

National Shortage Occupation List Guidance

Medical Physics Roles

Prior to this review, four medical physics roles were explicitly listed on the (NSOL).

- radiotherapy physics scientist (under SOC 2217)
- radiotherapy physics practitioner (under SOC 2217)
- Nuclear medicine scientist (under SOC 2219)
- Nuclear medicine practitioner (under SOC 2217)

Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) code 2217 is headed as “Medical radiographers”, and while it is a somewhat uncomfortable fit for Clinical Scientists and technologists, the Office of National Statistics (ONS), who is responsible for SOC coding, has on two occasions assured the Workforce Intelligence Unit (WIU) that this is the SOC code that they allocate to the Clinical Scientist and physics technologists job roles. However, the description does not match well with either Clinical Scientists or technologists in medical physics role. The most recent update of the NSOL accepts the MAC recommendations and lists all occupations under SOC 2217 as in shortage. This gives the appearance that medical physicists have been removed from the NSOL, which is not accurate, as the ONS codes Clinical Scientists in medical physics under 2217, and all occupations under 2217 are to be listed on the SOL. However, without the explicit listing, and with the poorly matching SOC description there may well be significant practical obstacles to employers sponsoring visa via this route.

SOC code 2219 is described as “Healthcare Professional Not Elsewhere Classified”, which is a more intuitive fit for Clinical Scientist and technologist roles, but it was the MAC that placed the role there, in the 2014 partial review, rather than the ONS. The ONS have previously advised the WIU that they do not recognise this classification, but following the SOL update, the [ONS coding tool](#) returns the code 2219 when the job description "nuclear medicine physics Clinical Scientist" is entered. The coding tool has been updated to include the roles that were formerly listed and so job titles relating to radiotherapy physics practitioner, radiotherapy physics scientist return the code 2217.

In order to progress a smooth sponsorship application for a Tier 2 Visa under the NSOL, UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) must recognise the job description and title as one on the NSOL. The following table summarises codes returned for different job titles and may be useful information for any visa sponsorship under Tier 2 intending to make use of the NSOL list.

Search Term	Top result
Radiotherapy Physics Clinical Scientist	2217, "Scientist, physics, radiotherapy"(Medical Radiographers)
Nuclear Medicine Physicist Clinical Scientist	2219, "Scientist, medicine, nuclear"(Health Professionals nec)
Radiotherapy Physics Practitioner	2217, "Practitioner, physics, radiotherapy" (Medical Radiographer)
Radiation Protection Physics practitioner	2113, "Practitioner, protection, radiation" (Physical Scientist)
Medical Physicist	2113, "Physicist, medical" (Physical Scientists)
Clinical Scientist	2112 "Biological Scientists and Biochemists"
Dosimetrist	2219, "Dosimetrist"

It is clear that the ONS SOC coding does not match well with these jobs : insisting on classifying medical physics roles under SOC2217, when the coding tool classifies medical physicist and radiation protection practitioner under 2113:physical scientists, along with geophysicists is confusing and counter-intuitive. Since IPEM's workforce data and vacancy rates were provided to the MAC, and were instrumental in classifying radiotherapy physics scientist and practitioner and nuclear medicine physics scientist and practitioner, IPEM believes that these roles should be listed and will work with the ONS and MAC to unsure that this is clear and unambiguous.

The MAC also recommended expanding the SOL to include **all** occupations under **SOC 2126** “Design and Development Engineers” and 2129 “Engineering professionals not elsewhere classified”. The ONS coding tool (found [here](#)) returns the code **2126** if the search term “Clinical Engineer” is used, but not if the term “Rehabilitation Engineer” is used. Consequently, Clinical Engineers, provided they describe themselves as such are now clearly listed on the NSOL. Rehabilitation engineers may make a case for it by describing themselves as Clinical Engineers. Searching for “Clinical Engineer (rehabilitation)” using the ONS coding tool, also returns SOC 2126.

Biomedical Engineer is explicitly listed under SOC code **2129**. The above information would indicate that all Clinical Engineering roles can be considered at listed on the SOL.

IPEM recommended the below SOC codes to help you choose which is best for your profession.

Medical Physics		
Job Role	SOC Code	SOC Title
Radiotherapy physics scientist	2217	Medical radiographers
Radiotherapy physics practitioner	2217	Medical radiographers
Nuclear medicine scientist	2219	Healthcare Professional Not Elsewhere Classified
Nuclear medicine practitioner	2217	Medical radiographers

Clinical Engineering		
Job Role	SOC Code	SOC Title
Clinical Engineer	2126	Design and Development Engineers
Rehabilitation Engineer	2126	Design and Development Engineers
Biomedical Engineer	2129	Engineering professionals not elsewhere classified