

# Information for overseas nurses

If you're looking for information about becoming a nurse in the UK, you've come to the right place.

This page describes what you need to know, depending on where you've trained, and signposts you to further information.

Nurses who are interested in coming to live and work in the UK need to register with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) [1]. The NMC [2] regulates the nursing and midwifery profession in the UK, setting standards which ensure high-quality patient care.

## Nurses trained outside the UK and EEA

Nurses from outside the UK can apply to be on the NMC Register [3], providing they meet its standards. The NMC [2] will compare the training in your country with that required in the UK.

Everything you need to know about joining the register to work as a nurse in the UK is available on the NMC website [4]. There's a handy checklist [5] which helps you understand if you are ready to register and a step-by-step guide [5] which takes you through the registration process.

However, registration with the NMC [2] does not automatically provide the right to work in the UK. Please visit our overseas health professionals page [6] for further information, including the health and care visa.

## Process for nurses educated outside the EEA

The only route to registration for all nurses trained outside the UK and EEA with the NMC [2] is through a two-part application process.

- **Part one** – a computer-based test. This is a multiple-choice examination which is accessible in many countries around the world for applicants to access in their home countries.
- **Part two** – a practical observed structured clinical examination which can be taken in three test centres across the UK.

Visit the NMC website [7] for further information about part one and two of the application process.

EEA nationals who have trained outside the EEA will not be eligible for automatic recognition of their qualification under the EU Directives and the interim arrangements as they have not trained within an EU member state. See further information on the NMC website. [1]

Nurses trained outside of the UK must also meet the English language standards set by the NMC [2]. This can be demonstrated:

- by successfully completing a language test such as the International English Language Testing System [8]

(IELTS) or the Occupational English Test [9] (OET).

- through evidence that their pre-registration nursing programme was taught and examined in English and that at least 50% of the programme involved clinical interaction using English

**IELTS** is a universally recognised international test of English language proficiency. It measures the language ability of people who wish to study and/or work where English is the main language of communication. Those taking the IELTS need to achieve a minimum overall level of 7, although a level 6.5 in writing will be accepted alongside a level 7 in reading, listening and speaking.

Further details about IELTS can be found on the IELTS website [8]

**The OET** is an international English language test designed specifically for the healthcare sector. It uses clinical scenarios and in the UK is an option for nurses, midwives and doctors.

It assesses the language communication skills of healthcare professionals who wish to register and practise in an English-speaking environment. Nurses taking the OET need to achieve a minimum of a level B.

Further details about the OET, including materials to help you prepare, can be found on the OET website [9].

You can find out more about registering with the NMC [2] (including the language competency requirements and relevant guidance) on the NMC website [10].

## **Nurses trained in the EEA**

Nurses who trained in the EEA must also meet the standards of the NMC [2] before they can be considered for registration. The NMC [2] will compare the training in your country with that required in the UK.

Following the recognition of qualification, and before entry to the register, all applicants are required to supply evidence that they have the necessary knowledge of English. Communication is defined as speaking, reading, listening and writing.

You can read more information about EEA registration on the NMC website. [11]

Nurses who trained in the EEA who are not EEA nationals may be required to undertake one or both parts of the application process above.

## **Code of practice for ethical overseas recruitment**

Many NHS organisations contract with agencies to help with overseas recruitment campaigns, in line with the Department of Health and Social Care code of practice [12].

The code is clear that active recruitment from developing countries is unethical. See NHS Employers' website [13] for more detail. The code of practice also includes key principles such as not requiring candidates to pay a fee up front. If you are asked to pay a fee up front for promises of NHS accommodation or work, please report the request to Action Fraud [14].

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/information-overseas-nurses>

### **Links**

[1] <http://www.nmc.org.uk/>

[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NMC>

[3] <https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/>

- [4] <https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/register-nurse-midwife/trained-outside-the-eueea/new-application/>
- [5] <https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/register-nurse-midwife/trained-outside-the-eueea/new-application/how-to-guide/check-ready/checklist-tool/>
- [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/overseas-health-professionals>
- [7] <http://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/trained-outside-the-eueea/>
- [8] <http://www.ielts.org/>
- [9] <https://www.occupationalenglishtest.org/>
- [10] <https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/trained-outside-the-eueea/>
- [11] <http://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/trained-in-the-eu-or-eea1/>
- [12] <https://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/recruit/employer-led-recruitment/international-recruitment/uk-code-of-practice-for-international-recruitment>
- [13] <https://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/recruit/employer-led-recruitment/international-recruitment/uk-code-of-practice-for-international-recruitment/list-of-developing-countries>
- [14] <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>