



Briefing: UCAS deadline applicant statistics for March 2018

Briefing Paper: Nursing applicants at the 24 March deadline – 11 April 2018

UCAS has [published](#) data on undergraduate applications processed by UCAS ahead of the 24 March deadline.

Headlines for the whole higher education sector

Overall application rate down

Overall, there was a 2 per cent reduction in the total number of people applying to higher education, to 590,270 compared to the same point in 2017. This drop is due to the fact that there are 18,000 fewer 18-year-olds in the population and due to a decline in applications from older UK domiciled students.

In **England**, the overall number of applications decreased by 4 per cent compared to 2017 to 392,990; in **Northern Ireland** it declined by 5 per cent to 18,970; in **Scotland** it decreased by less than 1 per cent to 46,620; and in **Wales** it decreased by 3 per cent to 20,220.

Rise in EU and international applications

The number of applicants from the **EU** increased by 2 per cent to 46,040 and the number of **international** applicants increased to its highest number ever, by 8 per cent to 65,440.

Rise in proportion of 18-year-olds applying

The proportion of 18-year-olds domiciled in **England** applying has increased to 37.8%, the highest on record (0.3% up from 2017). However, due to the 2.3 per cent fall in the number of 18-year-olds in the population, this represents a 2 per cent decline in the overall number of applications to 230,320.

The application rate for 18-year-olds domiciled in **Wales** also increased by 0.3 percentage points to 32.4 per cent, while rates in **Northern Ireland** were stable at 47.5 per cent.

In **Scotland**, the same rate fell by 0.2 percentage points to 32.6 per cent.

Nursing figures

Application by country of provider

Compared to the 2017 cycle, the number of applicants for nursing courses overall is down 10 per cent.

In **England**, the number of applicants decreased by 13.5 per cent, and in **Northern Ireland** by 7.4 per cent. The number of applications remained the same in **Wales**, and increased by 2.6 per cent in **Scotland**.

The number of applicants from the **UK** decreased by 10.7 per cent and the number of **EU** (excluding the UK) applicants decreased by 10 per cent, whilst the number of **non-EU** applicants increased by 10 per cent. The trends for EU and non-EU applicants are broadly similar across England, Scotland and Wales with England having seen the sharpest decrease of EU applicants, and Wales being the only country where applications from non-EU applicants decreased between 2017 and 2018¹.

Applicants by domicile group

The number of applications from individuals resident in **England** fell by 14 per cent compared to 2017, and applications from individuals resident in **Northern Ireland** decreased by 7 per cent. Applications from individuals based in **Wales** remained the same and the number of applications from individuals from **Scotland** increased by 3 per cent.

First-time and reapplicants

The number of **first-time applicants** to nursing courses declined by 6 per cent compared to 2017, whilst the number of **reapplicants** fell by 28 per cent.

The number of **first-time applicants** from **England** decreased by 9 per cent compared to last year, and the number of first-time applicants from **Northern Ireland** by 5 per cent. However, the number of first-time applicants from **Wales** increased by 4 per cent and the number of first-time applicants from **Scotland** increased by 5 per cent. The number of first-time applicants from the **EU** (excluding the UK) was 7 per cent down and the number of **non-EU** first-time applicants increased overall by 11 per cent.

The number of **reapplicants** fell for applicants domiciled in each of the four countries compared to 2017: 32 per cent for applicants resident in **England**, 17 per cent for those resident in **Northern Ireland**, 8 per cent for those resident in **Scotland**, and 19 per cent for applicants resident in **Wales**. The number of reapplicants from the **EU** (excluding the UK) fell by 28 per cent and the number of **non-EU** reapplicants by 9 per cent.

Applications from 19-year-olds

Whilst the number of 19-year-old applicants resident in **Wales** increased modestly by 4 per cent compared to last year, this includes a 28 per cent increase in the number of first-time applications from 19-year-olds and a 28 per cent decrease in the number of 19-year-old reapplicants.

By contrast, the number of 19-year-old first-time applicants resident in **England** fell almost as sharply as the number of 19-year-old reapplicants with 11 and 14 per cent respectively.

¹ No data available for Northern Ireland.

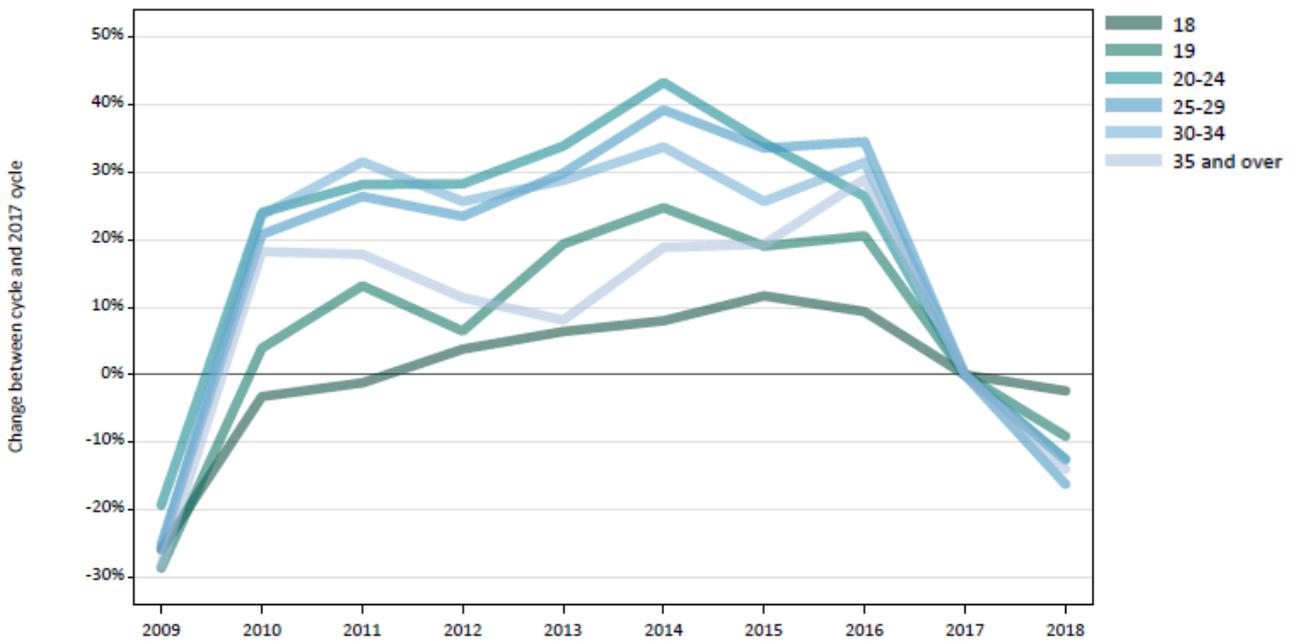
First-time applications from 19-year-olds resident in **Northern Ireland** remained the same, whilst the number of 19-year-old reapplicants fell by 17 per cent.

The number of first-time applications from 19-year-olds resident in **Scotland** increased by 14 per cent and the number of 19-year-old reapplicants fell by 3 per cent.

Applicants aged 20 and over

The number of applications from 20-24-year-olds to undergraduate nursing courses in the UK declined by 13 per cent compared to 2017; by 16 per cent for applications from 25-29 year-olds; by 13 per cent for applications from 30-34 year-olds; and by 14 per cent for applications from 35 and over.

Figure 1: Difference in applications for UK nursing courses between 2017 and 2018 by age group



The number of applicants resident in **England** aged 20 and over fell more sharply than the number of 18 and 19 year old applicants. It fell by 15 per cent for those aged 20-24; by 21 per cent for those aged 25-29; by 18 per cent for those aged 30-34; and by 19 per cent for those aged 35 and over.

The number of applicants resident in **Northern Ireland** aged 20-24 fell by 10 per cent; by 12 per cent for those aged 25-29; by 14 per cent for 30-34 year-olds; and by 11 per cent for those aged 35 and over.

By contrast, the number of applicants resident in **Scotland** aged 20-24 and of applicants aged 30-34 remained the same, and it increased by 1 per cent for those aged 25-29 and by 19 per cent for those aged 35 and over.

The number of applicants resident in **Wales** aged 20-24 decreased by 3 per cent, and for those aged 25-29 by 6 per cent. The number of applications aged 30-34 increased by 12 per cent and for those aged 35 and over by 11 per cent.

The number of applicants domiciled in the EU (excluding the UK) and domiciled outside of the EU aged 20 and over declined overall. However, it increased for those aged 30-34 from outside of the EU by 43 per cent and for the same age group domiciled in the EU by 9 per cent.

Male and female applicants

The number of **male** applicants to nursing courses fell more sharply than the rate of female applicants with a 15 and 10 per cent decrease respectively. Whilst the number of 18-year-old male applicants increased by 8 per cent, the number decreased for all other age groups, especially for men aged 25-29 (-20 per cent), men aged 30-34 (-21 per cent) and men aged 35 and over (-23 per cent).

By comparison, the number of **female** applicants aged 18 decreased moderately by 3 per cent, whilst the number of female applicants from all other age groups decreased by between 9 and 16 per cent.

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 sharpest rise (+ 21 per cent) in the number of applicants came from females aged 35 and over, whilst the sharpest decline in the number of applicants came from females aged under 18 (-27 per cent).
- Similarly, in **Wales** the number of female applicants rose most sharply for those aged 30-34 (+ 11 per cent) and those aged 35 and over (+ 15 per cent).
- In **England**, the number of applications from all age groups for both sexes decreased with the exception of male 18-year-olds for whom the number of applications increased by 16 per cent compared to 2017. The sharpest decline (-31 per cent) occurred for male applicants aged 30-34.

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