

Working With Refugees

This section suggests a practical process for working with would-be refugee entrepreneurs and sources of further information.

This includes:

- A checklist of issues which may be relevant to the client
- Where to refer a client to, or to seek further information

Working With a Client

The checklist below covers issues in addition to the business advice you may already be providing. It looks at some of the processes and issues involved in working with a refugee client. It is not intended to be comprehensive, but it will help you to cover the main issues to tailor your advice or make referrals appropriately.

Checklist

- Where was the client referred from?
- Is the client eligible to work? Is he or she an asylum seeker or a refugee? If an asylum seeker is there any permission to work granted from the Home Office?
- What sort of leave is granted? Note if it's Temporary Leave to Remain – they may be removed after five years.
- How are the client's English language abilities? How is their written and spoken English? Do they need English lessons?
- Do you need an interpreter? Where can you find one?
- What cultural background is the client from? Is there anything you need to be aware of?
- Is the client male or female? Are there any considerations about childcare, confidence, additional language support, or other cultural considerations?
- Does the client have any other pressing issues such as housing, health, education, finances?
- Does the client use any RCO resources? Which ones?

- What qualifications does the client have? Are these recognised in the UK and accredited? Are they relevant to the business idea?
- What work experience does the client have? Is this from the UK or another country?
- Does the client have a business idea? What is the basis of the idea? Is it open to the mainstream or based in the community? What structure is appropriate to the business goals?
- What sector will the business be based in? Is there a lot of competition in this sector? Will it be based within a community?
- Does the client have a written business plan? Do they know about business plans? Do they need help writing one?
- Have they thought about the legal structure of the business?
- Does the client need finance? How will that finance be raised? If it is going to be difficult, are syndicates or co-operatives a possibility?
- Does the client have a National Insurance Number?
- Does the client have a UK bank account? Do they have relevant identity documents?

Sources of Further Information and Referral

It may often be the case that a client has a number of issues that are not based on their desire to start a business, but may have a significant impact on their ability to do so. These can include immigration problems (particularly for family members), health issues, financial problems, housing problems, or more detailed and protracted difficulties. It is unlikely as a business adviser you will be able to deal with these in detail. Therefore, it's a good idea to develop links with other organisations that can deal with these issues including mainstream and specialist bodies. This will allow you to refer refugee clients appropriately to the best source of help available, allowing you to get on with focusing on the business! Good starter points for referral are noted below.

Organisation	Website
General Sources of Information (useful for many types of help)	
Refugee Council	www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Refugee Action	www.refugee-action.org.uk
Scottish Refugee Council	www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk
Immigration and Legal	
Immigration Advisory Service	www.iasuk.org
Refugee Legal Centre	www.refugee-legal-centre.org.uk
Law Centres Federation	www.lawcentres.org.uk
Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants	www.jcwi.org.uk
Citizens Advice Bureaux	www.adviceguide.org.uk
English Language	
Many HE or FE colleges will provide English language training free of charge, otherwise try Refugee Council and Refugee Action above for further information	
Housing	
Refugee Housing Association	www.refugeehousing.org.uk
HACT	www.hact.org.uk
Employment and Self Employment Training	
RETAS	www.education-action.org
Employability Forum	www.employabilityforum.co.uk
Community Action Network	www.can-online.org.uk
Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)	www.dti.gov.uk
Refugee Women	
Refugee Women's Association	www.refugeewomen.org

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