

# WYCOMBE REFUGEE PARTNERSHIP – WRITTEN EVIDENCE (EUC0114)

## The economics of Universal Credit

1. Wycombe Refugee Partnership is a CIO which is currently resettling its 20<sup>th</sup> refugee family in High Wycombe. One of the things we do is to help refugees apply for Universal Credit when they first arrive. Able, well-educated, native-speaker volunteers have not understood some of the questions being put online to claimants, many of whom (whether refugees or local people) are neither well-educated nor native speakers.

2. We are currently helping a family of seven. In round numbers, the government says that it costs £1500pcm to rent a 4-bedroom house in High Wycombe – and a 4-bed house is necessary for a family of seven, as anything smaller would be deemed overcrowding. The government estimates that it costs £1700 pcm excluding rent to support a family of seven. They add the £1500 and £1700 together, apply the benefits cap and then tell the family that they have to cope on £1666pcm **total**. You don't have to be an economist to see the problem!

I do hope your enquiry can make significant improvement to this very flawed system.

*4 February 2020*