

# The application process

First you'll have to check your eligibility to work in England, followed by a language test. If you are eligible, you can apply for a role.

You'll be interviewed and employed directly by the NHS trust you apply to, and they will support you with your Health and Care Visa application and the move over to England.

## We are here to help

Ready to make a start? The entire application process can take anywhere between three to 12 months or longer depending on the role you've chosen.

We've created a list of everything you'll need to do to start working as a registered nurse. There's no specific order in which you need to complete each step, but we recommend the following:

1. Check you're eligible to work as a registered nurse in England by starting the [Nursing and Midwifery Council \(NMC\) application process](#) [1] and [completing their self-assessment](#) [2].
2. Complete your English Language (EL) Test and Computer-Based Test (CBT). You don't need to do this before you apply for a job, but you'll need to do it before you move.
3. Choose your application route, whether it's via NHS Jobs, the NHS's recruitment website, or an agency local to you.
4. Have your interview and receive a job offer – you'll be interviewed and directly employed by an NHS trust.
5. Apply for your Health and Care Visa.
6. Book your flights and find somewhere to stay once you've arrived in England (your trust or agency will be able to support you with this).
7. Complete your Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) – you'll need to take your first test within 12 weeks of starting your new job.



## Meeting the [NMC](#) [3] requirements

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC <sup>[3]</sup>) regulates nurses and midwives in the UK, and nursing associates in England. To become a registered nurse in the UK, you'll need to complete a NMC <sup>[3]</sup> Eligibility and Qualification application.

To get you started, here's a step-by-step guide to completing your NMC application <sup>[1]</sup>. You'll also need to check if you're eligible to practice <sup>[2]</sup> as a registered nurse in England.

If you have completed a recognised pre-registration nursing/midwifery qualification in your country of training and want to work in the UK as a Registered Nurse/Midwife, there are five routes open to you:

- adult nursing
- children's nursing
- learning disabilities nursing
- mental health nursing
- midwifery

Some key facts that are helpful to know before you start your application:

- your qualification doesn't need to be specific to the field of nursing that you are applying to, but it does need to be a recognised nursing qualification
- you should think about what experience you have and consider this field of nursing
- the Test of Competence is specific for the field of nursing you apply to. It allows you to show you have the relevant knowledge and skills for this field
- you will need to complete the NMC <sup>[3]</sup> registration eligibility application
- you can only use your pre-registration qualification to apply to one field of nursing

Changing your field of registration once registered will only be possible by undertaking additional training called a full-time 18-month conversion course. It is best to get on the right part of the nursing register at the beginning of your UK career.

## English language test

If you trained outside of the UK, you'll need to show you meet the English language standards <sup>[4]</sup> set by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC <sup>[3]</sup>) by either:

- Completing an English language test such as the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) <sup>[5]</sup> or the Occupational English Test (OET) <sup>[6]</sup>

Or

- Showing that your nursing programme was taught and examined in English <sup>[7]</sup>, and that at least 50% of the programme involved practical work using English.

If you trained outside of the European Union (EU) / European Economic Area (EEA) you'll also need to take a Test of Competence (ToC) so we can see what knowledge and practical skills you have.

This is a two-part process and includes:

- completing a Computer-Based Test (CBT), a multiple-choice exam which you can complete in your home country. You must complete your UK registration application within two years of passing your CBT. If you're unable to do this, you'll need to take your CBT again and start a new application.
- completing an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) [8]. These are held in one of the approved UK-based test centres, and you'll have up to 12 weeks from your employment start date shown on your Certificate of Sponsorship (your trust will give you a Certificate of Sponsorship once you have a job offer) to sit the first exam. You can still work as a nurse during this time. If you do not pass the test the first time, you may resit.

## How to apply for a job with an NHS trust

There are three ways you can apply for a nursing job in England:

- through an agency in your home country – you'll want to check they have a good reputation for recruiting nurses for overseas. You may want to discuss with friends or look on social media for feedback
- through an NHS-approved agency based in England [9]
- via NHS Jobs [10]

If you apply via an NHS-approved agency, they:

- Will work on behalf of an NHS trust and will provide you with support as you work through the recruitment and visa process
- Will not charge you any recruitment fee.

If you apply for a job with an NHS trust using NHS Jobs [10], you'll be able to find lots more information about where they're based, what they specialise in and how they can support you on the trust's website.

Once you've been offered a job, you'll receive a Certificate of Sponsorship from the NHS trust you'll be working for – you'll need this for your visa application.

\*The World Health Organisation (WHO) has created the WHO Workforce Support and Safeguard List to highlight which countries need to hold on to their healthcare staff. Improving health and social care is really important to us, and that includes outside of the UK. The NHS does not actively recruit health and care professionals from countries on this list [11].

## Visa application process

The Health and Care Visa [12] allows you to come to England and work for the NHS, an NHS supplier or within adult social care. The visa can last up to five years before you need to extend it, giving you plenty of time to develop your career.

You don't need to apply for your visa until you have been offered a job – your agency or NHS trust will be able to help you with your visa application.

To qualify for a Health and Care Visa [12] and come to work in the NHS as a nurse, you must:

- be a qualified nurse in your home country

- have a job offer from the NHS, an organisation providing medical care to the NHS or an organisation providing adult social care
- have a Certificate of Sponsorship from the organisation you have a job offer from (see point above)
- be paid a minimum salary of £29,000, or £23,200 if your role is on the [immigration salary list](#) <sup>[13]</sup> or [occupations paid by NHS bands](#) <sup>[14]</sup>
- have at least £1,270 in your bank account to prove you can support yourself unless your employer can support you instead – your Certificate of Sponsorship will confirm this

When applying, you'll need to provide:

- a Certificate of Sponsorship reference number. This will be provided by your NHS trust once you've been offered a job
- [proof you can read and speak English](#) <sup>[15]</sup>
- a valid passport or other document that shows your identity and nationality
- your job title and annual salary
- your job's occupation code – you can find more information [here](#) <sup>[16]</sup>
- the name of the NHS trust you'll be working for and their sponsor licence number – this will be on your Certificate of Sponsorship

If your documents are not in English, you will also need to provide certified translations.

## Developing your career

Your learning doesn't stop once you've qualified as a registered nurse. When you're working within the NHS, you'll have access to lots of development programmes and you'll be supported by an experienced practitioner. You'll also be given ongoing training and have access to a £1,000 professional development fund to help you develop your skills and progress your career.

### • **What roles are available to overseas nurses?**

We have lots of roles on offer, find out more about the [range of roles](#) <sup>[17]</sup>.

### • **Does the application process vary?**

The application process will vary depending on the trust you apply to and the route you apply through. You'll be able to find plenty of information about how trusts and agencies can support you during the application on their websites.

## Available support

Find out how the NHS will support you into your nursing job in England

Available support <sup>[18]</sup>

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**Source URL:**<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/we-are-the-nhs/nursing-careers/international-recruitment/application-process>

### Links

[1] <https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/register-nurse-midwife/trained-outside-the-eueea/new-application/how-to-guide/> [2] <https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/register-nurse-midwife/> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NMC> [4] <https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/english-language-requirements/> [5] <https://www.ielts.org/> [6] <https://www.occupationalenglishtest.org/> [7] <http://https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/english-language-requirements/trained-english/> [8] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Objective\\_structured\\_clinical\\_examination\\_OSCE](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Objective_structured_clinical_examination_OSCE) [9] <https://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/recruit/employer-led-recruitment/international-recruitment/uk-code-of-practice-for-international-recruitment/recruitment-agency-list> [10] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk> [11] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-for-the-international-recruitment-of-health-and-social-care-personnel/code-of-practice-for-the-international-recruitment-of-health-and-social-care-personnel-in-england> [12] <https://www.gov.uk/health-care-worker-visa> [13] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list> [14] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-pay-scales-for-eligible-healthcare-jobs/national-pay-scales-for-eligible-healthcare-occupation-codes> [15] <https://www.gov.uk/health-care-worker-visa/knowledge-of-english> [16] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations-and-codes> [17] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing> [18] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/we-are-the-nhs/nursing-careers/international-recruitment/we-are-nurses-we-are-nhs/available-support/available-support>