



# Forced Marriages

Please note, this is a sensitive topic that impacts many people. If you find that this has caused you any upset or distress, please stop and seek appropriate support or feel free to reach out to the Safeguarding team at [safeguarding@qa.com](mailto:safeguarding@qa.com)



# Forced Marriages

## What is a forced marriage?

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not or cannot consent to the marriage, and pressure or abuse is used to force them into marriage. Forced marriage is illegal in the UK. It is a form of domestic abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

For a marriage to be consensual, it must be entered into freely by both people getting married. You should feel you have a choice. Legally, people with certain learning disabilities or severe mental health conditions are not able to consent to marriage, even if they feel the marriage is what they want.

## How to recognise forced marriages

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities or reduced capacity, cannot) consent to the marriage as they are pressurised, or abuse is used, to force them to do so. It is recognised in the UK as a form of domestic or child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will may be:

- Physical: for example, threats, physical violence, or sexual violence
- Emotional and psychological: for example, making someone feel like they are bringing 'shame' on their family

Financial abuse, for example taking someone's wages, may also be a factor.

## Who to contact and how can they help?

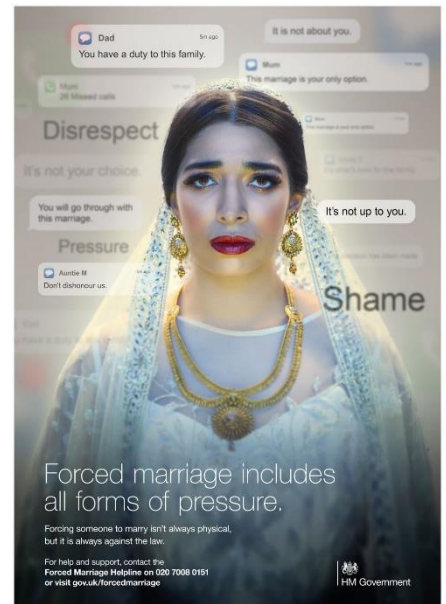
The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) is a joint Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and Home Office unit which leads on the government's forced marriage policy, outreach, and casework. It operates both inside the UK (where support is provided to any individual) and overseas (where consular assistance is provided to British nationals, including dual nationals).

The FMU operates a public helpline to provide advice and support to:

- Victims and potential victims of forced marriage.
- Professionals dealing with cases.

The FMU public helpline can help with:

- Safety advice.
- Providing assistance when an unwanted spouse is due to move to the UK ('reluctant sponsor' cases) where possible, assistance in repatriation of victims held against their will overseas.



The FMU undertakes an extensive training and awareness programme targeting both professionals and potential victims and carries out a range of work to raise awareness. (Gov.uk)

## Activity – Video



Please watch the above video. This will provide you with further awareness and context to this learning. Questions related to this can be found below. If watching this video has caused you any upset or distress, please stop and seek appropriate support or feel free to reach out to the Safeguarding team at [safeguarding@qa.com](mailto:safeguarding@qa.com)

### Questions:

1. How did others react when Sanaz took an overdose?
2. When did forced marriage become an offence?
3. What is a forced marriage?

### How to contact the FMU?

- Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7008 0151
- Email, including for outreach work: [fmufcdo.gov.uk](mailto:fmufcdo.gov.uk)
- Facebook: [Forced Marriage page](#) Twitter: [@FMUnit](#)
- Media enquiries: The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office +44 (0) 20 7008 3100
- Home Office +44 (0) 300 123 3535