Guidance notes for H-DASH

(Version 1.1 March 2025)

Honour Based Abuse can take many forms, including child marriage, virginity testing, enforced abortion, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, male genital mutilation as well as physical, sexual and economic abuse, emotional abuse and coercive control, even resulting in murder and can have some degree of approval and/or collusion from family and/or community members.

There is no current statutory definition of Honour Based Abuse however, forced marriage became a criminal offence in 2014. Forced marriage can involve physical, emotional, economic and sexual abuse including being held unlawfully captive and can include coercive and controlling behaviour [Forced marriage - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage#:~:text=The%20Anti%2Dsocial%20Behaviour%2C%20Crime,Northern%20Ireland%20under%20separate%20legislation).).

On 27th February 2023, it also states that it is an offence to carry out any conduct for the purpose of causing a child to enter a marriage before the child’s eighteenth birthday (whether the conduct amounts to violence, threats, any other form of coercion or deception) [Legal age of marriage in England and Wales rises to 18 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/legal-age-of-marriage-in-england-and-wales-rises-to-18).

**Specialist support services:**

**Karma Nirvana 0800 5999 247 (for further information, visit** [**www.karmanirvana.org.uk**](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.karmanirvana.org.uk%2F&data=05%7C02%7CLara.Iggulden%40lincolnshire.gov.uk%7Ca36b5043fb99408481a408dc75875df5%7Cb4e05b92f8ce46b59b2499ba5c11e5e9%7C0%7C0%7C638514471495123609%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=InG1Uub%2BOYJCHMKS4fIDFz8Tih%2FPw45tY0T3%2BAkJ%2BB0%3D&reserved=0)

**Halo Project 01642683045** [**Honour Based Violence in the UK (haloproject.org.uk)**](https://www.haloproject.org.uk/honour-based-violence-W21page-3)

**Solace Womens Aid specialist traveller support project 08088025565** [**The Irish Traveller Project - Solace Womens Aid**](https://www.solacewomensaid.org/our-services/irish-traveller-project/)

**Jewish Women’s Aid 08088010500** [**Jewish Women's Aid (jwa.org.uk)**](https://www.jwa.org.uk/)

**PLEASE FOLLOW THE ONE CHANCE RULE FOR DISCLOSURE – THIS COULD BE THE ONLY TIME SOMEONE DISCLOSES ABUSE OR THAT A PROFESSIONAL CAN SPEAK TO THAT PERSON FREELY. USE PROFESSIONAL CURIOSITY TO BUILD A CLEAR PICTURE OF RISK.**

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THESE QUESTONS SHOULD BE ASKED WITH SENSITIVITY AND LIKELY WILL BRING OUT AN EMOTIVE RESPONSE.**

**Risk Factor Definitions**

**Q1. Are you missing lessons/work and is your attendance affected?**

If under 18yrs this is classed as child abuse and needs to be referred to Child Safeguarding [insert details].

If over 18yrs and the person is missing lessons or work, are you aware of the risks involved and are there steps in place to support.

**Q2. Is there evidence of self-harm for the victim?**

Look for patterns of previous self-harm.

HBA is recognised by the government as a form of domestic violence and abuse.

**Q3. Are you being held/kept at home? Is your behaviour/activity being policed?**

Look for evidence of false imprisonment, controlling and coercive behaviour where further isolation could increase the risk. If experiencing coercive control find out what is it they are restricted from doing, and what the motivations are around this.

Explore whether anyone else might be at risk.

If the victim/ survivor is in a relationship which is not approved of, is the partner also at risk?

Have other members of the family experienced similar abuse and what was the extent of this?

**Q4. Are you frightened of being forced into a marriage? Have you been in a forced marriage?**

Consideration if the wider family members made threats to kill are in immediate danger of being killed, if they don’t go through with the marriage. Or consider suicide as the only way out the situation.

If there is a forced marriage risk are their siblings who may also be at risk?

**Q5. Are you frightened of being taken abroad? Or threats made to take you abroad?**

Do they have access to their own passport and any children’s passports?

Is there concern regarding any upcoming holidays, visits or special ceremonies being arranged abroad.

Consider airport security measures, for example; spoon in underwear to trigger metal airport detectors, which will then alert the authorities and instigate the opportunity for them to be spoken to on their own and disclose they are being taken out of the country against their will.

**Q6. If the victim is aged between 16-18, ask if they are at risk of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)?**

**OR**

**If they are an adult, have they had FGM performed/been cut?**

**OR**

**Are they a male and at risk of Male Genital Mutilation (MGM) or had MGM performed?**

If under 18yrs this is classed as child abuse and needs to be referred to Child Safeguarding [insert details].

Gather any further information where the practice would take place or has taken place and report to the police.

If the person is pregnant refer to midwifery if not already aware and consider the risk of FGM being repeated once baby born and risk of FGM to baby.

Consider the fact that MGM is considered culturally acceptable, however, is deemed to be genital mutilation as can be performed by untrained people with no or little medical background, which can lead to serious complications and even death.

[Genital Mutilation Offences | Legal Guide by Stuart Miller Solicitors](https://www.stuartmillersolicitors.co.uk/genital-mutilation-offences-guide-male-female/)

**Q7. Are you in a relationship that is not approved of by the family/community?**

Is there fear that they will be killed or ostracised. Explore whether there have been any triggers to abuse escalating, or being likely to escalate e.g. refusing a marriage, breaking ‘rules’, being seen with a partner, becoming pregnant outside of marriage etc. Explore whether there are multiple perpetrators and if so, who they are and where they are (including if some are abroad). Consider need as well as risk e.g., has the abuse or risk of abuse created health or housing issues which require support?Pressures from family or community not to disclose.

**Q8. Have you ever been accused of witchcraft, or spirit possession and any discussions around exorcism on yourself?**

Have they ever been tied down, ceremonies carried out to get rid of evil spirits, have weapons been used, who carried out these procedures? More details are needed as this type of abuse can include wider community members including church members and can be prevalent in child abuse cases which can be linked to domestic abuse disclosures.

[Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief – National FGM Centre](https://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/calfb/)

**Q9. Are there threats your child(ren) will be taken away/taken abroad?**

Do children have a passport? Who has access to the passport? Are there any measures in place with education providers, for example; who has access to pick them up from school.

**Q10. Are you reliant on ( ) to live? Do you have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)?**

A person will have no recourse to public funds when they are ‘subject to immigration control’. A person who is subject to immigration control cannot claim public funds [benefits and housing assistance] unless an exception applies. [Who has no recourse to public funds (NRPF) | NRPF Network](https://www.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/information-and-resources/rights-and-entitlements/immigration-status-and-entitlements/who-has-no-recourse-to-public-funds)

Are you aware of the type of visa they have?

Consider barriers to the victim/ survivor seeking support e.g. language barriers, insecure immigration.

Other risks to consider:

* How the victim/ survivor views and perceives the abuse, and what they would like to happen.
* The different forms of abuse occurring (if more than one).
* Previous history of harmful practices (including towards other family members).
* Whether the victim/ survivor may be seen to have transgressed what is considered ‘accepted behaviour’
* Explore intersecting risks, for example, consider additional factors which may escalate risk such as the victim/ survivor’s sexuality or gender identity or the weaponization of factors such as their immigration status or faith.