

SHEEP SHEARER

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

UK farmers rely on overseas Sheep Shearers from countries such as New Zealand, South Africa and Australia. Workers are employed by either individual employers or by agricultural bodies such as local contractors who are usually members of the National Association of Agricultural Contractors (NAAC).

INDUSTRY REQUIREMENTS

In the UK the British Wool Marketing Board (BWMB) issues Blue, Bronze, Silver and Gold Seal certificates.

Blue Seal is notionally equivalent to the NVQ Level 2 in Livestock production that includes the optional unit "prepare and assist with shearing livestock".

Bronze, Silver and Gold Seal are notionally equivalent to NVQ Level 3 in Livestock Production that includes the optional unit "shear livestock". At NVQ Level 3 standard, workers are required to prepare the work area and livestock for shearing, move the livestock into the shearing area and to be able to shear sheep at an acceptable commercial speed.

Shearers at Bronze Seal standard are able to shear sheep properly unattended or unsupervised. At Silver Seal standard workers are able to shear more sheep in a given time than the Bronze Seal standard workers and workers who hold a Gold Seal are classed as top professional Sheep Shearers.

Shearers in Australia and New Zealand take their own awards. These qualifications at Level 4 are equivalent to the BWMB Silver and Gold awards.

REGISTRATION WITH A PROFESSIONAL BODY

There is no requirement for registration with a professional body.

CASEWORKER TREATMENT

B&C

Workers with a recognised qualification equivalent to BWMB Bronze, Silver or Gold Seal and who have worked at this standard for at least three years, meet the skills criteria.

Due to the short duration of the work at each farm, applications are usually made by a contractor for individuals or gangs of shearers to work at a number of farms rather than by individual farmers.

Work permits may show that the overseas national can work on any farm

within a particular area or district where the employer cannot provide specific details. It is acceptable for them to provide one set of documentation to cover each gang.

TWES

Training

This occupation is not suitable for training.

Work Experience

This occupation is not suitable for work experience.

SALARY

Minimum salary levels are set by the relevant Agricultural Wages Board. From 01/10/07 the minimum rate for a 39 hour week for a standard agricultural worker is £215.28 per week (£5.52 per hour). In England this rate applies to workers above compulsory school age, in Scotland to workers who are aged 19 or over and in Northern Ireland to workers who are aged 22 or over.

In Scotland, when the worker is employed for more than 26 weeks the rate increases to £5.96 per hour. Workers in Scotland with appropriate qualifications receive an extra 90p per hour when they have been with the same employer for 26 weeks.

Overtime in all parts of the UK is paid at a rate of 1.5 times the hourly rate.

ADVERTISING

Posts are normally advertised in an appropriate trade publication, for example Farmers Weekly magazine or other relevant websites such as the local news section of the National Farmers Union website at www.nfu.org.uk.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Lantra

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Agricultural Wages Boards

Agricultural Wages Board (England and Wales)

Tel: 0845 000 0134

Scottish Agricultural Wages Board

Tel: 0131 244 6397

Agricultural Wages Board for Northern Ireland

Agricultural Wages Secretariat

Tel: 028 9052 0813 or 028 9052 4492

Website: <http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/fisheries-farming-and-food/enforcement-awb.htm>

National Association of Agricultural Contractors

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Scotland

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