

Asylum Seeker – Refugee Journey into Employment relating to their prior skills

Period whilst waiting for decision on asylum case		Grant of status	As Refugee	
By 6 months	After 6 months	“move-on”	Pre-employment	Employment
<p>Language barrier</p> <p>Cannot access ESOL. Not eligible</p> <p>Difficulties in proving qualifications, experience and references from my country. Didn't manage to bring proof with me. Not safe to request them now</p> <p>No proper advice on options or route to take</p> <p>Agencies don't know of NARIC, or don't have free access to it.</p> <p>NARIC equivalence scale downgrades overseas qualifications – have to top up or convert. Means re-doing A levels then degree, again. Humiliating. Too long. Give up</p> <p>Difficulty in accessing University</p> <p>Not allowed to study</p> <p>Given wrong information by agencies/colleges meant I lost a lot of time and opportunities</p> <p>Don't know who to ask for guidance. Want to map out a route that is a straight line not lots of dead ends and wasted time</p> <p>No advice or advice too late, or wrong advice – no clear route map</p> <p>Unsure if I can volunteer?</p>	<p>Not allowed to work. Have to live on non-cash benefits lower than JSA</p> <p>ESOL classes full / waiting list.</p> <p>ESOL: slow learning. Only a few hours per week, and very rarely skills related content</p> <p>Asylum seekers and colleges etc lack of knowledge or are confused over eligibility criteria for different courses and support programmes</p> <p>No childcare provision so can't go to classes</p> <p>Can't afford to travel to right courses</p> <p>Can't go to University to gain UK equivalent. Some uni's give part time access, but only on some courses, and can take 6 years to finish</p> <p>Can take years for a decision on case. If can't work for years then will lose my skills, or they will become outdated</p> <p>Negative media reporting / perceptions and representations of asylum seekers: humiliation, anger, depression</p> <p>Lose confidence about yourself. Low self-esteem</p> <p>Drop out of classes. Lose heart. Too depressed. Lose track of time</p> <p>Waiting for result of asylum claim. Its hard to plan or decide anything when you have no clear future</p> <p>Not easy to find a Volunteering chance– especially one relating to your skills. And can't afford CRB checks for volunteering</p> <p>No proper advice from Further Education /colleges. Courses don't match skills and lower level. So many certificates for this and that, but will employers value them? Will they be useful?</p>	<p>Very sudden and quick transition. Less than 28 days to move house and start new support system</p> <p>Huge upheaval. Lot of disruption</p> <p>Can't access the UKBA contracted Refugee Employment Service if our case was under Legacy (pre-2007)</p>	<p>Hate to sign at Job centre – don't feel comfortable talking with them. They don't seem comfortable talking to me</p> <p>Job centre not interested in my skills. Just push whatever job is on their list. Don't give any help to use your skills. Just pressure to get any job, with no relevance to skills, to move off JSA quickly</p> <p>Conflict between getting a job immediately and finishing course (Uni or college). We have to prove we are looking for work so how can we finish?</p> <p>Many refugees don't sign on or go to JCP. They don't feel comfortable with the benefits culture here. So don't get access to JCP support programmes or jobs advertised via there</p> <p>Lack of UK references: how can you get a work reference when you can't get work without them?</p> <p>Front line workers seem to assume we don't have skills or qualifications. Their expectations are very low. They don't offer us any support</p> <p>Poor attitudes and awareness within support agencies</p> <p>We've never heard of Next Step or enhanced careers IAG services. We never get referred there either</p> <p>Don't know how the recruitment process works here. Don't realise importance of application form or how to do interviews. Need smart clothes for interviews</p> <p>Employers seem to be uncomfortable with us. They are not sure of all the paperwork and our permission to work either</p> <p>Prejudice. Discrimination and racism</p> <p>Need advice on how to do business here. All the bureaucracy and legislation. And help to start up business</p> <p>Lack of capital for new business start up</p> <p>Limited work placement opportunities</p> <p>Limited long term specialist support</p>	<p>End up in factory production line or cleaning. Low skilled low paid.</p> <p>Hard to keep going with career objectives once in this kind of job. Long hours, shift work. Night work.</p> <p>Employers don't care about us, they don't like us anyway. They're not interested in helping us improve our skills or do training. Just want us as cheap labour to work shifts</p> <p>We don't know what rights we have, or what rights employer has</p> <p>Hard to finish college or university course</p> <p>Difficulties in fitting in to the work place. Different workplace culture: can lead to bad experience on both sides (refugee and employer/staff). Barrier to promotion and progress</p> <p>Feel different. People avoid me. Feel isolated.</p>

What other things are going on in the lives of asylum seekers and refugees?

Period whilst waiting for decision on asylum case		Grant of status	As Refugee	
By 6 months	After 6 months	“move-on”	Pre-employment	Employment
Disorientation Effects of trauma and loss Housing standards poor. Stress from asylum case progress or lack of it Physical and mental health suffers	Distractions and stress from what is happening to family back home Interruptions – meetings with solicitor Poverty Loss of face in front of children	Have to move out of accommodation – difficulty in finding new house, may be a period without own place to live	Delays in receiving benefits causes lot of problems Pressure on refugee to support families – remittances home, can abandon career aims as need to take up immediate earning opportunity	