

International Protection

Access to legal aid



If you are applying for international protection, you need to know that the law changed on the 12th of June 2026 and there are new rules in place.

It is important to know that if you are making an application for international protection:

1. You are entitled to legal counselling;
2. You are also entitled to apply for legal aid.



Both are provided by the Legal Aid Board.

What is Legal Counselling?

Legal counselling provides you with general information and guidance on the examination procedures for your application.

It also gives you guidance on your rights and obligations during the examination procedure, and guidance on completing a written application for international protection.

Legal counselling is not legal advice.



What if I want legal advice?

‘Legal Aid’ includes Legal Advice and Legal Representation.
To receive legal advice, you can make an application for legal aid.

You can apply for legal advice to help you during the application process, and to help you prepare for the interview process.

Legal aid also includes legal representation if you receive a negative decision on your application for international protection and wish to appeal this decision.

How do I apply for legal aid?

You can make an application for legal aid at all stages of the international protection application process.

To apply for legal aid, you can either:

1. Make an application for legal aid at the Legal Aid Board Citywest Legal Counselling Service, based in Citywest Reception Centre where you make your application for international protection; or
2. Contact any of the specialist Legal Aid Board International Protection Law Centres.

To find out the contact details for specialist Legal Aid Board International Protection Law Centres, go to the Legal Aid Board website.

