

Modern Slavery Myths

What is the reality?

Myth	Reality
The person did not take opportunities to escape so is not being coerced.	Remaining in an exploitative situation could indicate a willingness to remain there and/or an absence of coercion. But there are many reasons why someone may choose not to escape an exploitative situation, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fear of reprisal against the person or family members • vulnerability • Stockholm syndrome (psychological dependency on the person exploiting them) or grooming • lack of knowledge of their environment • belief that the trafficker or exploiter will fulfil their promise • fear of witchcraft • violence or threats of violence • not knowing how and where to seek help
UK nationals cannot be victims of modern slavery.	UK nationals can and have been victims of modern slavery.
Crossing a border is required in order to be trafficked.	Trafficking does not have to occur across borders; it can occur within a country.
Modern slavery is a necessary evil in some cultures and so must be accepted.	Abusive people may use ‘culture’ as a justification for modern slavery or trafficking other human beings. Modern slavery is a crime in the UK and child modern slavery is child abuse, not a ‘cultural’ issue.
It cannot be modern slavery when organiser and victim are related, married, living together or lovers.	Close relationships are often used to exploit and control others. This is especially relevant in child modern slavery. There have been numerous incidents where ‘boyfriends’ have groomed women and children into sexual exploitation or family members have colluded (intentionally or unintentionally) in the exploitation.
A person is not a victim of modern slavery when they say they have a better life than previously.	Some people are willing to tolerate their situation because they may perceive it as a ‘stepping stone’ to a better future and may compare it favourably to experiences at home. This doesn’t mean they are not a victim of modern slavery.
A person is not a victim of modern slavery when they reject an offer of help.	It is not uncommon for victims to reject offers of help at first. This is not unique to victims of modern slavery.