

# **ESF Eligibility for Afghan Citizens arriving in the UK**

Guidance for GLA ESF Providers



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# GLA ESF Eligibility for Afghan Citizens

This document outlines the three main routes through which Afghan Citizens will seek refuge in the UK. It provides guidance on associated eligibility for GLA ESF co-financed provision.

## Route 1 - Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP)

This is a bespoke resettlement scheme launched on 1 April 2021 for current and former Locally Employed Staff (LES) in Afghanistan. Under the policy, any current or former locally employed staff who are assessed to be under serious threat to life are offered priority relocation.

People coming to the UK through [ARAP](#) will receive immediate **'indefinite leave to remain'**, including the right to work and recourse to public funds. Normal rules for accessing ESF provision in these circumstances apply. See the paragraph regarding non-EEA nations who hold leave to remain under 'Participant Eligibility' [here](#).

People already relocated to the UK under ARAP will be able to apply to convert their temporary leave into indefinite leave.

## Route 2 – Afghanistan Citizen's Resettlement Scheme (ACRS)

The Afghanistan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme will welcome 5,000 Afghans in the first year and up to 15,000 people in the coming years. Once open, those already in the UK and eligible for the ACRS will be able to apply.

As above, Afghans resettled through the [ACRS](#) will be granted **'indefinite leave to remain'**, including the right to work and recourse to public funds. Normal rules for accessing ESF provision in these circumstances apply. See the paragraph regarding non-EEA nations who hold leave to remain under 'Participant Eligibility' [here](#).

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## Route 3 – People seeking asylum

Some Afghan nationals will seek refuge in the UK through claiming asylum. In this instance, normal ESF eligibility for asylum seekers applies. See the section regarding 'Asylum Seekers' [here](#).

It is important to emphasise that those coming to the UK under the ARAP scheme, and those coming through the future ACRS are **not** asylum seekers.

### Evidence of Immigration Permission

- **Afghans arriving under the ACRS or ARAP resettlement scheme** should have one of the following forms of evidence:
  - Vignette in their passport or other travel document where a passport was not held which will state 'Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (or ACRS) – "Indefinite Leave to Enter/Remain'
  - Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) which will state 'Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (or ACRS) - Indefinite Leave to Enter/Remain'
  - Online checks can be made on holders of BRPs – see Annex 4 of the [ESF Data Evidence Requirements - Eligibility and Results](#).
- **Afghans arriving under the Locally Employed Staff Ex Gratia Scheme (LES)** should have a passport with the following endorsement: "Settlement - AF".
- **Returning British Citizens/British Passport Holders and individuals with a UK immigration status other than ARAP, LES or ACRS** should provide evidence in-line with published [ESF Data Evidence Requirements - Eligibility and Results](#).
- **Asylum seekers** – see the [ESF National Eligibility Rules](#) for conditions that apply to asylum seekers.

The GLA have been informed that the Home Office are currently issuing arrivals from Afghan with documentation confirming that they have 'Leave outside of the Rules', which confirms right to live in the UK. This documentation can be used as step 2 evidence along with this GLA guidance until such time as the Home Office commence issuing step 1 evidence in the form of Biometric Residence Permits. Please note that at this time we do not have confirmation that "Leave outside of the Rules" verifies the right to work in the U.K.. We are following up with the Home Office and will update this guidance as soon as we receive confirmation.

### Additional Information

Additional information on support for refugees and asylum seekers arriving in London can be found on the [GLA website](#).

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