

# What is an asylum seeker?

Look at the statements below, which are all about asylum seekers. All you have to do is to decide whether the statements are true or false...

If someone is an asylum seeker, they are also a refugee.	There is no such thing as an illegal asylum seeker.	The United Nations defines an asylum seeker as someone who has applied for protection as a refugee and is awaiting a decision about their status.	A refugee is a person who has been granted permission to stay in the UK under the terms of the 1951 Refugee Convention because of a well-founded fear of persecution in their own country, due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a social group.
The top destination for asylum seekers is the UK.	There were more asylum seekers coming to the UK in 2007 than there were in 2006.	Most asylum seekers are from Iraq, followed by Russia and China.	More than 45,000 Iraqis applied for asylum in 2007, compared with 22,900 in 2006.
The local council decides who is granted asylum in the UK.	Everyone who immigrates to the UK is an asylum seeker.	All asylum seekers are held in a detention centre until their application is processed.	If a person is granted asylum, their refugee status lasts for five years.
All children of asylum seekers must go to school if they are aged between 5 and 15 years.	Asylum seekers may enter the UK with false or no documentation as long as they declare their documents to be false and apply for asylum immediately and cooperate with efforts to replace their documentation.	Asylum seekers are not allowed to do any kind of work while they are awaiting a decision on their application.	In 1992 just 1% of all asylum seekers to the UK were unaccompanied children. In 2002 the figure was 20%.

**Warning:** the next page of the document gives the answers to the task! Don't look until you've made your true or false decision...

## ANSWERS: What is an asylum seeker?

<p>If someone is an asylum seeker, they are also a refugee.</p> <p><b>FALSE:</b> they become a refugee if/when their asylum application is accepted.</p>	<p>There is no such thing as an illegal asylum seeker.</p> <p><b>TRUE</b></p>	<p>The United Nations defines an asylum seeker as someone who has applied for protection as a refugee and is awaiting a decision about their status.</p> <p><b>TRUE</b></p>	<p>A refugee is a person who has been granted permission to stay in the UK under the terms of the 1951 Refugee Convention because of a well-founded fear of persecution in their own country, due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a social group.</p> <p><b>TRUE</b></p>
<p>The top destination for asylum seekers is the UK.</p> <p><b>FALSE:</b> it's the USA, followed by Canada, France, Italy and then the UK.</p>	<p>There were more asylum seekers coming to the UK in 2007 than there were in 2006.</p> <p><b>FALSE:</b> there were 23,430 applications in 2007 compared to 28,000 in 2006. In 2008 figures were up again to 25,670, but nowhere near the peak of over 100,000 in 2002.</p>	<p>Most asylum seekers are from Iraq, followed by Russia and China.</p> <p><b>TRUE</b></p>	<p>More than 45,000 Iraqis applied for asylum in 2007, compared with 22,900 in 2006.</p> <p><b>TRUE</b></p>
<p>The local council decides who is granted asylum in the UK.</p> <p><b>FALSE:</b> it's the Home Office that makes the decisions.</p>	<p>Everyone who immigrates to the UK is an asylum seeker.</p> <p><b>FALSE</b></p>	<p>All asylum seekers are held in a detention centre until their application is processed.</p> <p><b>FALSE:</b> only some are.</p>	<p>If a person is granted asylum, their refugee status lasts for five years.</p> <p><b>TRUE</b></p>
<p>All children of asylum seekers must go to school if they are aged between 5 and 15 years.</p> <p><b>TRUE</b></p>	<p>Asylum seekers may enter the UK with false or no documentation as long as they declare their documents to be false and apply for asylum immediately and cooperate with efforts to replace their documentation.</p> <p><b>TRUE</b></p>	<p>Asylum seekers are not allowed to do any kind of work while they are awaiting a decision on their application.</p> <p><b>FALSE:</b> they can do voluntary work or unpaid work.</p>	<p>In 1992 just 1% of all asylum seekers to the UK were unaccompanied children. In 2002 the figure was 20%.</p> <p><b>TRUE</b></p>

For more information, read these two BBC News articles: [Asylum applications reduced by 9%](#) (27/02/07) and [Asylum seekers up for second year](#) (24/03/09).