

The department received a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) requesting the following:-

- 1 On what date was Nursing placed on the list of skill shortage professions?
- 2 What criteria is employed in assessing whether or not a profession should be placed on this list?
- 3 How many work permits were issued to Nurses over the last 5 year period?
- 4 Over the same period how many work permits have been applied for?
- 5 Is a 5 year breakdown available which identifies who specifically lodged these work permit applications? - to reflect how many were applied for by recruitment agencies on behalf of an employer, and how many were applied for by the employer themselves.
- 6 Over the last 10 year period, on what dates has the Nursing profession been added to the UK Labour shortage list? For how long at a time has it remained there?
- 7 What is the specific criteria to be met before a profession will be added to the Labour Shortage list?
- 8 What is the specific consultation &/or other process followed in considering whether or not a profession is to be added to the shortage list?

Nurses Occupation - Approved Applications, Covering Periods 2000 - 2005

Year	Approvals	Total Cleared
2000	15,040	15,704
2001	24,263	25,620
2002	28,642	31,448
2003	29,490	31,275
2004	29,094	30,325
2005	22,580	23,857
Total	149,109	158,229

IND does not hold information on recruitment agencies.

All Registered Nurse and Midwives were put onto the shortage list in August 2001.

In operating the work permit arrangements, our objective is to ensure that we strike the right balance between safeguarding the interests of the resident work force and enabling UK employers to recruit or transfer skilled people from abroad in order to enable them to compete effectively in an international market.

The shortage occupation list is administered by Work Permits (UK), and posts are only added to this list where it is established that there is a recognised national shortage of these skills within the UK. Any decision to include an occupation on this list must be supported by robust evidence, such as labour market research reports or statistics.

To assist in identifying skills shortages in industry sectors Work Permits (UK) manage five Sector Advisory Panels. The membership of the Sector Advisory Panels is drawn from key independent professional/trade organisations within the sector, Sector Skills Councils, trade unions and relevant government agencies. The role of the Sector Advisory Panel is to agree a methodology relevant to the sector for identifying skills shortages, evaluate representations and research on shortages, and provide Work Permits (UK) with an independent recommendation on the posts and skills which should be included in the shortage occupation list.

The updated list can be seen on the WPUK website (www.workingintheuk.gov.uk/)

A Sector Advisory Panel does exist for the healthcare industry, and this includes nurses within its remit.