



Briefing: UCAS deadline applicant statistics for January 2019

Briefing Paper: Nursing applicants at the 15 January deadline – 7 February 2019

Today, UCAS has published data on undergraduate applications processed by UCAS ahead of the 15 January deadline. It shows a 5% increase in the number of applications for nursing courses in the UK.

Headlines for the whole higher education sector

Overall application rate increases

Overall, there was a 0.4% increase in the total number of people applying to higher education, to 561,420, compared to the same figure in 2018.

In **England**, a record 38.8% of the 18-year-old population have applied. This is a 1.4 percentage point increase on the application rate at this time in 2018 despite the fall in the total number of 18-year-olds in England.

In **Northern Ireland**, 46.8% of 18-year-olds have applied (down 0.7 percentage points). In **Scotland**, the 18-year-old application rate remains 32.5%, and in **Wales**, the application rate is 32.2% (up 0.2 percentage points).

EU and international applications rise again

Overall, UK domiciled applicants have decreased by 0.7%, while applicants from outside the UK have increased to their highest levels on record for both EU and non-EU countries with a 0.9% and a 9% increase respectively. However, the number of applications from the EU only increased in England but fell in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

More applicants from disadvantaged areas

The gap between the most and least advantaged applicants has narrowed, as a record 23.2% of young people classified as living in the most disadvantaged areas of the UK (POLAR4 quintile 1) have applied, up 1.3 percentage points. This compares to 53.5% of those living in the most advantaged areas, a growth of 1 percentage point.

Nursing figures

Application by country of provider

Compared to the 2018 cycle, the number of applicants for undergraduate nursing courses overall has increased by 5% from 40,600 to 42,820.

The number of applications for nursing courses received by providers in Scotland increased by 5% and by those based in England by 4%. The number of applications received by providers in Wales increased marginally.

Applicants by domicile group

The number of applicants from the **UK** increased by 5% and the number of **EU** (excluding the UK) applicants increased by 3%, whilst the number of **non-EU** applicants increased by 32%. Applications from EU (excluding UK) applicants to providers in England have stayed the same but have increased by 30% for providers in Wales and by 10% for providers in Scotland. For the first time, providers of nursing courses in Scotland received more applications from EU domiciled applicants than providers in England.

Providers in England did receive 34% more applications from non-EU applicants. Similarly, providers in Scotland saw a 33% increase and providers in Wales a 25% increase in applications from non-EU applicants.

The number of applications from individuals resident in **England** increased by 4% compared to 2018. Applications from individuals from **Northern Ireland** and **Scotland** both increased by 9% and those from **Wales** by 5%.

First-time and reapplicants

The number of **first-time applicants** to nursing courses was 7% higher than in 2018, whilst the number of **reapplicants** fell by 5%.

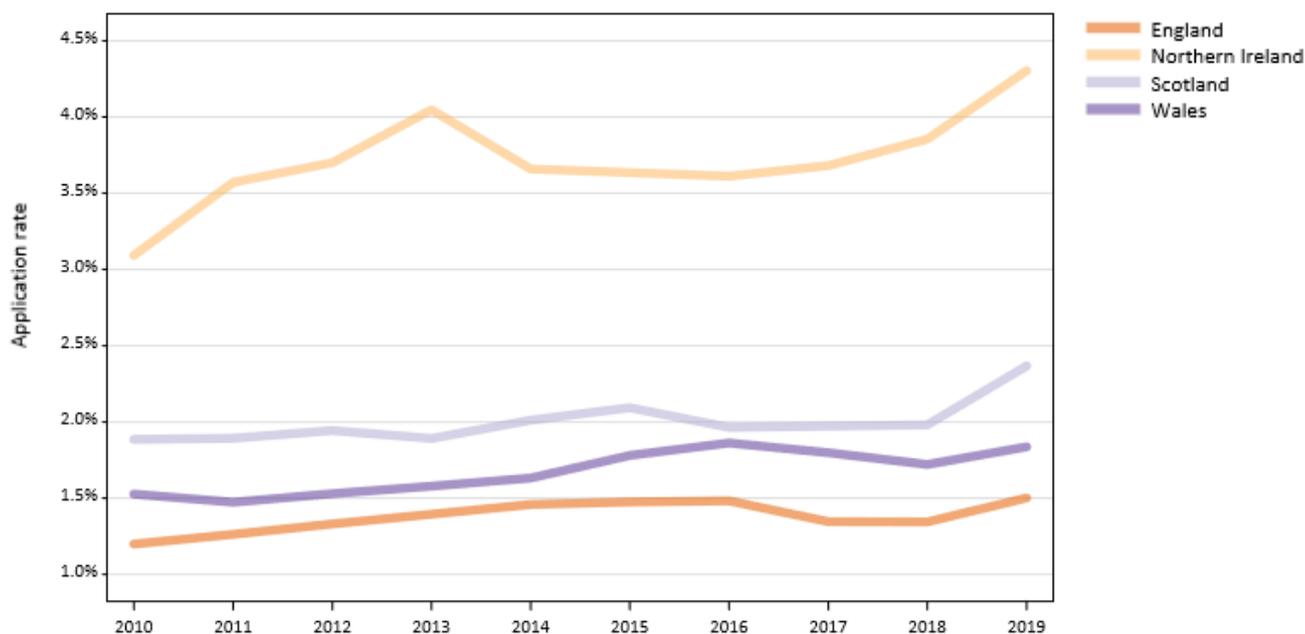
The number of **first-time applicants** from **Northern Ireland** was 11% higher, the number of those from **Scotland** 9% higher and the number of those from **England** 7% higher. There were also 4% more first-time applicants from **Wales** than last year. The number of first-time applicants from the **EU** (excluding the UK) was 5% up and the number of **non-EU** first-time applicants was 28% higher than in 2018.

At the same time, the number of **reapplicants** from **England** fell by 11%, whilst it increased for reapplicants from **Northern Ireland** by 2%, from **Scotland** by 9%, and from **Wales** by 12%. The number of reapplicants from the **EU** (excluding the UK) fell by 10% and the number of **non-EU** reapplicants increased by 71% (although numbers are small).

Applications from 18-year-olds

The number of 18-year-olds from all four nations to nursing courses has increased despite the overall population of 18-year-olds having become smaller. The proportion of 18-year-olds applying for nursing courses is still particularly high in Northern Ireland (4.3%).

Figure 1: Nursing application rates for 18-year-olds by UK country of domicile as a proportion of the 18-year-old population



The number of 18-year-old applicants resident in **England** was 10% higher than in 2018. Similarly, applications from 18-year-olds resident in **Northern Ireland** increased by 8%, those resident in **Wales** by 4% and from those resident in **Scotland** even by 16%.

Applications from 19-year-olds

The increase in the number of applications to nursing courses from 19-year-olds from all four nations was even more significant. The number of 19-year-old applicants domiciled in **England** was 8% higher, from those domiciled in **Northern Ireland** and **Wales** 19% higher and from those resident in **Scotland** 17% higher.

First-time applications from 19-year-olds resident in **England** increased by 11%, whilst the number of reapplicants aged 19 was almost the same as in 2018.

The number of 19-year-old first-time applicants and reapplicants resident in **Northern Ireland** increased by 13% and 23% respectively.

Similarly, first-time applicants and reapplicants domiciled in **Wales** increased by 15% and 29% respectively.

First-time applicants and reapplicants resident in **Scotland** increased by 14% and 19% respectively.

Applicants aged 20 and over

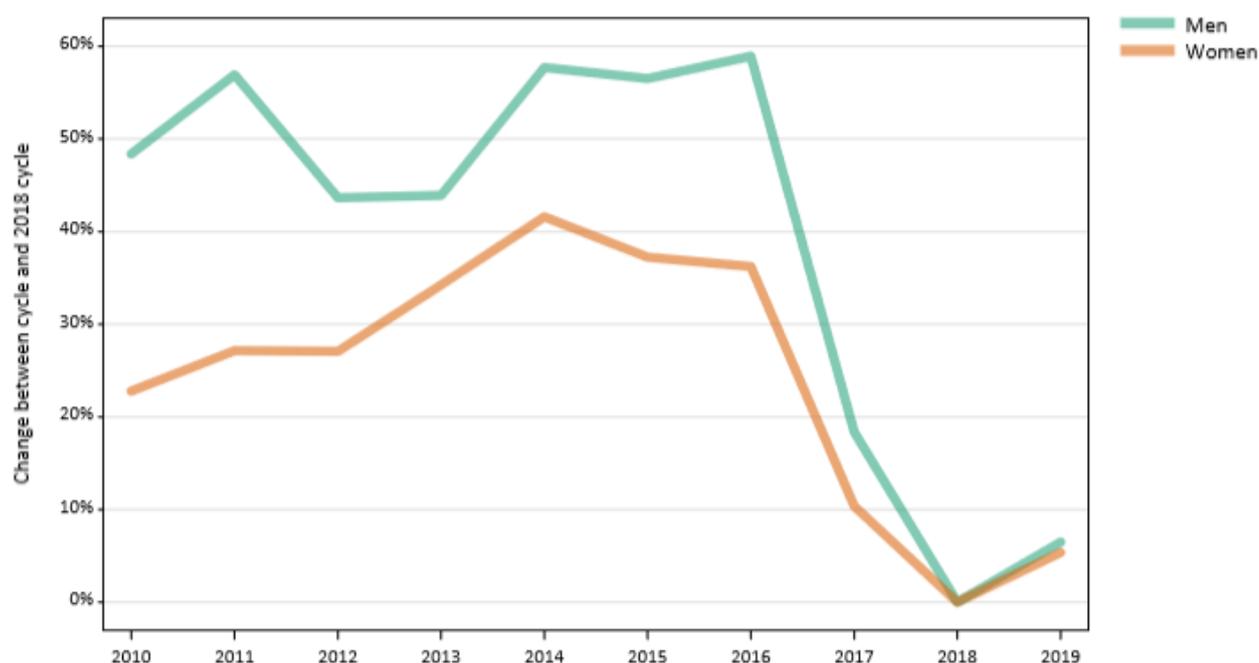
The number of applicants resident in **England** and those domiciled in **Wales** aged 20 and 21-24 remained fairly stable. It increased by 4% for those aged 25 and over in both nations.

Similarly, the number of applicants domiciled in **Northern Ireland** and **Scotland** aged 20 and 21-24 was almost the same as in 2018 and increased for those aged 25 and over by 15% and 8% respectively.

Male and female applicants

The number of **male** applicants to nursing courses increased slightly more than the rate of female applicants with a 7% and 5% increase respectively. The number of male applicants aged 18 was 18% higher than in 2018.

Figure 2: Nursing applicants by sex: difference between 2019 cycle and 2018 cycle



Due to the low number of male applicants, one should be careful not to place too much emphasis on developments by age group for the four nations of the UK. The same applies to the breakdown of EU and non-EU applicants by age group and sex. A few deviations from the national picture are worth noting though:

- In **Scotland**, the increase in applications from men was slightly higher than the increase in applications from women with 12% and 9% respectively. This brings the number of male applicants roughly back to where it was previously before it had fallen in 2017.
- In **Wales**, the number of male applicants was 13% lower than in 2018 whilst the number of female applicants to nursing courses was 6% higher.

- After the number of male applicants had fallen by 43% between 2016 and 2018, it has picked up again with a 9% increase this year.

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