



# Briefing: UCAS statistics on placed applicants 28 days after A-level results day

## Briefing Paper: Placed nursing applicants as of 7 September 2021

UCAS has published data showing a record number of applicants have been placed on undergraduate nursing courses at UK universities. The data, published 28 days after A-level and SQA results day, indicates broad sectoral growth. However, there has been a mix of increases and decreases across domicile and age categories.

- The nursing higher education sector has continued to build upon a record increase in placed applicants in 2020 with further UK-wide growth of 2.6%.
- There is a 3.6% increase in placed **English** domiciled applicants; a 0.7% increase in placed applicants domiciled in **Scotland**; a 2.5% decrease in placed applicants domiciled in **Wales**; and a 3.1% decrease in the number of placed applicants domiciled in **Northern Ireland**.
- This compares with the wider higher education sector which saw a 1.6% decrease in placed applicants, largely attributable to a 56.4% decrease in applicants from the EU.
- Across the UK, there was an 11.7% increase in placed nursing applicants aged 18; a 1.4% decrease in placed applicants aged 19; a 11.3% decrease in placed applicants aged 20; a 4.3% decrease in placed applicants aged 21-24; a 3.2% increase in placed applicants aged 25-29; a 9.7% increase in placed applicants aged 30-34; and a 1% decrease in placed applicants aged 35 and over.
- Placed applicant increases are lower than for data published on results day. This is likely the result of a greater proportion of applicants achieving their predicted grades and confirming places and being placed earlier in the cycle.

## Headlines for the whole higher education sector

### Overall placed applicant decrease

Overall, 507,610 applicants were placed in this cycle. This is a 1.6% decrease in the total number of people with a confirmed place on an undergraduate course in the UK compared to 2020.

### Increase in 18-year-old placed applicants

37.9% of all 18-year-olds from the UK have accepted a place at a UK university, an increase of 1.5% compared to 2020. This represents 272,510 placed applicants in 2021 versus 253,890 in 2020, an

increase of 7.3%. This ranged from a 13.7% increase for those domiciled in Scotland to a 5.5% increase for those domiciled in Northern Ireland.

### Decrease in applicants from other age groups

The number of UK applicants from all age groups other than those aged 18 decreased. This ranged from -9.7% for applicants aged 20 to -2% for applicants aged 30-34.

### Divide between applicants from the EU and those from outside the EU

Placed applicant rate changes from the EU were vastly different than those from outside the EU. From the EU there was a decrease of 16,700 placed applicants representing a -56.4% change and a record low in the period from 2012 to 2021. From outside the EU placed applicants increased by 2,310 or 5.2%. Within this, applicants from China increased by 4.9%; applicants from India increased 29.7%; and applicants from the USA increased 35.1% - all record highs.

### Increase in applicants with a deferred place

Across the UK, of applicants with a confirmed place, 31,070 hold a deferred place. This is an increase of 5.8% compared to 2020. This represents 6.1% of all placed applicants in 2021, an increase of 0.4% since 2020.

## Nursing figures

UK universities in 2021 have once again placed a record number of nursing applicants with 35,060 placed by 7 September. This is an increase of 870 (2.6%) since 2020 including nearly 1,000 more 18-year-old placed applicants. This increase however was not equivalent across domicile groups, age, gender, or country of provision.

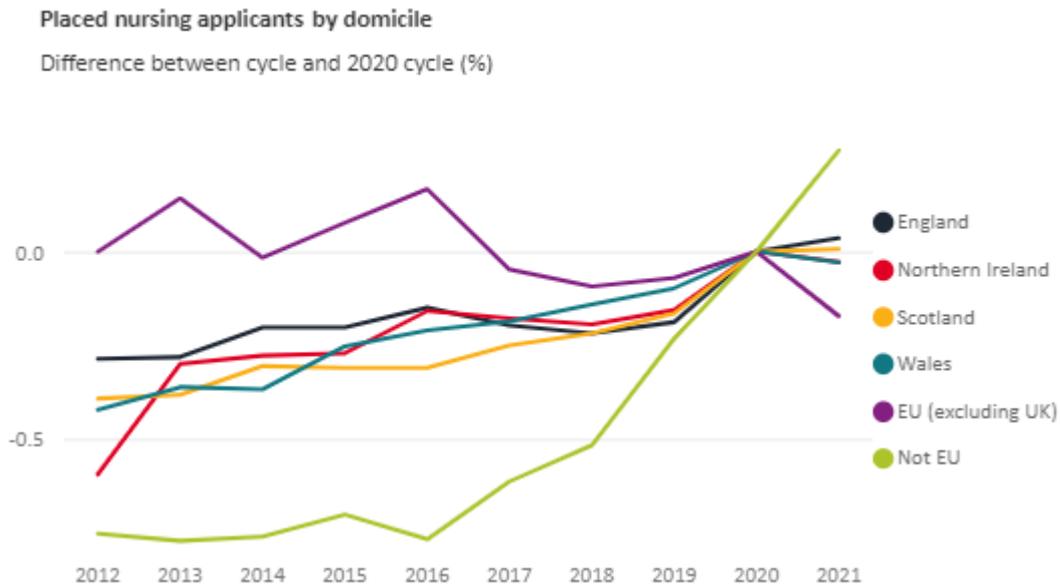
### Placed applicants by domicile group

There was a 3.6% increase overall in placed **English domiciled applicants** compared to 2020, rising from 25,910 to 26,850. The number of **Scottish domiciled applicants** rose slightly by 0.7% (4,270 in 2020; 4,300 in 2021). However, the number of **applicants domiciled in Wales** decreased by 2.5% (2,000 in 2020; 1,950 in 2021), and the number of **applicants domiciled in Northern Ireland** decreased by 3.1% (1,310 in 2020; 1,270 in 2021).

The overall number of placed applicants from the **UK** increased by 2.6% (33,490 in 2020; 34,360 in 2021). The number of placed **EU** applicants decreased by 15.9% (440 in 2020; 370 in 2021), whilst the number of **non-EU** applicants increased by 26.9% (260 in 2020; 330 in 2021). Almost all (330) EU applicants are from Ireland while most non-EU applicants are from Nigeria, India, Hong Kong, the United States, and Zimbabwe.

Figure 1: Difference in number of placed nursing applicants by domicile compared to 2020 cycle in %

### Nursing - domicile



### Placed applicants by age group

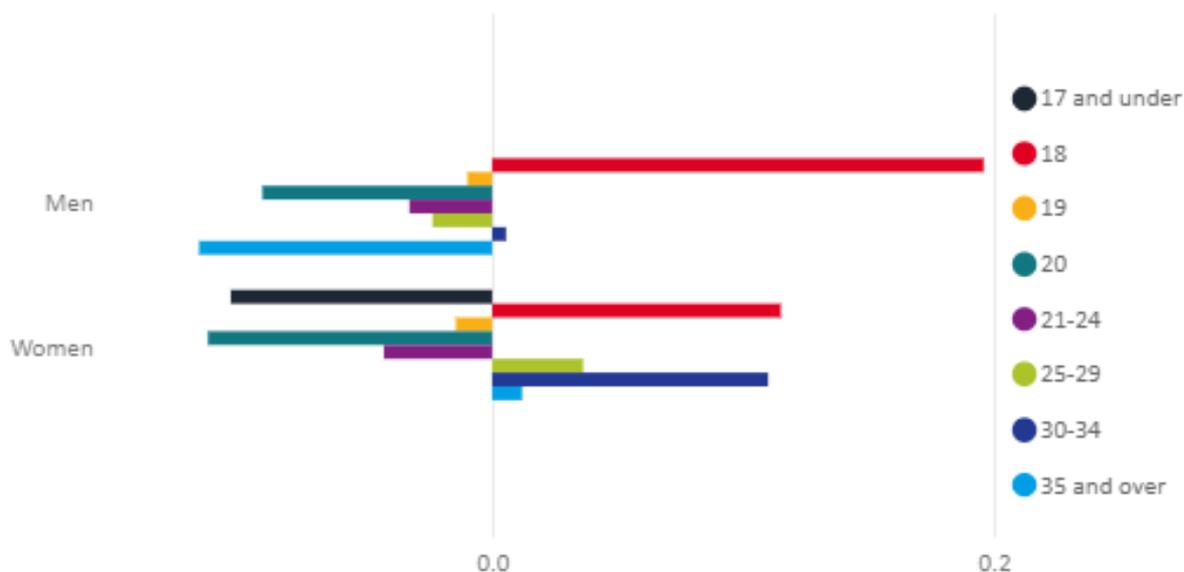
The number of placed nursing applicants has increased for certain age groups while decreasing for others. Across the UK, the largest increase was for **18-year-olds**, who represent 970 (11.7%) more applicants (8,270 in 2020; 9,240 in 2021). The largest decrease was for **20-year-olds**, who represent 240 (-11.3%) fewer applicants (2,120 in 2020; 1,880 in 2021). 1.2% of all 18-year-olds in the UK are now placed on nursing courses.

The number of applicants aged 19 decreased by 1.4% (3,530 in 2020; 3,480 in 2021). There was a 4.3% decrease in the number of applicants aged 21-24 (5,130 in 2020; 4,910 in 2021), but a 3.2% increase in the number of applicants aged 25-29 (4,760 in 2020; 4,910 in 2021). There was a further increase in those aged 30-34 of 9.7% (3,400 in 2020; 3,730 in 2021), but a decrease in those aged 35 and over of 1% (6,930 in 2020; 6,860 in 2021).

### Male and female applicants

The number of placed **female** applicants to nursing courses increased by 3.2%. While placed **male** applicants decreased by 4.1%, this remains 25.3% higher than in 2019. For both female and male applicants the greatest increase was amongst those aged 18 with increases of 11.5% and 16.7% respectively.

Figure 2: Difference in number of placed nursing applicants by gender and age compared to 2020 cycle in %



### Country of Provider

Providers in England have placed 27,720 applicants which is an increase of 4.2% from 2020. Providers in Scotland have placed 4,560 applicants, a decrease of 1.5% from 2020. Providers in Wales have placed 1,810 applicants, a decrease of 3.2% as compared to 2020. Providers in Northern Ireland have placed 960 applicants, a decrease of 12.7%.

### Applicant Status

Compared to 2020 the number of applicants placed through firm decisions increased by 11.7%, while those placed by clearing decreased by 9.4%. This breakdown is in line with a greater proportion of applicants achieving predicted grades sector wide. There is a 50.3% increase in the number of students who are free to be placed in clearing (15,100 in 2020; 22,710 in 2021) and there remain 4,100 applicants who are holding an offer, an 18.2% increase as compared to 2020.

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