

My professional identity crisis: experiences of a South African sonographer practising in the UK

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My journey



Before the UK



Coming to the UK



Navigating pathways in the UK



Highs and Lows of the ultrasound terrain in the UK



Lessons learned: top tips for managers to help the overseas workforce navigate their way in the UK

My journey before the UK



My journey into ultrasound



Training in SA



- **Direct entry programme.**
- **Bachelor of Health Sciences (BHSc) in Radiography in the discipline of Ultrasound.**
- **South African National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 8 equivalent to UK's Regulated Qualifications Framework(RQF) 6.**

Training in SA

- HPCSA
- Radiography
- Diagnostic
- Ultrasound
- Nuclear Medicine
- Radiotherapy



Training in SA

- Programme aims to develop:
 - robust practitioners
 - theoretical and practical hands-on training
- Clinical placements in hospital settings feature early on
- Healthcare infrastructure in South Africa is a mixture of public and private settings
- Private settings offer benefits for learning
- Global shortage of sonographers

Training in SA

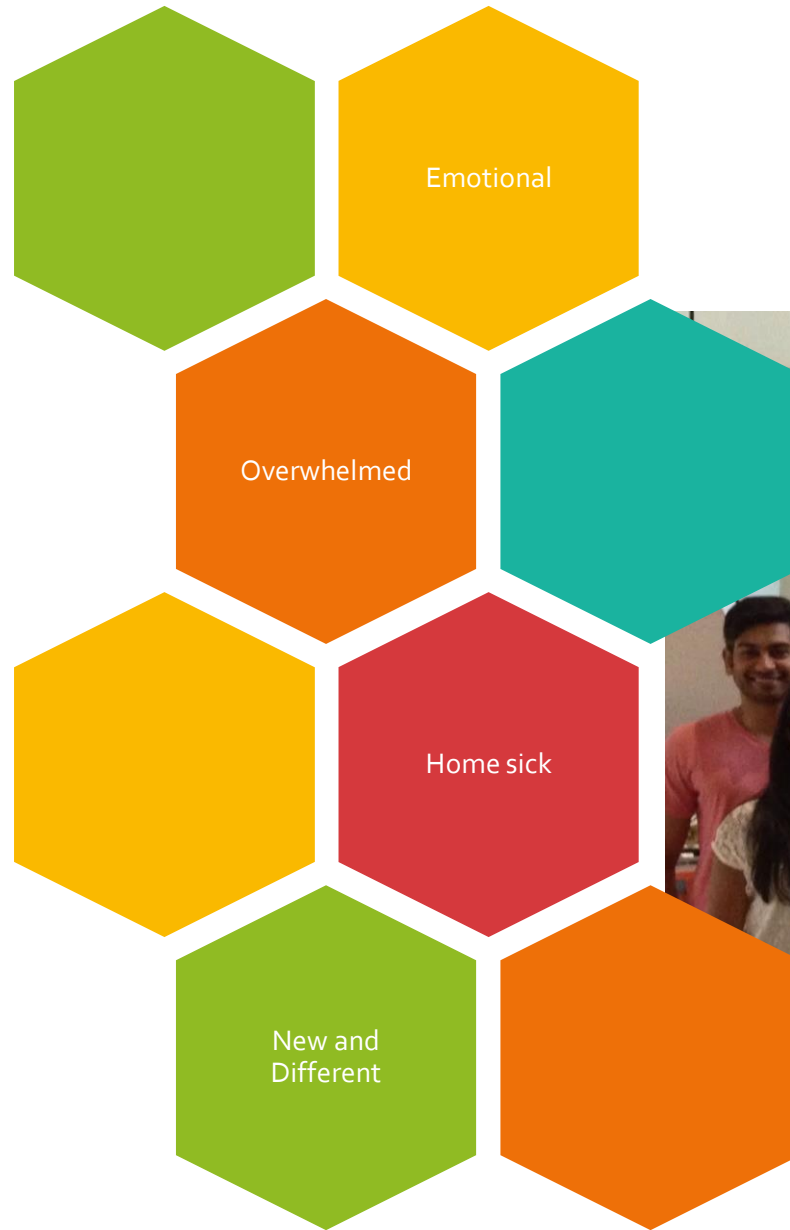
- **Qualified sonographers expected to know:**
 - **Obstetrics**
 - **General (Abdominal and Gynae)**
 - **Vascular**
 - **MSK**
 - **Small parts (incl. Breast)**
 - **Paediatrics**
- **Reporting Expectations**
- **Community service**

Coming to the UK

- Background
- Outside perceptions of the UK
- Getting into the UK
- Challenges
 - HR
 - Home Office and Immigration
 - Local Management Changes
 - Costs



Navigating pathways in the UK

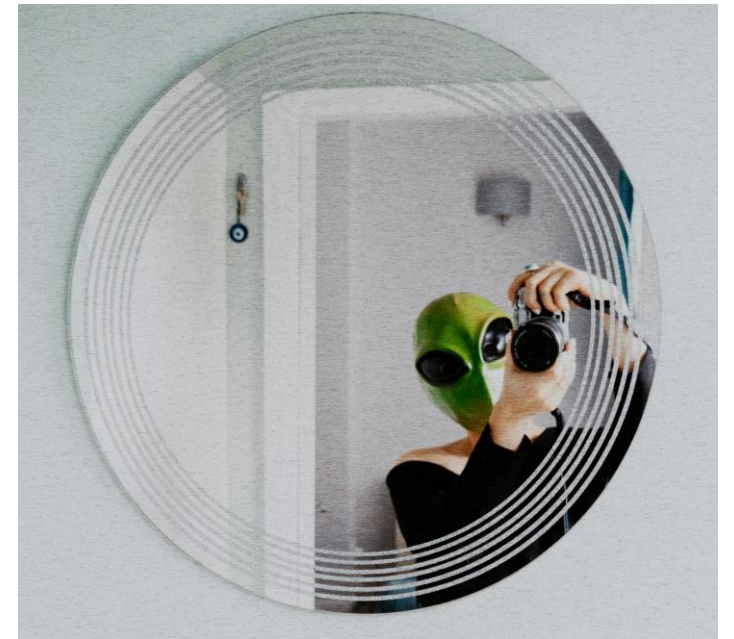


Highs and Lows of the ultrasound terrain in the UK

- **Hyper imposter syndrome**
- **Attitudes upon arrival**
- **Painted with the same brush as others**
- **Academic qualifications, knowledge and skill**
- **What I had to do to overcome the challenges**

Professional Identity crisis

- **Clear position in country of origin/training**
- **Professional alien**
- **Challenges of being “the other”**
- **Government speak**
- **I am unprofessional?**



It's not ALL
bad ...

- **Life in the UK and the North East**
- **Opportunities for a sonographer in the UK**
- **The UK's place on the world stage**
- **My Team**



Lessons learned: top tips for managers



Optimise Recruitment



Practical Probation and Dynamic Development Plans



Recognise and Value skills brought by the migrant workforce



Home Office liaisons



Highlight gaps in the regulatory structure in the UK



Reimbursement packages

Lessons learned: Top tips for managers

- **Understand what the migrant workforce goes through:
Visa, ILR, citizenship; country of origin admin**
- **Mentorship programme**
- **Be wary of the attraction/ pull of the UK**
- **Be kind and promote staff support structures your
organisation might have**
- **Help new staff that come from other countries to integrate**

My Aspirations

- **Better regulation for sonographers in the UK**
- **Harmonising the practice of ultrasound across the world.**

Get Together!

References

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Thank you!