

Debate Pack

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Visas, security and access to services for Hongkongers living in the UK

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Summary

There will be a Westminster Hall debate about visas, security and access to services for Hongkongers living in the UK on Thursday 17 October. The debate will be opened by Connor Rand MP.

1

Background

Over the last several years, relations between the United Kingdom and China have deteriorated sharply.¹ In 2020, China imposed a new National Security Law for Hong Kong (see section 1.3 below). The UK considers that the law violates the agreements made between the UK and China to govern the handover of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty in 1997.

In response, the Johnson government announced plans to allow Hongkongers with [British National \(Overseas\) status](#) to move to the UK.² Over 150,000 people have since arrived on what has become known as the BN(O) visa.³

1.1

Visas

The [Hong Kong British National \(Overseas\) visa scheme](#) launched in January 2021. It enables BN(O) visa holders and their dependent family members to come to live in the UK and qualify for permanent residence after five years.

The route was established in response to concerns about an erosion of human rights protections in Hong Kong, but does not grant formal refugee status. Eligibility is not based on a risk of persecution.⁴ Rather, it is a visa which is only available to people with BN(O) status (or a parent or eligible family member who has that status).

Applicants must pay a visa application fee and the [immigration health surcharge](#). For example, a single adult applying for a five-year BN(O) visa would pay a £250 application fee and immigration health surcharge of £5,175.

The visa gives people permission to come to live in the UK with fewer restrictions than the usual work, study, or family visa routes. BN(O) visa holders have broadly unrestricted entitlements to work or study in the UK and may be given permission to claim [public funds](#) (most benefits, tax credits or housing assistance paid by the state).

BN(O) visa holders are eligible for [permanent residence](#) (also known as settlement or indefinite leave to remain) after five years in the UK and for [British citizenship](#) after another year. Children of BN(O) visa holders who are born in the UK are not automatically British citizens. UK-born children can however become British citizens via a [process called registration](#).

¹ See Commons Library research briefing CBP-10029, [UK-China relations: recent developments](#)

² [HC Deb 2 June 2020 cc682-683](#); [HC Deb 1 July 2020 c330](#)

³ Home Office, [Immigration system statistics, year ending June 2024, Safe and Legal \(Humanitarian\) routes to the UK](#), 22 August 2024

⁴ See Commons Library research briefing CBP-8939, [Hong Kong British National \(Overseas\) visa](#)

Hongkongers without BN(O) status

The main deadline to register for British Nationality (Overseas) was 30 June 1997.⁵ It is no longer possible to apply for BN(O) status; nor can it be passed on to future generations. The pool of BN(O)s was fixed in 1997.

However, the children of BN(O)s can also get a BN(O) visa if born after the 1997 handover. Those under 18 can accompany a BN(O) parent, while adult children can apply in their own right.⁶ The provisions for adult children allow for the fact that there was no opportunity for such people to be registered for BN(O) status.⁷

By contrast, the adult children of BN(O)s are not automatically eligible for the visa if born before the 1997 handover. The parents of such children did have the option to register them for BN(O) status before the deadline. The charity Hong Kong Watch argues that people born before 1997 should nevertheless be allowed to get BN(O) visas if they had a BN(O) parent.⁸

Statistics on the UK's Hong Kong population

The 2021 and 2022 censuses identified 135,000 usual residents who were born in Hong Kong. Of these, 121,000 were living in England and Wales, 12,000 in Scotland, and 2,000 in Northern Ireland.⁹

Since the BN(O) visa route opened in 2021, a further 150,000 people from Hong Kong have moved to the UK, according to the Home Office.¹⁰ This means the overall Hong Kong-born population in the UK in 2024 may be closer to 285,000.

⁵ [Hong Kong \(British Nationality\) Order 1986, SI 1986/948](#) (as amended)

⁶ Home Office, [Immigration Rules Appendix Hong Kong British National \(Overseas\)](#), in particular paragraphs HK 15.1 and HK 23.3, accessed on 15 October 2024

⁷ HCWS635 [on [Hong Kong British National \(Overseas\) immigration route](#)], 24 February 2022

⁸ Hong Kong Watch, [On the 27th anniversary of the Hong Kong handover, Hong Kong Watch calls for the BNO scheme to be expanded](#), 1 July 2024

⁹ Office for National Statistics (ONS), [2021 Census – custom table builder](#), ‘country of birth (extended)’; National Records of Scotland, [2022 Census, ‘Country of birth \(UV204\)’](#); Northern Ireland Research and Statistics Agency (NISRA), [Census 2021, country of birth – intermediate detail](#).

¹⁰ Home Office, [Immigration system statistics, year ending June 2024, Safe and Legal \(Humanitarian\) routes to the UK](#), 22 August 2024

1.2

Access to services

National Health Service

Hongkongers with a BN(O) visa are able to access all NHS services. Like other foreign nationals applying for temporary permission to live in the UK, they are required to pay an [immigration health surcharge](#) in addition to the visa application fee. The standard rate is £1,035 per year of the visa, paid in advance, but secures access to the NHS.

Benefits

BN(O) visa holders, like most temporary migrants in the UK, have [no recourse to public funds](#). This means that they are mostly ineligible for welfare benefits and social housing. But they can apply for a ‘change of conditions’ granting them recourse to public funds if they are able to provide evidence of destitution, child welfare concerns or exceptional financial circumstances.¹¹ Change of conditions applications are not routinely available to people in most other visa categories, but are for BN(O)s.

Student finance

Students with this visa have immigration restrictions on their stay and so are not ‘settled’. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, they are therefore not eligible for home fee status or student finance.¹² This means they must pay international fees and cannot access publicly funded loans or grants.

Pensions

Hongkongers in the UK on the BN(O) visa have reported difficulties in accessing pensions held in the Hong Kong Mandatory Provident Fund. This is compulsory savings scheme that Hongkongers must pay into for their retirement. The Foreign Office has urged the Hong Kong authorities to “facilitate early draw down of funds as is the case for other Hong Kong residents who move overseas permanently”.¹³

¹¹ Gov.uk, [Apply to change your permission to allow access to public funds](#), accessed on 15 October 2024

¹² See Commons Library research briefing, [Home fee status for students from Hong Kong](#)

¹³ PQ 2169 [on [Pensions: Hong Kong](#)], 2 September 2024; PQ 17314 [on [Pensions: British National \(Overseas\)](#)], 6 March 2024; PQ 5408 [on [British National \(Overseas\): Pensions](#)], 5 December 2023

Passports

Some Hongkongers whose Hong Kong Special Administrative Region passports have expired report being reluctant to renew their passport due to fears of attending an appointment at a Chinese embassy or consulate.¹⁴ This may leave them with no valid passport until they qualify for British citizenship up to six years later.

The Home Office can issue a '[certificate of travel](#)' document to use instead of a passport. But this is only for people who have permanent residence in the UK and have been "formally and unreasonably refused a passport" by their home country, according to the relevant guidance.¹⁵ In 2022, the then immigration minister Robert Jenrick said the Home Office had "no plans" to issue alternative travel documents to Hongkongers in these circumstances.¹⁶

Children who were born in the UK can [apply to be registered as a British citizen](#) (and in turn, obtain a British passport) if one of their parents gets indefinite leave or British citizenship while the child is under 18.

1.3

Security

2020 National Security Law

Since June 2020, when the China's parliament passed a [National Security Law for Hong Kong](#), most observers have stated there has been a serious deterioration in human rights in Hong Kong.¹⁷

The National Security Law criminalises any act of:

- secession – breaking away from the country;
- subversion – undermining the power or authority of the central government;
- terrorism – using violence or intimidation against people; and
- collusion with foreign or external forces.

The law is extraterritorial: it applies to anyone regardless of where they live in the world and whether they are a citizen/resident of Hong Kong.

¹⁴ Applicants are required to "collect your passport in person [at] the Chinese embassy/consulate-general": Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (London), [Frequently Asked Questions](#), accessed on 15 October 2024

¹⁵ UK Visas and Immigration, [Home Office travel documents: caseworker guidance](#), 29 August 2023, p8

¹⁶ PQ 73800 [on [Travel Requirements: Hong Kong](#)], 28 October 2022

¹⁷ ["Hong Kong's freedoms 'better protected' under national security law, government tells UN ahead of human rights review"](#), Hong Kong Free Press, 27 December 2023

The UK Government has said that the National Security Law is a “clear and serious violation” of the [Sino-British Joint Declaration](#).¹⁸ The Joint Declaration was signed in 1997 and states that Hong Kong will be directly under the authority of the People’s Republic of China but enjoy a “high degree of autonomy” and its social and economic systems and lifestyle will remain unchanged for 50 years.

The UK Government has responded with three main actions since the National Security Law:

- It suspended the UK’s extradition treaty with Hong Kong.
- It extended the embargo on certain military items already imposed on mainland China (in response to the 1989 Tiananmen Square repression) to Hong Kong.
- It introduced the BN(O) visa.¹⁹

The Hong Kong Government claims that human rights are better protected since the legislation was passed.

Targeting of Hongkongers and British citizens

The Hong Kong authorities have used the extraterritorial nature of the law to target people abroad. In March 2022, Benedict Rogers of Hong Kong Watch said the Hong Kong police had written to him stating he faced charges of “collusion with foreign forces” should he return there.²⁰

In July 2023, police in Hong Kong issued arrest warrants under the National Security Law for eight exiled Hongkongers. A HK\$1 million bounty was also offered for information leading to their arrest. In response, the then Foreign Secretary James Cleverly urged Beijing to remove the National Security Law and called on the Hong Kong authorities to “to end their targeting of those who stand up for freedom and democracy”.²¹

In December 2023 another five arrest warrants were issued against activists including some based in the UK and the US, again with bounties offered. The then Foreign Secretary, Lord Cameron of Chipping Norton, issued a statement in response:

I have instructed officials in Hong Kong, Beijing and London to raise this issue as a matter of urgency with the Hong Kong and Chinese authorities.

¹⁸ [HC Deb 20 July 2020 c1831](#)

¹⁹ See Commons Library research briefing CBP-9318, [Hong Kong: National Security Law and recent events](#), 20 September 2021

²⁰ [“Hong Kong: Briton accused of jeopardising China's security”](#), BBC News, 14 March 2022

²¹ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, [Hong Kong National Security law arrest warrants: Foreign Secretary’s statement](#), 3 July 2023

We will not tolerate any attempt by any foreign power to intimidate, harass or harm individuals or communities in the UK. This is a threat to our democracy and fundamental human rights.²²

The Commons Library debate pack [Future of human rights in Hong Kong](#), 22 January 2024, has further details.

Chinese ‘police stations’ issue

In September 2022 a human rights NGO, Safeguard Defenders, published a report claiming that Chinese authorities were running 54 unofficial police stations in 30 countries, including three in the UK.²³

The police service stations were set up to help deal with the growing issue of fraud and telecommunication fraud by Chinese nationals living abroad, and were being used to persuade suspects to return to China. But Safeguard Defenders said that they used “irregular methods” against the targeted person or their family members in China in order to pressure them to go back to China. The NGO warned that they could be used to target political dissidents also.

Responding in the House of Commons, then Security Minister Tom Tugendhat, said such activities “must be stopped”, stressing it would be “unacceptable” for any foreign government to attempt to operate a security apparatus upon UK shores.²⁴

In June 2023 Mr Tugendhat gave a written statement to update the House of Commons on the issue. He said that while police had visited each location and not identified any laws that had been broken, the site had been established without the permission of the UK Government. He added that “all such stations have closed permanently. Any further allegations will be swiftly investigated in line with UK law”.²⁵

²² Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, [Hong Kong National Security Law arrest warrants: Foreign Secretary’s statement](#), 14 December 2023

²³ Safeguard Defenders, [110 Overseas – Chinese Transnational Policing Gone Wild](#), September 2022

²⁴ [HC Deb 1 November 2022 c779](#)

²⁵ HCWS822 [on [Update on Chinese ‘Overseas Police Service Stations’](#)], 6 June 2023

2

Parliamentary material

2.1

Early day motions

[25th anniversary of the handover of Hong Kong](#)

That this House recognises today as the 25th anniversary of the handover of Hong Kong to China; laments that Hong Kongers are suffering from the collapse of the rule of law, an unchecked government, repression, erosion of freedoms, and destruction of civil society, despite their hope for continued peace, ... and calls on the UK Government to support the people of Hong Kong, since the safety and freedoms of Hong Kongers—here in the UK, in Hong Kong, and around the world—must be protected, as must democracy.

04 Jul 2022 | Early day motions | Open | House of Commons | 243 (session 2022-23)

Primary sponsor: Nicolson, John

[Hong Kong British National \(Overseas\) assistance programme](#)

That this House acknowledges the excellent arrangements the Government is making to welcome and support Hongkongers arriving in the UK under the British National Overseas (BN(O)) visa scheme; recognises the significant cultural, economic and social boost Hongkongers will provide to communities across ...

12 Apr 2021 | Early day motions | Open | House of Commons | 1708 (session 2019-21)

Primary sponsor: Rosindell, Andrew

[180th anniversary of the founding of modern Hong Kong](#)

That this House notes that the 26th of January 2021 marks the 180th anniversary of the modern founding of Hong Kong; recognises the significant historical ties between the UK and Hong Kong... commends the opening of the BN(O) visa scheme on 31st January 2021; looks forward to the significant cultural, economic, and social contribution Hongkongers will bring to the UK in coming years...

20 Jan 2021 | Early day motions | Open | House of Commons | 1382 (session 2019-21)

Primary sponsor: Rosindell, Andrew

2.2

Debates

[China](#) – HL Deb 06 Jul 2023 – 831 cc201-217GC

[Hong Kong National Security Law Anniversary](#) – HC Deb 28 Jun 2023 – 735 cc133-157WH

[Chinese Police Stations in UK](#) – HC Deb 19 April 2023 – 731 cc247-257

[Overseas Chinese Police Stations in UK: Legal Status](#) – HC Deb 01 Nov 2022 – 721 cc779-789

[Hong Kong Anniversaries](#) – HC Deb 29 Jun 2022 – 717 cc95-115WH

[Human Rights in Hong Kong](#) – HC Deb 09 Jun 2021 – 696 cc395-419WH

[The UK's offer of visa and settlement routes for residents of Hong Kong.](#) – HC Deb 28 Apr 2021 – 1123 2019-21

2.3

Statements

[Hong Kong Six-monthly Report](#)

12 Sep 2024 | Written statements | House of Commons | HCWS94

[Hong Kong British National Overseas \[BN\(O\)\] Welcome Programme Year 4 Funding Announcement](#)

11 Mar 2024 | Written statements | House of Commons | HCWS331

[Children and Young People's Resettlement Fund](#)

26 Feb 2024 | Written statements | House of Commons | HCWS292

[Hong Kong Update](#)

13 Jul 2023 | Ministerial statements | House of Commons | 736 cc534-542

[Update on Chinese ‘Overseas Police Service Stations’](#)

06 Jun 2023 | Written statements | House of Commons | HCWS822

[Chinese Consulate: Attack on Hong Kong Protesters](#)

18 Oct 2022 | Ministerial statements | House of Lords | 824 cc1072-6

[Hong Kong British National \(Overseas\) immigration route](#)

24 Feb 2022 | Written statements | House of Commons | HCWS635

[Launch of the Hong Kong British National \(Overseas\) route](#)

01 Feb 2021 | Written statements | House of Commons | HCWS751

2.4

Parliamentary questions

[Pensions: Hong Kong](#)

Asked by: McDougall, Blair

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take steps to support people from Hong Kong with British National (Overseas) visas access pensions managed in Hong Kong.

Answering member: Seema Malhotra | **Department:** Home Office

This Government is deeply committed to supporting members of the Hong Kong community who have relocated to the UK.

We are aware that individuals who have chosen to take up the British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) visa route are having difficulties in drawing down early their pensions held in the Hong Kong Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF).

Whilst documentary requirements for withdrawing funds early are a matter for the Hong Kong authorities, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office has raised this issue directly with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and the Hong Kong MPF Schemes Authority. They have

urged them to facilitate early draw down of funds as is the case for other Hong Kong residents who move overseas permanently and have made clear that any discrimination against BN(O)s is unacceptable.

02 Sep 2024 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 2169

Date tabled: 29 Jul 2024 | Date for answer: 02 Sep 2024 | Date answered: 02 Sep 2024

Overseas Students: China and Hong Kong

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Amnesty International report published on 13 May "On my campus, I am afraid": China's Targeting of Overseas Students Stifles Rights; and what action they are taking with allies to protect Chinese and Hong Kong students studying abroad who are subject to intimidation and surveillance from Chinese agents.

Answering member: Baroness Barran | **Department:** Department for Education

The government's International Education Strategy and its recent update make clear that the internationalisation of the higher education (HE) sector cannot come at any cost. Universities must ensure they have appropriate processes in place to manage risk.

The department recognises concerns about overseas interference in the HE sector and regularly assess the risks facing staff and students.

The Integrated Review Refresh, which this government published in March 2023, sets out in clear terms the UK's policy towards engagement with China and Chinese entities.

Any attempt by any foreign power to intimidate, harass or harm individuals or communities in the UK, or on campuses abroad, will not be tolerated. This is an insidious threat to democracy and fundamental human rights.

The department passed the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 to further protect the UK's campuses from interference and other threats to lawful freedom of speech. The Act strengthens existing freedom of speech duties placed upon HE providers in England and creates new routes of redress if these duties are breached.

The department has made the Commencement Regulations to ensure the main provisions of the Act are in place for 1 August 2024.

Where providers are operating campuses abroad, they must take, and should already be taking, reasonably practicable steps to secure freedom of speech within the law on those campuses.

HE providers are independent autonomous organisations and therefore responsible for ensuring they have adequate governance and risk management procedures in place when accepting donations. The department expects the HE sector to be alert to risks when collaborating with any international partners.

24 May 2024 | Written questions | Answered | House of Lords | HL4674

Date tabled: 15 May 2024 | Date for answer: 30 May 2024 | Date answered: 24 May 2024

Dual Nationality: Hong Kong

Asked by: Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of dual allegiance among British citizens who are current or former Hong Kong government officials who hold dual citizenship under the British Nationality (Hong Kong) Act 1990; and the implications of this for (1) transnational crime, and (2) intimidation of Hong Kong democrats and their families who have fled Hong Kong.

Answering member: Lord Sharpe of Epsom | **Department:** Home Office

We do not comment on the detail of security or intelligence matters, however we continually assess potential threats to the UK public, including transnational crime and threats to individuals' rights, freedoms, and safety. Any attempt by any foreign power, or any individuals acting on their behalf, to intimidate, harass or harm individuals or communities in the UK will not be tolerated.

Where we identify individuals at heightened risk, we are front footed in deploying protective the full range of tools available to protect them.

The National Security Act 2023 brings together vital new measures to protect our national security and ensure our law enforcement and intelligence agencies have everything they need to respond to the full range of modern-day state threats including those that may emanate from Hong Kong and China.

More broadly, Home Office officials work closely with the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and DLUHC, as well as other government departments, to ensure that the UK is a safe and welcoming place for both those who hold BN(O) status and other Hongkongers.

23 May 2024 | Written questions | Answered | House of Lords | HL4672

Date tabled: 15 May 2024 | Date for answer: 30 May 2024 | Date answered: 23 May 2024

[Hong Kong Security Legislation](#)

There is no doubt that article 23 will have a chilling effect on freedom and human rights in Hong Kong. It is designed to further stifle all criticism of the Chinese regime and its policies, both inside and outside Hong Kong. Given the number of UK dual nationals in Hong Kong, what plans do the Government have to protect UK citizens from political persecution by China, both here and in Hong Kong? Will the Minister look again at extending the BNO passport scheme to children born before 1997?

20 Mar 2024 | Proceeding contributions | House of Commons | 747 c947

Member: Sarah Champion (Rotherham) (Lab)

[Asylum: Hong Kong](#)

Asked by: Coyle, Neil

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he plans to allow Hong Kongers who are being processed as asylum seekers to apply for BNO visas at the same time.

Answering member: Tom Pursglove | **Department:** Home Office

Applicants to the British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) route must have no serious criminal convictions, have not otherwise engaged in behaviour which the UK Government deems not conducive to the public good, or be subject to other general grounds for refusal set out in the Immigration Rules. However, we recognise that every case has its individual circumstances therefore caseworkers have flexibility to ensure that those who have custodial sentences for crimes which are not recognised as such in the UK are not automatically refused on the BN(O) route.

In most cases, a person with a pending asylum claim can make an application to the BN(O) route. Recent changes ensure that a person who has been placed on immigration bail due to a pending asylum claim will not have their application to the BN(O) route refused solely for that reason. To make a successful application, applicants will need to meet all the other requirements of the route.

17 Jan 2024 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 8999

Date tabled: 10 Jan 2024 | Date for answer: 17 Jan 2024 | Date answered: 17 Jan 2024

[Hong Kong Nationals Living Overseas: Arrest Warrants](#)

Asked by: Michael Fabricant (Lichfield) (Con)

What discussions has my right hon. Friend had with the Home Secretary or others in the Home Office regarding the availability, if that is the word, of Chinese police stations operating here in the United Kingdom?

Answered by: Anne-Marie Trevelyan | **Department:** Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Earlier in July, the Foreign Secretary set out that any attempt by any foreign power to intimidate, harass or harm individuals or communities in the UK will not be tolerated. We have made it clear to the Chinese authorities that the existence of any undeclared

sites—sometimes known as secret police stations—in the UK is unacceptable. Their operation must cease. The Chinese authorities have confirmed that they have been closed.

18 Jul 2023 | Oral questions - Supplementary | Answered | House of Commons | 736 c754

Date answered: 18 Jul 2023

[Hong Kong: Bounties for Exiled Pro-democracy Activists](#)

Asked by: Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws (Lab)

My Lords, as your Lordships know, along with the noble Lord, Lord Alton, I have been sanctioned by the Chinese, and it is not just me but my whole family. The long arm of China is something we have to be very conscious of. It is now described by lawyers internationally as transnational suppression. Many nations are now doing this: their reach goes beyond their own borders when they oppress their citizens. We have seen it with Russia and Iran and we are seeing it with China. What concerns young Hong Kongers who live in this country is that they might not be able to travel. They are fearful that, in transit, they will be arrested by less hospitable, less human rights-concerned nations and transported back to either Hong Kong or China to be prosecuted.

The threat to the safety of those who have had these bounties placed on their heads is very serious and real. We have to remember that a police station was set up in Glasgow where arrests could be made and intimidation applied to people who have settled in this country because of their fears. I ask the

Minister, who I know is very sensitive to all this, what the Government are doing in their conversations with China and with the leaders in Hong Kong. Why are more of them not put on targeted Magnitsky sanctions lists? I want to hear what the Government do when they meet Chinese officials.

Answered by: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon (Con)

My Lords, I know these things directly from our conversations and I am grateful to the noble Baroness for her valuable insights. Equally, I know the great challenges imposed on many colleagues, both in this House and in the other place. Indeed, there are members of His Majesty's Government who are now Ministers and are subject to the sanctions she listed. On the issue of future Magnitsky sanctions, I am proud of our record across the piece. We continue to look at all our levers to ensure that those who commit egregious abuses of human rights are held to account.

On the specific transnational issues, my right honourable friend the Security Minister, Tom Tugendhat, who has himself experienced the impact of sanctions, has been directing the Defending Democracy Taskforce to review our UK approach to transnational repression, specifically with China and Hong Kong. Let me be very clear: there are three major things we ask consistently. We call on Beijing to remove the national security law; that has to happen. We consider China to be in an ongoing state of non-compliance with the Sino-British joint declaration, which is why we suspended our extradition agreement. We continue to work with other partners, including agencies such as Interpol, to ensure that there are no abuses of these international agencies as well.

06 Jul 2023 | Oral questions - Supplementary | Answered | House of Lords | 831 cc1312-3

Date answered: 06 Jul 2023

[British National \(Overseas\): Hong Kong](#)

Asked by: Owen, Sarah

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether training is being provided to police officers to help ensure they have appropriate knowledge and skills to support the (a) protection and (b) safety of Hong Kongers living in the UK.

Answering member: Chris Philp | **Department:** Home Office

As you would expect, Home Office officials work closely with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, as well as other government departments, to

ensure that the UK is a safe and welcoming place for both those who hold British National (Overseas) status and other Hongkongers.

The College of Policing sets and maintains training standards for policing. The Government is not aware of any training for police officers specifically in relation to Hongkongers in the UK. However, the Code of Ethics, published by the College in 2014, includes equality and diversity among the standards of professional behaviour in the police.

The College's foundation training for all those entering the service also covers supporting diverse communities. Training in each police force is the responsibility of individual chief officers, according to policing needs and priorities, which may include specific community needs.

19 Jun 2023 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 189740

Date tabled: 14 Jun 2023 | Date for answer: 19 Jun 2023 | Date answered: 19 Jun 2023

British National (Overseas): Hong Kong

Asked by: Dixon, Samantha

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of refusals by the Hong Kong Police Force to provide criminal records of British National (overseas) Visa holders on the ability of those people to gain employment in the UK.

Answering member: Felicity Buchan | **Department:** Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

In April 2021, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) launched a new UK-wide Welcome Programme to support BN(O) status holders. In November 2022, DLUHC published a letter to BN(O)s and prospective employers on Certificates of No Criminal Conviction (CNCC) from the Hong Kong Police. The letter outlines a revised guidance on how to obtain a CNCC. Where a CNCC cannot be obtained, sectoral examples on alternative methods are provided. The letter is available in English and Cantonese and is available on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) landing page. We are working closely with FCDO officials to keep the guidance under review and monitor the impact to help BN(O)s overcome the barriers they face when seeking employment.

15 May 2023 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 183640

Date tabled: 02 May 2023 | Date for answer: 09 May 2023 | Date answered: 15 May 2023

Overseas Students: Hong Kong

Asked by: Benn, Hilary

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she plans to take steps with Cabinet colleagues to review the charging of overseas student fees to British National (Overseas) visa holders from Hong Kong who have moved to the UK.

Answering member: Robert Halfon | **Department:** Department for Education

To qualify for home fee status in the UK, a person must have settled status or a recognised connection to the UK. This includes people who are covered by the EU Withdrawal Agreement, have long residence in this country, or who have been granted international protection by the Home Office. There are also requirements associated with ordinary residence in the UK.

Subject to meeting the normal eligibility requirements, British Nationals (Overseas) status holders will be able to qualify for home fee status once they have acquired settled status in the UK. This is usually acquired after five years.

There are no plans to review British Nationals (Overseas) status holder's access to home fee status.

19 Dec 2022 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 102786

Date tabled: 05 Dec 2022 | Date for answer: 07 Dec 2022 | Date answered: 19 Dec 2022

National Security: Hong Kong

Asked by: Kinnock, Stephen

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to prevent money administered through the British National (Overseas) support packages funding organisations operating in the UK supporting the Hong Kong National Security Law.

Answering member: Luke Hall | **Department:** Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

My department is fully aware of the potential sensitivities with regards to Hong Kong, and will undertake robust due diligence procedures before awarding funding to any organisation through the Hong Kong UK Welcome Programme. This includes assessing the appropriateness and suitability of potential grant recipients, and their ability to deliver the support required.

15 Jul 2021 | Written questions | Answered | House of Commons | 31424

Date tabled: 12 Jul 2021 | Date for answer: 15 Jul 2021 | Date answered: 15 Jul 2021

2.5

Committee material

[The UK's offer of visa and settlement routes for residents of Hong Kong: Government response to the Committee's second report of session 2021-22. Home Affairs Committee second special report.](#)

08 Sep 2021 | Parliamentary committees - House of Commons papers - Select Committee reports (Government responses) | House of Commons | HC 682 2021-22

[The UK's offer of visa and settlement routes for residents of Hong Kong.](#)

02 Jul 2021 | Parliamentary committees - House of Commons papers - Select Committee written evidence | House of Commons | HC 191 2021-22

Notes: Part of the written evidence published.

[The UK's offer of visa and settlement routes for residents of Hong Kong. Home Affairs Committee second report.](#)

02 Jul 2021 | Parliamentary committees - Select Committee reports - House of Commons papers | House of Commons | HC 191 2021-22 [show related items](#)

[The UK's offer of visa and settlement routes for residents of Hong Kong.](#)

28 Apr 2021 | Parliamentary committees - House of Commons papers - Select Committee oral evidence - Select Committee written evidence | House of Commons | HC 1123 2019-21

Notes: Part of the oral evidence and part of the written evidence published. Witnesses were anonymous.

[Correspondence from the Home Secretary relating to the Hong Kong British National \(Overseas\) route](#)

03 Feb 2021 | Parliamentary committees - Unprinted papers - Select Committee written evidence | House of Commons

3 Media

3.1 Press releases

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3.2 Articles and blogs

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