



3.1 Why change attitudes?

The UK does not provide a warm welcome to refugees. Years of misrepresentation in the media and elsewhere has resulted in people seeing refugees and asylum seekers as liars and scroungers.

One opinion poll found 78% of people think refugees come here just for the benefits.

Negative attitudes influence Government policy and sometimes lead to negative behavior towards asylum seekers and refugees. We need to challenge hostile views so that we can build public support for humane protection policies and become a welcoming community for those fleeing war, torture and oppression.

STAR members can promote greater understanding of refugees and asylum seekers among other students and in the local community. You can do this in lots of ways including publicity stunts like sleeping out in mock refugee shelters, plus hosting debates, film screenings, theatre performances and speaker events.

STAR knows that it only takes good information and meeting a refugee face to face to change a negative attitude to a friendly and helpful one. And universities are unique places to reach young people with the facts about refugees and increase their awareness of the difficulties of seeking protection in the UK.