

DRAFT RESPONSE
TO THE
CONSULTATION PAPER ON ENTITLEMENT CARDS AND IDENTITY FRAUD

The Muslim Council of Britain, having consulted with its affiliates wishes to make the following response to the consultation process on Entitlement Cards and Identity Fraud.

Guided by its mission to work for the common good of the society, The Muslim Council of Britain is not in principle opposed to the scheme. In relative terms, the Muslim Council of Britain regards the universal option to be more useful than one, which is limited by region or purpose.

We should like to emphasise though that as the most marginalised and socially excluded group in the present day United Kingdom, Muslims are naturally apprehensive that the Entitlement Card and Identity Fraud requirement may be misused as a further instrument of harassment and discrimination against them. It certainly has the potential for misuse and we hope that, if and when, the scheme is put into operation, it will have proper safeguards attached to it.

We should also like to point out that Islam is not just a faith but also a complete way of life. The Muslims are required to live, dress and eat in accordance with the tenets of the Quran and the Haddith. These tenets have differing interpretations and their observance is of varying standards within Muslims. However the important point is that our faith has a significant impact on our identity and appearance. The Muslims would wish to be fully reassured that no requirement in the Scheme would be imposed or enforced in a manner that interferes with our religious belief.

As you will note our response at this stage is somewhat brief. That is because the paper upon which you seek views is, in our opinion, far from clear in a number of areas and as this is the first stage in what we believe will be a long process of consultation, we understand the reasons for gaps in thinking.

We hope our response has been helpful.

Yours faithfully,

Iqbal AKM Sacranie OBE
Secretary General