

## **Policy for handling registration applications from forcibly displaced persons**

1. As the regulator of nursing and midwifery professionals in the UK, it's our responsibility to maintain the register of professionals eligible to practise. This involves ensuring that all registrants have the right knowledge, skills and training to practise safely and effectively, which we achieve by setting clear registration requirements and standards.
2. From time to time, the NMC may receive registration applications from nursing and midwifery professionals that have been forcibly displaced and who may encounter difficulty providing the evidence to satisfy our registration requirements in the usual way.
3. This policy details how the NMC handles registration applications from forcibly displaced persons and what applicants can expect from us. It sets out:
  - 3.1. Who is covered by the policy, including what we mean by international protection and forcibly displaced persons, and who is eligible for support.
  - 3.2. Our approach towards handling registration applications from eligible applicants.
  - 3.3. What alternative evidence we may accept from eligible applicants, when it is safe and reasonable to do so.
4. Our registration requirements are key to maintaining the integrity of our register. This means that any alternative evidence submitted must demonstrate that the person seeking admission meets our registration requirements for safe, kind and effective practice. We will only consider alternative evidence in exceptional circumstances and when it is safe and proportionate to do so. If we are not confident that the alternative evidence submitted is sufficient, then we will not be able to admit applicants onto the register.
5. Eligible applicants must therefore be able to demonstrate that they are forcibly displaced, and that they have a genuine need for further support. Individuals that cannot demonstrate their eligibility will not be provided with further support and must satisfy our registration requirements in the usual way.

### **Who this policy covers**

6. Forcibly displaced persons means anyone that is 'forced to move across borders, due to armed conflict, persecution, terrorism, human rights violations and abuses,

violence, the adverse effects of climate change, natural disasters, development projects or a combination of these factors'.<sup>1</sup>

7. This policy covers applications from:

- 7.1. People that have been granted international protection in the UK, including asylum and indefinite leave to remain (refugee status, humanitarian protection or discretionary leave).
- 7.2. People who do not have international protection, but who might otherwise be considered forcibly displaced, and can demonstrate why they may find it difficult to provide evidence in support of their registration application in the usual way.

## Overview

8. Nurses and midwives in the UK and nursing associates in England must be registered with us to practice. In order to register, all overseas qualified professionals are required to satisfy our international registration requirements.<sup>2</sup>
9. We understand that applicants with international protection and other forcibly displaced persons may experience difficulty satisfying some of our registration requirements. This may be because they cannot obtain certain documents that we require to demonstrate their eligibility for registration or because we cannot verify the evidence submitted with the appropriate third parties.
10. Our values underpin everything that we do and help inform how we handle all registration applications. Our forcibly displaced persons policy embodies our values in the following ways:
  - 10.1. **We're fair:** taking proportionate, robust and evidence-based decisions about a person's registration application is central to being a fair regulator. This policy sets out the steps we will take to help ensure that all eligible applicants have equal opportunity to join our register.
  - 10.2. **We're kind:** treating people with kindness and compassion is at the heart of our this policy. We act with kindness by considering the individual circumstances of forcibly displaced applicants, and by taking into account alternative evidence where possible.
  - 10.3. **We're ambitious:** this policy demonstrates our ambition to always improve, and to identify new and innovative ways of working that will do the best for the public, our registrants and applicants.
  - 10.4. **We're collaborative:** in recognition of the difficulties forcibly displaced persons can face, we are committed to working in collaboration with eligible applicants, and those supporting them, to help them satisfy our registration

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/forcibly-displaced-people/>

<sup>2</sup> [NMC International Registration Application Process: step-by-step guidance](#)

requirements through alternative means, where it is safe and proportionate to do so.

## **The international applications process**

11. To join our register, all applicants who gained their qualification overseas must satisfy our registration requirements. This includes:
  - 11.1. completing an initial eligibility and qualification application
  - 11.2. taking the Test of Competence
  - 11.3. completing the registration application.
12. Over the course of their application, applicants are asked to provide us with different pieces of information and evidence so that we can confirm they are eligible to register and that they have the skills, knowledge and training to practice safely in the UK.
13. Our eligibility and qualification application process requires applicants to:
  - 13.1. provide evidence of their identity
  - 13.2. upload a copy of their original qualification certificate
  - 13.3. if never registered in their country of training, provide contact details of the education institution that awarded the relevant qualification
  - 13.4. if previously or currently registered, provide us with the name of the regulator and a copy of their registration certificate
  - 13.5. if never registered, provide us with the name of the regulator in their country of training.
14. Upon submission, the International Registration Team will then contact the relevant regulator to verify whether a person was registered or that their qualification would allow them to register in that country. If a person has not registered before, we will also contact the applicant's education institution to verify their qualification would lead to registration.
15. When completing their registration application, applicants will also need to supply:
  - 15.1. evidence that they meet our health requirements. This includes a self-declaration and a supporting declaration from a registered medical practitioner
  - 15.2. evidence that they meet our character requirements. This includes a self-declaration; police clearances and DBS certificates; and a supporting

declaration from an appropriate third party, to verify that they meet our character requirements

- 15.3. evidence that they meet our English language requirements
- 15.4. confirmation that they have, or will have, an appropriate indemnity arrangement.

## **What support we provide**

### *Information and guidance*

16. Applicants who have been forcibly displaced should contact our [international registration team](#) before starting their online application, to notify us of their situation.
17. A named assessment officer will be allocated to the case and will provide the applicant with further information about how our registration process works, what they need to do, and the support available to them.

### *Initial eligibility*

18. Nursing and midwifery professionals who have been forcibly displaced may have difficulty providing us with the documents required to evidence their eligibility for registration such as their original qualification certificate, a copy of their registration certificate if applicable, or supporting character declarations. This may be because documents have been either lost or destroyed, or because the institution with the information is no longer in existence or is refusing to cooperate.
19. In this situation we take a pragmatic approach, and our international registration team will work in collaboration with the applicant to develop a portfolio of possible alternative evidence for assessment.

### *Verification*

20. Where applicants do have the appropriate evidence, we may not be able to verify the documents submitted with the appropriate third party. This may be because the organisation is no longer in existence or because the applicant could be put at risk from us doing so.
21. In these cases, with the applicant's consent, we may contact third parties on the applicant's behalf provided that it is safe for us to do so. Where we are unable to verify documents in the standard way, we will look for alternative pieces of evidence to provide us with the assurance required.

## **How FDP applications are processed**

22. The flowchart in Annexe A provides an overview of how applications from FDPs are assessed and the different support provided at each stage of the application process.

## *Evidence of International protection status*

23. To be eligible for support, applicants will need to show that they have international protection status.
24. Applicants should contact our [international registration team](#) before starting their online application to notify us of their situation and to provide us with evidence of their protection status.
25. They will need to provide the assessment officer allocated to their case with evidence from the Home Office confirming that they have international protection. This may include, but is not limited to, one of the categories listed below.
  - 25.1. refugee status (having been recognised as a refugee under the 1951 United Nations Convention)
  - 25.2. indefinite leave to remain (with refugee status)
  - 25.3. indefinite leave to enter (with refugee status)
  - 25.4. exceptional leave to remain with refugee status (granted prior to 1 April 2003)
  - 25.5. humanitarian leave to remain (also known as humanitarian protection, granted on or after 1 April 2003)
  - 25.6. discretionary leave to remain with refugee status (with no restrictions on working, granted on or after 1 April 2003)
  - 25.7. leave to remain under any family settlement visa (family member with refugee status).
26. Applicants who have been granted UK resettlement either themselves or as a result of being a relevant spouse / partner to a person granted UK resettlement will also be eligible for support. This may include, but is not limited to, the following schemes:
  - 26.1. Afghanistan Ex-Gratia Scheme (EGS)
  - 26.2. Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP)
  - 26.3. Afghanistan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS)
  - 26.4. Ukraine Family Scheme
  - 26.5. Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme
  - 26.6. Ukraine Extension Scheme.

27. For the most up-to-date information on the different forms of international protection granted in the UK, please visit the [Home Office's website](#).
28. We recognise that people who do not have international protection may also experience difficulty demonstrating they meet our registration requirements in the usual way.
29. Therefore, other applicants who do not fall into any of the categories listed above but who may otherwise be considered forcibly displaced may be eligible for support if they can provide information which demonstrates why they may find it difficult to provide supporting evidence in the usual way.
30. Applicants already residing in the UK must be lawfully resident. Persons residing illegally in the UK will not be eligible for support..
31. We advise all applicants to contact an appropriate support organisation prior to submitting an application with us for further information and guidance about the application process and eligibility for support. A list of recognised support organisations is included in Annexe B.
32. Once their status has been confirmed, the assessment officer allocated to their case will work directly with the applicant to help develop a portfolio of alternative evidence for assessment and / or will work with the applicant to contact third parties where it is safe to do so.

### *Alternative evidence: eligibility and qualification application*

33. Any alternative evidence provided must demonstrate that the person seeking admission is meets our registration requirements for safe, kind and effective practice.
34. The table below sets out some examples of the types of alternative evidence we may accept if a person has difficulty providing us with the usual information required as part of their eligibility and qualification application.
35. We aim to take a flexible and pragmatic approach towards accepting alternative evidence, which takes into account the individual circumstances of the applicant.
36. This list below is therefore not exhaustive and we may accept other forms of alternative evidence when it is safe and proportionate to do so. Applicants do not need to provide us with each of the items listed in each section, though they are encouraged to provide us with as much information as possible so that we can make a fair assessment of their eligibility.
37. Acting with delegated responsibility, the Assistant Registrar is responsible for assessing each application and for making a decision about whether an application may be progressed onto the next stage.

38. Each application will be assessed on a case by case basis. With support from General Counsel, the Assistant Registrar will have ultimate discretion about whether the alternative evidence submitted provides us with an appropriate level of assurance required.

<b>Evidence Required</b>	<b>Possible alternative evidence</b>
Passport as evidence of identity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biometric residence card.</li> <li>• Refugee ID Card.</li> <li>• Home Office Travel Document such as a refugee travel document.</li> <li>• An international travel document, issued from an appropriate authority of the applicants' country of residence.</li> </ul>
Copy of original qualification certificate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from the applicant's education institution confirming that they completed the relevant education and training, and that they would be eligible for registration in that country.</li> <li>• Copy of course/academic transcripts.</li> <li>• Letter from the regulator in the applicant's country of training confirming that this qualification would lead to registration.</li> <li>• If previously registered, confirmation from the regulator in the applicant's country of training that they were previously registered.</li> <li>• Evidence of past employment in a registered role that requires qualification, such as references from past employers.</li> </ul>
Copy of registration certificate (if previously registered).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter / confirmation from the regulator that they applicant was</li> </ul>

Evidence Required	Possible alternative evidence
	<p>previously registered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from the applicant's education institution confirming that they completed the relevant education and training, and that they would be eligible for registration in that country.</li> <li>• Evidence of past employment in a registered role that requires qualification, such as references from past employers.</li> </ul>
<p>Verification from regulator that the applicant was previously registered, or that that their qualification would make them eligible for registration in that country.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmation from the education institution that they have completed the relevant training and that this would result in registration in that country.</li> <li>• Evidence of past employment in a registered role that requires qualification, such as references from past employers.</li> <li>• If previously registered in another country, confirmation of registration from the regulator in that country.</li> <li>• Letter from another organisation or government body responsible for overseeing training, confirming that the applicant has been registered.</li> </ul>
<p>Verification from the education institution that the applicant has completed the relevant training and that they would be eligible for registration in that country.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of course /academic transcripts.</li> <li>• If previously registered, confirmation from the regulator that the applicant was previously registered.</li> <li>• If previously registered in another country, confirmation of registration from the regulator in</li> </ul>



Evidence Required	Possible alternative evidence
	<p>that country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of past employment in a registered role that requires qualification, such as references from past employers.</li> </ul>

39. Once the alternative evidence has been gathered, the international registrations team manager or case officer will refer the application to an Assistant Registrar to review whether the evidence meets our requirements.

40. The case referral will outline the steps taken to obtain the standard information required and provide an overview of where alternative evidence has been provided.

41. The Assistant Registrar will consider the evidence submitted and decide whether the alternative evidence provides us with the level of assurance required, and whether the applicant may progress onto the next stage of the application process. We will aim to make a decision within 14 days of the alternative evidence being submitted.

42. If accepted, the applicant will be able to progress onto the next stage of our international registration process and will be invited to complete the NMC Test of Competence.

43. If not accepted, the applicant will not be able to progress to the next stage and their application will be closed.

#### *Alternative evidence: health and character*

44. Applicants who successfully complete their eligibility and qualification application will be asked to complete their registration application. This includes providing further information about their health and character, which involves completing a number of declarations.

45. The table below sets out some examples of the types of alternative evidence we may accept if a person has difficulty providing us with the health and character information usually required.

Evidence required	Possible alternative evidence
<p>Police clearances and/or DBS certificates from all of the countries the applicant has lived in for 12 months, in the ten years prior to making their application since being over the age of 18.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most up-to-date police clearance and / or DBS certificate as possible.</li> <li>• Exit visa.</li> </ul>

<p>Supporting character declaration from the applicant's previous regulator.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting character declaration from the applicant's most recent employer, if they worked in a healthcare setting within the three years before submitting the application.</li> <li>• Supporting character declaration from their education institution that awarded the qualification.</li> <li>• Supporting character declaration from an NMC registrant who has known the applicant for at least a year and who has been in contact with the applicant in the last six months before submitting the application</li> <li>• Supporting character declaration from another UK-regulated healthcare professional who has known the applicant for at least a year and who has been in contact with the applicant in the last six months before submitting the application.</li> <li>• Supporting character declaration from an NMC recognised UK refugee organisation, with whom you have worked for over 1 year.</li> <li>• Supporting character declaration or certificate of good conduct from another organisation or government body responsible for overseeing training.</li> </ul>
--	---

46. Once all of the evidence has been gathered and the registration application is complete, the application will be referred to an Assistant Registrar for a decision.

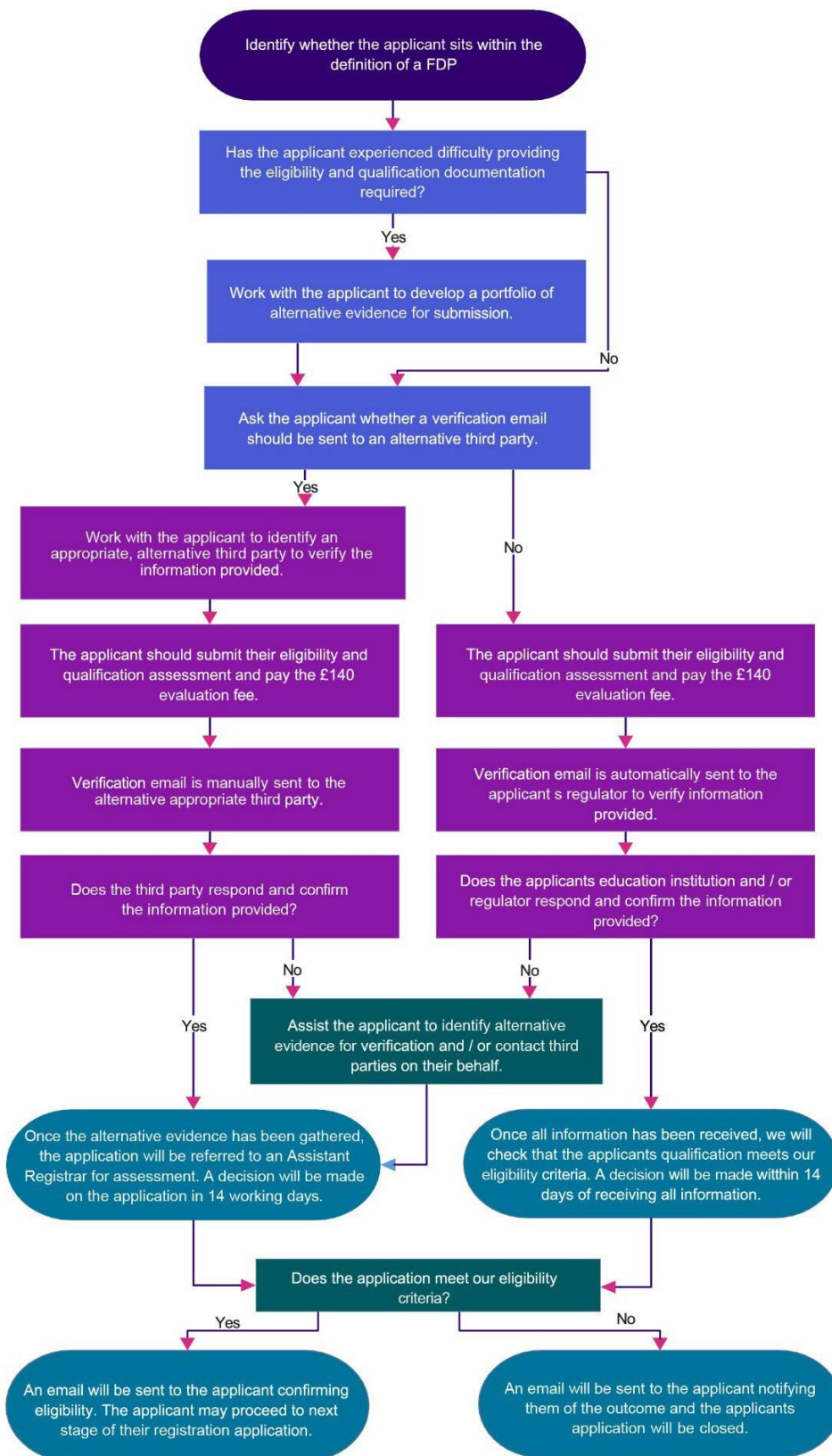
47. The Assistant Registrar will consider the evidence submitted and make a decision about whether the applicant's health and character means they are capable of safe and effective practice and whether they are able to join our register.

48. If not accepted, the applicant will be contacted by email and will be advised of the next steps available to them.

49. Applicants may appeal our decision on applications for entry where the refusal concerns their good health or character, or a requirement to undergo an English language test. An appeal must be completed within 28 days of the decision.

Date of Publication: 16 January 2023

## Annexe A: how registration applications are processed



## Annexe B: Additional support

Below is a list of refugee support organisations who will be able to provide further information and guidance to applicants about the application process. They will also be able to help with wider support, such as work and career advice and personal or practical support.

- [Building Bridges Programme](#): is an NHS-funded partnership for all refugee health professionals living in London including nurses and midwives. The partnership provides careers advice, funding, language training, and support towards registration.
- [REACHE](#): supports refugee and asylum-seeking doctors, nurses and allied health professionals into NHS employment through a free integrated English language (OET) and clinical programme based at Salford Royal Hospital. It provides comprehensive pastoral support, CV advice, interview practice, preparation for the NMC (CBT & OSCE) and the GMC (PLAB) registration exams, supervised clinical placements and training in cultural and professional adaptation to the NHS.
- [RefuAid](#): provides support to refugees and people seeking asylum and helps them to gain access to language tuition, education, finance and employment.
- [Refugee Assessment and Guidance Unit \(RAGU\)](#): is a partner in the Building Bridges Programme and is an NHS-funded partnership. Based at the London Metropolitan University, RAGU provides careers advice and employability and professional development training and support for all refugee health professionals including nurses and midwives.
- [The Refugee Council](#): is a charity that works with refugees and people seeking asylum in the UK. They provide crisis advice, mental health counselling and practical support to help people to settle and integrate into their new community.
- [Talent Beyond Boundaries \(TBB\)](#): is a charity that lifts displaced people out of displacement through skilled employment and migration pathways. TBB works in collaboration with NHS England, NHS Employers and the Department of Health and Social Care, to place overseas trained nurses directly into UK nursing posts or pathways into nursing.