

BB Academy Handbook

Who are Breaking Barriers?

Breaking Barriers was founded in 2015 after recognising the lack of effective and comprehensive employment support for refugees in the UK.

Our mission: To empower refugees to acquire the knowledge, confidence and experience they need to secure stable and fulfilling employment.

The challenge: Refugees flee war, violence, and persecution, but once in the UK, face further challenges to start their new life. There is no UK national strategy to support refugees with their integration or steps into employment.

We know refugees can and do make valuable contributions to society, and that securing employment is one of the most important factors in helping them integrate into their new home.

Our support: We offer each of our refugee clients bespoke, intensive and flexible support to assist their individual employment journeys and educational needs.

Our Partners: We are passionate about the role businesses can play in supporting refugees into meaningful employment. Our corporate partners boost and complement our employment programme by offering funding, expertise and opportunities for our clients in the form of workshops, mentoring, paid work placements and permanent job opportunities, just like the BB Academy.

Barriers faced:

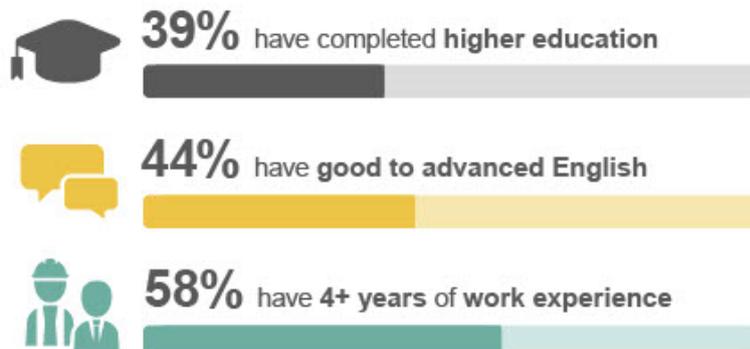
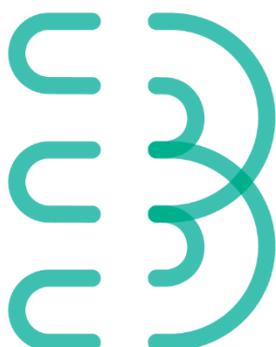
The UK is home to approximately 374,000 people from a refugee background. Even before the Covid-19 pandemic, those of a refugee background had an unemployment rate that is four times higher than the national average due to the barriers faced, these include:



- Employment gaps on CVs due to lengthy asylum process
- Lack of UK work experience or education
- Lack of English language skills
- Limited understanding of the UK job market and no professional networks
- Public misconceptions and discrimination

Our refugee clients:

Breaking Barriers' refugee clients come from 50+ different countries, are aged between 18–68 and have a diverse range of backgrounds, skills and aspirations.



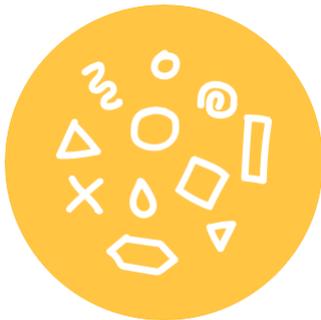
What is the BB Academy?

BB Academy is our structured programme designed to provide our refugee clients with work experience that will help them to become job-ready in their chosen field. We work collaboratively with businesses to develop six-month, part-time or full-time paid placements for clients who would benefit from experience in a UK workplace to move them closer to securing a permanent role. The programme can also be delivered as a recruitment pathway hiring from our refugee talent pool.

The benefits of BB Academy placements for your business:

We can provide wrap-around support for our refugee clients, the hiring businesses and line managers. We support throughout the recruitment, shortlisting and onboarding with regular check-ins for 6 months to ensure a positive and valuable experience for all.

Since we started the Academy programme in 2016, our corporate partners have gained enormous value and benefits from employing refugees in their business. Importantly they have accessed and unlocked refugee talent and potential.



DIVERSITY

Improved diversity and inclusion



UNITY

Improved team morale and employee engagement



DEVELOPMENT

Personal and professional development of employees

Academy Partners

You are part of a growing community of corporate partners who are working with Breaking Barriers to employ refugees in their organisation. So far we have successfully placed over 50 refugee clients on our BB Academy programme, which now includes both office-based and virtual onboarding and delivery. With your help Breaking Barriers are able to provide intensive support, training and mentoring to help refugees find jobs that are meaningful and fulfilling.

ALLEN & OVERY



Grant Thornton

GUCCI



HERBERT
SMITH
FREEHILLS



Ipsos MORI

MAYER | BROWN



WesternUnion WU

What our partners and clients have said...

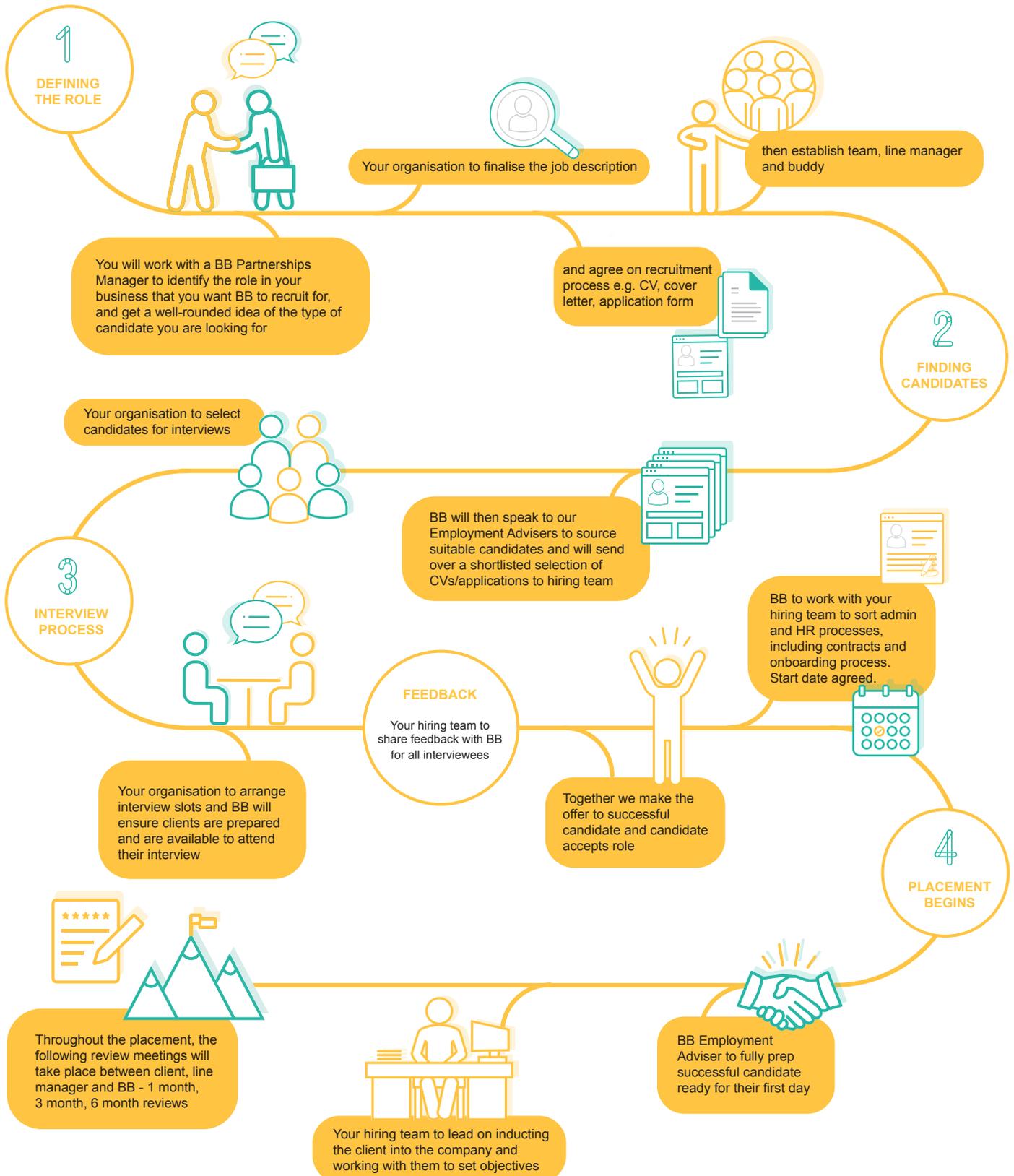
“My placement taught me many things. British working culture is very fast-paced. What people take for granted – making calls, answering emails and talking to clients – I had to re-learn. It was a genuine culture shock. Working again was challenging yet my colleagues’ support and generosity enabled me to adapt. My life is richer now as I have transferable skills in project management, administration and assertiveness. Though I recognise there are many more rivers to cross, I am truly grateful, more confident and motivated to find my next opportunity.”

Prudence | BB Academy Client

“We hosted our first ever refugee work placement helping someone who hadn’t worked in over ten years to adapt to a fast-paced business environment and stand a greater chance of finding meaningful employment. We will offer further placements and heartily encourage other companies to do the same. Working with Breaking Barriers has allowed our people to develop their coaching skills to support others, and it has been hugely rewarding to see people leaving us with increased confidence and skills ready for the next stage of their employment journey.”

Karen Higgins | Head of Sustainability, Grant Thornton UK LLP

How your Academy Placement will work



BB will regularly be in touch with the client and line manager throughout the placement, to ensure a successful placement. We recommend your organisation maintains regular communication with BB, sharing feedback and key learnings.





We are really looking forward to working with you and our team will be happy to support you throughout the Academy process.

 www.breaking-barriers.co.uk

 [@bb_uk1](https://twitter.com/bb_uk1)

 [@breakingbarriersuk](https://www.instagram.com/breakingbarriersuk)

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