



Briefing: UCAS deadline applicant statistics for January 2022

Briefing Paper – 17 February 2022

UCAS has published a statistical release providing core numbers for the 26 January 2022 application deadline.

Definition change

It should be noted that from the 2022 cycle onwards, UCAS is using a different subject classification system. The previous definition of nursing used for UCAS reporting was for all courses within the B7 – Nursing subject group through the Joint Academic Coding System (JACS) subject classification. These subjects included both midwifery and dental nursing. UCAS are now using the Common Aggregation Hierarchy applied to Higher Education Classification of Subjects to identify subjects. This means that they have split nursing from midwifery and dental nursing has been removed from the nursing classification entirely. These definitions are applied across all years in this data, but please note that comparison against data released in previous cycles needs to be considered carefully. It is important that any analysis from this data release is caveated by this definition change.

Headlines for the overall higher education sector

UCAS has warned not to take the headline figures at face value as there are decreases in applicants for all data groups, however 2021 was an 'atypical year'. There was a significant increase in mature students related to the pandemic. 2022 applicant data shows a sustained upward growth in applicants in line with pre-pandemic levels.

- Overall applications for full-time undergraduate applications for university and college courses that start this coming autumn fell slightly by 1%.
- 28% of young people from the most disadvantaged areas (quintile 1 using the POLAR4 measure) have applied – up from 17.8% nine years ago in 2013.
- Overall number of UK 18 year olds applying increase by 5% but mature applicants declined by 17% compared to 2021.
- Demand from China and India has increased with the number of applicants from India almost doubling in the last two years.

Headlines for nursing

The nursing figures for 2022 are in line with the rest of the sector in showing a general trend for sustained upward growth if we take out the 2021 application rates as an outlier. Overall the nursing figures in this statistical release show a decrease compared to 2021 but an increase compared to 2020. We can surmise that this may be down to two factors: a) the definition change to the nursing subject classification, b) UCAS has highlighted that last year's application rates across the whole sector were 'atypical'.

Therefore the number of applicants to UK undergraduate nursing courses has decreased by 10% compared to 2021 from 46,040 to 41,220 but the number of applicants to UK undergraduate nursing courses has increased by 19% compared to 2020.

Applicants by country of provider

The number of applicants to nursing courses for providers in **Scotland** decreased by 16% compared to 2021 and increased by 4% compared to 2020.

The number of applicants to nursing courses for providers in **England** decreased by 8% compared to 2021 and increased by 25% compared to 2020.

The number of applicants to nursing courses for providers in **Wales** decreased by 11% compared to 2021 and increased by 17% compared to 2020.

The number of applicants to nursing courses for providers in **Northern Ireland** decreased by 8% compared to 2021 and increased by 19% compared to 2020.

Country of provider	2019	2020	2021	2022
England	24950	26750	36410	33410
Northern Ireland	2570	2430	3120	2880
Scotland	6140	6410	7920	6690
Wales	3300	3090	4090	3630

Applicants by age

Applicants aged 18

The overall number of 18-year-old nursing applicants has remained the same compared to 2021 (12,440 applicants) and has increased compared to 2020 by 29%.

Applicants aged 19

The overall number of 19-year-old applicants saw a decrease of 3% compared to 2021, but increased by 16% compared to 2020.

Applicants aged 20

The overall number of 20-year-old applicants saw a decrease of 9% compared to 2021, but increased by 5% compared to 2020.

Applicants aged 21-24

The overall number of applicants aged 21-24 saw a decrease of 20% compared to 2021, but increased by 9% compared to 2020.

Applicants aged 25-29

The overall number of applicants aged 25-29 saw a decrease of 26% compared to 2021, but increased by 9% compared to 2020.

Applicants aged 30-34

The overall number of applicants aged 30-34 saw a decrease of 15% compared to 2021, but increased by 23% compared to 2020.

Applicants aged 35 and over

The overall number of applicants aged 35 and over decreased by 12% compared to 2021, but increased by 21% compared to 2020.

Male and female applicants

In line with the trends in the number of overall nursing applicants, the number of female applicants saw a decrease of 11% compared to 2021, but increased by 17% compared to 2020. The number of male applicants saw a decrease of 4% compared to 2021, but increased by 34% compared to 2020.

Headlines for midwifery

The number of applicants to UK undergraduate midwifery courses has decreased by 11% compared to 2021 from 12,790 to 11,410 but the number of applicants to UK undergraduate midwifery courses has increased by 23% compared to 2020.

Applicants by country of provider

The number of applicants to midwifery courses for providers in **Scotland** decreased by 18% compared to 2021 and increased by 9% compared to 2020.

The number of applicants to midwifery courses for providers in **England** decreased by 9% compared to 2021 and increased by 27% compared to 2020.

The number of applicants to midwifery courses for providers in **Wales** decreased by 15% compared to 2021 and increased by 14% compared to 2020.

The number of applicants to midwifery courses for providers in **Northern Ireland** decreased by 1% compared to 2021 and increased by 51% compared to 2020.

Country of provider	2019	2020	2021	2022
England	7350	7520	10510	9520
Northern Ireland	580	540	810	800
Scotland	1200	1220	1630	1330
Wales	1170	1220	1640	

Applicants by age

The overall number of **18-year-old** midwifery applicants has increased by 2% compared to 2021 (3,780 applicants in 2021; 3,870 applicants in 2022).

The number of midwifery applicants for all other age groups decreased compared to 2021 but increased compared to 2020.

For more information contact:

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