



UNIVERSITY OF SANCTUARY

Introductory training for staff and students

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Replicated with consent from training provided by University of Bradford, with the contents tailored to the University of Warwick.

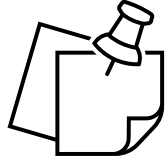
INTRODUCTION

This module is designed to assist staff and students at Warwick to develop insights into the life of asylum seeker and refugee students in the UK. This presentation will take you on an interactive learning journey allowing you to select and explore information a section at a time.

The University of Warwick has been recognised as a University of Sanctuary since 2017. Higher Education Institutions in the UK have a proud and radical tradition of supporting refugees and people in the asylum system. The University of Sanctuary award recognises commitment to creating a culture of safety, solidarity, and empowerment for people seeking sanctuary within, and beyond, university campuses.

Learn [more about Universities of Sanctuary](#).

KEY TERMS



- **Refugee:** someone who is in need of protection and would be at risk of persecution if they returned to their home.
- **Asylum seeker:** someone who has asked to be recognised as a refugee and is waiting for the government to make a decision. They have made themselves known to the authorities and are part of an on-going legal process.
- **Refused asylum seeker:** someone who has had their claim for asylum turned down because the Home Office has decided that they do not need protection in the UK. They can appeal and may be waiting for the outcome of this which can take years.
- **Sanctuary seeker:** A collective term for refugees, asylum seekers, and others seeking protection.
- **Sanctuary Scholars:** A student in receipt of one of our Sanctuary Scholarships.

CONTENTS



Seeking sanctuary

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- Attitudes to migration.

Supporting students seeking sanctuary

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SEEKING SANCTUARY



REASONS FOR MIGRATION

- There are many reasons why people migrate. Usually this can be voluntarily for economic reasons or to study, but it can also be because they are forced to leave their home country. This is the case of sanctuary seekers.
- Reasons can be complex and overlap and we cannot assume that someone who fits the category of voluntary migrant came to the UK because they wanted to.
- Forced migration, specifically refugees and asylum seekers, is the focus of this module.

Voluntary migration

- Economic migrants.
- International students.
- Spouse or dependant.

Forced migration

- Refugees and asylum seekers.
- People trafficking.



REFUGEES:

RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMMES

- You may come across students who are here under voluntary resettlement programmes. They have the same rights to health care, benefits, and housing as any UK citizen and may get automatic leave to remain after 5 years.
- In recent years you may have heard in the press that 20,000 Syrian families are being resettled in the UK over the next 5 years. The most vulnerable families are being selected straight from refugee camps on the borders of Syria. The Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme will provide temporary residence status.
- This is in addition to the existing UNHCR gateway protection programme where 750 refugees are brought over to the UK each year.

- Read [this BBC news report](#) for more information about resettlement.
- Read [Ayham's story about being resettled](#) from the Refugee Council.



REFUGEES:

THE 1951 REFUGEE CONVENTION

- The UK is a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. This allows people to seek asylum if they have left their home country and are unable to return due to a well-founded fear of persecution.
- The grounds for a claim for asylum are the following:
 - Race.
 - Religion.
 - Nationality.
 - Membership of a particular social or political opinion.



For more information you may like to read the frequently asked questions on [the 1951 Refugee Convention](#).



ASYLUM:

WHY PEOPLE SEEK ASYLUM

Read stories from Refugee Action about why some people came to the UK to seek asylum.

- How did you feel after hearing the stories?
- How do the stories compare with your previous understanding of why people seek asylum?



ASYLUM:

LOST FAMILY MEMBERS

A student who has fled home may have left family members behind or even witnessed their torture and murder. This can negatively influence mental health.

Watch a film clip where an asylum seeking woman talks about her experience.

- How would you feel if a student disclosed something like this to you?



DIFFERENCES

‘BACK HOME’

Life back home may have been very different to living in the UK. This could include cultural differences; clothing, food choice and preparation, or living in a city compared to a rural area.

From this



To this



“I was cold. She told me to turn the radiator on. I didn’t know what this was”.

“I didn’t know how to cross the road in the city centre. I had to copy other people”.

“I didn’t know how to buy food so I followed someone around the supermarket and bought the same as them then tried it out... why would you put fish in a tin?”



DIFFERENCES

EDUCATION

- A sanctuary student may have had a very different learning experience. This may include:
 - A lack of technology in the classroom.
 - Different relationships between students and lecturer leading to the expectation for more or less engagement.
 - ‘Talk and chalk’ rather than group discussions.
 - Copying from books rather than critical thinking.
- These could affect the student’s response to the University learning environment, including the understanding of the idea of plagiarism



UK ASYLUM PROCESS:

THE JOURNEY TO THE UK

- Once someone has decided to flee home, the journey to a safe country can be fraught with danger. You may have seen media stories about refugees drowning in the Mediterranean.
- The person who decides to flee often pays an agent and may experience a long and difficult journey. They often don't know which country they are heading for.
- Once a person arrives in the UK and claims asylum, there are certain stages that they have to go through due to immigration status.
- This can add to anxiety caused by experiences at home and their journey to the UK

- Listen to a [poem about the journey across the Mediterranean](#).
- Read about [Zekarias's journey](#).

How do you feel?

If you want to know more, read about Amnesty International's work '[Families belong together](#)'.



UK ASYLUM PROCESS:

STAGES

Application

An asylum claim is usually made immediately at the port or airport. The Home Office will undertake a screening interview. If the person seeking sanctuary is unaware they can claim asylum, they have to attend Croydon for the screening interview.



UK ASYLUM PROCESS:

STAGES

Application

Initial Accommodation Centre

The person seeking sanctuary is sent to an initial accommodation Centre in the UK for 3 weeks. Food, board, and basic health screening is provided.



UK ASYLUM PROCESS:

STAGES

Application

Initial Accommodation Centre

Dispersal

The person seeking sanctuary is dispersed somewhere in the UK, on a no choice basis and provided with accommodation and Section 95 (cash) support. They wait for a substantive asylum interview to take place and are not allowed to work or claim benefits. They may have to move around on a no choice basis with no notice.



UK ASYLUM PROCESS:

STAGES

Application

Initial Accommodation Centre

Dispersal

Wait and report to Home Office

The person seeking sanctuary has to report regularly to the Home Office and wait for a decision. This can take years.



UK ASYLUM PROCESS:

STAGES

Application

Initial Accommodation Centre

Dispersal

Wait and report to Home Office

Decision

- Positive decision: The person seeking sanctuary will be granted Refugee status, Humanitarian Protection, or Discretionary Leave to Remain. All of these have a designated time period, after which settlement can be applied for. From being granted refugee status they have 28 days to leave Home Office accommodation and support is withdrawn. This may lead people to experience poverty and homelessness despite having leave to remain.
- Negative decision: This can be appealed within 14 days and Section 95 support continues. If it is denied destitution, detention, and deportation may follow. A refused asylum seeker can submit fresh claims if they can provide new evidence to support their case.



UK ASYLUM PROCESS:

THE 4 DS

- From the asylum process on the previous page, you will see there are '4Ds' which can have an impact on an asylum seeker – dispersal, destitution, deportation, and detention.
- This may be something a student at the University fears could occur.

Watch the film clips below which feature women talking about their experiences of the 4Ds.

- Dispersal.
- Destitution.
- Deportation and detention.



ATTITUDES TO MIGRATION:

GOVERNMENT AND MEDIA

- In recent years there has been a negative political dominant discourse around immigration and cutting net migration. Although this is focused on EU migration, asylum seekers and refugees are also labelled as 'migrants'.
- Through negative press reporting, the media can reinforce the negative political discourse around immigration.



Read the [newspaper article here](#). Examine the type of language used by the media and the interchangeable use of the word migrant and asylum seeker.

How did this story make you feel? How do you think other people may respond?



ATTITUDES TO MIGRATION:

SOCIAL DISCOURSE

- The way the general public discusses migration and asylum seeking can be influenced by the political and media discourse.
- In 2010, an ICM poll found that: 25% of British people believed asylum seekers come to Britain to claim benefits and 71% believed asylum seekers are given £100 or more of benefits every week to cover their living expenses.
- Negative attitudes from the local community could lead to a student feeling socially isolated and fearful of their safety.

Watch a film clip about a woman who was befriended by an elderly white man when she arrived unsupported with her young children including baby twins.



SUPPORTING STUDENTS SEEKING SANCTUARY



SANCTUARY SCHOLARSHIPS

We have a number of Sanctuary Scholarships providing financial support to sanctuary seeking students, to enable them to pursue Higher Education.

Foundation

Students can choose to complete a foundation year before progressing to undergraduate study. To take this route, they apply for the UG scholarship and confirm they wish to study Foundation first.

Undergraduate

We offer four undergraduate scholarships of:

- 100% tuition fee waiver.
- Grant equivalent to the maximum government Maintenance Loan.

PGT

We offer three postgraduate taught scholarships of:

- 100% tuition fee waiver.
- Maintenance stipend in line with UKRI rates.

PGR

We offer two postgraduate research scholarships of:

- 100% tuition fee waiver.
- Maintenance stipend in line with UKRI rates.
- One off research grant of £5,000.



SUPPORTING STUDENTS

- As you have learnt, sanctuary seeking students may have been through traumatic experiences leading to them fleeing their home. This may have been followed by a perilous journey to the UK and poor experiences whilst living here.
- Students may disclose their experiences to you. You don't need to handle the situation on your own, you can signpost students to the following if needed:
 - University of Sanctuary key contact – Baljit Gill (Widening Participation Team Manager): 02476 574051 or B.Gill.2@warwick.ac.uk.
 - Wellbeing and Student Support.
 - Immigration and Compliance.
 - International Student Support.
 - Students' Union Advice Centre.



COVENTRY CITY OF SANCTUARY

Warwick is located in Coventry, which became a City of Sanctuary in 2011 to join a group of cities and towns that hold the vision that the UK will be a welcoming place of safety for all and proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution. You can read more about Coventry City of Sanctuary on the City of Sanctuary UK website.



Learn more about [Coventry City of Sanctuary](#).



FURTHER INFORMATION

- On our University of Sanctuary webpages you will find more information, including
 - What you can do: This page includes ideas of things you can do to support a culture of safety, solidarity, and empowerment for people seeking sanctuary within, and beyond, the University.
 - Useful links and resources: On this page you'll find useful links and resources for discovering more about sanctuary and work to provide sanctuary seekers.

Read a blog from one of Warwick's Sanctuary Scholars, Hanna – 'My journey and what access means to me'.

