



WELCOME TO THE UK

BRIGHT PATH FUTURES

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WELCOME TO THE UK

It's great to have you here. This guide gives a brief overview of life in the UK and includes lots of useful information which will help you to settle in over the coming weeks. There's a lot to learn, so this is just some of the basics.

In this guide we look at different topics, and compare life in Afghanistan with life in the UK on each. This guide can also be used by people who are supporting re-settled Afghans, to help them to get a better understanding of cultural starting points.

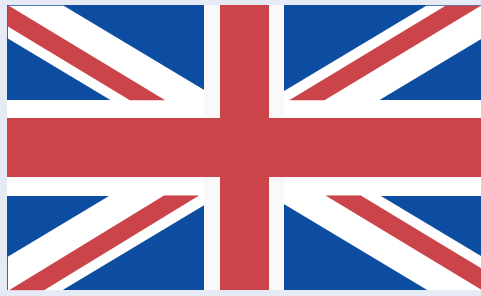
We have included a lot of information on the law in the UK. As culture and law is so different here it is easy for Afghan people to get into trouble by mistake if they don't understand key differences. Very few people will need to know this but we want to make sure that no-one gets into trouble by mistake or through misunderstanding.

We hope you find this guide useful. Thanks and good luck,

Jos and Omar

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UNITED KINGDOM



ENGLAND



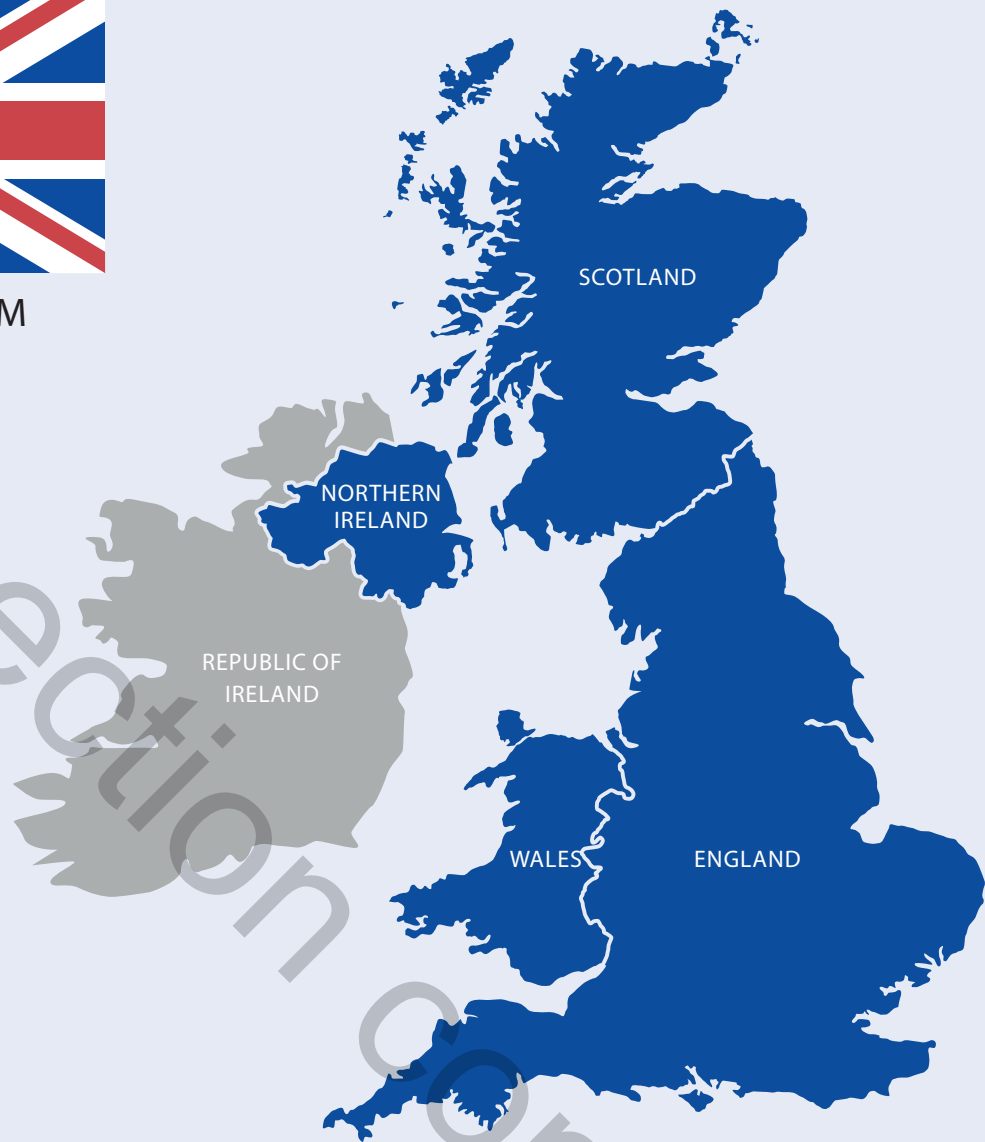
WALES



SCOTLAND



NORTHERN IRELAND



OVERVIEW

The UK (United Kingdom) is made up of four countries: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It is sometimes referred to as Great Britain. Each country has a strong heritage, culture and identity, and its own flag.

Core British values include democracy, the rule of law, respect, tolerance, individual liberty and equality for all.



GOVERNMENT AND REPRESENTATION

The UK is a democracy and a constitutional monarchy. While King Charles III is the formal head of state, the country is run by the government, led by the political party who wins the national election, which is held at least every five years. We also have local elections every four years.

Your national representative (MP) and local councillor can help represent you if you have a problem you need support with, or you feel you're not getting the help you're entitled to.

NATIVE LANGUAGES

English is the primary language spoken in the UK. Wales is bi-lingual with 29.5% Welsh speakers. There are also other minority languages spoken in Scotland, such as Scottish Gaelic and Scots.

Many regions have strong local accents, which can take time to understand!



POPULATION AND RELIGION

The last census showed the total UK population to be over 67 million people. The UK promotes multiculturalism and diversity and has a diverse cultural heritage. Discrimination against anyone because of ethnicity is illegal in the UK.

The latest Census identified that less than half of the population (46.2%) in England and Wales identify as Christian, while 37.2% have no religion. This means in many ways the UK is quite a secular society. The second largest religion is Islam, with 3.9 million people or 6.5%.

All schools in the UK must teach Religious Education (RE) as a subject. The local councils are responsible for deciding the religious education syllabus, but faith schools and academies can set their own. You can opt out of religious observance for your child on request if you wish to withdraw them from this.

You have the right to practice any religion peacefully and publicly in the UK. You can wear religious clothes or symbols in public as your right, and if you experience harassment from anyone from a different background the police will help you, as this is against the law.

There are multiple places of worship available throughout the UK, especially in urban areas. You can speak to your case worker or welfare support officer for information about how to find and access these.





CULTURE

There are many big festivals of art, music and culture, such as Notting Hill Carnival in London and the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland. We have a thriving arts and drama sector, with theatres and concerts in most towns and cities.

The two main Christian seasonal celebrations are Christmas and Easter. Customs and traditions from other religions, such as Eid (Muslim), Diwali (Hindu) and Hanukkah (Jewish) are widely recognized and publicly celebrated in the UK.

In the calendar, only Christmas and Easter are public holidays, where many businesses and public offices are closed, shops may be open but on reduced hours. There is no official holiday for other occasions like Eid, Diwali or Hanuka.



SAFEGUARDING

Everyone in the UK has the right to live in safety. Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is a collective responsibility and we all need to look out for each other in our families and communities. Professionals are trained to watch out for any of the following: physical, sexual, psychological or emotional and financial abuse; neglect; modern slavery.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

In Afghanistan, it is culturally accepted that children can be alone at home or older children can take care of their younger brothers or sisters, but in the UK, you can't leave your children alone at home, or let a child under 12 look after younger ones. Young children shouldn't run around unsupervised in public spaces like parks or in the street.



Nurseries, schools and colleges all have a duty to safeguard your children. In the event that these establishments have any concerns, there is ordinarily a Safeguarding Officer or Lead working within these establishments who identify and manage any concerns they have identified, or which have been disclosed to them. There are also other professionals within these settings who have the same responsibilities such as teachers and teaching assistants. These concerns will be investigated thoroughly and may require liaison with supporting services such as social services within our local authorities and possibly the police, subject to the potential severity of the risk.

Their intention is to ensure children and vulnerable adults are kept safe and where possible they will support the family unit to manage the risk. If the risk identified is high, they make temporary arrangements or measures to ensure the individual at risk is safe. This could include providing a safe place for the individual away from their usual residence. Consideration can be given for a permanent arrangement if necessary.

Where possible confidentiality will be maintained, but if a child or young person is considered to be at risk of harm information should be shared with other relevant professionals to make sure they are protected and supported.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Safeguarding adults is about protecting those at risk of harm. An adult at risk may need community care services due to disability (either physical or mental), age or illness and they may be unable to take care or protect themselves. Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone to identify and report (each council will have a different way of processing referrals).

Adult social care can provide practical support to people with a disability, physical or mental illness to support them to live independently, safe and well. The services can be delivered within the home, a care home or in the community. Further information on adult social care can be accessed through your local council.

EQUALITY AND SAFETY FOR WOMEN

In the UK, women and men mix in most situations – socially, at work, and in public spaces. Women and men are equal and so they are paid the same, do the same jobs and have equal decision making rights, in the same way that older and younger people do too.

Women can dress as they want to – wearing clothes which show your skin or hair is considered normal. Women dressed this way are not inviting sexual attention and if you make sexual approaches, for example in a nightclub or in the street at night, you may be committing a crime of sexual harassment. It is important to get fully informed consent to any sexual connection, especially if someone is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

It is very important not to have sexual relationships or any kind of intimate relationship with a minor (someone under 16), this is breaking the law. Chatting online to children under 16 with a view to forming a sexual relationship with them is called 'grooming' and is against the law – special police units try to catch these criminals.



RECOGNISING DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse is illegal in the UK: you are not allowed to hit, threaten, humiliate or control another woman, child or man. In the UK, anyone can become a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of their gender, age, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, sexuality or background.

Domestic abuse can happen between two people who are personally connected to each other and the behaviour is abusive.

PERSONALLY CONNECTED INCLUDES:

- You are, or have been, married to each other
- You are, or have been, civil partners of each other
- You have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- You have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- You are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other
- You each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child
- You are relatives

ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR CONSISTS OF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse – this includes behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on your ability to obtain, use, or maintain money or other property, or obtain goods or services
- Psychological, emotional, or other abuse
- And it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct

IF YOU BELIEVE THAT YOU OR OTHERS YOU KNOW MAY BE A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC ABUSE, THERE ARE SIGNS THAT YOU CAN LOOK OUT FOR INCLUDING:

- being withdrawn, or isolated from your family and friends
- having bruises, burns or bite marks – violence or threatening behaviour is never OK in the UK
- having your finances controlled, or not being given enough money to buy food, personal items or medication
- not being allowed to leave your house, or being stopped from going to college
- having your internet or social media use monitored, or someone else reading your texts, or emails
- being repeatedly belittled, put down or told you are worthless or otherwise emotionally abused
- being pressured into sex or sexual contact – even when you're married it's against the law to pressure or force your spouse into have sex, and rape is still a crime between married people
- being told that abuse is your fault, or that you're overreacting

If you are experiencing domestic abuse, you should contact the police by calling 999, or 101 for non-emergency situations, and they will investigate as with any other crime. If you give a formal statement, then either the police or the crown prosecution service will decide whether to press charges. They may take the case to court or issue a caution. However, in some cases of domestic abuse if the police believe they have sufficient evidence they will pursue a charge without the victim providing a statement. This is to ensure the victim is kept safe.

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DIGITAL SAFETY

In Afghanistan, all purchases and transactions are done in cash. Only a small number of people who are civil servants or work in private companies have bank accounts. In the UK, most transactions are done online and digital tools and technology are used more broadly. This means there are lots of different ways criminals or 'scammers' can trick you into taking your money or hacking your account, and you have to be very careful about this.

Scammers often try to trick you into giving bank details or sending money or passwords. They might pretend to be from your bank or another trusted organisation, and can set up fake websites for example to convince you they're genuine. Scammers work through a wide range of mediums: phone call, emails, texts or whatsapp messages. 'Clickbait' is where they try to get you to click on a link online, and even romance scams where someone pretends to be interested in a relationship with you.

So how can you protect yourself? Set up multi-factor authentication; use strong passwords; never respond to scam messages; install anti-virus software; keep social media accounts private, be cautious transferring money, and speak to your bank if you have any concerns over a transaction or attempted scam.

There are multiple types of cyber crime. This link gives detailed information about ways you might be vulnerable on-line: [Online fraud & Cybercrime / Police.uk \(www.police.uk\)](https://www.police.uk)





HEALTH AND THE NHS

In the UK you can't access specialist health care (for example a hospital consultant) without a referral from a GP. Apart from emergency health care, you will always need an appointment in advance and be registered with the NHS. You can't get medication (apart from a limited range of over-the-counter medicines) without a doctor's prescription.

Health services in the UK are available through the National Health Service (NHS) and the private health sector. People in the UK highly value the NHS, our national health service. It means everyone has access to free healthcare, with a few exceptions such as prescriptions, and increasingly dentistry, which can be hard to find on the NHS in some areas of the UK.

Access to other health services can also be challenging, for example in many areas of the country it isn't always easy to get a GP appointment or register with an NHS dentist, and you may be on a long waiting list to access specialist health care. Some people choose to pay for private health insurance or medical care in these situations.

THE NHS OFFERS THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:

- NHS direct – a website with information about health conditions and how to access health care: <https://www.nhs.uk>
- 111 – a phone line where you can speak to a health professional 24/7 and get advice on your symptoms or concerns, and get referred to services such as your GP, an emergency GP, A&E or local walk-in centres, or ambulance services
- GP practices – where you can see a range of health professionals about general health issues, including GPs, practice nurses, community midwives, social prescribers and others. You need to register with nearest GP before you can visit them. You will be given a unique NHS number after registration. Remember you can only be registered with one GP, and you can only go to that GP for conditions not needing specialist support – they will refer you on to a specialist if needed

- Consultants and specialists, mostly based in hospitals – you need a GP referral to access these.
- A&E (accident and emergency department) is where you can go 24/7 for injuries or more urgent treatment. You do not need to be registered with these centres in advance, they will find you on the system if you can give your own or your children's name and date of birth, so it's important to learn how to say/write these down.
- NHS walk-in centres are similar to A&E departments as they offer assessment and treatment for non-life threatening but urgent medical conditions or injuries. Access to these varies from area to area, so call 111 before visiting.
- High street opticians who help with eye care and some hearing issues You will need to contact a local optician for an appointment and confirmation of costs. Some spectacles are free of charge but for some, there will be a charge.
- Dental surgeries for teeth – getting a new NHS dentist can be hard as there is a big national shortage, and wait times can be long, though once registered you can call in the morning to see if there's a cancellation. You can also access emergency dentist appointments through 111 as long as you are registered with a local dentist.
- Pharmacies – give you prescribed medicines, and also pharmacists can advise on a range of everyday health conditions, ask them if they can help. If you are unemployed or on certain benefits, you don't have to pay for prescriptions.
- Over the counter medicines – medicines you can buy without a prescription. These drugs usually include common painkillers, allergy drugs, antacids, and supplements such as vitamins, etc.
- The NHS app – use to manage appointments, order prescriptions, use the 111 service online and check your health history. You can download this application from Play Store or App Store and install it on your mobile phone.
- Mental Health support – local health trusts run a variety of mental health support schemes. Either ask your GP or call 111 to find out what's available in your area.





- The Operation Courage scheme provides bespoke support for veterans, service leavers and reservists so any ARAP scheme members with a service background can access this, though not their family members. You can self-refer and we can also support you to do this if you require it: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/armed-forces-community/mental-health/veterans-reservists/>
- All Rise is a project offering trauma support services for professional Afghan women who have been persecuted for their roles in Afghanistan, and who are now relocated to the UK: <https://www.tt-intl.org/afghan-project>



EMERGENCY AND OTHER CONTACT NUMBERS

Call 999 to contact the fire service, call an ambulance for a genuine medical emergency or the police for immediate danger. You will be asked for your name and address by the call handler, so have these ready.

101 is the non-emergency police number, and 111 is the non-emergency health number.

The Samaritans are a charity offering a 24 hour emotional support service if you need someone to talk to: 116 123

NSPCC is the national charity for keeping children safe – 0808 800 5000. www.nspcc.org.uk

The CAB is a national advice service for help with benefits, cost of living, debt management and key information and advice on any other issue – 0800 223 1133 or www.citizensadvice.org.uk

0800 138 1625 is the anti-hate crime number to call if you are experiencing racial or religious abuse.

Support for lesbian and gay people: Switchboard LGBT+ helpline 0800 0119 100



EDUCATION

SCHOOL ADMISSION

All children in the UK are entitled to full time education until the age of 18. You can apply for the school of your choice, but if there isn't space there your local authority will offer you a place in the nearest school that has room for new children. This may mean travelling some distance, and it is your legal responsibility to ensure attendance at school despite any issues with transport.



SCHOOLS AND AGE GROUPS

- Nurseries are for children until the age of 4
- Primary schools are for children aged 4-11
- Secondary or High schools are for children aged 12-16
- Colleges or Sixth Form are for young people aged 16-18

If your child is attending a school in Wales, it is important to note that there are five main types of primary schools in Wales, and each have a different approach to teaching the Welsh Language. Some teach in Welsh only and others teach in English whilst focusing on Welsh as a subject. Please check with your local school for further information.

EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH A DISABILITY

Children with a learning or physical disability will either get extra support at a mainstream school through an EHCP (education health care plan) or if they are unable to study in a mainstream school, they will be offered a place in an SEN (special education needs and support) school. Talk to your local authority about this if your child needs additional support.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Dates are different in different regions in the UK, but most local authorities school holidays are longer in the summer (average six weeks), with around two weeks at Christmas, two weeks at Easter and three mid-term holidays (half term) of a week each. Schools also close for extra teacher training days. Ask your child's school for a school holiday calendar. Many schools offer holiday camps for children, and breakfast and after school clubs, which can be helpful for working parents.

ATTENDANCE

Attending school is compulsory for children aged between five years and 16 years. All children must go to school full time, and attendance is monitored. If your children miss too much school the local authority will ask you why and parents can be fined for keeping children out of school. If they are unable to attend due to illness, you must let the school know on the morning of the absence. School days are approximately six hours long, Monday to Friday.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

All children in reception, year 1 and year 2 will automatically get free school meals. For children in nursery, years 3 to 6, or secondary school you will have to pay for the school lunch unless you fit the eligibility criteria for free school meals. You can get further information about the free school meals from year 3 onwards by contacting your child's school. For more information and information on school contacts, contact your local council.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Every school has a different school uniform so please make sure that your child is wearing the correct uniform for the school that they attend. The school will usually inform you of what they expect their pupils to wear before your child starts school. You can buy school uniform from school uniform shops and some supermarkets. If you are finding it difficult to afford the school uniform, you can speak to your school's Head teacher and they may be able to help, or there may be a local charity who may be able to provide a free school uniform.



COLLEGE

In the UK, FE Colleges offer further education studies for 16 – 18-year-olds. Colleges offer a wide range of qualifications - students can choose from A Levels, Higher National Diplomas, skilled diplomas and BTEC courses, as well as lower level vocational qualifications for people with less English. College courses are open to both young people (mostly 16-19) and adults, and occasionally for 14-16 year olds.



Many local colleges offer ESOL classes – teaching and qualifications in English for speakers of other languages. Teachers are very friendly and experienced at helping people settling into life in the UK, and classes are run for all levels. If you can't speak English and this is a barrier to you getting work you will be expected to attend ESOL classes. Most classes are mixed sex and people of all ages attend.

UNIVERSITIES

University is where you will study for an undergraduate or post graduate degree and courses are available for anyone over 18 with a level 3 qualification (A level or equivalent). You can apply for a government loan to pay for course fees and for maintenance loans. A degree can be an important step to getting a career, especially in industries which require specific training and registration – for example some healthcare and legal roles.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND BURSARIES AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR REFUGEE STUDENTS

Some universities offer financial support to refugees wanting to study for a degree or Masters.

Student Action for Refugees (STAR) offers information about financial and other support:

www.star-network.org.uk, <https://star-network.org.uk/access-to-university/scholarships/list/>

UK CURRENCY

The main currency in the UK is the pound (GBP).

THIS PICTURE SHOWS THE VALUE OF COINS AND NOTES:



$$2p + 2p + 1p = 5p$$



$$5p + 5p = 10p$$



$$10p + 10p = 20p$$

$$20p + 20p + 10p = 50p$$



$$50p + 50p = \text{£}1$$

$$\text{£}1 + \text{£}1 = \text{£}2$$



$$\text{£}2 + \text{£}2 + \text{£}1 = \text{£}5$$



$$\text{£}5 + \text{£}5 = \text{£}10$$



$$\text{£}10 + \text{£}10 = \text{£}20$$



BUDGETING

Many UK households now struggle to pay their bills because of rising inflation. It's important to budget carefully and avoid getting into debt. Your local CAB or library can signpost you to debt advice experts.

PRICES:

From a cheaper supermarket (Aldis or Lidl's) £1 might buy you:

- a loaf of bread
- 1 kg of rice
- 1 kg onions
- A pack of six tomatoes
- 500g plain yoghurt

A warm winter coat might cost £30-£40 from a cheaper shop. You can buy cheap second-hand clothes from ebay: www.ebay.co.uk or from high street charity shops.

You can use an online budgeting tool to help you plan how to spend your money wisely: <https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/everyday-money/budgeting/budget-planner>

BANKING

You will need a UK bank account. To get this you need proof of ID and proof of address (usually two bills or letters from government or a business with your name and address on it sent in the last three months). In the UK women and men usually share responsibility for money and spending decisions.

Women usually need to have access to their own money, so will need their own bank account or at least their own bank card.

THE MAIN TYPES OF BANK ACCOUNTS, AND WHAT THEY ARE USED FOR.

- **Current accounts** – You can use a current account to help you manage your money day-to-day. This is usually used as the main account to receive your salary and/or benefits, keeping track of your spending and paying your bills. You may also get a debit card which you can use in shops and cash machines. The bank may let you have an overdraft and access to other kinds of credit. You will be allowed to set up direct debits and standing orders.
- **Savings accounts** – You can use savings accounts to put away money that you'd like to save for the future, for emergencies or to buy expensive purchases. A savings account will usually give you interest on your money; however, you must check what interest rate is offered with your bank. You can find out more about savings on the Money Helper website - <https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/savings>





- **Basic bank accounts** - If you have a poor credit rating or a low income, you may have problems in opening a standard current account or savings account. If you're in this situation, you may be able to open a basic bank account. You can ask a bank or building society to open a basic bank account. The bank or building society must tell you whether it offers basic bank accounts. If it does, it must tell you the conditions you must meet to be able to open one.
- **Joint Accounts** - You can also open a bank account jointly with other people. For example, you might want to do this to manage household bills with someone you live with, or with your wife, husband, or civil partner.

HOW TO OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT

To open a bank account, you usually have to fill in an application form. Often, you can do this in a branch or online, and sometimes you can also do this over the phone. You will also have to provide proof of your identity including your full name, date of birth and address.

You usually have to show the bank two separate documents that prove who you are, for support with identifying appropriate documents, please ask your Mears Welfare Staff Member.

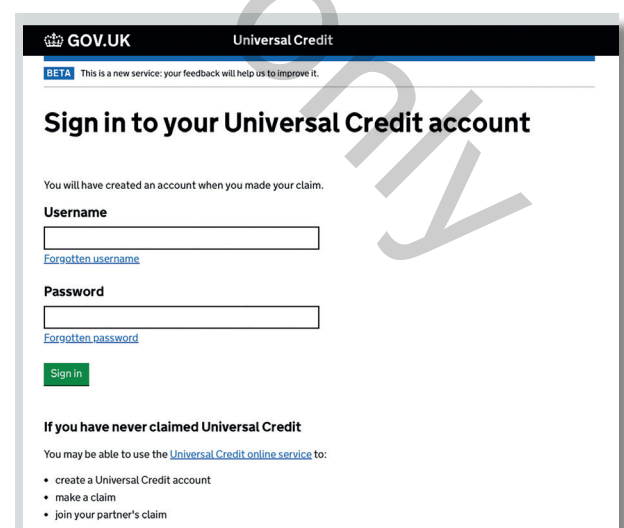


TYPES OF BENEFITS

If you are struggling with the cost of living, you may be able to claim benefits from the government to support you. You should use a benefits calculator for a detailed check on your eligibility as this assesses your personal situation.

- **Universal Credit** - This benefit is available for individuals who are actively and able to search for a job and obtain full or part time employment. If you claim this benefit, you will be expected to attend regular meetings with your JobSeeker Adviser and form a claimant commitment. Within this commitment you will detail and will be required to evidence how you are fulfilling this commitment. This may include evidencing jobs you have applied for, attending interviews or education and training to develop your skillset and ensure you are suitably trained for certain roles.
- **Housing Benefits** - If your UC payment includes help with rent, you'll usually need to pay your landlord each month from your Universal Credit payment, even if you live in social housing. You can ask the DWP to pay your rent directly to your landlord if you're in debt, have rent arrears or are struggling with money.
- **Employment Support Allowance** – This benefit is available for individuals who are unable to work due to a health condition or a physical disability which makes you unable to work permanently or temporarily. You may be requested to attend assessments to determine how your disability prevents you from working.
- **Personal Independent Payment** – This benefit is available for individuals if you need extra help because of an illness, disability or mental health condition. You can make a PIP claim whether or not you get help from anyone. To get PIP you must find it hard to do everyday tasks or get around because of a physical or mental condition.
- **Child Benefit** – This benefit is available for individuals who are responsible for bringing up a child under the age of 16 or 20 providing they stay in full time education or training. The mother or father of the child can claim this.

For each of the above benefit, you will be assessed regarding your eligibility for these benefits and the outcome of these assessments will be communicated to you. If you disagree with the outcome, you will be able to appeal these.



GOV.UK Universal Credit

BETA This is a new service: your feedback will help us to improve it.

Sign in to your Universal Credit account

You will have created an account when you made your claim.

Username

[Forgotten username](#)

Password

[Forgotten password](#)

Sign in

If you have never claimed Universal Credit
You may be able to use the [Universal Credit online service](#) to:

- create a Universal Credit account
- make a claim
- join your partner's claim



EMPLOYMENT

Job Centre Plus is the building where you will get help finding a job. You will have a work coach who will help you with this. Your work coach will help you understand your skills and will complete a Claimant Commitment which will be reflective of you and your abilities. If you do not have the skills or qualifications for a job you wish to progress into, you may be required to study part time to enhance your skills and/or qualifications.

To find employment you can utilise online and offline methods. Online methods include using job search engines, job boards and networking sites. Offline methods include speaking with contacts/ getting referrals and attending career fairs. The Job Centre can support you with this.

If you are employed through a company, there is a minimum wage you should expect to be paid for people aged 23 and over, which is progressively lower for younger people. You may be expected to work shifts in some jobs. Depending on the work, you might be paid weekly fortnightly or monthly (this is called a salary).

If you are directly employed by an employer then tax is deducted before you're paid (PAYE – pay as you earn). If you are self-employed you need to register on the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/working-for-yourself>. People who are self employed are expected to pay tax directly to the government, so make sure when you are paid you save enough to do this.



WHAT JOBS ARE EASY TO FIND?

The UK is short of workers in some key areas, for example:

- Care workers / NHS staff
- Hospitality / cleaning
- Manufacturing
- Lorry drivers
- Fork lift truck operators
- Administrators
- Security

Training to do these jobs can be an advantage.

HOUSING

Whilst you are on the ARAP scheme, you will be housed by the MOD in temporary accommodation whilst you are supported to move to more permanent housing. When a property becomes available that meets your requirements, this will be offered on a no choice basis. You will be helped with this move and supported as you begin your life in your new home.

In the UK, there is a shortage of affordable housing and for this reason, the private rental market is very competitive. Some local areas are more challenging than others to find somewhere to rent.



To buy a house you need to save a deposit (usually at least 10% of the cost of the house) and take out a special loan called a mortgage. You will only get this if your income is high enough, which is why it's difficult for many people, especially younger people, to buy their first house.





TRANSPORT

There are many ways to travel round the UK and we are well served by transport systems. Some of these systems can be found below. To find out what local public transport options you have, check on: <https://www.traveline.info>

By road – A car remains the most popular method of transport in the UK. To drive a car, you must hold a driving licence and have insurance and road tax paid on your vehicle. If you are buying a car, you can check its MoT status and history on line: <https://www.gov.uk/check-mot-history>, <https://www.gov.uk/get-vehicle-information-from-dvla>. More advice on buying a used car is here: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/buying-or-repairing-a-car/buying-a-used-car>

By rail – There is a rail network across the UK and most larger towns and all cities have train stations.



By coach and bus – The primary means of local transport are the local bus services which run between towns and villages. These operate on seven days a week however there may be a reduced timetable on evenings and weekends. Coaches can run between towns and cities.

Taxi – Within your local area, you will have local taxi services that can get you around by car. Uber is a national operating system that runs in most places in the UK. You will need to check their app to ensure they operate in your area.





IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

There are a few key documents you need to keep very safe, as if you lose them, they are expensive and difficult to replace, and you will be asked to show them regularly. Identity theft is a problem in the UK, so burglars often target ID documents such as passports or driving licenses, so keep them hidden along with any jewellery, cash etc.

YOUR WELLBEING

There are lots of simple ways you can look after yourself and reduce stress and low mood.

You can find a PDF of Bright Path Futures Amiko cards on our website: www.brightpathfutures.com

Use the Downloads menu to choose either Pashto or Dari. Get to know the cards, as they are good reminders of how to shift from stress or low mood and feel a bit better in the moment. Key wellbeing topics are physical self care, connection with self and others, self organisation and focus, and self expression/inspiration. There are lots of ideas to try in the cards.



FINDING A RELATIONSHIP OR GETTING MARRIED

Many people in the UK have relationships (boyfriends, girlfriends or partners) before they get married, and some people live together and don't get married at all, even when they have children together. There is much more freedom in the UK in how you have your relationship, and this is seen as normal and acceptable. People can choose their own partners rather than needing permission from their parents or carers.

While you can help young people in your family find a suitable marriage partner, it is illegal to force someone to marry against their will, so it's important that the marriage is what the bride and groom want for themselves. Many second generation young people start to adapt to UK culture and may feel it's more normal to have a girlfriend or boyfriend, or choose their own marriage partner as a 'love match'. This can be difficult for different generations to adjust to over time.





LGBTQIA+ CULTURE AND RIGHTS

In the UK everyone is considered to be equal, and inclusion in all sectors (such as employment, public spaces, social gatherings etc) is protected by law. There are many types of gender and sexual orientation which are all legal and socially acceptable. Tolerance and respect for everyone are key UK values. Everyone can make their own personal choices on such issues in this country.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND REPORTING CRIME

If you are a victim, you must report this to the police immediately. You will be given a crime number and informed of the outcome of the investigation. For less serious offences this may be by text, for more serious offences the police will contact you in person to update you. The emergency number for the police is 999, and the non-emergency number is 101.

It is against the law for members of the public to take the law into their own hands and try to fight back against criminals. It is the job of the police to respond to crime, and communities can't do this for themselves, apart from sharing information about criminals to warn others about activity in their area.



COMMON CRIMINAL OFFENCES IN THE UK

COMMON CRIMINAL OFFENCES IN THE UK INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING;

- Theft
- Fraud
- Harassment and stalking
- Drink driving
- Assault
- Offensive weapons
- Drug offences
- Sexual offences



If you are arrested for a criminal offence you do have the right to legal representation. This is often free and available via the Custody Police staff. This is known as legal aid.

If you are detained in police custody, you can be legally detained for 24 hours. Subject to the severity of the offence, you may be detained for longer.

You may be detained in police custody to appear at court for the offence for which you are charged with. You will be presented at a Magistrates Court in the first instance. At court, a decision will be made to remand, release you with bail conditions or release you with no further action.

If you are remanded you will be taken to a prison for the period of your remand. This is normally until your next court appearance.

If you are released with court bail conditions, it is important you adhere to these conditions to prevent you from committing any further offences or being arrested again.

If you are not presented before the Magistrates Court, you can still be given bail conditions from a police station. This is known as police bail conditions. These are as important as bail conditions given at a Magistrates Court. It is important you adhere to these to prevent you from committing any further offences or being arrested again.

If you are convicted of an offence, you may be dealt with at the police station or at Court. The police can formally caution you. Subject to the severity of the offence you may be dealt with at the Magistrates or Crown Court. Both Courts can give custodial prison sentences.

SOCIAL BEHAVIOURS

In the UK, as in every country, there are some unspoken rules for social behaviour that sometimes people from other countries don't know about when they first arrive here. For example you should expect to wait in queues and respect turn-taking – people will get upset if someone tries to jump to the front of a queue.

Most people in the UK are polite and use words like thank you, excuse me and sorry a lot more than in some other countries. However in initial meetings with people you haven't met before, people are mostly cautious about asking direct personal questions. Similarly physical contact and affection which might be very usual in some countries, such as holding hands with a friend as you walk down the street, is not common in the UK – this is usually reserved for family relationships only.

While staring at others is a sign of admiration or respect in some countries, in the UK it is considered rude or even a form of harassment, and can lead to physical confrontation in some more extreme situations.

In public spaces like libraries, hospitals or on public transport you should generally speak in a quiet voice. You are not allowed to listen to loud music or TV in your home in a way that disturbs your neighbours. If you do, then neighbours can complain about you to the council or police for anti-social behaviour.

Unlike in some other countries, people consider it rude to spit in public places. You shouldn't throw rubbish or litter on the ground but use bins or take it home with you to dispose of.

Most importantly, time is really valuable in the UK and you should always be on time for meetings, appointments or deadlines - if you're late you may lose an important opportunity, for example a GP appointment or job interview.

Knowing about these unspoken social 'rules' and following them will help you fit in and get on well with people you meet and interact with in your daily life.





MEETING YOUR NEIGHBOURS AND MAKING FRIENDS

People in the UK are usually very friendly and helpful to strangers, and if you are stuck, lost or confused it's usual to ask for help in public places, on public transport etc. However people can be more cautious about making friends and getting to know new people than in some other countries, so be friendly and chat with neighbours and people you meet (for example when you take your children to the park, in the school playground or at a bus stop) but expect to take a bit of time to be invited into your neighbours' home or socialise with new people you meet. People have certain conversations to show they're being friendly with people they don't know so well – talking about the weather is a very popular one for example, so this is good language to learn.

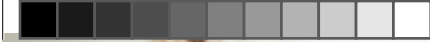
You can meet people by joining in local events – for example, school fairs, or events or clubs advertised on posters or at your local library. Meet-up is an online platform which promotes events where people can go to meet new people and do things with others. Some places have community cafes.

Volunteering in your spare time is another great way to meet new people and practice your English – ask in your local library or council offices about where to find out about local volunteering opportunities.



Inspection copy only

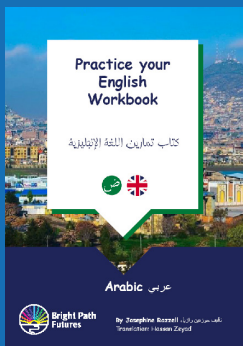




Bright Path Futures Resources

Bright Path Futures is a small not-for-profit company making and distributing resources for refugees and asylum seekers.

You can buy copies of this workbook and our other books and resources from our shop:



www.brightpathfutures.com/shop



Also in our shop:

Welcome to the UK: an illustrated book with animated audio versions, covering comprehensive practical and cultural topics for new arrivals

Amiko cards - simple reminders of ways to keep your self well and happy. Available as a:

- playing card pack (translated into all languages)
- colourful workbook with links to Amiko discussion videos (translated into all languages)
- set of four printed cloths for group work (English only)
- laminated A4 set of selected cards for group work (English only)
- A1 poster (English, Dari or Pashto versions)

Practice Your English for School Children: a special edition of Practice Your English with additional language content to help children prepare for life at primary or secondary school.

Our resources are translated into the following languages:

Albanian

Arabic

Dari (Afghan Farsi)

Farsi (Iranian Farsi)

French

Pashto

Romanian

Sorani Kurdish

Spanish

Tigrinya

Ukrainian

Vietnamese

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