

4. Work and education

Working in the UK

If you are physically and mentally able to work, finding employment will be a key part in helping you secure more permanent accommodation. You have the right to seek and access paid work opportunities in the UK and there are services to help.

You can get advice from the local Job Centre Plus. The Job Centre Plus can give you information about jobs vacancies, training and claiming benefits. There are details in the Local Information section of this pack. Staff can also help you to complete job applications and you can also get support finding employment through Asylum Welcome and Refugee Resource.

- **Swindon Job Centre** – Spring Gardens House, Princes Street, Swindon, SN1 2HY, 0800 169 0190
- **Abingdon Job Centre Plus** – 38-44 Stert St, Abingdon, OX14 3QS, 0800 169 0190
- **Refugee Resource** – info@refugeeresource.org, 01865 403280
- **Asylum Welcome** – advice@asylum-welcome.org, 01865 722082

Converting qualifications

If you have qualifications in your home country, the NARIC can translate and recognise how they compare to UK qualifications. You will have to pay a fee for this service.

Phone: 01242 258614

Website: www.naric.org.uk

Volunteering

Volunteering is great for meeting new people, improving your English and building work skills. The experience you gain through volunteering can also be helpful when looking for paid work.

Volunteering in the UK is a form of unpaid work where you give your personal time regularly to support and help businesses or charities and is greatly valued. You can choose where you would like to volunteer based on your skills and interests, and normally work on days and times that suit you.

If you would like more information on volunteering and current opportunities, you can contact:

Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action: phone 01865 251946, email vol@ocva.org.uk, or visit their website: www.ocva.org.uk

Education and learning English

Education for children between the ages of 5 and 18 is free and compulsory. All parents are obliged to ensure that their children attend school. Likewise, the State must ensure there are places available and that standards of education are high quality. Your children may be entitled to a free school meal. Please contact the school for information and support.

The school year starts in September and ends in July of the following year for primary and secondary education.

Oxfordshire County Council school holidays 2023-2024 can be found here www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/term-dates-and-holidays

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October half-term 23 October - 27 October
Christmas holiday 21 December - 5 January
Spring half-term 12 February - 16 February
Easter holiday 29 March - 12 April
Late Spring half-term 27 May - 31 May

Wiltshire County Council school holidays 2023-2024 can be found here
publicholidays.co.uk/school-holidays/england/wiltshire

October half-term 19 October - 27 October
Christmas holiday 21 December - 3 January
Spring half-term 12 February - 16 February
Easter holiday 29 March - 12 April
Late Spring half-term 27 May - 31 May

Nursery or pre-school (0-5 years)

It is not compulsory for a child to attend nursery or pre-school. Nurseries provided by the state are usually free but can have long waiting lists. Some 2, 3 and 4 year olds are eligible for free early education funding.

Advice on finding a place and on free entitlement is available from the Family Information Service:

Oxfordshire: email fisenquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk or phone 01865 323332

Wiltshire: email familyservice@swindon.gov.uk or phone 01793 465111

Primary education

From the age of 5 (or 4 depending on date of birth) children attend primary school. Your child's progress will be monitored throughout the year.

Secondary education

Education for ages 11-16 is called secondary education. Prior to leaving, pupils generally take GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) exams.

To apply for a school place during the school year, you need to complete an in-year transfer form on the Oxfordshire County Council website: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Applications should be processed within 15 days, but it can take longer. If face to face support is needed with the application process, this is available at County Hall in Oxford with no appointment necessary.

You can find your nearest primary and secondary schools here:

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/list

If you have any school application queries, contact the Schools Admissions Team:

admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk or phone 0345 241 2487.

Post 16 education

It is law in England for students to remain in some form of education until the age of 18. Therefore, when you leave secondary school at 16, you will then need to complete either:

- > full-time education e.g. college or sixth form
- > apprenticeships or traineeships with local businesses and organisations
- > work or volunteer (for 20 hours or more a week) while in part-time education or training

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Sixth form schools continue education from GCSE level up until the age of 18. There are a range of courses that can be taken at sixth form schools or colleges, including A levels and National Vocational Qualification (NVQ).

University education

If you wish to continue studying after completing your compulsory education, you can apply to attend a university. A course at university will be more specialised and focus more on research. Once you have completed your studies you will be awarded an academic degree.

There are a variety of different university courses offered at institutions across the UK. Each course will have different entry requirements regarding English Language and other academic grades. Courses are usually for 3 years but may be longer or shorter depending on the subject being studied. You can find information about different courses and make university applications on Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) here: www.ucas.com

You will need to pay a fee to attend university, however, as you have been given indefinite leave to remain you can apply for student finance. This will allow you to take out a loan which you will have to repay once you have finished your studies and are in employment. If you need more information about student finance, please see: www.gov.uk/browse/education/student-finance

Refugee Education UK (REUK)

REUK supports young refugees and asylum seekers access education in the UK. Find out more on their website: www.reuk.org

Learning English

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

ESOL classes are a great way to improve your English. Most ESOL classes charge but you should be eligible to attend for free if you are receiving certain benefits or not working.

There are several online options for learning English for free in Oxfordshire. Your Community Support Officer can help you with this.

Abingdon and Witney College

01235 555 585
enquiries@abingdon-witney.ac.uk
www.abingdon-witney.ac.uk

Asylum Welcome

One to one support for asylum seekers and refugees, especially for those unable to attend college classes for whatever reason. Higher and lower levels of ESOL with the opportunity to progress. Contact: office@asylum-welcome.org

Oxfordshire County Council

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/education-and-learning/adult-learning/english-courses-adults

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Oxford Business College

0333 242 0000

enquiries@oxfordbusinesscollege.ac.uk

www.oxfordbusinesscollege.ac.uk

Oxford International Digital Institute

020 8293 1188

admissions@oidigitalinstitute.com

www.oxfordinternationaleducationgroup.com/oi-digital-institute

The Open University

www.open.edu/openlearn

You can find courses by going on their website and typing in 'free English courses' in the search bar on the main page.

ESOL

Informal provision

- Every Tuesday 10am-12pm, The Charter, Abingdon, OX14 3LY, 01235 520374