Informative webpage for employers

Recruiting Displaced Talent INTO ADULT SOCIAL CARE

# Overview

The proposed webpage should feature the following key components:

* What is displaced talent?
* Realities of hiring displaced talent
* Key considerations for employers
* Useful resources

## **What is Displaced Talent?**

In the UK there is a pool of workers which is commonly known as displaced talent. This group consists of non-UK nationals residing in the UK with refugee status, and it also includes a sub-set of asylum seekers enabled to work in the UK via the [Shortage Occupation List](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-shortage-occupations/skilled-worker-visa-shortage-occupations) after 12 months in the country.

While refugees have the freedom to work in the UK, asylum seekers typically do not have the right to work in the UK. An asylum seeker is someone who has applied to the Home Office for protection and recognition as a refugee by the UK government but is still waiting for a decision on their claim. This decision period is estimated to last 6 months, but due to many factors, including in recent times COVID-19, this period can stretch over a number of years. Asylum seekers have no basic right to work during the period whilst their claim is considered, but they can apply to the Secretary of State for permission to take up employment as long as:

* They have been in the UK for more than 12 months without a decision through no fault of their own
* They take up a role listed on the Shortage Occupation List, which features roles in short supply within the UK labour market.

In February 2022, care workers were added to the Shortage Occupation List (SOL) to help support care providers and address workforce pressures. This has opened up opportunities for social care employers to hire displaced talent for care worker and home care worker positions from people already in the UK including those awaiting a decision on their asylum status.

## **Realities of Hiring Displaced Talent**

Hiring displaced talent may have a number of positive impacts on prospective employers. These benefits may [include](https://ach.org.uk/news-and-features/7-very-good-reasons-hire-refugees-2019):

* Improved business diversity
* Increased staff retention rates, and
* Refugees make motivated, loyal staff.

A [recent study](https://www.londonchamber.co.uk/LCCI/media/media/Employing-refugees-measuring-business-attitudes-in-London.pdf) from the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry highlighted that some businesses in London hired refugees because of their perceived strong work ethic and unique skills.

The [Building Bridges Programme](https://media.refugeecouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/09120107/Building-Bridges-Impact-Report-2016-2019.pdf) run by the Refugee Council, the British Medical Association, and the NHS (National Health Service) recognise the great talent, experience and passion refugees bring to the UK and these factors are the motivation for the support they provide to enable refugees to get back into the professions they love.

Hiring displaced talent via the SOL may be an attractive prospect for adult social care providers. Alongside addressing shortfalls in their workforce, employers may also be able to benefit from the positives around recruiting displaced talent.

The process, however, of hiring an asylum seeker and/or refugee is complex and there are practical considerations and challenges that adult social care employers should take into account before embarking on their recruitment journey.

## **Key Considerations for Employers**

**Realities of Employment** - Employers should not engage with the process of recruiting displaced talent unless they can support the applicant. As an employer, you should consider what the induction package will look like, what post-onboarding support will be available and whether you are willing and able to provide this support. The [pastoral support guide](https://www.nationalcareforum.org.uk/projects/pastoral-care-guide-for-international-recruitment-in-social-care/) from the National Care Forum features lots of considerations employers should take during different stages of the recruitment journey.

Some specific things employers should make sure they consider include:

* Asylum seekers may need time off to attend hearings ([information about the process of claiming asylum](https://freemovement.org.uk/how-to-claim-asylum-in-the-uk/))
* Trauma Support
* Language support
* Flexible working arrangements

**Eligibility** – Adult social care employers must determine the eligibility of any potential worker. As permissions to work for asylum seekers and refugees differ, employers must make sure that they are aware of the documents they need to check. The NHS Business Services Authority have [summarised](https://nhsbsa-live.powerappsportals.com/knowledgebase/article/KA-25231/en-us) the key information about eligibility for both groups. Please note it is important for employers to keep up to date with any changes in the Shortage Occupation List if they are hiring asylum seekers for these roles.

Free Movement has also produced a [helpful guide](https://freemovement.org.uk/asylum-seekers-social-care-jobs-shortage-occupation-list-2022/) that includes information about the process of hiring asylum seekers via the shortage occupation route in adult social care. This could also be seen as a useful starting point when aiming to dissect and simplify the process and identify who can be hired.

**Pre-employment checks** – Employers should also ensure that they carry out any required pre-employment checks. Employers wishing to hire displaced talent should be aware that there could be potential challenges in obtaining DBS checks and character references from refugees and asylum seekers due to a variety of factors. This may include:

* **Lack of Verifiable Documentation:** Refugees and asylum seekers often flee their home countries due to conflict, persecution, or other dire situations. As a result, they may lack traditional identification documents or formal character references from previous employers or institutions.
* **Fear of Persecution**: Some refugees and asylum seekers may be hesitant to share personal information or details about their past due to fear of potential repercussions or harm to family members still in their home country.
* **Limited Employment History:** Some refugees and asylum seekers may have interrupted or limited employment history due to their circumstances, making it difficult to obtain traditional employment references.

As an employer, it is important to make sure that you are following the latest guidance. The latest guidance on the pre-employment checks required by adult social care employers is available from the [CQC (Care Quality Commission)](https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/fid2932547-employment-requirements-regulation-19.pdf) and [DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service).](https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/20191113_Disclosure_and_Barring_Service_DBS_checks_guidance_v7.pdf)

**Location-specific considerations** – As an employer, it is essential to consider the location of your services when hiring, as it can impact potential recruits' interest. Factors to consider include:

* **Accommodation:** Check if there are affordable housing options available for new recruits and ensure landlords are aware of the [right to rent immigration checks](https://www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-rent).
* **Childcare:** Look into the availability of nearby and affordable childcare services.
* **Schools:** Consider the proximity and quality of schools in the area.
* **Transportation:** Consider the efficiency and accessibility of the local transport network for new recruits.

**Training** – When hiring displaced talent, it's essential to offer training opportunities that align with their roles and responsibilities. As an employer, understanding the limitations and funding constraints surrounding training for displaced talent is equally crucial. It's essential to recognise that displaced talent may not be eligible for the same funds as the domestic workforce, so an employer may need to decide how they will provide suitable and accessible training options to support this cohort.

# Resources

## **Information about Third-Sector Organisations**

Below is a list of organisations that provide information and resources that may be useful for social care providers interested in recruiting and engaging with asylum seekers and refugees:

**Business in the Community:** [Business in the Community](https://www.bitc.org.uk/) is a UK-based organisation that promotes responsible business practices. They offer programs and resources focused on refugee employment and can provide guidance to employers. Their "[Hire, Inspire and Grow](https://www.bitc.org.uk/employment-and-skills/)" framework helps businesses create more inclusive workforces through self-assessment tools, toolkits, and a community of practice. While not specific to social care, employers can utilise these resources to enhance diversity and inclusion within their organisations.

**Refugee Action**: [Refugee Action](https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/pathways-to-work/) is a UK-based charity that supports refugees and asylum seekers. Their "[Pathways to Work](https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/pathways-to-work/)" program assists refugees in finding employment. Employers, including social care providers, can partner with Refugee Action to support their work and offer pre-employment support to refugees, asylum seekers, and other vulnerable migrants. This collaboration can help social care employers hire and integrate refugees into their workforce.

**Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB):** [TBB](https://talentbeyondboundaries.org/) is a global nonprofit organisation that connects employers with skilled refugees and displaced persons. While not specific to social care, they work with employers in various industries, including healthcare. Social care employers can register with TBB to access their talent pool, which can provide an opportunity to recruit skilled refugees who can contribute to the social care sector.

**The Launchpad Collective**: [The Launchpad Collective](https://www.wearetlc.org.uk/) is a project by The Learning Collective (TLC), supporting organisations to create inclusive workplaces. They focus on helping employers create inclusive environments for refugees, asylum seekers, and other disadvantaged groups. Their services include training, consultancy, recruitment support, ongoing assistance, and an employer network. Social care employers can benefit from their expertise in creating inclusive workplaces and tapping into diverse talent pools. You can find out more and register your interest on their website: <https://www.wearetlc.org.uk/employers>

**The Refugee Council:** [The Refugee Council](https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/) is a leading UK charity working with asylum seekers and refugees. They provide [information](https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/information/refugee-asylum-facts/) about asylum seekers and refugees, which can be a useful resource for employers seeking to learn more about the refugee situation. They also offer support options for displaced talent and [partnership opportunities](https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/get-involved/support-us-through-your-company/employment-partnerships/) for employers. Through their "Refugees into Jobs" program, they work with employers to design training programs and support the recruitment of refugees into their organisations.

**The Refugee Employment Network (REN):** [REN](https://www.refugeeemploymentnetwork.co.uk/) is a network of organisations and employers committed to supporting refugees in the UK. They offer resources, training, and guidance to employers interested in hiring refugees. While not specific to social care, social care employers can benefit from accessing their resources and receiving guidance on recruiting refugees, enhancing their recruitment strategies, and creating inclusive workplaces that value and support refugees.

## **Useful Resources and Guides**

Below is a list of resources that may be useful for adult social care providers who are interested in hiring displaced talent. The majority of resources are not specific to social care but offer useful information for those who would like to find out more about the process.

[Guide to Helping Refugees into Employment (2019):](https://southeastspm.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Emp-and-IAG-Guide-Final.pdf) A comprehensive guide that provides information on supporting refugees in gaining employment. While not specific to social care, it offers insights and strategies that can be applied in various sectors.

[Guide to Opening Pathways to Decent Work for Refugees (2022):](https://www.ingka.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Skills-for-employment-toolkit_A-how-to-guide-for-opening-pathways-to-decent-work-for-refugees_Ingka-Group-an-IKEA-Retailer.pdf) A toolkit by Ingka Group (IKEA Retailer) that offers guidance on creating opportunities for refugees to access decent work. While not specific to social care, it provides insights and practical tips applicable to various industries.

[Opening Doors to Refugees](https://www.bitc.org.uk/opening-doors-to-refugees/) campaign: Business in the Community: This organisation has an "Opening Doors to Refugees" campaign that encourages businesses to commit to creating more inclusive workplaces for refugees. The campaign identifies keys to unlocking employment opportunities for excluded groups. Their website offers more information and resources on this campaign.

[Proving Your Right to Work Guide from Citizens Advice](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/right-to-work-in-the-uk/check-how-to-prove-your-right-to-work-in-the-uk/): A guide that provides information on how to prove the right to work in the UK, for different groups including refugees. This resource can help employers navigate legal requirements when hiring refugees.

[Recruiting Healthcare Professionals - NHS Employers (2023):](https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/refugee-healthcare-professionals) This article offers information and resources for employers who are interested in recruiting and supporting refugees in health and social care professions. While the page has an NHS focus, there is also useful information for adult social care providers.

[Refugee Toolkit: Unlocking a Waiting Workforce Toolkit (2022):](https://cityandguildsfoundation.org/what-we-offer/resources/refugee-toolkit/) A comprehensive toolkit that provides information on refugees and the recruitment process. While access requires signing up, it offers valuable resources for employers interested in hiring refugees.

[TENT UK Employers Guide to Hiring Refugees (2018):](https://www.tent.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Tent_Guidebook_UK_singlepages.pdf) A guide that covers multiple aspects of hiring refugees, including benefits, finding, and hiring refugees, and addressing recruitment and retention challenges. It includes case studies, lists supporting organisations, and discusses strategies for breaking barriers in refugee employment.

[Tools for Harnessing the Skills of Refugees in Your Workplace (2021):](https://businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/sites/skillsgateway/files/documents/Tools%20for%20harnessing%20the%20skills%20of%20Refugees%20in%20your%20workplace.pdf) This resource offers valuable sector-wide insights while also providing specific advice for Wales. It serves as a useful starting point for social care providers, offering guidance on recruitment, retention, and support for refugees in the workplace. It provides information about key considerations and practical strategies to help employers engage and integrate refugees into their workforce.

*Please note that it is important to check the latest guidance and regulations from relevant government bodies and organisations when considering the recruitment and employment of refugees and asylum seekers. Guidelines and policies may evolve, and staying up-to-date ensures compliance and best practices in supporting refugees who work in adult social care. Always refer to the most current resources and seek professional advice as needed.*