

Registering an Asylum Application in the United Kingdom

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1. Summary

This document sets out how a foreign national should register an asylum application in the United Kingdom once they have already entered the UK.

This document does not replace existing arrangements for Immigration Officers who in the course of their work encounter persons who want to register an asylum application e.g. lorry drops or enforcement activity.

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2. General Principles

Foreign nationals who wish to make an asylum application in the United Kingdom should make their claim at the first available opportunity. This expectation is underpinned by Article 31 of the 1951 Convention which states that applicants should present themselves without delay to the authorities of the host country. This is also reflected by the powers of section 55 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act (2002) which prohibit support for those applicants who have not made their asylum application as soon as “reasonably practicable”.

This would normally be at the port of entry into the United Kingdom. However, the principle of *refugees sur place* recognises that some may find the need to make an application following entry to the host country due to a change in circumstances.

It is further recognised that those who enter the United Kingdom illegally may need to seek the protection of the authorities, which they should do without delay.

This instruction offers general guidelines of how to make an asylum application for foreign nationals who have already entered the United Kingdom.

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3. How to Make an Asylum Claim (In Country)

3.1 Where to Register your Asylum Application once in the UK

Foreign nationals who wish to claim asylum in the United Kingdom are expected to register their application in person along with any dependants at the Asylum Screening Unit (ASU):

Asylum Screening Unit

**Lunar House,
40 Wellesley Road,
Croydon
CR9 2BY**

Opening Hours: Monday – Friday: 08.00 – 13.00 hrs

ASU appointment booking number: 020 8196 4524.

The appointment booking line is open Monday - Friday 08:00 - 15:00 hrs.

The Asylum Screening Unit will accept asylum applications on a walk-in basis, but to complement this service foreign nationals can also choose to make an appointment.

Instructions for the walk-in process at the ASU can be found in [Section 4: Walk-In Process](#).

Instructions for the appointment process at the ASU can be found in [Section 5: Appointment Process](#).

Please note: The role of the Asylum Screening Unit is to process new asylum applications. Those who have already made an asylum application in the United Kingdom should not attend the ASU for an update of their case nor call the appointment booking number. Officers should direct existing applicants to contact their case owner or alternatively call for the Immigration Enquiries Bureau: 0870 606 7766.

For a full and up to date list of the facilities currently available at the ASU see the UK Border Agency website: [UK Border Agency | Asylum screening unit](#).

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4. ASU Croydon Walk-In Service

4.1 Reception

When an individual enters the ASU the front desk Officer should issue them with a numbered ticket and gather some basic personal details relating to their identity, language spoken and their particular circumstances (e.g. if they need accommodation). They should then be asked to wait in the ASU waiting area. The information taken by the front desk will be used by the ASU to determine the order in which those waiting will be seen.

For a full and up to date list of the facilities available at the ASU see the UK Border Agency website: [UK Border Agency | Asylum screening unit](#).

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4.2 General Advice for Potential Applicants (for Officers to Note):

A summary of how to claim asylum is available for public reference on the [UK Border Agency website](#). This advice is summarised below for Officers to note and disseminate if asked about the process:

The screening process can be lengthy and could take several hours to complete. The ASU opens at 8am and those who wish to claim asylum should arrive as early as possible. The ASU can only deal with a certain number of applicants on any given day.

If the ASU reaches full capacity it will close for the day and advise anyone waiting to be seen to either make an appointment or alternatively return early the following morning. **Those who have long distances to travel are advised to book an appointment in advance.**

Documents that potential applicants are advised to bring:

- ✓ **Passport(s)** (for the main applicant, their spouse, or any dependants in the United Kingdom).
- ✓ **Police Registration Certificates** (for the main applicant /their family - as applicable).
- ✓ **Other Identification Documents** - these are needed to help establish identity and nationality and can include ID cards, birth/marriage/school certificates, membership cards, etc.
- ✓ **Four un-separated passport-sized photographs** (of the main applicant, together with four un-separated passport-sized photographs of each of their dependants included to be included on the application). The photographs must meet the following requirements.
 - a. Passport size (approximately 4cm x 5cm).
 - b. Recently taken (within the last few months).
 - c. Full face.
 - d. Light background.

The name and date of birth of the person who appears in the photograph should be clearly printed on the reverse of each copy.

Evidence of Accommodation

Those who attend the ASU should provide documentary printed evidence of their current accommodation (such as: recent bank statements, building society book, council tax demand, medical care, housing benefit book, tenancy agreement, telephone/electricity/gas bills, etc). The document should clearly display the individual's full name and address in the United Kingdom.

If they are living in another person's house (e.g. friend or relative), then they should bring a letter (no older than 3 months) from the householder stipulating permission to, along with documentary evidence such as a bank statement, council tax demand (as per above) which shows his/her full name and address.

Potential applicants should also bring any other relevant documents which will support the basis of their asylum application.

Travel Expenses

It should be noted that the UK Border Agency does not reimburse travel expenses for foreign nationals who want to claim asylum. The process can be lengthy (taking most of the day) and there is a possibility of detention. Potential applicants are advised to take this into consideration when purchasing return rail tickets.

Please refer to [6 Screening Summary](#) for further information on what the process entails.

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5. ASU Croydon Appointment Process

5.1 Appointment Process

The appointment booking number for the ASU is **020 8196 4524**

If there are problems communicating with the individual, an interpreter should be used where appropriate.

The officer should first check that the individual in question has not already claimed asylum in the UK. If they have, they should be advised to contact their case owner and no appointment should be booked.

If the individual has not claimed asylum previously, the following details should be taken and recorded on the ASU appointment booking form.

- Name
- Nationality
- Language they wish the screening interview to be conducted in
- How many dependants the individual has
- Address and contact telephone number
- Any immediate or special needs that need to be considered

The individual must be advised that their claim will not be recorded until they attend their appointment.

Discretion should be exercised where exceptional circumstances of a case warrant an individual being asked to attend the ASU the next day rather than waiting for an appointment.

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5.2 Children

Appointments for children should only be booked where the child is being accommodated by social services. An appropriate adult should accompany the child to the appointment on the scheduled date. All other children should be invited to attend the ASU without an appointment.

Officers to note: Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 requires the UK Border Agency to carry out its existing functions in a way that takes into account the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the UK. It does not impose any new functions, or override existing functions.

Officers must not apply the actions set out in this instruction either to children or to those with children without having due regard to Section 55. The UK Border Agency instruction [‘Arrangements to Safeguard and Promote Children’s Welfare in the UK Border Agency’](#) sets out the key principles to take into account in all Agency activities.

For further guidance on the screening process for children see the Asylum Instruction [Processing Asylum Applications from Children](#)

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5.3 Applicants who have extant leave

If an individual states that they have extant leave which is due to expire before an appointment can be made they should be advised to attend ASU Croydon on a walk-in basis.

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5.4 Confirming the appointment by letter

Generally appointments should be given on a first come first served basis and allocated according to the next available slot from the ASU Spreadsheet. However, flexibility (where possible) and a common sense approach should be adopted by Officers when booking appointments for those who have a long distance to travel.

Details of the appointment should then be given verbally to the individual and an Appointment letter should be sent by post or fax (if appropriate). If the individual speaks good English they should also be sent copies of the self completion (Part B) form and asked to return this when they attend their appointment.

An outline of what potential applicants should bring with them is detailed in the Appointment Letter or refer to the [4.2 General Advice](#) guidelines within this instruction.

When the individual attends for screening, Officers should ask to see a copy of the appointment letter to confirm the individual has an appointment and that it is scheduled on that day.

Please refer to [6 Screening Summary](#) for further information on what the process entails.

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6. Screening Summary

6.1 Basic Overview

This outline is not specific to screening in the ASU, rather a synopsis of the general actions that will occur wherever an asylum application is registered.

Before the registration of the asylum application Officers should cross-check UK Border Agency databases to see if the applicant is already known to the Agency. If the asylum application is then accepted it will be recorded on UKBA database and a file created.

The Screening Interview should then commence and Stages One and Two, completed by the Screening Officer.

Stage one consists of the following sections:

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ Bio-data
- ✓ Travel History and Documentation
- ✓ Health
- ✓ Basis of Claim Summary
- ✓ Security Screening

Stage two:

- ✓ Family Background

If the applicant has dependants they should also be screened on a Dependant Screening Form.

During the screening process the applicant should be:

- ✓ Fingerprinted and checked against UKBA and Eurodac databases.
- ✓ Checked against security/watch list databases.
- ✓ Photographed.

Depending on the immigration history of the applicant Officers may decide to interview under caution if it is suspected that they have committed an immigration offence.

If an applicant is not fully honest during the screening process it may harm their asylum application and result in prosecution. Offences can include verbal deception and entering the UK without valid travel documentation.

Depending on what the individual circumstances that apply to the applicant they may be detained, given temporary admission, or if they have leave to remain given directions to regularly report and live at a particular address.

If the applicant is not detained then an Application Registration Card (ARC) will be issued along with the other documents; such as an IS96 (reporting conditions), a routing letter and the appropriate information leaflets.

If the applicant has requested accommodation then it will be provided under section 98 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1999. The applicant will have to complete a separate application whilst in initial accommodation if they wish to remain accommodated by the UK Border Agency.

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7. Exceptional Cases – Inability to Travel to ASU Croydon

7.1 Exceptional Cases

Foreign nationals that are considered to fall within an exceptional category and are destitute or in the case of children are in the care of social services may be treated discretionally and have their application recorded and screened regionally at a Local Enforcement Office. The criterion is limited to the following:

- ✓ Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASCs) who cannot travel to the ASU (i.e. due to the distance involved).
- ✓ Those whose condition (documented or visually apparent) is such that they cannot reasonably be expected to travel to ASU Croydon. (This also applies to the principle dependants of the main applicant). **Such cases will be very exceptional in nature.**

Foreign nationals, who are already in the United Kingdom, have access to accommodation (supported, hospitalised or imprisoned) and who fulfil the following criteria can submit written notification requesting the registration of an asylum application:

- ✓ those who have a disability or severe illness and are physically unable to travel
- ✓ those who are imprisoned and unable to make their application in person

It should be noted that satisfactory medical evidence must be provided to substantiate a postal application where the applicant claims to have a disability or severe illness and are physically unable to travel to ASU Croydon.

For further information refer to the [Postal Claims](#) instruction.

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Change Record

Version	Authors	Date	Change Reference
1.0	CB	12/10/09	Published Edition

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