



**NMC** Nursing &  
Midwifery  
Council

# Registering as a nurse or midwife in the UK

Information for applicants trained  
outside the European Union (EU) or  
European Economic Area (EEA)

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## Introduction

### Our role

We regulate nurses and midwives in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and nursing associates in England.

Better and safer care for people is at the heart of what we do, supporting the healthcare professionals on our register to deliver the highest standards of care.

We make sure nurses, midwives and nursing associates have the skills they need to care for people safely, with integrity, expertise, respect and compassion, from the moment they step into their first job.

This is part of our role as regulators of the nursing and midwifery professions.

However we don't:

- Regulate hospitals or other healthcare settings
- Regulate healthcare assistants
- Represent or campaign on behalf of the professionals on our register
- Set levels of staffing

We believe learning doesn't stop the day nurses, midwives and nursing associates qualify.

To promote safety and public trust, we require professionals to demonstrate throughout their career that they are committed to learning and developing to keep their skills up to date and improve as practitioners.

We want to encourage openness and learning among healthcare professions to improve care and keep the public safe. On the occasions when something goes wrong and people are at risk, we can step in to investigate and take action, giving patients and families a voice as we do so.

## Working as a nurse or midwife in the UK

All nurses and midwives who want to work in the UK must register with us. Our register consists of four parts.

- nurses
- midwives
- nursing associates
- specialist community public health nurses (SCPHN).

The nurse part of the register is divided into four fields of practice.

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

Once you're registered, you can work in the National Health Service (NHS) or private health. As a regulator, we can't help you find jobs or give references.

To work as a nurse or midwife in the UK, you'll need to meet immigration conditions. Immigration in the UK is handled by [UK Visas and Immigration](#). We can't help with any part of this application process.

All nurses, midwives and nursing associates registered with us must follow our rules and standards, including [the Code: Standards of conduct, performance and ethics for nurses, midwives and nursing associates](#) (the Code). They also need to renew their registration annually.

It's a criminal offence in the UK to pose as a nurse, midwife or nursing associate or to provide false or misleading information. If at any point in the application process we discover that your application is fraudulent, we won't continue to assess the application and you may be liable for prosecution.

If, after registration, we discover that any part of the application was fraudulent, we will remove you from the register and you'll be liable for prosecution.

## Special advice for refugees and asylum seekers

If you're a refugee or asylum seeker, you should contact us for advice before making an application. You'll need to fill in the application form in full, but if you're unable to fill in any part of the form, we request that you send it to us with a supporting letter explaining why.

At the very least, we need photocopies of:

- your nursing or midwifery diplomas and registration certificates
- your transcript of training
- verification from the relevant licensing authority or registration body, if you were registered

If you're not able to provide any of these documents, we may not be able to assess your application. Agencies that support asylum seekers and refugees may be able to help obtain the information required to apply for registration.

Please keep copies of all the documents that you send to us, as we aren't able to return them. If you decide to apply for registration, you'll need to send us an application form and:

- a copy of your UK Home Office letter confirming your status
- a letter from social security
- a UK Home Office Pocard.

# Requirements for applying to join the register

## Eligibility and qualification requirements

Your qualification must meet the eligibility criteria for the part of the register to which you are applying for your application to be considered.

For nursing, you'll need to hold a qualification capable of leading to registration as the equivalent of a UK Level 1 nurse, in the country in which you trained. In the UK, a Level 1 nurse is a nurse who has completed a three-year programme of education leading to a nursing qualification and an academic qualification (a degree or diploma)

For midwifery, you'll need to hold a qualification capable of leading to registration as a midwife in the country in which you've trained.

## Registration requirements

You'll need to show that you meet our health, character and English language requirements as part of your application.

## English language requirements

When you apply to register with us we need to know you can communicate effectively in English. Communication is defined as speaking, reading, listening and writing. You must demonstrate competence in these four skills.

**There are a number of pieces of evidence that we will accept.**

- You have recently achieved the required score in one of the [English language tests accepted by the NMC](#). You must achieve the required score in each of the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking.□
- A pre-registration nurse midwife or nursing associate qualification which was [taught and examined in English](#).□
- Recent practice of at least one year in a [majority English speaking country](#)□

**Your evidence of English language will be assessed against the following criteria. It should be:**

- recent, objective and independent□
- able to clearly demonstrate that you can read, write, communicate and interact with patients, service users, relatives and healthcare professionals in English□ □ authentic evidence that we can verify.□

**Important**

If you cannot send the evidence we request, or we are not satisfied with what you send us, you will need to provide an alternative type of evidence such as a language test.

We highly recommend you make sure you can meet our language evidence requirements before you apply to us.

For more information on our language requirements please refer to annexe 1.

# How to apply for registration as a nurse or midwife

Before deciding to apply, you should consider if you meet the general and specific requirements described in the previous sections. You should then begin your application online through our website.

## The application process

### Self-eligibility

This is the first stage of the application process. You'll need to complete an online self-assessment, which will confirm if you're eligible to apply. As part of this, you'll be asked to confirm that you meet our health and good character and our English language requirements. You'll also need to confirm that you understand you will be asked to provide us with supporting documents to evidence this later in the application process.

If you complete these declarations and can't provide any supporting evidence later on, we won't progress your application and any costs you've incurred won't be refunded.

### Test of competence part one: the computer based test (CBT)

Once you've passed the eligibility stage, you'll be asked to sit the CBT. This is a test of your theoretical practice-based knowledge. The test format is a multiple choice test and can be taken in test centres around the world.

You'll have three attempts at the CBT as part of one application, with a minimum of ten days in between each sitting. You'll need to pass within six months of completing your eligibility. If you've not completed the CBT within six months of completing your eligibility it will expire and you'll need to complete the online selfassessment again.

If you're unsuccessful on your third attempt, your application will close and you'll need to wait six months in order to restart the application process.

Our test provider, Pearson VUE, administers their own test fee in agreement with us. You'll need to contact Pearson VUE directly to book and pay for your test.

### Application Assessment

After you've passed the CBT, you'll be asked to provide your supporting documents for your application.

You'll need to upload copies of the following documents to us are:

- your current valid passport
- your birth certificate

- your formal qualification certificates for each qualification you're submitting as part of your application.
- your registration certificates from each country where you've practised and/or been registered. If the country operates state level registration, then you'll need to have registered in each state where you've practised.
- a full, national police clearance certificate for every overseas country you've lived in or visited for more than three months, since the age of 18. You'll need to submit these within three months of the date of issue.
- if you've lived in the UK for more than three months, you'll need to provide us with a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate. You'll need to submit this within three months of the date of issue.

You'll also need to download and print the following forms from your online portal and have them completed:

- registration verification from each country where you've practised or where you've been previously registered. Again, if the country operates state level registration, you'll need to have been registered and provide verification forms from each state you've practiced in. These forms need to be completed by the relevant authority and we need to receive them within three months of the date it was signed.
- a completed form to accompany transcript of training (FATT) form and full transcript of your training for all relevant nursing or midwifery qualifications you're submitting as part of your application. These forms need to be completed by your education provider.
- a good health declaration from your general practitioner or the occupational health department at your place of work. They'll be asked to confirm that they've seen you within the last six months of the date they're completing the form and we must receive the form within three months of the date it's been completed. The individual completing your good health declaration must not be a member of your family or your direct employer.

All of the relevant forms required are available to download from your online portal once you reach the assessment stage, but not before.

You'll need to send the relevant forms to the correct authorities to be completed and they must be posted back to us. We do need the original forms that the referee or relevant authority has completed; please don't send photocopies or scans, as these won't be accepted. All forms must be completed in full and be signed, stamped and dated.

Once we've received all the necessary documents, your application will be assessed by a member of the International Registrations Team.

We aim to assess applications within 60 calendar days of receiving all your supporting evidence.

If we need to ask you for more information following our assessment, we'll assign you a case officer, who will be your point of contact going forwards.



Once we confirmed you've met our registration requirements, your application will be progressed to the next stage, which is the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE).

## Test of competence part two: the objective structured clinical examination (OSCE)

The OSCE will assess your clinical knowledge and can only be completed in the UK. The test will be administered by one of our approved university test centres who will administer their own test fee in agreement with us. You'll need to contact the university directly to book and pay for your test.

The OSCE simulates a clinical environment and patient scenarios which all registered nurses and midwives are likely to encounter when they assess, plan, implement and evaluate care. The OSCE contains nursing or midwifery scenarios along with separate skill stations. Each separate clinical examination is known a 'station' and you'll circulate through all the stations within a set timeframe.

Each of the six stations has standardised marking criteria against which everyone is assessed. Everyone is assessed by a panel of examiners and will be filmed for quality assurance purposes.

Both the CBT and OSCE are based on current UK pre-registration standards.

You'll have three attempts at the OSCE as part of one application, with a minimum of ten days in between each sitting.

If you're unsuccessful on your third attempt, your application will close. You'll need to submit a new application but will not be able to sit the OSCE again for a minimum of six months.

### ID check

A face-to-face ID check will take place at the OSCE location on the same day as your OSCE exam. You'll need to bring all of the original documents that you uploaded as part of your application. This includes your passport, registration certificates, police clearances and UK DBS. You can find a checklist on the back of your OSCE letter, which is downloadable from your portal.

If for any reason you don't have all of your original documents on the day, you will still be able to sit your OSCE exam. However, you'll be asked to book in an appointment, either at our office in London or at one of the OSCE locations, to complete your ID check. If this is the case, you won't be able to progress to the last stage of the registration process until you've attended your follow up ID check.

### Registration

Once we have received notification that you've successfully completed your OSCE and the ID check, you'll be asked to complete your final declaration and make your registration payment via your portal. Once you've completed both, we'll send you your registration number (Pin).

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# Important information about the application process

## Completing the supporting application forms

Please ensure all sections of the downloadable forms are completed in full and in English. This will reduce the need for follow-up queries and speed up the application process.

Only you should complete your online portal; no one else should do this on your behalf.

If you knowingly withhold any information or provide false or misleading information, this may result in your application being refused. If this is part of a subsequent application and you're already on our register, we may remove you from the register and you may be liable to prosecution.

Please don't download and print multiple copies of the same form (such as the registration verification forms), as each entry on your portal will generate its own unique form. Using duplicate forms may delay your application.

If you've already submitted your application and you think you may have used duplicate forms in error please contact us at [overseas.enquiries@nmc-uk.org](mailto:overseas.enquiries@nmc-uk.org).

## Translations

If one of your original documents is not written in English, please also provide an English translation of it. The translation must:

- be produced by a certified translator
- be attached to the original-language version of the document.

The translator should confirm in English that the translation is an exact translation of the original document. The translator should also provide their contact details (telephone, address and/or email address).

## Application process timelines

Once you've passed the self-assessment eligibility stage, you'll have up to six months to successfully complete the CBT. If you don't pass the CBT in this time, your application will close.

Results will be emailed to you within 48 hours of taking the exam. The exam fee must be paid in full each time to Pearson Vue.

Your successful CBT result is valid for two years and you'll need to ensure you complete your registration within this time. Therefore, we advise you to start the assessment stage and provide your supporting documentation as soon as possible once you've passed the CBT.

We aim to assess applications within 60 calendar days, once we've received all required documents. Once you pass the assessment stage, you'll then be invited to sit the OSCE in the UK. You'll need to ensure that you're able to successfully complete the OSCE within two years of passing the CBT. OSCE results will be emailed to candidates within five working days of taking the examination.

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# Responsibilities as a registered nurse or midwife

## Professional indemnity insurance

All nurses and midwives must hold appropriate cover under an indemnity arrangement in order to practise and provide care. To register with us, you are required to make a self-declaration that you hold, or will hold when you begin practising, appropriate cover under an indemnity arrangement. The Code has been updated to reflect this change.

If the indemnity arrangement is no longer appropriate for the scope of practice and you no longer meets our registration requirements, you must inform us immediately on 0207 333 9333.

Further information about the indemnity requirements is available on our website.

## Revalidation

Once on the register, all practitioners are required to revalidate to maintain their registration with the NMC every three years. Taking effect from April 2016, revalidation is a straightforward process and will help you demonstrate that you practise safely and effectively.

Revalidation encourages you to reflect on the role of the Code in your practice, allowing you to demonstrate that you are living the standards set out within it.

The requirements for revalidation are:

- 450 practice hours or 900 hours if revalidating as both a nurse and midwife
- 35 hours of Continuing Professional Development
- five pieces of practice-related feedback
- five written reflective accounts
- reflective discussion
- health and character declaration
- professional indemnity arrangements
- confirmation.

If you become registered with the NMC, you will be required to meet the requirements. For more information on revalidation, please see [www.nmc.org.uk/revalidation](http://www.nmc.org.uk/revalidation).

## Responsibility and scope of practice

Registered nurses may work in a variety of health-related settings including the NHS, private hospitals and nursing homes or in the community. In any circumstance, you're accountable for your own practice. This responsibility cannot be delegated elsewhere as you're recognised as an autonomous practitioner.

## Practising as a midwife

Being on our register as a midwife only provides evidence of qualification. Midwives are also required to show continuing professional development by targeting required learning and experience to maintain their expertise. Please see [www.nmc.org.uk/revalidation](http://www.nmc.org.uk/revalidation) for more information on revalidation.

# Useful contacts and further information

NMC

23 Portland Place  
London, W1B 1PZ +44  
(0)20 7333 9333  
[www.nmc.org.uk](http://www.nmc.org.uk)

NHS Careers

PO Box 376  
Bristol, BS99 3EY +44 845  
6060 655  
[www.nhs-careers.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs-careers.nhs.uk)

NHS Careers international nurses advice line

+ 44 8458 505888 (09:00–17:00 GMT only) [www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/outside-uk](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/outside-uk)

Pearson VUE [www.pearsonvue.co.uk](http://www.pearsonvue.co.uk)

British Council

5th Floor, Information Centre, Bridgewater House  
58 Whitworth Street  
Manchester, M1 6BB +44  
161 957 7755  
[www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)

International English Language Testing System (IELTS) [www.ielts.org](http://www.ielts.org)

UK Visas and Immigration

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration)

Praxis (support for refugees and asylum seekers)  
Pott Street  
London  
E2 0EF

+44 20 7729 7985 +44 20 7346 6700 [www.praxis.org.uk](http://www.praxis.org.uk) [www.refugeecouncil.org.uk](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk)

The Refugee Council  
240-250 Ferndale Road  
London  
SW9 8BB

Northampton Oxford

The University Of Northampton  
Boughton Green Rd

Oxford Brookes University  
Headington Campus

X3 0BP  
NN2 7AL

## Data privacy policy

### Personal information we collect about the applicant

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is the nursing and midwifery regulator for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. We may collect general personal information about our applicants including their name, address, email address, place of work or study and NMC Pin, if applicable. We may also collect personal information about you if you apply for a job with us, if you provide us with feedback about an area of practice, if a complaint is made about you or if you make a complaint about a nurse, midwife or us.

### How we use their personal information

If you're a nurse or midwife, we may collect personal information about you for the following purposes: administering your application to join the register, running and maintaining the register, compliance with our regulatory responsibility to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the public, carrying out investigations into any complaint raised against you including making any necessary publication about the investigation, administering any sanctions against you, sending publications and newsletters when requested, dealing with any calls you make to our registrations centre and professional advice service.

### Disclosures to third parties

Personal information about registrants that is publicly available on the register will be disclosed as part of our requirement to provide a register.

We may be required to disclose personal information in response to requests from a court, tribunal, regulator, or otherwise as part of the litigation process or to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the public. Where possible, we will consult with you prior to making such disclosure and, in order to protect your privacy, we will ensure that we will disclose only the minimum amount of your information and only necessary for the required purpose.

We may share your personal information with third parties such as law enforcement agencies, employers or potential future employers in order to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the public or in context of an investigation about their conduct should this be necessary.

### Access to their personal information

You have the right to request access to the personal information that we hold about you and to ask for information about the purposes for which their personal information is used.



To exercise this right or request further information, use the data protection request form on our website, email us at [FOlandDParequest@nmc-uk.org](mailto:FOlandDParequest@nmc-uk.org) or write to us at:

Records and Archives

Nursing and Midwifery Council

23 Portland Place, London, W1B 1PZ

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# Annexe 1: English language requirements

## English language tests we accept

We accept two language tests as evidence of your ability to communicate effectively in English: the International English Language Test System (IELTS) and the Occupational English Test (OET).

You must achieve the required score in each of the four areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Test scores are valid for two years.

## International English Language Test System (IELTS)

We'll accept an IELTS Academic examination certificate that confirms you achieved:

- an overall score of at least 7
- at least 6.5 in the writing section and at least 7 in the reading, listening and speaking sections.

## Combining IELTS test scores

You can achieve the required mark across two test sittings if:

- you sit the tests within six months of each other
- you're tested in all four sections at the same time
- all scores in both sittings are above 6.5, and
- you achieve at least 6.5 in the writing section and at least 7 in the reading, listening and speaking sections in either of the two test sittings.

## Occupational English Test (OET)

We'll accept an OET examination certificate that confirms you achieved:

- at least a B grade in the writing, reading, listening and speaking sections.

## Combining OET test scores

You can achieve the required mark across two test sittings if:

- you sit the tests within six months of each other
- you're tested in all four sections at the same time
- all grades in both sittings are above Grade C+, and
- you achieve Grade B or higher in all four sections when the results of both sittings are viewed together.

Test scores are valid for two years.

## Example scenarios

## IELTS Example

### Example 1

	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking
Test 1	7	7.5	6.5	7
Test 2	6.5	7	7.5	8

This combination would be accepted. The applicant has scored at least 7 in the listening, speaking and reading sections and at least 6.5 in the writing section in either of the two test sittings, and no score is lower than 6.5.

### Example 2

	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking
Test 1	6	7.5	6.5	7
Test 2	6.5	7	7.5	7.5

This application would not be accepted. The applicant has a score lower than 6.5.

## OET Example

### Example 1

	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking
Test 1	B	B	C+	B
Test 2	B	C+	B	B

This application would be accepted. The applicant has scored B in all categories, and no score is lower than C+.

### Example 2

	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking
Test 1	B	B	C+	B
Test 2	C	C+	B	B

This application would not be accepted. The applicant has scored lower than C+.

## Trained in English

If you completed an NMC-approved pre-registration nurse, midwife or nursing associate programme within the last five years, we will accept this as evidence that you have the necessary knowledge of English.

If you did not complete an NMC-approved pre-registration nurse, midwife or nursing associate programme we need to be satisfied that your programme demonstrates that you have the necessary knowledge of English.

- If you completed your programme in a majority English-speaking country within the last five years you will need to demonstrate that your programme meets the requirements set out in our guidance by providing evidence which meets our criteria.□
- If you completed your programme in a non-majority English-speaking country within the last five years you will need to demonstrate that your programme meets the requirements set out in our guidance by providing evidence which meets our criteria. We will consider your evidence but please be aware that it is likely that you will need to provide an alternative type of evidence such as a language test.□

Your evidence must confirm that the programme was composed of at least 50 percent clinical interaction. Your evidence must also clearly demonstrate at least 75 percent of that was with patients, service users, their families and other healthcare professionals and must have taken place in English. If your evidence does not clearly demonstrate the above requirements you will need to provide an alternative type of evidence such as a language test.

## Registered and practised in English

If you who wish to rely on evidence that you have recently registered and practised in English you must be able to satisfy us that:

- you have completed an English language assessment or examination as part of your registration as a nurse or midwife outside of the UK.
- you have completed an English language assessment or examination as part of your registration as a nurse associate outside of England.
- you have one year recent post registered practice in English
- your registration is in a [majority English speaking country](#).

We may require confirmation from each of your employers that the practice you undertook was in English and that you have the necessary knowledge of English to practise safely and effectively in the UK.

By recent we mean that the end of the period of practice you are relying on must be within the last two years at the point when you apply to register with the NMC.

Please note if you were not required to sit a language test by the regulator because you were taught and examined in a country where English is the first and native language, we will seek further information regarding the language assessment which your regulator completed.

Last updated: 5 April 2019