

# Working in the UK NHS

The UK NHS is a prestigious healthcare system recognised around the world. Many doctors will come from abroad to work in the UK for a number of reasons.

- **Training**
- **Family**
- **Salaries**
- **Experience**

There are many different variables included in what is available to who and how. This can depend on many things. To name a few it could be your experience, where you have previously worked, how many years in a particular speciality, your availability to start work and your qualifications.

**This information below is strictly for Doctors outside of the EU, if you are a European doctor please scroll down to the part titled "EU doctors"**

There are different routes one can secure him or herself a chance to work in the UK NHS, to name a few I have put a list below. (These contain different routes one can take)

## **PLAB**

**Professional and Linguistic Assessments Board (PLAB) test. The PLAB test is the main route by which International Medical Graduates (IMGs) demonstrate that they have the necessary skills and knowledge to practise medicine in the UK**

Complete the PLAB Part 1 & Part 2. (This usually is the longer, more conventional way for overseas doctors who do not hold a post graduate qualification. The PLAB is a route taken by doctors who are not EU citizens, it can take up to a year to complete.

Link: <http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/plab.asp>

## **Post Graduate Qualification**

This is one I see most common in Asian or Middle Eastern doctors who hold qualifications such as the MRCEM Part A, B & C. "The Royal College of Emergency Medicine". Once all parts of this qualification are successfully completed it allows the doctor to apply for their IELTS English exam, pass it with an overall 7.5 minimum score and apply for their GMC immediately after. The GMC registration after the IELTS is complete should take an average of 6-8 weeks.

There are many other post graduate qualifications that are accepted by the GMC and the one I have put above is just an example. To check the list of other post graduate qualifications and see if you are eligible please click this link which will take you to the official GMC website and have a list of acceptable qualifications. [http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/registration\\_applications/acceptable\\_postgraduate\\_qualifications.asp](http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/registration_applications/acceptable_postgraduate_qualifications.asp)

## MTI Training Scheme “Medical Training Initiative”

The MTI scheme allows International Medical Graduates (IMGs) to come to the UK for a maximum of two years to train within the National Health Service (NHS). IMGs benefit greatly from the knowledge, skills and techniques learned within the NHS and can use them to improve the level of patient care in their home country on their return. In addition, UK hospitals who provide a placement for IMGs benefit from increased workforce capacity and the skills and knowledge that IMGs can share with their UK colleagues.

During the placement, IMGs follow a similar assessment process to UK trainees. The expectations of IMGs in terms of their performance and targets should be based on the same standards as UK trainees at ST2 level initially, until, with support from the hospital, they move to ST3–4 level for the majority of their placement.

The MTI process contains several steps and involves many parties. It requires the continuous cooperation between applicants, the MTI Lead, hospitals, the GMC and the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges. Efficient communication between these parties reduces the risk of delays in placing MTI doctors.

## If you have a post graduate qualification that is accepted by the GMC

The post graduate qualification is the most common thing I have seen regarding non EU doctors coming to the UK NHS. If you view the GMC and notice that your post graduate qualification is accepted, then this is what is required after.

## IELTS English Exam

### International English Language Testing System (IELTS) requirement guidance

This sets out the criteria that your IELTS certificate must meet to satisfy us that you have the necessary knowledge of English.

## What are the criteria?

You will need to book this in yourself. For us to accept your IELTS certificate it must show:

- that you got a score of at least 7.0 in each testing area (speaking, listening, reading and writing), and an overall score of 7.5.
- that you got these scores in the same test
- that you took the academic version of the test
- the original stamp and test report form (TRF) number (we use this to validate all certificates)

## How long is it valid for?

IELTS certificates are valid for two years.

If you are taking the PLAB test, it must be valid on the day you sit PLAB part 1. **Or**

If you are applying for registration with a licence to practise it must be valid when we approve your application.

**Please note that achievement of IELTS for the purpose of applying for registration with the GMC may not be acceptable evidence of your English language skills for the purpose of obtaining a UK Visa. We recommend you visit the [UK Visa and Immigration website](#) to check their requirements**

## Once you have completed your IELTS exam and passed

You will then need to apply for your GMC registration. Here is a link to the website to guide you through it. After you have successfully completed your IELTS. It will then take you roughly 6-8 weeks to get your registration. If you are a Non EU doctor this will give you time to interview for a post, get a job offer and the hospital can sponsor you a COS (Certificate of sponsorship) for a Tier 2 VISA once your GMC is complete.

## **This information below is strictly for EU Doctors only (If you are from outside of the EU please only go by the information above)**

Doctors that are EU citizens will not need to go the same route as those who are not EU citizens. If this is a category you fall under then you will only need to apply for the GMC registration and complete your IELTS English test.

You can actually complete your GMC process before you pass your IELTS exam, however you will not be given the license to practice until you have successfully completed the English exam.

The same rules apply in that you must score an overall 7.5 to be eligible to work in the UK, however there are a few ways you can get around this and potentially be eligible for exemption of the test.

## Knowledge of English – European doctors

When you apply for registration with a licence to practise (or your first licence if you've previously held registration), the GMC need to be satisfied you have the necessary knowledge of English to communicate effectively so you do not put the safety of your patients at risk **before** we grant your licence. Communicating includes speaking, reading, writing and listening.

They will look at the information in your application and **may** ask you to give us evidence that you have the necessary knowledge of English.

You can read their [detailed guidance](#), including the legislation which gives them the powers to ask for evidence and the types of evidence they may accept, for background and more information.

If they ask you for this evidence, and:

- you do not send it to them
- or**
- They are not satisfied with it

They will approve you for registration **without** a licence. **You will not be able to practise medicine in the UK without a licence.**

You should send them your evidence when they ask for it. You **must** submit it at least 10 working days before your ID check. If it meets their requirements, they will grant you both registration and a licence.

If you do not submit your evidence before your ID check, the only evidence they will be able to verify on the day of your ID check is a valid IELTS certificate that meets their criteria.

**OR**

You can make a separate application for a licence to practise after your registration is granted at the ID check. You will still need to give them the evidence of your knowledge of English if we asked you for it before.

There are different ways in which doctors may be able to demonstrate their knowledge of English.

They will consider evidence of knowledge of English only where it meets their criteria:

- Is recent (less than two years old at the point of application)
- Clearly shows you can read, write and interact with patients, relatives and healthcare professionals in English
- Can be verified by them through contact with recognised medical institutions, regulators or other official bodies:

**The easiest way to do this is to take the academic version of the IELTS test and meet their minimum scores.**

They accept:

- A valid IELTS certificate that meets their criteria
- OR**
- Where your PMQ is less than two years old at the point you apply for registration, an original letter or certificate from the institution where you qualified that confirms:

A) All of the course, including clinical activities, were taught and examined solely in English.

B) At least 75% of any clinical interaction, including personal contact with patients, their families and other healthcare professionals, which took place as part of the course of study, was conducted in English,

C) The date you passed your final examination.

**See the list of universities from which they will not accept English language evidence.**

**Please note that above applies only if your PMQ is less than two years old at the point of application.**

**OR**

- Original references from all your employers over the last two years, outlining your English language capability in a medical capacity, in a country where English is the first and native language.

**OR**

- Other evidence that meets their criteria, considered at our discretion. For example, a pass in a language test for registration with a medical regulatory authority in a country where the first and native language is English

If it is older than two years we will ask you for evidence that you have practised as a medical practitioner in a country, where English is the first and native language, immediately preceding your application for registration. You should give them original references from all your employers over the last two years outlining your English language capability.

**OR**

An offer of employment from a UK healthcare organisation which is a designated body (please check their list of designated bodies) and where they receive:

- A copy of the offer in writing
- A completed English language reference for doctors with UK job offers from the appointing clinician which includes confirmation from the Responsible Officer that the recruitment process has made sure that the applicant has the necessary knowledge of English to practise safely in the UK.

**Please note that the above does not apply if you have previously taken the IELTS test and failed to achieve their current minimum scores.**

For more information, please check our website at [www.vobismedical.com](http://www.vobismedical.com)

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