Musa's Journey

Musa came to the UK from Somalia a year ago and has recently been given refugee status. At the start of Musa’s journey, he has no family here, but is hoping that his wife and three children will be able to join him. He has some health problems stemming back to injuries received at home and is fairly mistrustful of the authorities. He has a little spoken English. He ran a successful shop in Somalia and had some formal education. He wants to set up his own business, but feels that it would be best to get a retail or admin job first so he can get to know how business works in the UK – and he wants to do this quickly.

The journey sketched out below touches on only some of the complexities involved for many people. It hints at the ‘stop-start’ pattern that for many is the route to learning, skills and sustainable employment or self employment. It is meant to illustrate some of the challenges for people – in their personal and family lives, and in accessing the kind of provision and other support that is needed to help them reach their goals.

Access Routes & initial assessment
1 month

Musa talks to one of the volunteers at the Somali Community Centre (SCC). He explains what he wants to do, and says he’s not sure where to go – he’s worried about talking to people at the Jobcentre because he can’t speak enough English. The Volunteer says he’ll go with him.

Further assessment & various skills delivery
9 months

At the Jobcentre, an Advisor thinks that Musa should go onto an ESOL Employability Skills Programme at Kingsland Training.

Musas's English is improving, but the course doesn’t help him to learn about retail or admin and he really wants a job.

After 2 months, Musa really wants to restart his training. The Employability Programme is full, so he is referred by Kingsland Training to the local college. He has to wait until September to start. His ESOL gets assessed again and he’s put on an Entry 2 programme this time.

Entry level job, no further training
15 months

Musa’s friend in the Somali Community Centre hears about another organisation called Ready Training that does special ESOL with admin courses. Musa tries it, but his English isn’t good enough.

Musa drops out and decides that he just wants to get any job now – to help his family more.

Musa finally gets a bigger flat for his family, but it’s farther away from the college and his family has problems settling in. His wife is feeling very isolated and depressed – she doesn’t like Musa being away from the house at college. He finds it difficult to attend regularly and he wants his wife to get help with her English.

After another 3 months, Musa gets a job in a local shop that sells Somali goods. He’d really like to get a better job, but he doesn’t know how he’s going to do it. After a year, it looks as if the shop will close.

3 weeks after he has started, Musa’s wife and children arrive. He begins to have problems with getting a bigger place to live, and finding schools for the children. He drops out of the Employability Programme. He finds it really difficult to get help with these problems.