



Strand Nurses Bureau

A Guide to Living and Working in the U.K.

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Section 1

Introduction

Strand Nurses Bureau was established in 1974 and for most of this time has specialised in finding work for Australian and New Zealand nurses on working holidays. We are very aware of the needs and desires of nurses wanting to travel while having to work. As a consequence our agency is able to accommodate nurses in this category by offering variety and flexibility of work with excellent pay rates and holiday pay.

Excellent nursing training, work ethic, friendliness and flexibility have resulted in significant demand from hospitals, private clients in their own homes and doctors in the UK for Australian and New Zealand nurses.

Strand's professionalism, combined with its Australian and New Zealand agency staff, has made Strand Nurses Bureau one of the most highly regarded agencies in London. We have an excellent reputation and have an exclusive, private home-care client base, in addition to a variety of other clients. This results in extremely interesting positions, remarkable opportunities and great variety of work through our agency.

The variety of work we are able to offer includes opportunities with NHS and private hospitals, GP practices, corporations, industrial sites, district nursing, private home-care, vaccination programmes and others in London and UK wide. There are also live-in positions available as well as opportunities to escort clients abroad.

Over recent years, the National Health Service (NHS) has created the "National Agency Framework". The National Agency Framework has approved and agreed contracts with certain reputable agencies to provide agency staff to NHS Hospitals and Trusts. Strand Nurses Bureau is proud to be one of those agencies; therefore we are able to offer you hospital work with many of the major central London hospitals. We have recently been awarded 'Platinum' status, the highest compliance level attainable on the NHS National Agency Framework– recognising the high quality service we provide to our clients.

Strand Nurses Bureau provides a professional but personalised and friendly service to all its nurses. Our branch consultants are able to provide accurate information, support and assistance with your plans and preparation to work in the UK. If this is about to be your first experience of working abroad, the prospect can be quite daunting. With our help, this need not be the case.

Section 2

Working as an 'Agency Worker'

Working with Strand Nurses Bureau, you will work as an "agency worker" thus providing flexibility to fit in with your travel plans.

Work can be provided to:

- All qualified nurses who obtain registration with the NMC (Nursing and Midwifery Council) in the United Kingdom and have an appropriate work visa
- All qualified nurses (including enrolled nurses) from abroad who are not registered or are unable to register in the United Kingdom and have an appropriate work visa
- All auxiliaries/carers with a minimum of 12 month's experience in hospitals, nursing homes or equivalent who will be categorised as "Health Care Assistants" and have an appropriate work visa

No contract is required between the two parties when working for an agency. An agency worker is only required to sign the Terms and Conditions of the agency which are concerned with code of conduct etc. Signing the Terms & Conditions does not bind or obligate the agency worker to specified conditions such as contracted hours or place of work. Agency workers are able to choose when and where they work dependent on the work available.

Agency work therefore provides a great deal of flexibility and freedom to come and go as you please and is also an excellent way to gain experience in a variety of settings. Providing you are qualified to do so, you can try new areas of work or you may want to gain further experience in your specialist field. Either way, you can choose the amount of hours you work and you can vary these week by week to suit your requirements. This is a perfect fit with travel plans and suits the holiday worker extremely well. Strand Nurses Bureau has looked after the needs of holiday workers since it was established in 1974 so we understand the needs and preferences in these circumstances.

Agency staff often choose to work long hours over a short period then travel for several weeks at a time. If you do this, there is no need to undergo a completely new registration process after travel – just call into the office and complete a simple form to bring us up to date with any change of details and let us know what you want in the way of work. You will just need to supply references from any work/course of study you have undertaken during this period of absence.

Strand Nurses Bureau has an enormous variety of agency work available – both in London and across the U.K. Strand is also one of the largest providers and most exclusive agency for private home-care in London.

Section 3

Variety of work available

a) Hospitals – NHS and Private

- **Specialist nurses** - ITU in all areas, Paediatric ITU, Neonatal ITU, Recovery, Theatres and A&E.
- **E Grade** - RNs in charge, RSCNs, RMNs, HDU, CCU and any nurse with specific experience or training relevant to particular requests
- **D Grade** - general duties for Registered General Nurses
- **B Grade** - enrolled nurses from abroad or qualified nurses who are not registered with the NMC in the UK (classified as Auxiliaries Trained Abroad or ATA's)
- **A Grade** - auxiliaries who have hospital experience and/or basic training and must be able to do observations, have proof of a recent manual handling course and administer basic general nursing care

Duties in hospitals are typically as follows:

- Early shifts: 07:30 hours to 13:30 hours / 07:30 hours to 15:30 hours
- Late shifts: 13:30 hours to 21:30 hours / 15:30 hours to 21:30 hours
- Night duties : 20:30 hours to 08:00 hours / 21:00 hours to 08:00 hours
- Long days : 08:00 hours to 20:00 hours

(Times shown are approximate and given for guidance only; specific shift times are determined by the client and will be confirmed at time of booking)

We frequently have ongoing positions of weeks/months within large central London hospital wards, theatres, angiography clinics, outpatient's departments, x-ray, lithotripsy, phlebotomy etc. for RNs and ATA's working on an agency basis. This provides an alternative to working in different hospitals/wards every day if you prefer some stability.

b) Practice Nursing

- In NHS and Private GP Practices
- With corporate clients

c) Occupational Health

- Corporate clients
- Industry

d) District Nursing (Community)

- In NHS Healthcare Trusts

e) Nursing, Care and Residential Homes

- Independent
- Group owned
- Those with geriatric and/or psychiatric units

f) Private home-care

- Strand has a wide range of private clients in their own home for Registered Nurses, ATA's and auxiliaries with experience

Section 4

Flexible Working

When working as an agency nurse it is entirely up to you as to how little or how much you work, the times you want to work and where you want to work. This allows you all the flexibility you need for your travel and financial plans.

All we ask in return is that you to let us know what you prefer when registering with Strand Nurses Bureau and communicate your availability to your consultant in the office, according to a system which will be explained to you when you register with us. For much of the time we are able to find work to suit your needs and preferences.

This system allows you freedom and flexibility without having to worry about missing work. There is no need to sit by the phone although most people have mobile phones nowadays making contact more instantaneous and effective.

Section 5

Eligibility to work in the UK

To work with us, you must have the following:

Nurses

- NMC registration or your original nursing registration certificate from your own country, which will entitle you to work as an ATA (auxiliary trained abroad) until UK registration is granted. (Please note that Strand Nurses Bureau do not offer supervised placements or adaptation courses).
- A current work permit, UK passport or appropriate visa (where applicable).
- Proof of hepatitis B and immunity with titre levels, current tetanus, proof of TB, diphtheria, polio, rubella and chicken pox immunity.
- Proof of hepatitis C immunity.
- A current chest X-ray is required if entering the UK from some countries, taken within the last 6 months. Please check with the British Consulate in your country to see if this is required.
- A certified copy of your police clearance (if entering the UK, taken within the last 6 months)
- 2 references – You will need to provide the names of two referees, to whom you have reported, including your present or most recent employer, whom we may approach for a reference (not relatives or friends). A minimum of 12 months history must be covered.* (Business address to be given).

***Referees must be a previous/current supervisor/manager/employer.**

Health Care Assistants

- A current enhanced CRB disclosure or police clearance if from abroad
- At least 12 months experience
- Moving and handling training (we can provide updates)
- First Aid certificate (we can provide an appropriate training course)

PASSPORTS & VISA'S

PASSPORTS:

Unless you have a British or European Union passport, you will need a visa to work in the UK. Below we give you a brief overview of the visa options and requirements.

You should investigate your options thoroughly and further detail regards the regulation of visas can be found by visiting www.ukvisas.gov.uk (or in Australia on www.ukinaustralia.fco.gov.uk). Please ensure that you check all details carefully with the British High Commission before making any travel arrangements.

Many countries won't let you in with less than six months validity remaining on your passport, so check your passport has plenty of time remaining before you leave home.

a) British passport

A British passport entitles you to work on an agency or permanent basis, to come and go as you please and there are no age restrictions. If your father was born in the UK this entitles you to a British passport. If you were born after 1983 and your mother was born in the UK this may also entitle you to a British passport. Please check with the British Consulate for up to date details.

b) EU (European Union) passport

An EU passport entitles you to work on an agency or permanent basis, to come and go as you please and there are no age restrictions. Please refer to the relevant consulate regards your eligibility. Each country's rules vary and eligibility cannot be based on UK eligibility.

Anyone from the EU countries listed below does not require a work permit but will have to produce a passport as proof of citizenship.

Austria	Belgium	Cyprus	Czech Republic	Denmark	Estonia
Finland	France	Germany	Greece	Hungary	Iceland
Ireland	Italy	Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Malta
Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Slovakia	Slovenia
Spain	Sweden	UK			

VISA OPTIONS

a) Tier 5 – Youth Mobility Scheme

In mid-2008, the Home Office announced changes to the working holiday-maker scheme. This ever-popular visa has been replaced by Tier 5 of the UK's 5-tier Points Based System (PBS), where it is now known as the Youth Mobility Scheme (YMS).

The main changes to the YMS are:

- You may work for the full 24-month period
- You must intend to take regular employment, not to engage in business or to provide services as a professional sportsperson
- You are not able to switch into other employment categories from within the UK
- You may not switch to or apply for Tier 5 if you have previously spent time in the UK as a working holidaymaker in the past

The requirements for a person seeking entry clearance under YMS are that he/she :

- Is a citizen of a nation on the list of participating countries, (currently Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Monaco)
- Is aged from 18 to 30 (or is not yet 31 when given permission to enter the UK, even if you travel after your 31st birthday)
- Is unmarried, or married to a person who meets the requirements for entry under any of the UK immigration categories (at the same time)
- Is able and intends to maintain and accommodate themselves independently without recourse to public funds, where the level of funds required is £1,600

- Has the means to pay for their homeward on onward journey
- Intends to leave the UK at the end of the YMS

b) Ancestry Visa

This Visa allows Commonwealth citizens with strong ancestral ties (to a British-born grandparent) to become eligible to live in the UK and perform unrestricted work for a period of up to five years from their arrival. This Visa carries fewer restrictions than the YMS. You must apply for this visa prior to coming to the UK. If you comply with certain criteria you will be eligible to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain after being in the UK for five years on an Ancestry Visa. The criteria include not leaving the UK for a certain period of time and you must have made every attempt to remain in continuous employment for this period.

c) Tier 1 – General

The Highly Skilled Migrant Programme (HSMP) was replaced by Tier 1 of the PBS in June 2008. It was a UK innovation since it was the first scheme designed to attract people to the UK, whereas all previous legislation had restricted entry. The initial qualifying criteria for HSMP were extremely high and made the original HSMP unobtainable for most potential applicants. The criteria changed in June 2008 to make the scheme more realistic, where the scheme is now determined on a points system for age, qualification and earnings over the 12 months prior to leaving. The criteria are an attempt to attract young, skilled professionals from overseas, where the visa is issued for a period of 24 months in the first instance and is followed by a two-year extension. On completion of the total five years, you can make an application for Indefinite Leave for Remain, (ILR).

Qualifying criteria: to qualify for this scheme, candidates have to demonstrate that they can achieve the current point threshold. Points are allocated on the following criteria:

- Age
- Qualifications
- Past earnings
- UK experience

Additionally, all potential candidates also have to demonstrate the following mandatory requirements:

- Ability to speak English
- Ability to support and maintain themselves without recourse to public funds (certain fixed amount apply depending on your location at the time of application)

(Note: the criteria for South Africans are now much stricter)

d) Tier 2 – Skilled Sponsored Workers

Work Permits were replaced by Tier 2 of the PBS in November 2008. Employers must hold a licence issued by the Home Office permitting them to issue Certificates of Sponsorship to eligible migrants.

Please note that Strand Nurses Bureau cannot issue Certificates of Sponsorship.

e) Marriage Visa

If you marry in the UK, you may be able to change your visa status to become a dependant on your spouse's status. This includes marriage to a British or EU national or someone with settlement status in the UK. The Home Office requires you to apply for a 'Certificate of Approval' to marry in the UK. If you married outside the UK, accompanying spouses and dependants of British citizens, or persons with UK settlement status who wish to travel to the UK, must seek to gain entry clearance prior to entering the UK. Other situations whereby spouses and dependants may apply for conditions in line with their partner/supporter include persons holding an Ancestry Visa or Student Visa. Again, these must be applied for prior to your departure to the UK. If you comply with certain criteria you will be eligible to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain after being in the UK for a certain amount of time on the Marriage Visa.

f) Unmarried Partners Visa

Legislation allows unmarried partners of British or European citizens or someone with settlement status in the UK to apply for dependency, provided they have been in a relationship akin to marriage for a minimum of two years. Documentary proof is needed. If you comply with certain criteria you will be eligible to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain after being in the UK for a certain amount of time on the Unmarried Partners Visa.

g) Right of Abode

If you or one of your parents were born in the UK you can apply to register as a British citizen, where Right of Abode is not needed.

h) Naturalisation

This is the process of becoming a British citizen. If you are married to a British citizen you may apply after three years of living in the UK – without having left for more than 270 days in the three-year period – and if you hold Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) status. If you qualify under the five year residency criteria (based on Ancestry, Marriage to an EU national, Tier 1, etc.), you may apply after five years of living in the UK – without having left for more than 450 days in the five-year period – and if you hold ILR status for at least 12 months. Essentially this makes it six years to qualify for residency.

i) Student Visa

The requirements for a Student Visa are that you are enrolled in a full-time course of study, which is either at degree level of leading towards a degree (one year or longer) that involves no less than 15 hours of organised study per week where the study is held at the college during daytime hours, Monday to Friday. This excludes study via correspondence, evening or weekend classes. Student Visas must now be applied for in your home country before departing for the UK.

Some Visa Tips

- a. You should not pay for any travel arrangements if a delay or refusal of your visa application will result in losing money
- b. For security, it is strongly advised that you send your application by registered mail or with a reputable courier firm. Request this for the return of any documents as well.
- c. If you are married, have children under 18 and your dependants intend to join you, separate applications must be submitted to a British High Commission overseas. You'll need to produce evidence that you can maintain and accommodate them without recourse to public funds or state benefits.

Section 6

Living in the UK

a) Tax & National Insurance

When working in the UK, you will usually have to pay tax and National Insurance on your wages. How much you pay and how you pay it, depend on:

- how much you earn, and
- whether you work for someone (Strand Nurses Bureau) or are regarded as 'Self Employed' (see below)

You pay:

- **Tax** for services like education and healthcare, and
- **National Insurance** to get certain benefits, and a state pension (if you remain in the UK for 5 years or more)

When you work for Strand Nurses Bureau, you are deemed to be 'employed' for the purposes of tax and National Insurance and we will take tax and National Insurance directly from your wages and pay it to the Inland Revenue. At the end of each tax year (5 April) we will give you a *P60 End of Year Certificate* which shows your total pay, tax and National Insurance for the year.

If you work as a UK Registered Nurse (NMC registration) and work with private clients in their own home, you will be deemed to be 'self-employed'. In this instance, Strand will not deduct tax and National Insurance directly from your wages and you will be personally liable for paying the tax and National Insurance at the end of each tax year for this particular element of earnings. This means you will have to complete a tax assessment form. If all your work is taxed (employed) it is not necessary to do tax assessment forms each year.

Once in the UK you will require a National Insurance Number. It is used to keep track of how much National Insurance you have paid. If you do not have a National Insurance Number, you will need to apply for one. Phone the Jobcentre Plus National Insurance number allocation service on 0845 600 0643. Lines are open from 8.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday.

For more information on applying for a National Insurance number go online at www.dwp.gov.uk/lifeevents/benefits/ni_number.asp

Tax levels for 2010 – 2011 tax year, are as follows:

- There is a tax-free threshold of £6,475
- Between £6,475 and £37,400 tax is at the rate of 20%
- Between £37,400 and £150,000 tax is at the rate of 40%
- Over £150,000 tax is at the rate of 50%

National Insurance contributions are approximately 10% of your salary.

The tax year runs from 6th April to 5th April each year.

b) U.K. Banking System

The major U.K. banks are:

- Barclays
- Halifax
- HSBC
- Lloyds TSB
- NatWest
- Royal Bank of Scotland
- Santander

If you choose to open a bank account when you arrive in the UK, you will need proof of Identification (passport, driver's licence and/or birth certificate) and evidence of your U.K. address (a utility bill or lease with your name on it). It is also worth bringing a letter from your bank at home as record of your credit history. We will be happy to provide you with a letter confirming you are registering with us and the date you started (or intend to start) working for us.

The more documentation you have, the easier your bank application should be. However, it can be difficult opening your account after your arrival and you may find it an easier process to open a UK bank account before you leave home.

If you're living in Australia or New Zealand you may have a HSBC branch near where you live. If you're close to a local branch of HSBC Australia or HSBC New Zealand you can walk in and enquire about opening a UK bank account. You will need proof of Identification, proof of your current bank address; statements from your other bank and a minimum deposit amount.

Consider opening a joint bank account if you are moving to the U.K. with your partner – it will cut down on the paperwork and you'll share the minimum deposit amount.

Travelex is a foreign currency business that can help you open a U.K. bank account with HSBC. You will need the same documents as if you walked into a branch (see above). You can apply at Travelex Australia or Travelex New Zealand and then head to Regent Street branch of HSBC in London to collect your card and pin number.

If there is a delay in setting up your bank account, we can pay you by cheque which can be cleared through your bank account in due course or give you a cash cheque and arrange for it to be cashed at our bank.

c) Travel

In central London, most of our work is easily accessible by London underground and/or buses. We provide full directions for each position, given to you by our consultants each time you are allocated work.

All the information you need about tickets, as well as a very useful journey planner, can be found on www.tfl.gov.uk. When you first arrive in the UK, buy a single tube ticket to your destination. Then, as you are likely to explore the city in your first week, the cheapest option is a weekly Travelcard for Zones 1 to 4. This gives you unlimited access to the travel network.

As soon as you settle in, you can save money by using an Oyster Card, which you can buy at most tube stations or off-licence cafes/shops. You swipe the card at the beginning and end of each journey and the system works out the best rate and deducts it from your pre-paid balance. Oyster Cards don't work on all forms of transport, but it's worth having one even if you use the tube or bus system infrequently as it takes the hassle out of queuing, finding change and working out the best route.

For London travel information please contact Transport for London on 0843 222 1234 or visit their website at www.tfl.gov.uk

For further information on services outside Greater London, please contact National Rail Enquiries on 0845 7 48 49 50 or visit their website at www.nationalrail.co.uk

d) Accommodation

Your experience of London will be greatly enhanced by finding a comfortable place to stay. If you do not have permanent accommodation before your arrival in the UK we strongly advise you to book temporary accommodation with a hostel or hotel. You need only book for a week or 2 maximum while you are looking for something more long term. If you have somewhere to go as soon as you arrive, it takes away the stress of not knowing where to go in a new and strange environment. There are many other young people in these hostels etc. in the same position as yourself and you often make good friends and find future flatmates.

Hostels: If you don't mind sharing, staying in a hostel is the most flexible accommodation and there is a great social atmosphere. There are hundreds of hostels in London ranging in style and price: usually about £15 to £25 per night for a dorm room and cheaper if you ask for weekly rates. Hostels are also great in-betweeners once you've packed up your flat or when you've just arrived back from travelling and need a place to stay.

Renting: Long-term renting is the best value for money if you are planning to stay in the UK for a while. Be patient as flat hunting can be time consuming, although using the Internet can make it easier. You can post and browse ads on sites like www.gumtree.co.uk or www.moveflat.co.uk, which have more details about the flat and potential flatmates than newspapers do. Many people still advertise in the classifieds of free traveller publications so pick them up or purchase a LOOT paper from a newsagent.

Types of rented accommodation:

House/Flat-shares: This is the most popular option for travellers living in London. You can either reply to an advert for a room in an existing house-share or get a few people together and find a vacant house or flat. Depending on size and location, rooms range from £300 to £500 per month. Couples or doubles should expect to pay a little more for the room. You'll usually need to pay a deposit (bond) to the value of four to six weeks rent as well as four weeks rent in advance, and most rental agreements run for either six or 12 months.

Before you sign the lease agreement, read it thoroughly and be sure of what bills are excluded. Never hand over your passport as security for your bond. If you are asked to do so, refuse and be wary of dealing with this person or company. Several companies offer antipodean accommodation in quality houses in various areas of London at very affordable rates. Try searching the web on www.tntmagazine.com/accommodation.

Bedsits: These are semi-self-contained rooms with a small kitchen and communal bathroom. Depending on the location they range from £85 to £250 per week.

Studio/One-bedroom Flats: These are totally self-contained with a kitchen and bathroom. They are perfect if you like your privacy, but they can be expensive at over £100 per week.

Accommodation and terminology			
F/F	Fully furnished	D/G	Double glazing
F/M	Female/male	W/M	Washing machine
OR	Own room	S/C	Self-contained
S/R	Share room	PCM	Per calendar month
N/S	No smoking	£90pw exc.	Cost per week excluding bills
'SW5'	Postcode	£90pw inc.	Cost per week including bills
C/H	Central Heating	Dep	Deposit required
AGY	Agency (this can mean extra fees)	No DSS	No social security beneficiaries

Council Tax: Street cleaning, rubbish collection and similar services are funded by council tax, which is levied on homeowners (or onto tenants). Council tax is not usually included in your rent, so make sure you check as there are serious consequences if it's not paid. The amount varies from area to area.

Utilities: Water, phone, gas and electric are usually billed quarterly. They can be tricky to arrange, so try to take on the previous tenant's phone number and get their utilities transferred into your name. Also, take down meter readings and the previous tenant's contact details to avoid their outstanding bills being charged to you. Phone the utility companies for an up-to-date tally of how much is owed in the billing quarter so far.

e) Cost of Living

London can be an expensive place, but you don't always have to spend a fortune to have a good time. For every expensive option, you should be able to find a bargain if you know where to look.

The list below is a rough guide for a few everyday items. The average prices were correct at the time of print, but are subject to change and vary from area to area. It also depends on what you regard as "average", i.e. a supermarket will be cheaper than a corner shop:

Cost of Living	
Flat share rental per month (single)	£290 - £550
Monthly travel card Zone 1 to 2 and 1 to 3	£99.10 and £116.00
Seven-day travel card Zone 1 to 2 and 1 to 3	£25.80 and £30.20
Pint of beer in the pub	£3.00 - £4.00
Average Bottle of wine from supermarket	£6.00 - £10.00
Fish and Chips	£3.00 - £5.00
Average restaurant meal	£14.00 - £25.00
Movie Ticket	£9.00 - £14.00
West End theatre ticket	£50.00
Loaf of bread	£1.00
Milk – 1 pint (about 500ml)	65p
Can of soft drink	60p
Newspaper	30p – £1.50
Haircut – men	£10.00 - £50.00
Haircut – women	£30.00 - £70.00
Petrol – 1 litre	£1.22 - £1.33

f) Healthcare for you in the UK and London

The National Healthcare System (NHS) offers low-cost or free healthcare, and Australia and the UK have a reciprocal arrangement for the provision of healthcare in each country. However, the system is different from Australia in that you will have to register with a local GP once you have a permanent address in the UK. Further information is provided here:

Doctor:

Register with a GP in your area as soon as you have a permanent address in the UK. There are only certain GP's in your area with whom you can register - to find out names and addresses you will need to consult your local council for a list or use the NHS website www.nhs.uk/ServiceDirectories/Pages/ServiceSearch.aspx

If you need to see a doctor and are unable to see your local GP, the NHS also has walk-in centres in London. These clinics are open 7 days a week and usually stay open quite late. You won't need to be registered with a GP to visit these clinics and the service is free.

To find your closest walk-in clinic visit: www.nhs.uk/ServiceDirectories/Pages/ServiceSearch.aspx

'NHS Direct' is a very useful service; call them on 0845 46 47 for advice or visit www.nhs.co.uk for a 24-hour nurse-led information line.

Private medical centres are situated across London and are very efficient and convenient but you do have to pay for this service.

Dentist:

NHS Dental care is available. Register with your local NHS dentist and pay 75% of the cost of your treatment. Quality private care is available, but this can be expensive. If you require emergency dental care, call NHS Direct on 0845 46 47.

Optometrist:

Optometrists are on every high street, so shop around. Contact lens can be expensive in the UK so bring a supply from home. Emergency optic care information is available from NHS Direct.

Section 7

Working as a nurse in the UK

a) The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC):

To work as a nurse in the UK, you will have to register with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). The NMC is the nursing registration board in the UK. In September 2005, the NMC introduced a new programme which every applicant trained outside the EEA (European Economic Area) has to undertake successfully before they are able to register in the UK. This is known as the Overseas Nursing Program (see section 8).

The NMC register has three parts:

- Nurses
- Midwives
- Specialist community public health nurses

The nurses part of the register is divided into four fields of practice:

- Adult nursing
- Mental health nursing
- Learning disabilities nursing
- Children's nursing

You can apply to be on the nurses or midwives part of the Register, as long as you meet the standards. If you have trained as a general nurse, you should apply for registration as an adult nurse. If you want to register on more than one part of the register, you should apply for each part at the same time. Details of the application/assessment process can be found at : www.nmc-uk.org.

Eligibility to Join the NMC Register:

For overseas staff eligibility to register with the Nursing and Midwifery Council in general or specialist areas of nursing in the UK depends on the following points:

Language requirements: you must be able to show you can communicate clearly and effectively in English. You must complete the academic version of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and achieve an overall average score of seven (out of a possible nine) and at least seven in each of the listening, reading, writing and speaking sessions. The NMC will not accept lower scores and will independently verify them with IELTS. It is your responsibility to arrange and pay for this test and provide the NMC with the results.

Education requirements: you must have completed a post-secondary education nursing or midwifery programme, leading to registration in your home country as a first level registered nurse or midwife. Prior to your post-secondary education, you should have successfully completed at least 10 years of school education before your post-secondary programme.

Practice requirements: when you apply you must have been practicing as a registered nurse or midwife for at least 12 months (full time or part time equivalent) after qualifying. If you have been qualified for longer than 12 months you must have practiced for at least 450 hours in the previous three years (if you have not completed 450 hours in the last three years, you may still be eligible, but would be required to complete a longer version of the ONP programme).

Speciality Specific Requirements:

General Nursing: you must have completed a 3 year full-time course at post-secondary level leading to registration as a general nurse, which includes theoretical and practical instruction in:

- General and Specialist Medicine
- General and Specialist Surgery
- Childcare and Paediatrics
- Maternity (obstetric) Care
- Mental Health and Psychiatry
- Care of the Elderly
- Community / Primary Care Nursing

Mental Health Nursing: you must have completed either a 3 year general nursing course followed by a 12 month mental health nursing course or a 3 year full-time mental health nursing course. Courses must include theoretical and practical instruction in:

- Mental health nursing in a range of settings including acute and enduring chronic illness
- Care for children and young people with mental health problems
- Specialist mental health care
- Care for adults with mental health problems
- Continuing care and rehabilitation
- Community care

Children's Nursing: you must have completed either a three year general nursing course followed by a 12 month children's nursing course or a 3 year, full-time children's nursing course. Courses must include theoretical and practical instruction in:

- Care for children in a range of care settings, including specialist medicine and surgery
- Care for children in emergency, neonatal and high-dependency environments
- Care for children at home, in school and in the community
- Working with families and carers to care for sick children of all ages

Learning Disabilities Nursing: you must have completed either a three year general nursing course followed by a 12 month learning disabilities nursing course, or a 3 year full-time learning disabilities nursing course. Courses must include theoretical and practical instruction in:

- Learning disability nursing in a range of care environments including residential and day-care settings
- Learning disability nursing in a range of environments to support people who have complex needs and mental health problems
- Care for people of all ages (from childhood to old age) who have learning disabilities
- Working with families and carers to support people who have learning disabilities
- Continuing care and rehabilitation

You may possibly be aware from colleagues that NMC registration can often be a long process and can taking several months to achieve in worst case scenarios. However, we are able to offer assistance to candidates to gain NMC registration and make the application simpler and more convenient. There are several important points regarding the application, to be aware of to avoid delays and frustration.

The assistance we provide is free, however you will have to pay fees to the NMC for your application and registration. The application fee is £140 and the registration fee is £109, which is for 3 years. Renewal of NMC registration is £79 annually.

b) Industry abbreviations:

RN	Registered Nurse
RMN	Registered Mental Health Nurse (Psychiatric Nurse)
RNMH	Registered Nurse Mental Health, which is a nurse trained to care for people with mental or physical disabilities
RSCN	Registered Sick Children's Nurse (paediatric nurse)
ITU	Intensive Therapy Unit - which is Intensive Care.
A & E	Accident and Emergency
HDU	High Dependency Unit
CCU	Coronary Care Unit
PICU	Paediatric Intensive Care Unit
NICU	Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
ATA	Auxiliary Trained Abroad. A registered nurse (general or enrolled) from abroad who does not have UK registration or is not able to register with the NMC
HCA	Health Care Assistant

c) Uniforms:

Most hospitals in the UK still require uniforms to be worn. The following lists the general requirements (some hospitals have very specific requirements which will be explained at interview):

- Uniforms will be available through our office at a cost of £10. The cost of your uniform can be reclaimed through our loyalty scheme 'For Life' which is a points based reward scheme based on hours worked.
- We have dresses or tunics and trousers with a comfort pleat at the back; dark blue trim for registered nurses and light blue for non-registered nurses. The trousers are dark blue.
- Your uniform should ideally include black nursing shoes with soft soles, although navy, brown or white shoes are largely accepted and flesh coloured tights.
- Hair is to be short or tied up.
- No excess jewellery to be worn.
- No trainers or boots.
- Male nurses must wear a white tunic, dark trousers and black soft sole shoes.

d) Immunisations:

Please note, these are mandatory in the UK in any healthcare situation and you will not be allowed to work until you have documentation proving you have had all the immunisations listed below where applicable, and/or demonstrate immunity where applicable:

- Evidence of satisfactory Hepatitis B immunisation course (with titre levels greater than 100miu/ml or 10iu/ml) or absence of e antigen (if vaccination deemed unsuccessful) and documentation from a doctor to confirm this.
- Proof of Hep C immunity.
- Tetanus and dates (must have booster every 10 years).
- Screening and/or immunisation for Tuberculosis (TB) and demonstrated evidence of immunity by a +ve scar and/or +ve Mantoux/Heaf test. A clear X-ray is also sufficient.
- Diphtheria immunisation proof and dates (must have booster every 10 years).
- Polio immunisation proof and dates (must have booster every 10 years).
- Proof of immunity to Chicken Pox by a blood test for antibodies or evidence from your GP of having had the infection (if not immune you will require immunisation and subsequent blood test again).
- Proof of Rubella vaccination or proof of immunity by a blood test for antibodies if you have not been vaccinated.

Ensure this is done before leaving home to avoid delays in your eligibility to commence work in the UK.

e) Infection control:

A video will be shown at the time of registration with Strand. If you have had recent study days or updates at your place of work, please bring proof of this with you.

f) Protocol for administration of medication:

Annual updates are also required to be undertaken for the safe administration of all medication. On registration with any agency, you will be required to complete a questionnaire on medication protocol, after having been provided with appropriate instructions at induction. Please bring proof of any updates you may have done.

g) Health declarations and chest x-rays:

Health questionnaires (Health Declarations) will have to be completed in the UK prior to working in any healthcare setting. If you have ongoing health problems, your fitness to work in specific areas may have to be supported by a statement from your GP or equivalent. It may be appropriate for you to arrange to have a relevant statement available if you fall into this category. Please do not hesitate to contact us for details.

At the present time, it is not compulsory for Australians and New Zealanders to have chest X-rays for entry into the UK. For other countries, please check with your British Consulate to establish the present requirements.

If you have had TB in the past, you may not be able to work in the NHS in the UK but will be able to work in a variety of other healthcare settings such as home-care and private medical facilities. Always have evidence of your status.

If you do not sero convert after having had Hepatitis B vaccinations, you may not be able to work in the NHS in the UK, however you will be able to work in other healthcare settings as described above. Always have evidence of your status.

h) Police checks (Australia) & CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) UK:

UK Department of Health legislation requires all health workers to have up to date police checks from their own country & UK Enhanced CRB checks before being able to work in any health care setting in the UK. Please ensure you have up to date evidence of a federal police check. We recommend this is done close to your departure date. In the first instance go to your local police station for further information.

The UK CRB checks include POVA (Protection of Vulnerable Adults) checks. At present, the POVA checks are taking between 2 & 7 days to be completed and the CRB checks are taking approximately 4 weeks. You will be able to work with private clients in their own homes and in private institutions with a POVA & Police check from your country but will not be able to work in the NHS until the UK CRB check is returned.

i) Rehabilitation of offenders act:

By virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) (Amendments) order 1986, the provisions of section 4.2 of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 do not apply to any employment which is concerned with the provision of health services and which, is of such a kind as to enable the holder to have access to persons in receipt of such services in the course of his/her normal duties.

j) Manual handling/moving and handling updates:

All nurses/health care assistants working in the UK must have current manual handling certification (updated every 12 months) before they can commence placements. We are able to arrange updates when your present update expires. Ensure you are up to date with this for arrival in the UK to avoid delays in commencing work. Future updates through our agency are free.

k) CPR updates:

In addition, Registered Nurses require current CPR certification (updated every 12months) before they can commence placements. Please ensure you have an update as close to your departure, as possible. We can arrange future updates for you.

l) Pay & pay rates:

Our agency's pay rates are very competitive with other major London and UK agencies enabling you to earn some of the best rates possible. There are many different rates depending on where you work and what grade you are. You are paid directly into your bank account every week. There are no fees or commission charges to nurses. All pay is guaranteed by Strand Nurses Bureau on receipt of timesheets correctly completed and signed by all parties concerned.

The rate of pay for each specific case/duty is provided and/or discussed with you before you accept an assignment. Rates of pay are available on request.

m) Holiday pay:

The entitlement is 28 days per annum or pro rata time worked if not a full year when requesting holidays. You will be required to give notice in writing of your intention to take holidays. This notice is twice the period you wish to take as a holiday e.g. for 1 week's holiday, 2 week's notice is necessary.

Holidays cannot be carried over and you cannot be paid in lieu of holidays. The pay you receive is dependent on the average number of hours you have worked over the 12 weeks preceding the date of your holidays.

n) Bonus payments:

Strand Nurses Bureau recognises the importance to the holiday worker, of flexibility and freedom to travel while still having the potential to earn excellent money. This is why we have in place, the following bonus possibilities.

- **£500bonus** payment for introducing a **Paediatric Nurse** who works 100 hours within their first 12 weeks
- **£150bonus** payment for introducing a **Registered Nurse** who works 100 hours within their first 12 weeks
- **£150bonus** payment for introducing a **Healthcare Assistant** (or ATA) who works 100 hours within their first 12 weeks

o) Professional indemnity

Professional Indemnity is compulsory in the UK.

For NMC Registered Nurses the Royal College of Nursing provides comprehensive cover. There are however, many organisations to which registered and non-registered nurses can subscribe.

Annual cover by the Royal College of Nursing costs approximately £12.06 per month and can be paid monthly and cancelled at any time if you depart the UK or cease to work in nursing. Nurses working as Healthcare Assistants can join the RCN for approximately £8.04 per month.

Nurses who have been accepted onto the Overseas Nursing Programme can join at a special rate of £10.00 for the duration of their programme (until they obtain their NMC PIN number, registration with the NMC), at which point the standard fee of £12.06 per month will apply. Further details can be found on the RCN website: www.rcn.org.uk.

Unison also provide cover up to £1million. Further details can be found on the Unison website: www.unison.org.uk/healthcare/

Strand Nurses Bureau do not have any affiliation or arrangement with the RCN, Unison or any other professional body so it is your choice as to which organisation you belong. We can advise you at interview how to find out about a variety of other organisations.

Section 8

Overseas Nursing Program

Provided you are accepted and meet the minimum standards to be accepted on the NMC register, as a nurse you will be required to undertake the Overseas Nursing Programme (ONP), if you have trained outside of the EEA.

Strand Nurses Bureau has an association with Bournemouth University and we can arrange for you to register to start on their ONP upon production of your NMC decision letter as soon as you arrive in the UK. This programme allows you to complete your UK PIN registration.

Whilst you complete the ONP and obtain your NMC registration, we are able to offer you work as an ATA (Auxiliary Trained Abroad) or a HCA (Healthcare Assistant), provided your registration documents are all in order.

The programme assesses your ability to practice in the UK healthcare environment. It consists of 20 days protected learning time (approximately 150 hours) and will include three taught days on campus. You will complete a study guide and attend the three taught days which are supporting study sessions. There are also online resources available for you to access as well as support via email.

Before organising a place on the ONP at Bournemouth University, you will need to meet the following criteria:

1. You must be eligible to work in the UK without sponsorship
2. You will need to complete the application/assessment process to join the nurses' part of the register through the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). Details of this application/assessment process can be found at : www.nmc-uk.org
3. You must be in possession of the **original** following documents:
 - NMC decision letter
 - Certificate of Attainment
 - ELTS 7.0 (academic)
 - Certified Declaration of Good Health and Good Character (within the application form)

(Photocopies of these documents will need to be submitted with the ONP application form. The originals will need to be presented to a member of the ONP team on the first day of your course. If they do not have them you will not be permitted to undertake the course).

4. You will be required to complete the ONP within two years from the date of the decision letter from the NMC.
5. You must have access to the Internet to be able to complete the course. If you are unable to access the Internet please contact us at Strand Nurses Bureau and we will be happy to help organise this for you.

This course is for students requiring unsupervised practice only. If you require a period of supervised practice in addition to the 20 hours protected learning, then we won't be able to provide you with work until after your supervised practice.

Section 9

How to register with Strand Nurses Bureau

As part of the registration process you will have been in contact with our Recruitment Team and they will arrange an appointment for you and ensure all your documentation is complete.

Once you have provided details of your arrival date into the UK we will make an appointment for you to come into the Strand office with all your documents at your convenience.

The following is the process for registration with Strand Nurses Bureau:

- the interview process takes approximately 1 hour
- you will be asked to complete a registration form
- all your documentation will be verified and photocopied
- you will be requested to complete a form for a Criminal Records Bureau check at interview (if not completed previously) at a cost of £36.00 cash or cheque made out to Strand Nurses Bureau if required as described previously
- you will be given a brochure which will contain pay rates, a booklet explaining policies and procedures with Strand Nurses Bureau, Department of Health booklets on national minimum standards for domiciliary care and nursing agency regulations, a confidentiality agreement to sign and a health declaration to complete
- the nurse or consultant interviewing you will discuss with you, your experience and preferences and explain about working with Strand Nurses Bureau
- following the interview you will be introduced to the relevant consultants on the hospital and/or home-care desks to discuss your preferences for where and when you would like to work; the consultants will describe the many opportunities available at that time
- an appointment for an induction comprising 2 sessions of approximately 3 hours, will be made for you; the induction will include information regarding the agency and work in a healthcare setting in the UK, Care Standards Regulations and abuse awareness training

Please ensure you bring the following with you to Strand in London or send them to us prior to departure for us to check and keep on file pending your arrival into the UK:

- An up-to-date and fully comprehensive CV to be emailed to branch , including dates (months and years) when you started and left each position. Please explain ALL gaps – e.g. for travel, child birth etc.
- All original or certified copies of certificates and proof of registration from your own country where applicable
- Proof of any training days, updates, courses or personal development studies (required for nursing re-registration – PREP in the UK)

- NMC (Nursing and Midwifery Council) Statement of Entry if you are a Registered Nurse and have it with you (it is advisable to acquire certified copies to send to us and/or to use for travelling and leave the original at home). If you are awaiting registration we must see your original or certified copy of registration from your country
- NMC PIN card
- Passport and 2 passport photos named and signed on the back
- All Immunisation details and written confirmation of these (as previously described)
- Police check which has at least 6 months (of 12 months from date of issue) remaining upon entry to the UK
- Manual Handling certificate (original training or update) for a course completed in last 12 months if possible (we are able to provide this here but may result in a slight delay to being able to commence work dependent on the next available training day)
- RN's also require documented proof of CPR update undertaken in the last 12 months (as above for manual handling)
- Infection control update documentation if you have undertaken one within past 12 months
- First Aid Certificate for Health Care Assistants
- Proof of address (e.g. rates bill, bank statement) if you have been living in the UK
- Professional references or full contact details of suitable referees – references are to fulfil the following criteria:
 - a) References must be from managers or seniors to whom you report or have reported (not colleagues) and up to the present date – must be from different departments or institutions
 - b) References must span 3 years (can supply more than 2 if necessary) from the present date
 - c) One referee must have known you for at least 2 years. If you do not have a professional referee who has known you for 2 years, you must still have 2 or more to span the 3 year professional reference requirement and provide a character referee who has known you for 2 years. This referee must be a professional – e.g. Doctor, nurse, lawyer etc.
 - d) Bring all details of your referees (name, title, address postal/web/phone/fax numbers)
 - e) Written references will be accepted and verified with referees so please also supply all their contact details as above
 - f) If you have not worked for 3 years, references from your university or character references from appropriate people will be acceptable. Appropriate people include your GP, minister of religion or other professional people who presently hold positions of responsibility and credibility

We are able to guide and assist you prior to departure from home to ensure you are well prepared to commence work in the UK soon after your arrival.

Section 10

Things to check and do before leaving home

- a) Get an **International Driver's Licence** or ensure you bring your driver's licence from home because you will be able to drive on this for 3 months after which time you should have an international licence which is valid for 1 year, or apply for a UK licence. This is easily obtained if you have a valid 'clean' licence from Australia or New Zealand. You can apply to the DVLA once in the UK.
- b) References from your previous landlord
- c) Reference from your bank
- d) Photocopies of all documentation including:
 - Passport
 - Visa
 - Traveller's cheque's receipt
 - Flight tickets
 - Insurance documents
 - Credit cards, etc.

Put your photocopies in a different place from the originals so they can be easily accessed in an emergency.

It is also a good idea to leave a copy at home with someone you trust.

- e) As explained in the section on NMC registration, registered nurses who have applied for, or are applying for NMC registration, should keep a photocopy of all the documents you are sending to the NMC with your application or submit the documents through Strand Nurses Bureau and we will keep a copy on your behalf.
- f) Details of last check-up with GP, Dentist and Optometrist

Section 11

Useful Contacts

Emergencies	
Emergency	999

Strand Nurses Bureau	
London office	020 7836 6396
Telford office (payroll)	01952 278 310

Lost/stolen credit cards	
American Express	01273 696 933
Diners Club	01252 513 500
Mastercard	0800 964 767
Visa/Connect	0800 891 725

Transport	
Transport for London	020 7222 1234
National Rail	08457 48 49 50
National Express	0871 781 8181
Eurostar	08705 186 186
Rail Europe	08705 848 848

Airports	
Heathrow	08700 000 123
Gatwick	08700 002 468
Stansted	08700 000 303
Luton	01582 405 100
London City	020 7646 0088

Embassies/High Commissions	
Australian	020 7379 4334
New Zealand	020 7930 8422
South African	020 7451 7299

Health	
NHS Direct	0845 46 47

Taxes	
Inland Revenue & Customs	020 7438 6420
National Insurance allocation	0845 600 0643

Telephone	
BT Direct	100
International Operator	155
Directory Enquiries UK	188 188

Utilities	
British Telecom Enquiries	0800 800 150
London Energy (gas/electric)	0800 096 5010
Thames Water enquiries	08459 200 888
Royal Mail enquiries	08457 740 740

Airlines	
Air New Zealand	0800 028 4149
British Airways	0844 493 0787
Qantas Airlines	08457 747 767
South African Airways	08707 471 111

Country Codes	
Australia	+61 + area code
New Zealand	+64 + area code
South Africa	+27 + area code