow up questions where necessary, whilst bearing in mind the purpose of the interview.

Where evidence suggests a claimant has a clear and urgent care need over and above that which is provided by the Home Office in the form of accommodation and subsistence, they should be referred to social services for a needs assessment. As this can be a complex area, you should discuss this with the National Asylum Allocation Unit or the relevant safeguarding team. For further information of community care assessments see the asylum support guidance: asylum seekers with care needs.

Although some categories of special needs (or vulnerability) in the asylum procedure are clear, for example, an unaccompanied asylum seeking child or someone who is pregnant, others may be hidden, or the individual may not recognise they are vulnerable due to their situation. For example, a claimant may appear to have a mental health disorder but may not have declared that they have one. Their responses may indicate a traumatic event which they feel unable to discuss. You must record on, any known special needs, such as pregnancy, health issues, disability, and any observations or behaviours seen in the claimant, for example withdrawn, agitated, tearful on Atlas (CID if required) and file minutes. Recording such information will assist both the allocation and casework teams in deciding if any adjustments are needed to the asylum procedure or indicate that there are other factors or procedural needs that may need to be explored in future.

A disabled person is someone with an impairment, health or mental health need that lasts for a year or more and impacts on day-to-day life. This may include people with schizophrenia, depression, HIV, sensory impairments, learning difficulties, survivors of stroke, cancer patients, as well as people who have mobility impairments or need to be accompanied by an assistant.



For more information see also: Healthcare needs and pregnancy dispersal guidance and the Immigration Enforcement guidance on Identifying people at risk.

The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) has developed a tool for the identification of people with special needs. The tool includes 14 categories of claimants who may have special procedural or reception needs, reflecting the EU asylum directives and the practice of EU States. Although the UK is no longer an EU state or subject to the EU asylum directives the tool includes information about each category regarding both identification and potential support measures that remain relevant. The list is non-exhaustive and identification should always be an individual process. You can access the tool on the [EASO website](#). The UK was involved in developing the tool.

Additionally, you may want to read the [Vulnerability Screening Tool - Identifying and addressing vulnerability: a tool for asylum and migration systems](#) developed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Detention Coalition.

## Initial contact and asylum registration questionnaire

You must use the initial contact and asylum registration questionnaire 'ASL. 3211. Main' for the principal claimant (if aged 18) and 'ASL.3211 Dep.' for an adult dependant.

The screening questionnaire allows for the collection of data relevant to individuals encountered by the different areas that may screen an asylum claimant in a consistent manner. It provides a framework of the basic questions that should be asked of all claimants. Some questions have further prompts or additional questions listed. However, for all questions where the response is incomplete, additional questions should be asked and continuation sheets used as necessary. In some circumstances, due to the special needs of the claimant it may not be possible to complete an in-depth screening interview.

The record must constitute an accurate account of what the claimant has said. The recorded response must not lose meaning or be taken to have a different meaning from the response given. It is good practice therefore to record the responses word for word. Unnecessary information may be left out when only basic factual information needs to be recorded. For example, if the claimant said in response to the question of when they were born; 'I was born on the 14 April 1951' it would be acceptable for you to record '14 April 1951', as the response has not lost its meaning nor can it be misconstrued, and reflects how the date of birth is recorded on Atlas.

You must seek clarification of what is being said where a response is unclear or ambiguous and ensure as far as possible that spellings are correct, particularly names and places. Where needed, you can ask the claimant or interpreter to write them down so that the correct spelling can be recorded.

Some of the required information required for the screening questionnaire will be available before the interview begins, for example where the claimant's personal details have already been recorded on other documents or systems. In such cases,

you can populate (or the casework system will auto-populate where possible) the fields with these details. Where information is populated prior to interview, you must confirm that the information on the questionnaire is correct with the claimant.

Copies of screening forms must not be saved to local systems, forms are periodically updated so you must only use the version found on Atlas (or DocGen in CID whilst still in use). Where possible the questionnaire should be completed on DocGen.

Intake levels vary from day to day and week to week. Video conferencing facilities may on occasion be used to ease local pressures. There may be occasions where a video conference screening interview was due to take place or had started but needs to stop and as a reasonable adjustment the interview will need to take place in the physical presence of an officer.

The screening questionnaire begins with statements that must be read out. This includes informing the claimant what information will be asked for during the interview and that the screening interview is not the asylum interview. Their asylum interview will be recorded, and it may be conducted by video conferencing (VC) unless they provide evidence as to why the interview should not be recorded or conducted by VC. It also informs them that their asylum claim may potentially be inadmissible, that they may receive a Preliminary Information Questionnaire (PIQ) and if invited to attend an asylum interview and they fail to attend their claim may be withdrawn. Additionally, that their home country will not be informed that they have claimed asylum, although information they provide may be shared with relevant bodies to enable the Home Office or other bodies to carry out their functions.

## Gender of screening officer or interpreter

Some claimants may have a preference to be interviewed by a male or female screening officer and interpreter. Disclosing experience of gender-based persecution may be difficult because of the associated trauma and shame. Where operationally possible, the claimant should be asked before the interview commences if they have a preference and their preference should be accommodated as far as possible. Such a preference may not be met in some scenarios, including where, an interpreter of a particular sex is not available, or there may be only one officer attending a police station and to continue to detain to wait for an officer of a different gender would lead to undue delay in completing the screening questionnaire. Where a request cannot be met, this must be clearly noted on Atlas or CID.

Where no specific request has been made, but the demeanour of the claimant gives the impression that they would be more comfortable responding to questions if they were being asked by a male or female officer, they should be offered this opportunity as far as operationally possible.

## Use of interpreters in asylum screening interviews

An interpreter should be used for screening interviews where there is a limited understanding of English. Where possible the screening interview should be in the first or preferred language of the claimant. Should it prove impractical to engage an

interpreter for the claimant's first or preferred language, you should establish if there is an alternative language in which the claimant could complete the screening interview. You should make sure you record what language was asked for, what language the interview was completed in and any difficulties encountered during the interview due to communication barriers.

Before commencing any interview, you must ensure that the claimant and the interpreter can understand each other. If it is clear the claimant does not understand the interpreter or you are not satisfied with the interpreter, the interview should be paused until an alternative interpreter is secured. The claimant should be kept informed of what is happening at regular intervals, and monitor their basic welfare needs to minimise any negative impact resulting from the delay.

You should explain to the claimant that the interpreter is to provide a word for word interpretation of the questions and responses and reassure them that the interpreter is working to a code of conduct, which includes not disclosing the details of the interview to anyone else. The interpreter must be instructed not to edit or offer additional information, opinion or comment, or to paraphrase what the claimant is saying.

The use of interpreters for screening interviews should be generally consistent with the use of interpreters for substantive interviews. Further information can be found in Code of Conduct for UK Visa and Immigration Registered Interpreters and section 8: Interpreters of the Asylum interviews guidance. If the claimant asks for a sign interpreter, contact Central Interpreters Unit (CIU) for advice on available signers.

Home Office appointed interpreters must be used and the CIU should be contacted if there is difficulty in finding an interpreter. Where practical the interpreter should be present in person. Where an interpreter is not available in person, such as at a port, interviews may proceed by telephone or video conferencing. Any difficulties with understanding need to be noted. You must also note where the interpreter is not in the same room as the claimant (for example where the interview is taking place by phone, you must record the interpreter's reference number followed by 'service provided by phone'). Where the claimant attends with their legal representative or their own interpreter they may be allowed to sit and observe the interview if there is sufficient accommodation, but they should not interrupt interviews unless absolutely necessary. If the interruption is not warranted, you can read the following warning:

"I would ask your interpreter not to interrupt during the course of the interview. If they want to make any comments they will have the opportunity to do so at the end of the interview".

Any comments made at the end of the interview must be recorded on a continuation sheet.

## Credibility warning

You should be aware that under [section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration \(Treatment of Claimants, etc.\) 2004 Act](#), decision makers must take into account any behaviour that they consider is designed or likely to:

- conceal information
- mislead
- obstruct or delay the handling or resolution of the claim or the taking of a decision in relation to the claimant

Although you are not the decision maker on the asylum claim, you have an important role in giving the claimant an opportunity to reassert their response or provide further detail where the response or lack thereof appears to potentially damage their credibility. This is particularly relevant in respect of the immigration history account that they provide.

Some claimants, for example, may not provide a credible account of how they entered the UK, or state that they had applied for a visa when the evidence shows otherwise. In such cases, you should consider giving a credibility warning and informing them of the reason for the warning, for example conflicting accounts regarding identity, improbable account of arrival. There is no required wording for such a warning, and you should use appropriate wording according to the particular circumstances.

Although un-cooperative claimants should be reminded of the seriousness of failing to assist in establishing the basic details needed to register the asylum claim, it is important to maintain an atmosphere of trust. Silence and evasiveness may indicate the traumatic nature of a claimant's experiences or an underlying mental health condition rather than an attempt to obstruct the screening interview. You will need to judge whether a credibility warning is appropriate, or whether a simple rephrasing of the question is appropriate. Those who prefer to use a standard form of words for a warning may use the following:

"I am here to gather information about you so that we can begin to process your asylum claim, and it is in your interests to answer the questions as fully and truthfully as you can. However, I consider that your (silence or failure to answer my question directly, or other behaviour) is likely to damage the credibility of your claim. (Repeat question)."

If a warning is given, this must be noted clearly in the questionnaire along with the claimant's response.

Section 8 of the 2004 Act also specifies certain types of behaviour that shall be taken into account as damaging to credibility. These are:

- failure without reasonable explanation to produce an identity document (in physical or electronic form) on request
- producing a passport or identity document (in physical form or electronic form) that can be used for travel as if it was a valid document when it is not (valid should be taken to mean properly obtained from the national authority)
- destruction, alteration or disposal of an identity document, ticket or other travel document (in physical form or electronic form) without a reasonable explanation
- failure without a reasonable explanation to answer a question asked by a deciding authority

- failure to take advantage of a reasonable opportunity to make an asylum or human rights claim while in a safe country
- failure to make an asylum or human rights claim until notified of an immigration decision, unless the claim relies wholly on matters arising after the notification
- failure to make an asylum or human rights claim before being arrested under an immigration provision, unless there was no reasonable opportunity to claim before the arrest or the claim relies wholly on matters arising after the arrest
- failure to provide access to information stored on an electronic device that is in the possession of the Home Office and that was found on the claimant or appears to have been in the possession of the claimant, when requested to do so

Section 62 of the Illegal Migration Act 2023 amended section 8 so that all explicit references to “passport” became references to “identity document”. This is without prejudice to the generality of section 8(2), which applies to any behaviour by a claimant that a Home Office decision-maker thinks meets any of the conditions set out under that section.

Section 62 of the Illegal Migration Act 2023 clarified that all references in section 8 to documents included those stored in electronic form. Again, this is without prejudice to the generality of section 8(2).

Section 8(2) already provided for a broad range of behaviours in respect of which decision-maker should find a claimant’s credibility to be damaged, prior to the commencement of Section 62 of the Illegal Migration Act. Section 62 put the position in respect of identity documents and documents stored in electronic form beyond doubt. For claims made prior to 28th September 2023, decision-makers should refer to section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc) Act 2004 as it was prior to that date in determining whether a claimant’s credibility should be damaged. For claims made on or after 28th September 2023, decision makers should refer to section 8 as amended by the Illegal Migration Act.

It is important that you give the claimant the opportunity to explain their behaviour, as there may be legitimate reasons for it. Any explanation given will be considered by the decision maker when they make their decision on the asylum claim. However, you must not explore the behaviour of claimants in detail for the purposes of section 8 of the 2004 act. The matter will be explored further at the substantive interview, if necessary, when the claimant also has the opportunity to explain any discrepancies between statements provided during the screening interview and evidence provided later in the process. The decision-maker will take into consideration the case of [SM \(section 8\) Iran \[2005\] UKAIT 00116](#):

“It is the task of the fact-finder, whether official or judge, to look at all the evidence in the round, to try and grasp it as a whole and to see how it fits together and whether it is sufficient to discharge the burden of proof. Some aspects of the evidence may themselves contain the seeds of doubt. Some aspects of the evidence may cause doubt to be cast on other parts of the evidence. Some aspects of the evidence may be matters to which section 8 applies. Some parts of the evidence may shine with the light of credibility. The fact-finder must consider all these points together; and, despite section 8, and although some matters may

go against and some matters count in favour of credibility, it is for the fact-finder to decide which are the important, and which are the less important features of the evidence, and to reach his view as a whole on the evidence as a whole.”

Additionally, the screening questionnaire is a useful tool in assisting decision makers to prepare for the substantive asylum interview so it is very important that the information contained in the screening questionnaire is an accurate and impartial account of what was said by the claimant.

For further information see [section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration \(Treatment of Claimants, etc\) Act 2004](#) and Asylum guidance on assessing credibility and refugee status.

## Personal details and identity – part 1

This section relates to the claimant’s personal details. You must establish the claimant’s name, any aliases used, date of birth, nationality, religion, occupation and language and details of any dependants and those that will have their own application as part of the Asylum Family Claims process. This information is significant for establishing identity, ethnicity, religion and language. Inconsistencies may affect credibility at the decision-making stage.

Where the details of the individual are already known, for example, you have the claimant’s valid passport, you can complete those sections and ask the claimant to confirm that the details are correct.

There may be occasions where the name, claimed date of birth or nationality does not match details previously recorded on Home Office systems. For example, they have applied for a visa in a different name or given a different identity when arrested. The Home Office will regard the first identity used by the subject as the true identity, unless it is clearly unreliable, or unless more reliable evidence exists in support of the second identity. You must question the claimant on all identities.

In all cases the details of all identities must be recorded and the claimant informed of the identity under which the claim is being taken forward. The claimant is to be informed that they will have the opportunity during the examination of their asylum claim to provide evidence of their true identity. If the new asserted identity is then accepted to be the true identity the casework systems records must be updated to reflect this.

You must follow the guidance in the asylum guidance [nationality: unknown, disputed and other cases](#) and [multiple applications where the identity of the claimant is in dispute](#).

An extract from part 1 of the screening questionnaire is reproduced below. Where information is already known, such as the name of the claimant this can be populated. However, you must check that the details are correct. The third column contains guidance related to the question which is not found on the actual screening questionnaire:



|                   |  |   |
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| <p><b>1.1</b></p> | <p><b>Full name</b> (first name or names; family name)<br/>Confirm spelling</p>  | <p>If undocumented enter 'claims to be'.</p> <p>You should bear in mind that not all nationalities and cultures have family names. If necessary, ask the claimant to write their name down.</p> <p>The following may assist in name formulation: <a href="#">a guide to names and naming practices</a>.</p> <p>Details of all identities must be recorded. If the claimant does not accept the identity that we are using, they should be informed that they will have the opportunity later in the process to provide evidence about their true identity and Home Office records will be updated accordingly.</p> <p>You should follow the asylum guidance: nationality: unknown, disputed and other cases where the identity of the claimant is in dispute.</p>   |
| <p><b>1.2</b></p> | <p><b>Date of birth (if not known ask how old)?</b><br/>Be aware of alternative calendars (for example Iranian). If the officer assigns DOB, CID must clearly note this (if disputed write disputed)</p> | <p>Children who claim asylum, and those assessed as being over 18 but within the age dispute category, should not have a screening interview. The asylum guidance: processing children's asylum claims must be followed.</p> <p>Where we do not accept the claimant's assertion to be a child (or to fall within the age disputed category), and they are being treated as an adult then a screening questionnaire must be completed. The claimed age as well as the age the person is being accepted as should be clearly recorded on the questionnaire.</p> <p>If claimant does not appear to match the age of the date of birth they have provided, you should ask them how old they are. It could be they have given their date of birth according to a different calendar. The interpreter may have a conversion table with them and convert the claimant's date of birth from another calendar (for example the Islamic calendar) to the Gregorian calendar. You must record the date in the claimant's</p> |

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|            |  | <p>own calendar as well as the converted date of birth.</p> <p>Some claimants may only know their approximate age. They may, however, be aware of the season they were born in, or be able to associate it with a religious event. You should record the claimant's age as appropriate to the claimed facts. For example, if the person knows they were born around Easter, the Islamic New Year, a national event, online calendars will give a range of months in which the claimant was likely to have been born.</p> <p>Although age disputes typically relate to suspected young adults claiming to be a child, an individual of any claimed age may be disputed. You should be particularly mindful that some children will claim to be adults (for example they want to remain with the adults they travelled with). Where the 'adult' is believed to be a child the children's asylum guidance and age dispute guidance must be followed. You should be particularly alert to the possibility of modern slavery, including human trafficking, in these cases.</p> |
| <b>1.3</b> | <b>Have you ever used any other names or dates of birth?</b> | All aliases must be included; this may include maiden name, colloquial/nicknames used in their country of origin and any names that they used to travel.  |
| <b>1.4</b> | <b>What is your gender?</b>                                  | <p>If the claimant's gender is unclear, ask about their gender in a sensitive manner.</p> <p>You should refer to the individual in their self-declared gender which may be different from their birth gender.</p> <p>For further advice see the asylum guidance Gender Identity (when available).</p>   |
| <b>1.5</b> | <b>What is your nationality?</b>                             | <p>See nationality: unknown, disputed and other cases.</p> <p>Questions can be tailored from information contained in reputable sources such as country reports if nationality is doubted.</p> <p>Where the nationality is disputed, you should record nationality (claims to be)</p>   |



|     |  |   |
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|     |  | <p>along with the nationality (believed to be). If the nationality is unknown, then nationality (claims to be) must also be recorded.</p> <p>In addition you should consider whether it may be appropriate to request or recommend where language analysis testing criteria are met.</p> <p>The claimant may claim to have no nationality and be stateless. Record the claimant's assertion to be stateless and also record country of former habitual residence. Further questions about their parents' country of birth, nationality and place of habitual residence could be asked.</p> <p>See nationality: unknown, disputed and other cases.</p> |
| 1.6 | <p><b>Do you have any other nationalities?</b></p>   | <p>Check if the claimant holds dual nationality or a right to reside in another country. The claimant's parents could be from different countries.</p> <p>If the person has extant leave in another country, how much leave do they have remaining and on what basis was it granted? Why could they not claim protection in that country?</p> <p>See nationality: unknown, disputed and other cases for more information on dual nationals and recording.</p>   |
| 1.7 | <p><b>Do you have any evidence to confirm your identity?</b><br/>If passport or travel document also record document number.</p> | <p>Although the most useful documentary evidence is in the form of a genuine passport that was correctly issued to the holder, any documents whether in physical or electronic form that assist in confirming identity and immigration history are helpful. The claimant has a duty to provide all material factors to substantiate a claim including identity documents.</p>   |
| 1.8 | <p>If no passport<br/><b>Where is your passport?</b></p>   | <p>If necessary, ask who has it and when did you last have it.</p>  |
| 1.9 | <p><b>Country and town of birth</b></p>  | <p>If a village name is given, what was the nearest town?</p> <p>Does the nationality match the country of birth; if not what is the reason?</p>  |

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| 1.10 | <b>What is your main language and dialect?</b>  | Does this response match their claimed nationality or area of origin within a country?   |
| 1.11 | <b>What other languages and dialects do you speak?</b>  | If the claimant speaks English, try to ascertain their level of proficiency. If the claimant has arrived on a visa, was English a requirement of issue?  |
| 1.12 | <b>What is your religion (including denomination)?</b>  | Ask for the denomination such as Muslim - Sunni, Shia, Ahmadi, etc. Also, consider asking 'Are you practising? If so record the name and address of their last/main place of worship in their country of origin.   |
| 1.13 | <b>What is your race/ethnicity/tribal group?</b>  | Clarify where necessary.   |
| 1.14 | <b>What is your occupation in your home country?</b>  | Additional questions might include "when were you last employed in this position?", If the response is quite general, for example "a journalist", consider asking "freelance or employed by a particular organisation?" or "where were your articles printed?" or "what was your monthly income?"  |
| 1.15 | <b>Do you have your own accommodation or someone you can stay with whilst your claim is considered?</b><br><br>Does the person have somewhere to reside whilst their claim is considered? | Additional questions could include (particularly if there is concern for the person for example trafficking): What type of accommodation is it? Whose accommodation is it? What relationship do they have to you? Is there a contact phone number for this address? Advise the claimant that they can apply for support if their circumstances change. |
| 1.16 | <b>Do you feel safe in the accommodation?</b><br>If no, explore reasons given (eg PVOT)   | Note that although the person may have somewhere to stay, there may still be safeguarding concerns.  |
| 1.17 | <b>What is your contact number and email address?</b>   | This is asked so we have contact details for the claimant if needed, but additional questions might include; 'Was the phone purchased in the UK or overseas?', 'Who is the provider?', 'Is it a monthly contract or a pay as you go?' or 'Who pays the bill?'  |
| 1.18 | <b>Please confirm details of any dependants to be included on your asylum claim.</b><br>A dependant is an accompanying spouse/partner (living as a  | Check that the dependants the claimant wants to add meet the definition within the asylum guidance: Dependants and former dependants.<br><br>Are there any safeguarding concerns?  |

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|             | <p>couple for two years), or a child under 18 years old.</p> <p>Please record details: name, DOB, nationality and relationship to the claimant.</p>  |   |
| <b>1.19</b> | <p>In respect of each of the children named at question 1.18:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• does the child face a risk on return to their country of origin?</li> <li>• if yes, do you believe the risk to be same risk that you face, or are there additional or differing risks?</li> </ul> | <p>You may need to explain - the meaning of the question/options.</p> <p>a) If the child has no protection need then they can still be a dependant on the asylum claim and remain with the parent for the duration of their claim. If the parent is granted refugee status, they would get leave in line but not refugee status. If their circumstances change, they can at a later stage claim asylum. If a claim for asylum is delayed this may affect their credibility.</p> <p>b) If the child has the same claim (including imputed grounds) as the parent (they all fear being persecuted for the same reason) then each child will receive their own individual decision based on the information provided by the parent including the possibility they may qualify for refugee status in their own right.</p> <p>c) If the child has different or additional grounds to claim asylum, then they will be treated as an accompanied asylum-seeking child with their own individual claim.</p> |
| <b>1.20</b> | <p><b>Please confirm details of spouse/partner and children not included on asylum claim.</b></p> <p>Please record details: name, DOB, nationality, location and relationship to the claimant.</p>   | <p>If their partner is not present also ask sensitively if they have a partner or children. If so find out the nationality of their partner and children, including any de facto adopted children they may have been responsible for before they fled, their relationship to the main claimant and where they are.</p> <p>Ask when and where was the last time they saw or had been in contact with their family.</p> <p>Important to get this information recorded because if the claimant is granted status and applies for family reunion the dependant's details will be checked against the details recorded here. May also be relevant in the context of the inadmissibility policy</p>   |

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| <p><b>1.21</b></p> | <p><b>Are there any compelling family reasons for children who are not your own to join you if you were granted leave?</b><br/>Please record details: name, DOB, nationality, location and relationship to the claimant and compelling reason</p> | <p>Are there children not already mentioned that the claimant has and will have a caring responsibility for?</p> |
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## Family Reunion

It is important to obtain full details of the claimant's family members during the asylum process so that well informed and prompt decisions can be made on any subsequent family reunion applications that will be considered by Visa Sections under [Paragraph 352A](#) of the Immigration Rules. Those who apply for family reunion must demonstrate they are related to the sponsor and that the relationship existed before the sponsor fled their country of origin. Therefore, even though the claimant's spouse, partner or children may not be with the claimant it is important to establish as complete a record of the claimant's family at the earliest opportunity. Additional questions that may be useful to ask could include established when and where did they marry, or how long have they have cohabited with their partner if they are not married, and for both situations, when and where did they last see them.

## Health and special needs – part 2

You must record any illnesses, disabilities and medical conditions in relation to both the main claimant and any child dependants and make note of any available supporting evidence provided to confirm this. Dependent adults will be asked separately about their health in the 'ASL.3211. Dep'. The claimant may not be aware that they have what we would categorise as a special need, or might not want to inform their partner where the need is a medical or health issue for example pregnancy.

If the illness, condition or disability was diagnosed by a recognised medical practitioner in the UK, their name, address and practice details should be recorded. If the claimant takes or needs to take specific medication, or is receiving medical treatment for their condition, you should record the name of any medication, dosage and length of treatment if known. Any illnesses, conditions or disabilities the claimant states they have but are not seeing a doctor or taking medication for must also be recorded.

The claimant, if not in contact with health services, should be informed that as a registered asylum seeker they and their dependants can seek medical advice or treatment from the National Health Service free of charge. This includes being entitled to register with a GP. If the claimant is going into supported accommodation they will be given assistance in registering with a GP.

If the claimant has a letter confirming acceptance for treatment from organisations such as Freedom from Torture or the Helen Bamber Foundation and they also require accommodation, then the National Asylum Allocations Unit (NAAU) must be informed.

Women should be asked if they are pregnant and, if so, the approximate due date, whether there are any complications and the date of their last doctor's appointment. You should request evidence of pregnancy such as MAT B1. If the claimant is pregnant and has not yet registered with the NHS, they should be advised to do so as soon as possible, so that their health and that of their child can be monitored. Claimants should be advised that when they obtain the MAT B1 they should send it to their asylum casework team. This will assist in making sure that asylum events can be planned around the pregnancy.

The information recorded about any health or medical conditions or pregnancy will assist in informing where the person will be routed, how the individual can be supported in the asylum process, and how to access appropriate treatment.

For claimants going into initial accommodation, NAAU will consider finding the most suitably located accommodation for claimants with healthcare needs or access requirements. You must therefore record any information about any conditions, disabilities or treatment that may impact on the allocation of initial accommodation.

If the evidence suggests a claimant has a clear and urgent care need over and above that which the Home Office can provide (that is above destitution), they should be referred to social services for a needs assessment. For further guidance refer to the support policy on asylum seekers with care needs.

For further information see also Healthcare needs and pregnancy dispersal guidance. If the claimant is detained and claims to be pregnant see detention of pregnant women.

Where a claimant faces any illnesses, conditions, disabilities, or other medical conditions, or there appears to be physical, sensory or psychological impairment or mental distress which may affect reporting or their ability to access the asylum process, CID notes, and where applicable Special Conditions on CID, should be updated with this information. In addition, CID notes should be updated if there has been a local authority referral, along with the name and contact details of the social worker or social services department responsible for the case.

An extract from part 2 of the screening questionnaire is reproduced below:

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| 2.3 | <b>Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your physical or mental health?</b> | Additional guidance<br><br>Some claimants may consider they do not have a medical condition but they may say something about their physical or mental health. This could relate, for example, to their general health, previous incidents of harm/torture that has affected their physical |
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|  |  | <p>or mental wellbeing, other mental illness issues or a learning disability. Ask follow-up questions as appropriate.</p> <p>You should remain vigilant to behavioural cues that may indicate that the claimant has an underlying condition they have not mentioned and record accordingly to assist the allocations and casework teams to decide if any adjustments are needed to the asylum procedure.</p> <p>You may need to make a referral to a safeguarding team including completing the NAAU safeguarding form, and or suggest that they seek assistance from the NHS or specialist support organisation (contact details are in the Point of Claim leaflet).</p> |
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## Potential victims of modern slavery (including trafficking)

You must be aware of and follow the instructions [victims of modern slavery: referrals](#), [victims of modern slavery: first responder guidance](#) as well as any additional guidance that may be relevant to Border Force or Immigration Enforcement encounters.

Modern slavery encompasses:

- human trafficking
- slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour

You may be the first person in authority to have contact with a potential victim of modern slavery in the UK and the claimant may not always feel able to identify themselves as being a victim.

If during interview a claimant, either:

- states they have been trafficked, forced into servitude or labour
- meets the modern slavery or trafficking indicators found in the guidance for frontline staff

you must complete the appropriate [National Referral Mechanism Form](#) (adults must consent to a referral).

This is very important, both in terms of identifying a potential victim, and improving actionable intelligence on the perpetrators of modern slavery and trafficking.

In many cases the claimant may have already been referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) or already intimated that they are a victim of modern slavery before the screening interview takes place. However, if they have not been referred to the NRM, the screening interview will provide a further opportunity to identify a potential victim. For some individuals, it may only be by directly asking that the claimant will indicate they are a victim of modern slavery.

The difference between people who are smuggled and those who are trafficked will often be blurred. The 'end' situation for the individual can determine whether someone has been smuggled or trafficked. Asylum claimants may be encountered before the 'end' situation, so the exploitation may not have yet occurred. However, as it is in the mind of the exploiter, the person could still be a victim of trafficking. If in doubt you should proceed on the basis that the person may be a victim of trafficking. The screening form has some initial softer questions that may indicate whether the claimant is a victim of trafficking and there is a direct question in part 5 – question 2.5.

## Level of education

You should ask at 2.6 what level of education the claimant has studied to. A response that someone has not been formally educated does not mean the person has learning difficulties or is illiterate, education in many countries is not free or accessible. However, the response may elicit that the person has learning difficulties.

You must establish, where the person has not had formal education, whether they can read and write. You may also consider if the level of education is broadly in line with the claimed occupation.

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## Travel and third country – part 3

The claimant's arrival details must be recorded. This will:

- inform consideration for safe third country processes
- form part of the information taken into consideration regarding suitability for detention
- provide possible intelligence on facilitation or a potential victim of trafficking
- provide preparatory information for the decision maker for the substantive interview

You must determine the claimant's immigration status, if not previously determined. All officers are expected to follow relevant guidance, such as the Liability to administrative removal under section 10 (non-European Economic Area (EEA) guidance, or for port cases the A-Z of immigration guidance for Border Force.

The UK no longer participates in the Dublin Regulation including Eurodac. The screening questionnaire is the principal interview to gather the information necessary to identify if a claim will enter the inadmissibility process. You should also where practical be alert to evidence the claimant may have linking them to a safe third country or evidence gathered such as immigration officer reports, HGV or vessel tracking data, police reports, or other sources that link them to a safe third country. This may include where someone has been fingerprinted by Border Force officers when attempting to enter or apprehended in juxtaposed control areas in France.

The claimant should be asked to name each country they travelled through and state how long they stayed in them. You should also ask them why they did not claim asylum in any of those countries. Gaps in the claimant's immigration history should be noted. However, gaps in knowledge will be expected in some cases due to the route, method of travel and being under the control of an agent or trafficker.

The type of questions you should ask include:

- what, if any, documentation was used for travel' and if so what type of document (passport or identity card)
- which country issued it, where and when the document was issued and who issued it (what colour of document if country is unknown)
- the name and details in the travel document
- when the claimant was in possession of the travel document
- whether the document included a visa
- where and when the visa was issued
- how the claimant obtained the visa
- what type of photo was in the passport – printed or a photo insert

If the claimant's travel document is lost or was stolen, you should ask where and when the loss or theft took place and whether they reported it.

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Where necessary a section 8 credibility warning should be given and the reason for the warning (responses **may** be used in determining the credibility of the asylum claim). See: [credibility warning](#).



Where an agent has been used to facilitate travel, you should ask about:

- the agent’s role
- when and where they met
- whether the claimant spoke directly to the agent
- who arranged the agent
- what instructions the agent was given or what instructions the agent gave to the claimant
- the claimant’s understanding of what would happen if the agent’s instructions were not followed

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An extract of some of the questions from part 3 of the screening questionnaire is reproduced below. The third column contains guidance related to the question which is not found on the screening questionnaire.

|     |  |  |
|-----|--|--|
| 3.1 | <p><b>Why have you come to the UK?</b></p>   | <p>Is the purpose of coming to the UK to claim asylum or for some other reason, for example to study? If the purpose for travel was for some other reason but the claimant now wants to claim asylum, check if it was always their intention to claim asylum or if their circumstances changed whilst in the UK. Are there indicators of trafficking or deception?</p>   |
| 3.2 | <p><b>Have you ever been fingerprinted in any country including your own?</b><br/>if yes please obtain details of each occasion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• where</li> <li>• when (month / year)</li> <li>• and why (for example for a visa application, an arrest, claim for asylum).</li> </ul> | <p>You should be considering, for example, if the claimant was fingerprinted in Europe, when this happened, was it on the way to the UK? Did they leave the EU area after being fingerprinted? Do they have permission to reside in an EU Member State or other country? Does this case appear suitable for inadmissibility action?</p> <p>If fingerprinted in a country outside of the EU, how long did they stay there, what was the reason they left, do they still have any connection with that country. Does it appear that the country could be a safe third country for the claimant?</p> <p>If their immigration history indicates time in USA, Canada, Australia or New Zealand Also</p> |

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|     |   | see Biometric data-sharing process (Five Country Conference (FCC) data-sharing process).  |
| 3.3 | <p><b>Have you claimed asylum in any other country?</b><br/>(if yes where, when, outcome of claim, and references they have to the claim, any documents about the claim?)</p>   | <p>This means at any time, so not necessarily on the journey to the UK. This could also include them being a dependant on someone else's claim.</p> <p>You should also look to find out why they left the country that was dealing with their claim and whether there are any reasons why they cannot return there.</p>   |
| 3.4 | <p><b>Please outline your journey to the UK?</b> (This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• date left country of origin, where from</li> <li>• each country they travelled through</li> <li>• transport and documentation used on each leg</li> <li>• how organised or assisted with arranging the legs</li> <li>• length of stay in each country</li> <li>• date of arrival in UK,</li> <li>• how entered the UK and what said to IO on arrival</li> </ul> <p><b>In particular, if travelled via European countries:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how and where did they first enter Europe</li> <li>• on what basis ( with a visa or residence permit and if so for how long)?</li> <li>• how did they support themselves?</li> <li>• where did they stay?</li> </ul> | <p>You should explore and record as much detail as possible about the route to the UK. This includes transit stops, when, how and where the claimant left each country, who they travelled with, any immigration or other authorities encountered en-route, the mode of transport used, languages spoken, where the claimant arrived in the UK and how soon after arrival the claim for asylum was made.</p> <p>If the claimant says they have stayed in a European country (meaning one of the Dublin Regulation signatories) what contact if any did they have with the authorities in that country?</p> <p>Does the journey, or any part of the journey, display indicators of trafficking?</p> <p>You need to be careful that the responses given and the follow-up questions asked where the claimant has experience trauma en-route do not stray into anything more detailed than the type of basic questions that would be asked in part 4 of the screening questionnaire about the basis of claim.</p> <p>If evidence arrived from a near country (e.g. by small boat from France) probe them about their time spent there. Is there evidence about their arrival linking them to a country, was the boat they arrived on tracked leaving France for example.</p> |

|             |  |  |
|-------------|--|--|
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what interactions with authorities did they have?</li> </ul>  |  |
| <b>3.5</b>  | <p><b>Do you have any evidence that you were in any of the countries you have mentioned?</b></p> <p>For example, do they have travel booking documents, receipts, letters from national or local authorities, or from organisations helping in a migrant camp?</p> | <p>Does the claimant have evidence to help establish connectivity to a safe third country?</p> <p>If the claimant was searched, did they have evidence on them indicating what countries they had been in? What do they say about the evidence?</p>  |
| <b>3.6</b>  | <p>If appropriate (for example travelled through Europe)</p> <p><b>It appears that you may have had the opportunity to claim asylum one or more times on your way to the UK. Why didn't you?</b></p>   | <p>If they had the opportunity to claim asylum on route, why did they choose not to? Why did they not stop in a safe third country?</p> <p>Claimants may have varied reasons, advice from others, because they have contacts in the UK, if a vague statement is made, for example human rights, what do they mean and why were not available in the EU country they were in?</p> |
| <b>3.7</b>  | <p><b>If the UK considers that one of the countries, you travelled through is safe for you and will consider your protection needs, is there any reasons why we cannot return you there?</b></p>   | <p>You should ask directly about return to named safe countries.</p>   |
| <b>3.10</b> | <p><b>Do you have any close family in the UK or any other European country?</b> if yes and different from responses to 1.18 and 1.19, please note names, DOB, whereabouts /addresses, status and how are they related).</p>  | <p>The response may be relevant to inadmissibility decisions including connectivity with a safe third country and may also be relevant to family reunion policy.</p> <p>If family is in UK check Atlas (and or CID) to see if the details are also held by the Home Office.</p>  |

## Where a third country may be responsible for case consideration

See guidance: inadmissibility: safe third country cases.

Although an asylum claim may be registered by anyone who is entitled to claim, it does not mean the UK will be responsible for substantively considering the asylum claim.

Where there is evidence that the claimant has been granted asylum status or otherwise enjoys sufficient protection in another safe country; that they did or could reasonably be expected to have claimed asylum (such as, there are no exceptional circumstances why they did not); or if they have a sufficient connection to another safe country, inadmissibility action could be appropriate. Such cases may include where the individual has been granted asylum status in an EU country, is encountered coming from an EU country (linked to a clandestine arrival from France, Belgium or Netherlands), or where someone claims asylum at port having arrived from a third country that is considered to be safe. More information on the cases that may be suitable for inadmissibility are contained within the inadmissibility guidance.

If following the advice in the inadmissibility guidance a case appears to be possibly inadmissible, you are to refer the case to National Asylum Allocations Unit (NAAU) informing them of your view and what the evidence is. NAAU will assess the evidence and if appropriate refer the case to NRC – TCU.

Cases that NAAU may be particularly interested in will include:

- statements or documents suggesting that a claimant's family member (spouse or dependent child) may be in another country
- evidence of an earlier asylum claim, such as documentation issued by authorities in another country
- removal of the individual to a Dublin Regulation state when the UK was bound by the Dublin Regulation
- documentary evidence, passports or statements that a visa or residence permit has been issued by another country in particular if the country may be thought of as generally being safe (such as a EU countries)
- evidence or documents (for example tickets, invoices, receipts, travel itineraries, business cards or other relevant evidence) suggesting that the person had been to a safe country and or has connection

## General basis of asylum claim - part 4

Someone who claims to fear returning to their country of origin (or country they were habitually resident in) must be able to particularise their claim for asylum. You **must not** probe the substantive details of the claim or challenge the credibility of the account but you will need to briefly and sensitively establish the following:

- why the claimant has come to the UK
- who they fear, why and important relevant dates
- why they cannot return to their country of origin

You should bear in mind that the claimant may not use the word 'asylum', and this is not necessary to particularise their claim.

The basis of claim should be recorded as accurately as possible. It is important to obtain clear answers, so if the response is ambiguous you must seek clarification from the claimant.

The information provided will be used by the interviewing officer to prepare for the substantive interview. Where the case is referred for possible detention and routing to the Detained Asylum Casework (DAC) team, the basis of claim will help to inform if detention is or remains appropriate.

If there are relevant inconsistencies between the screening questionnaire and what is being said at the substantive interview, the decision maker will need to consider whether it affects the claimant's credibility. An accurate record of the questions you ask and the responses given must be made during screening. The decision maker will also need to look at the time and conditions of the interview as tiredness and fatigue of the claimant may play a part in why there are discrepancies or omissions. You should make a record of any delays to the interview and any observations of general welfare indicators. See the asylum policy guidance on assessing credibility and refugee status.

An extract from part 4 of the screening questionnaire is below with additional guidance in the third column which is not found on the screening questionnaire:

|                   |   |  |
|-------------------|---|--|
| <p><b>4.1</b></p> | <p><b>Please briefly explain all of the reasons why you cannot return to your home country?</b><br/>         Where applicable ask:<br/>         What do you fear will happen to you on return to your home country?<br/>         Who do you fear?<br/>         Why do you fear them?<br/>         When did this happen?</p> | <p>This should be limited to establishing exactly who and what they fear, why and key dates. If the answer is "because of my politics" it would be appropriate to ask for the name of the organisation/party they belonged to, the position that the person held in the organisation, who would harm them and why (if it is not clear why they would be a particular target), have they already been harmed/detained and if so what were the dates, and what do they fear will happen if they were returned?</p> <p>Credibility must not be challenged nor should there be any in depth exploration of the substantive asylum claim - just a brief summation is required. This should be sufficient to enable the interviewing officer conducting the substantive interview to conduct initial research on the basis of claim.</p> |
|-------------------|---|--|

Particular sensitivity and care should be taken where a claimant is giving sensitive details about their claim, including for example where they are making an asylum claim on the basis of their sexuality or where issues such as torture, violence, or sexual assault are raised. If the claimant starts to provide more detail than required, you should inform them that they will be given the opportunity to provide full details at a later stage and include a note on the questionnaire that this conversation took place.

The claimant may also reveal sensitive information about a health or mental health need, or sensory impairment or learning difficulty that may have an additional compounding effect on them in part 2 of the screening questionnaire. You should signpost claimants to the relevant section of the leaflet '[information about your asylum claim](#)' (also known as point of claim leaflet). This is given to all claimants during the screening process and contains contact details of a range of support organisations that can provide help. They should also be advised to inform their legal representative (when they have one) who will be able to put them in contact with organisations providing support and advice.

It may only at this stage become apparent that the claimant does not have a particularised protection claim and you should consider if the registration of the claim should be discontinued. For further information see: [what constitutes an asylum claim?](#) and [claim made for a non-protection reason or is not particularised](#).

## Gender preference for substantive interview

All claimants must be asked whether they want to be interviewed by a male or female officer for their substantive interview. This is because some claimants may find it easier due to the nature of their claim to disclose to an officer of a particular gender. If the claimant has a preference, where operationally possible there will also be a gender match for the interpreter. It should be noted that it is not always possible to find an interpreter of the preferred gender for some languages.

## Criminality and security questions – part 5

The questions in this section may or may not relate directly to the asylum claim, but the responses may affect whether the claimant should benefit from the protection of the Refugee Convention. The information gathered will be used in helping to establish whether a claimant poses a security threat to the UK or is in possession of intelligence of national interest (and so may be contacted to see if they would consent to be debriefed outside of the asylum process). It will also help to determine whether there is a need for any other considerations, for example previous criminality, when sourcing suitable accommodation.

Information relating to any criminal activity **must** be divulged to the Home Office - even where the offence is not connected to the asylum claim or where it is historic. This includes minor driving offences and spent convictions (the same applies to anyone seeking leave to remain for longer than 6 months).

Similarly, claimants must be asked about involvement (including suspected) in war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide or terrorist activity. The claimant must divulge such information, regardless of whether such involvement relates to the basis of the asylum claim, or the activity happened a long time ago and the claimant's views have changed.

If the claimant fails to disclose information relating to this section of the screening questionnaire it may impact on the decision made or result in a review of any grant of status or future application (such as settlement).

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Questioning about previous experience of detention may be distressing for people who have been tortured or ill-treated in detention. You should take care and sensitivity where a claimant is providing information about sensitive issues and be mindful that this question may elicit a disclosure or behavioural indicators of trauma. Record any behavioural observations and, where appropriate, provide details of appropriate support services.

An extract from part 5 of the screening questionnaire is reproduced below. The third column contains guidance related to the question which is not found on the screening questionnaire.

|            |   |   |
|------------|---|---|
| <b>5.1</b> | <b>Have you ever worked for any of the following organisations?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Judiciary</li><li>• Media</li><li>• Government</li><li>• Public or civil administration</li><li>• Security (including police, intelligence services and private security companies)</li><li>• Scientific research</li></ul> | Ask questions as appropriate –<br><br>What was the name of the organisation, what responsibility did they have, was it a senior role, did they report to a senior official / minister.<br><br>If involved in scientific research what was the nature of the research, dates employed.   |
| <b>5.2</b> | <b>Have you been a member of the national armed forces? (This includes UK armed forces)</b><br>If yes, have you taken part in any fighting? When / where / what was their role?   | Include, if relevant, whether the claimant was a conscript or joined the armed service voluntarily, rank, etc.<br><br>If they fought, where did this take place and between what dates. What rank were they when they fought, etc.<br><br>If the claimant was previously in the UK Armed Forces and the case is being referred to the Detention Gatekeeper, they will need to be made aware of claimant's military service. |

|                   |   |   |
|-------------------|---|---|
| <p><b>5.3</b></p> | <p><b>Have you ever, in any country, been accused of, or have committed an offence for which you have been, or could have been / be convicted? (including traffic offences)</b><br/> Detail: date, country, offence.<br/> Did you commit the offence as part of organised criminal activities?<br/> Have you been convicted and what was the sentence?<br/> Do you have any documentation related to the offence?<br/> Where is the document now?<br/> If they have not been arrested - is there a warrant for your arrest?</p> | <p>This may be related to the asylum claim, a wholly unrelated issue in their country of origin, or they may be subject to an arrest warrant in a third country.</p> <p>This includes any arrest or charge even if they have not been convicted. There is no limitation in time passing since the arrest/charge/conviction in declaring what the offence was, therefore if the claimant was arrested for a driving violation 10 years ago, they are still required to declare the arrest and any subsequent action.</p> <p>This may also include, for example, being arrested in a third country as an illegal entrant.</p> |
| <p><b>5.4</b></p> | <p><b>Have you ever been detained, either in the UK or any other country for any reason?</b></p>  | <p>Some people are held without charge so may not have responded in the affirmative to Q 5.3. If the person has been detained - how were they treated whilst detained? What were the conditions of detention like?</p>  |
| <p><b>5.5</b></p> | <p><b>Have you ever been involved with, or accused of being involved with any:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pro-government groups</li> <li>• political organisation</li> <li>• religious organisation</li> <li>• armed or violent organisation, group or party</li> </ul>   | <p>Claimants must declare their support for such groups or organisations regardless of whether it is relevant to the basis of claim and or how long ago this occurred, even if their views have since changed.</p> <p>Even where claimants only indicate low level support, such as providing shelter or food, they need to clarify what their involvement was in these activities.</p>   |
| <p><b>5.6</b></p> | <p><b>Have you ever said or written anything which:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• praises or justifies acts of violence</li> </ul>   | <p>This must be noted, regardless of whether a claimant has changed their views over time.</p>  |



|            |   |  |
|------------|---|--|
|            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tries to make others commit violent or serious criminal acts</li> <li>• encourages hatred between communities</li> </ul>   |  |
| <b>5.7</b> | <p><b>Have you ever been involved in or suspected of involvement in:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• terrorism</li> <li>• war crimes,</li> <li>• crimes against humanity</li> <li>• genocide</li> <li>• human rights violations</li> </ul> | This must be noted regardless of whether a claimant considers they have been falsely charged or the evidence was not conclusive. |

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**Special Cases Unit (SCU)**

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**Detention suitability - part 6**

Part 6 of the screening questionnaire only needs to be completed if the case and claimant appears suitable for consideration by Detained Asylum Casework (DAC) team.

In general, an asylum claim may be suitable for DAC team if the claimant is suitable for detention under detention policy **and** if one of the following circumstances applies:

- the individual claims asylum while already detained pending removal, or claims asylum while detained following an enforcement visit (must be authorised according to standard detention policy requirements)
- the individual claims asylum in other circumstances (for instance, at the Asylum Intake Unit, at a port, or immediately following apprehension as a clandestine illegal entrant) and:
  - the claimant is from a country listed under [section 94\(4\) of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002](#), and there is therefore a prospect of certifying the claim as clearly unfounded (detention must be authorised by an official of no less than grade 7 seniority)
  - the claimant is not from a country listed in section 94(4) of the 2002 Act, but their initial basis of claim shows there to be a prospect of certifying the claim as clearly unfounded on a case-by-case basis under [section 94\(1\) of the 2002 Act](#) (detention must be authorised by an official of no less than grade 7 seniority)
  - the claimant is not from a country listed in section 94(4), but there exist exceptional circumstances (such as past criminality) justifying their detention (detention must be authorised by an official of no less than SCS seniority)

A non-detained case should not be referred to the Detention Gatekeeper without you first considering the detention guidance, adults at risk in immigration detention and Detained Asylum Casework (DAC) asylum process.

If it is decided at any point during the referral process that the claimant is not suitable for detention, you must refer the case to NAAU for allocation to a non-detained asylum team.

If there are factors that would support detention you must also consider if the asylum seeker falls within the policy of adults at risk in immigration detention. If you have observed behaviours or a demeanour that would indicate the claimant may be an adult at risk in detention they must be flagged to the Detention Gatekeeper team.

If the claimant appears to fall for consideration under the inadmissibility guidance (and therefore for referral to the Third Country Unit) the case should be referred to National Asylum Allocations Unit (NAAU) rather than the Detention Gatekeeper.

An extract from part 6 of the screening questionnaire is reproduced below. The third column contains guidance related to the question which is not found on the screening questionnaire.

|     |  |                     |
|-----|--|---------------------|
| 6.1 | <b>Can you tell me if there are any particular</b> | Additional guidance |
|-----|--|---------------------|

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  | <p><b>reasons why you should not be detained while your claim is considered?</b></p> <p>This might include your personal circumstances, health, any special needs or any other relevant factor.</p> | <p>Although the claimant has already had an opportunity to provide relevant information about factors that may affect the decision to detain; for example, their health and or basis of claim, they claimant should be given a further opportunity to specifically state why they should not be detained.</p> |
|--|---|---|

## Supporting documentation

The claimant must be asked if they have any documents, statements or other evidence relevant to their claim, family life or other personal circumstances they want to submit, whether during the screening interview or later (question 6.2 and 6.3). Where the claimant holds, or plans to submit such documents, the specific nature of the documents (including language and timescales in which the claimant plans to submit them) must be ascertained and recorded. The information will also assist the decision maker in preparing for the substantive interview.

An extract from part 6 of the screening questionnaire is reproduced below. The third column contains guidance related to the question which is not found on the screening questionnaire.

|                   |  |   |
|-------------------|--|---|
| <p><b>6.2</b></p> | <p><b>Do you have any documents or other evidence relevant to your claim, family life or other personal circumstances that you wish to submit to support your asylum claim?</b> If yes, do you have them with you today or when will they be available? (Ascertain nature of documents, including language).</p> | <p>Additional guidance</p> <p>There are any number of different types of documents. For example, a police incident report, a membership card for a political party, a letter from a third party such as Amnesty International, a court document involving a child custody hearing in the UK or a confirmed appointment to attend an organisation such as Freedom from Torture.</p> <p>The claimant must be asked to provide specific information about the nature and whereabouts of any documents they intend to submit and how they will obtain them.</p> |
| <p><b>6.3</b></p> | <p><b>Do you intend to have additional documents sent to you from your home country?</b> If yes, how long will it take you to obtain them and what language will they be in?</p>   | <p>Claimants should be specific about when they can get the document. Documents can initially be faxed to them or their legal representatives and then couriered as quickly as possible. If the person has been in the UK for a while, ask why they have not arranged for the document to have already been sent to them prior to their asylum claim and when they think they will be able to forward it.</p>   |

## Continuation sheet and declaration – part 7

The standard screening questions will often be sufficient. However, if you have additional questions to ask at the end of the interview (or additional space is needed for any of the answers), the questions and responses can be recorded in part 7. You should use additional sheets where required. The end of the continuation sheet contains two additional questions.

An extract from part 7 of the screening questionnaire is reproduced below. The third column contains guidance related to the question which is not found on the screening questionnaire.

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| - | <b>Have you understood all the questions asked?</b>                        | Confirm that the interpreter and the questions asked have been understood by the claimant |
| - | <b>Is there anything you would like to add or change to your response?</b> | Some claimants may want to provide additional clarity or correct a previous response.     |

## Biometric residence permit claim

All asylum claimants are required by [The Immigration \(Biometric Registration\) Regulations 2008](#) (as amended) to apply for a biometric residence permit (BRP) at the time of their claim. At this stage, the claimant (and dependants) need to confirm that they understand the declaration, and agree that their details are correct. For more information on BRPs see asylum guidance on drafting, implementing and serving asylum decisions and the section biometric residence permits (BRP).

When you have completed your actions on the case, along with any other documentation and letters, you must provide a copy of the completed screening questionnaire to the claimant.

## Countersigning the screening questionnaire

Countersigning is for local management quality checks. Screening interviews (and welfare interviews in the case of children claiming asylum) may take place in a range of locations and only one officer may sometimes be present when the screening interview takes place. If the screening questionnaire is not countersigned by a manager, it does not render the screening interview flawed. Where countersigning takes place, it is the responsibility of the counter-signing officer to ensure:

- that all appropriate sections of the interview are completed
- where appropriate, the interview is sufficiently probing and [credibility warnings](#) are issued
- CID checks are made on the people mentioned during the interview, such as family members or sponsors in the UK
- that all aspects of a case have been considered such as referring for third country inadmissibility processes suitability for consideration by Detained

Asylum Casework and whether nationality, age, personal details should be disputed

- any special needs have been noted and the appropriate action taken

#### **Related content**

[Contents](#)

# Incomplete asylum registration and screening questionnaire

## Asylum Intake Unit - indication that asylum will be sought

When an appointment is made to attend the Asylum Intake Unit (AIU), it must be recorded as an appointment. It is not to be recorded as an asylum claim, as all asylum claims are required to be made in person. The appointment will, however, act as a barrier to removal until the date of the AIU scheduled appointment has passed. Further information on actions to take following non-attendance at a screening interview in order to complete the screening questionnaire is set out below.

## Claimant fails to complete the screening questionnaire

There may be instances where the screening process cannot be completed on the same day and the claimant is asked to return on a later date to complete the process. You must inform the National Asylum Allocations Unit (NAAU) through CID notes if a case is not being referred for routing and allocation due to incomplete screening and allocate the case on CID to your team. You should also inform the claimant of the rescheduled screening date.

If the claimant fails to return on the date scheduled, the case should be referred to NAAU who will route the claim to a casework team to action. At this point, you should consider if the claim should be withdrawn. Likewise, if after a claim is registered in the AIU, the claimant decides to leave the screening environment and they do not explicitly withdraw their claim the case may be considered for implicit withdrawal if they fail to assist in the completion of the screening questionnaire. If the claimant assists in partially completing the screening questionnaire then the case should be allocated.

## Detained but removal not imminent

This applies to situations where Operational Support and Certification unit (OSCU) are not responsible for considering representations.

If at screening the individual decides that they do not intend to proceed with an asylum claim, they should be asked to sign an IS.101PA or similar (see withdrawing asylum claims). If they refuse to sign and then refuse to complete a screening questionnaire they should be informed that:

- where the claim for asylum has been particularised (protection reasons already noted as to why they wanted asylum), it may be withdrawn, and any subsequent request for asylum will need to be made under the further submissions process
- where the claim has not been particularised (see [what constitutes an asylum claim?](#)) then there is no barrier to removal as there is no asylum claim to consider

**Related content**  
[Contents](#)

# Referral to National Asylum Allocations Unit or Detention Gatekeeper

For non-detained asylum cases, which are the vast majority of cases, the screening process must be completed before the case is referred to the National Asylum Allocations Unit (NAAU) for routing into the asylum process unless there are exceptional reasons for not fully completing the screening process.

If the claimant is detained pending removal (but before the removal directions have been set and Operational Support and Certification Unit (OSCU)) are not responsible for considering representations), the National Returns Command (NRC) detained hub must refer the case to the Detention Gatekeeper (DGK). If the removal process has commenced see: [request for asylum made during the removal process](#).

You can contact the NAAU or the Detention Gatekeeper during the completion of the screening questionnaire in the following situations:

- if you are unsure that sufficient information has been collected
- if you need to check whether any special needs can be met in either detention, or initial accommodation
- if responses indicate a safeguarding or other issue that is relevant to subsequent actions for the referral team

## National Asylum Allocations Unit (NAAU)

Potential third country cases and asylum claims not suitable for Detained Asylum Casework must be referred to the NAAU. The NAAU - Intake and Accommodation team will make a decision on the referral providing that all necessary checks have taken place and been recorded on CID.

A case will not normally be accepted into the asylum process by the NAAU where the screening process has not been completed, unless there are exceptional reasons such as safeguarding or vulnerability. For example, Border Force may need to refer a family case to NAAU on an exceptional basis without a full screening questionnaire due to lack of interpreters where waiting for an interpreter would mean detaining a child overnight. However, mandatory checks **must** always be completed and recorded, and the reason the screening process could not be fully completed must be signed off by senior executive officer or equivalent.

## In hours referrals

NAAU require the following actions to be completed before they will accept a referral:

- complete asylum screening questionnaire
- create the case on CID with the claimant's full details and enter a summary of the basis of claim in case notes
- complete mandatory identity and security checks



- record checks (CID - recording mandatory checks)
- take photographs of claimant and any dependants
- create and serve immigration papers as appropriate
- create file papers as appropriate
- link any dependants on CID
- complete NAAU safeguarding form where there are vulnerabilities
- if it appears that admissibility action may be possible and why, what evidence is there

You must also communicate any special requirements to NAAU, including any vulnerabilities or safeguarding issues. Initial contact can be by a phone call to discuss any issues with the case.

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## Out of hours

For all asylum claims lodged outside of operational hours Border Force, the Immigration Compliance and Enforcement (ICE) team or the National Command and Control Unit (NCCU) should complete as many of the actions set out for the 'In Hours' process as is practical. If accommodation is not required, immigration staff must refer the case to NAAU on the next day. If accommodation is required, they must telephone the Asylum Accommodation and Support Services Contracts (AASC) contractor for their region.

Shortly after the referral has been made, the referrer will receive a call back advising that transport and accommodation has been arranged.

It is then the responsibility of Border Force, the ICE team or NCCU to:

- generate an IS.106 – Release Order (if detained)

- if detained at a police station, fax the papers to the responsible police station to authorise the release of the subject or subjects
- serve relevant documents

A full referral to the NAAU in line with the 'In Hours' process will still be required the following day. If the referral needed to be made before all the 'In Hours' actions (for example asylum screening questionnaire, fingerprinting) could be completed, the ICE team should make arrangements for missing actions to be completed as soon as practicable. For practical reasons, it is recommended that the ICE team covering the area where the individual has been accommodated is asked to undertake this function.

The service level agreement for these cases is 3 hours from the point of the call back. If this is not met, then the issue should be escalated by calling the relevant AASC accommodation or transport contractor.

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## National Asylum Allocations Unit - Routing

Where the claimant is not going to Home Office accommodation, transportation to collect the claimant will not be provided. In these cases, the claimant will be expected to make their own travel arrangements and Atlas will generate an RT2 (ASL.3072).

Where the claimant is to be accommodated, they will arrange accommodation and transport.

NAAU - Routing will prepare and inform you or your point of contact when the routing documents are available for printing. The document issued in these cases will be the RT1 (ASL.3070) for claimants who request Home Office accommodation:

- the RT1 (ASL.3070) outlines the region in which the claimant will be accommodated in, and confirms the date and time they will be collected and transferred there
- the RT2 (ASL.3072) confirms the claimant did not request or qualify for accommodation, but they can make a request for accommodation if their circumstances change at a later date

You must update Atlas (and or CID) with all actions taken, ensure that the case is allocated to the appropriate team and that the case file is sent to that team.

NAAU will also liaise with referring officers and safeguarding leads as necessary to ensure important information and safeguarding referrals are in place before routing the claimant.

## Initial accommodation

If support accommodation has been requested, then NAAU – Initial Accommodation Validation team will decide as to whether to admit the claimant to initial accommodation (IA) under [section 98 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#). The decision to refuse admission to initial accommodation is a different decision as to whether the claimant will qualify for dispersal accommodation ([section 95 of the 1999 act](#)) once they complete an asylum support form (ASF1). If the person has somewhere they can temporarily stay whilst an asylum support form (ASF1) is considered or has sufficient funds to temporarily accommodate themselves, they will not be considered eligible for initial accommodation. In these instances, a letter will be issued by NAAU - Intake and Accommodation team informing the claimant that they are not eligible for initial accommodation on the evidence available. They should be advised to contact Migrant Help to assist them in completing the ASF1 if they want accommodation in the future.

## Detention Gatekeeper

The referral process is as described in the asylum guidance: Detained Asylum Casework (DAC) asylum process. As this guidance highlights, most suitable claimants will already be detained, but there may – on occasion – be other individuals for whom detention may be appropriate, notwithstanding their asylum claim.

You must not refer a case to the Detention Gatekeeper without considering guidance on detention and adults at risk in immigration detention.

If an asylum claim is made while an individual is detained pending removal, the National Returns Command (NRC) detained hub must refer the case to the Detention Gatekeeper (DGK).

If the claim is made at the Asylum Intake Unit (AIU), a port, or elsewhere after the claimant's apprehension as a clandestine illegal entrant or overstayer, the unit responsible for the case must complete the asylum screening and refer the case to

the DGK if detention appears to be appropriate (see [Detention suitability - part 6](#) for types of cases that may be suitable).

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**Official – sensitive: start of section**

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

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**Official – sensitive: end of section**

In the event of the Detention Gatekeeper deciding that detention is not appropriate, you must arrange for immigration bail and serve appropriate paperwork.

You must update CID with all actions taken and ensure that the case is allocated on CID to the appropriate team and that the case file is sent to that team.

If the Detention Gatekeeper (or NAAU) considers that the claimant may be suitable for detention, but additional information is required, you may be asked to put additional questions to the claimant.

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