



Briefing: UCAS deadline applicant statistics for January 2020

Briefing Paper: Nursing applicants at the 15 January deadline – 6 February 2020

UCAS has published data on undergraduate applications processed by UCAS ahead of the 15 January 2020 deadline. It shows a 6% increase in the total number of applicants to nursing courses in the UK compared to 2019.

- There was an 6% increase overall in **English domiciled applicants**, the number of **Scottish domiciled applicants** rose by 12%, there was no change in the number of **Welsh domiciled applicants** and there was a 6% decrease in **Northern Irish domiciled applicants**.
- The number of applications for nursing courses received by **providers** in **Scotland** increased by 6% and for those based in **England** by 4%. The number of applications received by providers in **Wales** decreased marginally.
- There was an increase of 12% in the overall number of applicants **aged 30-34**, and a 21% increase in those **aged 35 and over**.
- The overall number of **18-year-old** nursing applicants has increased despite the UK population of 18-year-olds having become smaller.
- The number of **male** applicants to nursing courses increased slightly more than the rate of **female** applicants with a 14% and 5% increase respectively.

Headlines for the whole higher education sector

Overall application rate increases

Overall, there was a 1.2% increase in the total number of people applying to higher education, to 568,330, compared to the same figure in 2019.

Increase in 18-year-old applications

Overall, 39.5% of all UK 18-year-olds applied compared to 38.2% last year. In England, the number of 18-year-old applicants varies depending on the region but in London 51% of 18 year olds applied.

Increase in mature applications

The number of UK applicants aged between 30-34 increased for the first time in five years. This can partly be attributed to a rise in nursing applicants in this age group.

International applications rise again

Overall, there was a marginal decrease in the number of UK domiciled applicants and a decrease in EU applicants. However, there was a 14.7% increase from non-EU applicants which is largely driven by growth in applications from three countries (China, India and Hong Kong).

More applicants from disadvantaged areas

The gap between the most and least advantaged applicants has narrowed, as a record 24.6% 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 55% of those living in the most advantaged areas, a growth of 1.6 percentage points.

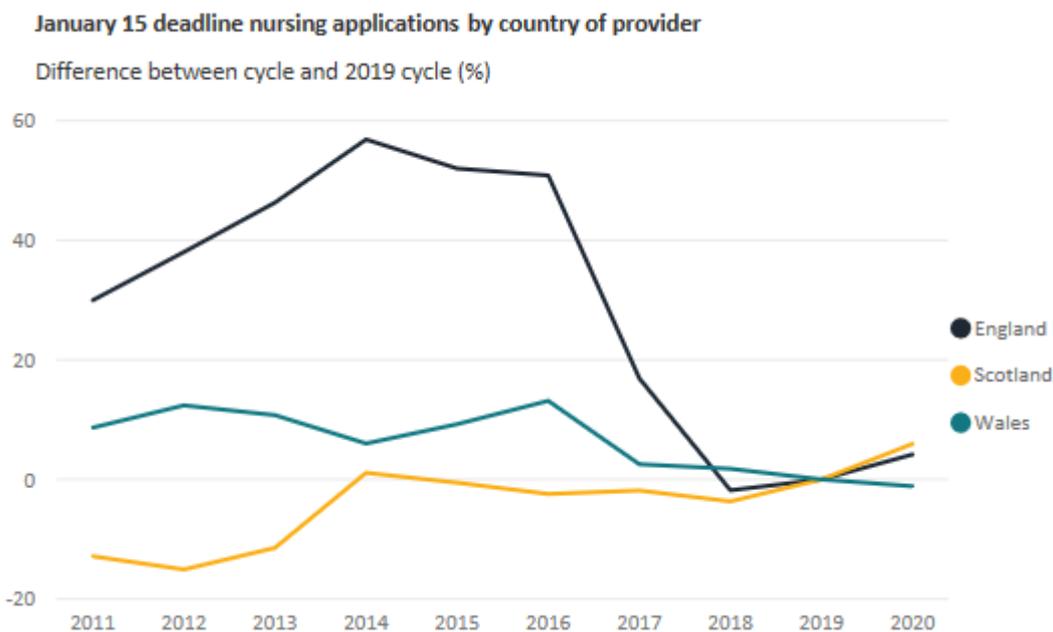
Nursing figures

Compared to the 2019 cycle, the number of applications to *subjects allied to medicine (including nursing courses)* has **increased by 5.4%**. The overall number of applicants to UK undergraduate *nursing courses* has **increased by 6%** from 42,820 to 45,430. This is marginally higher than the total number of nursing applicants across the UK in the 2017 cycle (45,090).

Applications by country of provider

The number of applications for nursing courses received by providers in **Scotland** increased by 6% (18,700 in 2019; 19,810 in 2020) and for those based in **England** by 4% (114,110 in 2019; 118,890 in 2020). The number of applications received by providers in **Wales** decreased marginally (8,690 in 2019; 8,590 in 2020).

Figure 1: The percentage change in the number of applications by country of provider



Applicants by domicile group

There was a 6% increase overall in **English domiciled applicants** compared to 2019, rising from 30,650 to 32,490. **Scottish domiciled applicants** rose by 12% (5,250 in 2019; 5,910 in 2020), there was no change in the number of **Welsh domiciled applicants** (2,720) and there was a 6% decrease in **Northern Irish domiciled applicants** (2,570 in 2019; 2,420 in 2020).

- The overall number of applicants from the **UK** increased by 6% (41,190 in 2019; 43,530 in 2020) and the number of **EU** (excluding the UK) applicants increased by 4% (1,040 in 2019; 1,080 in 2020), whilst the number of **non-EU** applicants increased by 37% (600 in 2019; 820 in 2020).
- Applications from **EU** (excluding UK) applicants to providers in England have increased by 5% (1,660 in 2019; 1,750 in 2020) and to providers in Scotland by 2% (1,770 in 2019; 1,810 in 2020) but have decreased by 35% for providers in Wales (190 in 2019; 120 in 2020). Providers of nursing courses in Scotland received more applications from **EU** domiciled applicants than providers in England.
- Providers in England did receive 42% more applications from **non-EU** applicants than last year rising from 1,680 to 2,390. Scottish providers saw a 9% increase (190 in 2019; 210 in 2020) and providers in Wales a 22% increase in applications (50 in 2019; 60 in 2020) from **non-EU** applicants.

First-time and reapplicants

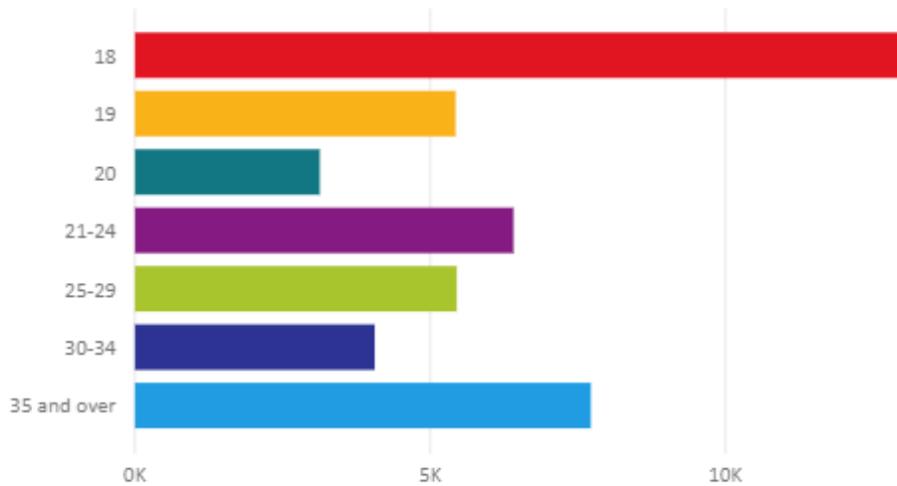
The number of **first-time applicants** to nursing courses was 6% higher than in 2019 to 39,270, and the number of **reapplicants** increased by 7%.

The number of **first-time applicants** from **Northern Ireland** was 8% lower than last year (2,120 in 2019; 1,940 in 2020), whilst the number of those from **Scotland** was 13% higher (4,400 in 2019; 4,980 in 2020), the number of those from **England** was 6% higher (26,790 in 2019; 28,280 in 2020) and the number of those from **Wales** was 2% higher (2,300 in 2019; 2,350 in 2020). The number of first-time applicants from the **EU** (excluding the UK) was 3% up and the number of **non-EU** first-time applicants was 41% higher (530 in 2019; 750 in 2020).

At the same time, the number of **reapplicants** from **Wales** fell by 11%, whilst it increased for reapplicants from **England** by 9%, from **Scotland** by 9%, and from **Northern Ireland** by 7%. The number of reapplicants from the **EU** (excluding the UK) rose by 13% and the number of **non-EU** reapplicants stayed the same.

Applicants by age

Figure 2: The number of applicants by age at 15 January 2020 deadline



Applicants aged 18

The overall number of **18-year-old** nursing applicants has increased despite the UK population of 18-year-olds having become smaller. 2020 is projected to be the final year of a UK-wide decline in the overall 18-year-old population.

The number of 18-year-old applicants resident in **England** was 8% higher than in 2019, from 8,980 to 9,700. Similarly, 18-year-old **Welsh domiciled applicants** increased by 10% (680) and **Northern Irish domiciled applicants** by 2% (960 in 2019; 990 in 2020). There was a marginal decrease in the number of 18-year-old applicants resident in **Scotland**. (1,280 in 2019; 1,250 in 2020)

Applicants aged 19

The overall number of 19-year-old applicants saw a decrease of 4%. The number of 19-year-old applicants domiciled in **England** was 4% lower (3,960 in 2019; 3,810 in 2020), from those domiciled in **Northern Ireland** 7% lower (410 in 2019; 380 in 2020) and from **Wales** 18% lower (380 in 2019; 310 in 2020). There was a marginal increase from 19-year-old **Scottish domiciled** applicants (540 in 2019; 550 in 2020).

First-time 19-year-old applicants resident in **England** decreased by 7%, whilst the number of reapplicants aged 19 increased by 4% compared to 2019.

The number of 19-year-old first-time applicants and reapplicants resident in **Northern Ireland** decreased by 4% and 9% respectively.

Similarly, first-time applicants and reapplicants domiciled in **Wales** decreased by 12% and 31% respectively.

First-time applicants aged 19 resident in **Scotland** increased by 9% but reapplicants decreased by 7%.

Applicants aged 20 and over

The overall number of applicants **aged 20** increased by 6%, whilst those **aged 21-24** and **25-29** remained fairly stable. There was an increase of 12% in the number of applicants **aged 30-34**, and a 21% increase in those **aged 35 and over**. These increases were particularly seen in applicants domiciled in **England** and **Scotland**.

There was a marginal increase in **English domiciled applicants aged 20** (2,100 in 2019; 2,200 in 2020), but a slight decrease in **English domiciled applicants aged 21-24** (4,600 in 2019; 4,430 in 2020) and **25-29** (3,720 in 2019; 3,640 in 2020). However, the number of applicants resident in **England aged 30-34** increased by 13% compared to 2019, from 2,480 to 2,800. The number of applicants resident in **England aged over 35** increased by 23% compared to 2019, from 4,790 to 5,890.

Male and female applicants

The number of **male** applicants to nursing courses increased slightly more than the rate of **female** applicants with a 14% and 5% increase respectively. The number of **male** applicants **aged 18** was only marginally higher than in 2019, whilst the number of **male** applicants **aged 35 and over** increased by 31%.

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 variations are worth noting though:

- In **England** there was increase in the number of male applicants (2,650 in 2019; 2,870 in 2020) to nursing courses and female applicants (28,000 in 2019; 29,620) with 8% and 6% increase respectively.
- In **Scotland**, the increase in male applicants was higher than the increase in female applicants with 38% and 10% respectively. This brings the number of Scottish domiciled male applicants to 570 which is the highest it has been.
- In **Wales**, whilst there was a 13% increase in the number of male applicants compared to 2019, there was a marginal decrease in the number of female applicants.
- In **Northern Ireland** there was a slight decrease in both male and female applicants.

For more information contact:

Robyn Cooke, Policy Officer, robyn.cooke@cod-health.ac.uk