

# **Graduate Entry into Nursing and Midwifery**

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## The current recruitment picture for nurses and midwives

Recruitment for many health professionals has been going through considerable upheaval in recent years and for the first time graduates and diplomates have been leaving courses and reporting it difficult to find a job. However, the situation has improved and long term forecasting is very positive for health professionals, with a consensus that recent short term problems were as a result of issues to do with workforce planning as well as many trusts moving to Foundation status.

Given the renewed government focus on nursing careers, the prescribing powers for nurses and the fact that hospitals will look to specialise, the forecast for the nursing job market is good. Areas such as health visiting, school nursing, first contact nursing, walk-in centres, telephone triage and nurse practitioner roles are likely to be growth areas.

The short term may prove challenging for some midwives but with government policy still aiming for an expansion of maternity services and more providers entering the market, there should be, in the medium to long term, a greater variety of midwife posts available with exciting career prospects.

For more information about the current job market and possible career progression for nursing and midwifery see the NHS website: [www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university).

Detailed information about all careers in the health sector

- [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/healthcare\\_sector.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/healthcare_sector.htm)
- <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobfamily/Pages/medicineandnursing.aspx>
- <http://nursing.nhs.uk/careers/>
- [www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing)
- [www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/midwifery](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/midwifery)
- <https://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/healthcare>
- [Training for Nursing](#)

## Training for Nursing

If you are interested in entering the nursing profession, the first decision that you need to make is which branch of nursing to follow – adult, mental health, learning disability or child. For further information on each area of nursing, refer to the publications and websites listed above and at the end of this handout. Adult branch nursing offers the most general training and at the present time it is possible after completing this to undertake further training via a shortened course, to gain second registration in another branch. However with the present financial situation within the NHS there are restrictions on the training available. There are a variety of alternative training routes for nursing, depending upon the degree subject that you have studied and the area of nursing you wish to enter. For graduates with a relevant degree e.g. Psychology, Sociology, Biological Sciences there are a number of accelerated two-year postgraduate courses. Some universities are becoming more flexible in their interpretation of what constitutes a ‘relevant’ degree. For example, a music graduate may go directly onto a postgraduate programme, based on demonstrating that through the performance element of a music degree it is necessary to receive criticism, reflect on performance and develop practice - all very similar to the style of learning in a clinical setting.

For those graduates with a non-relevant degree, currently the choice is to take a 3-4 year degree course.

### **Accelerated training courses for nurses**

The courses on offer can change from year to year. Some courses recruit through UCAS, some recruit through direct application via their website. You should refer to the Course Finder section of the NHS Careers website for updated information:

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/looking-course> for lists of approved Nursing and Midwifery Council courses: and the UCAS website [www.UCAS.com](http://www.UCAS.com).

## Universities currently offering two-year accelerated entry into nursing courses for graduates

Note some courses are 2.5 to 3 years specifically for graduates

- Buckingham New University( A, MH)
- City University, London (2.5 years) (A, C, MH)
- University of Essex (A)
- Hatfield, University of Hertfordshire (A)
- University of Hull (A,C,LD,MH)
- King’s College London (University of London) (A,C)
- Kingston University, London (A,C,MH)
- Middlesex University, London (A,MH)
- London South Bank University (3 years) (A,C,MH)
- University of Greenwich, London (A,C)
- University of Leeds (2.5 years) (A,C)
- Napier University, Edinburgh (2.5 years) (A)
- Northumbria University, Newcastle (A,C,MH)
- The University of Nottingham (A,C,MH)
- Oxford Brookes University (3 years full time, 5 years part time) (A,C,MH)
- Robert Gordon University – Aberdeen (A)
- University of Salford (3 years) (A,C,MH)
- Sheffield Hallam University (A)
- The University of Sheffield (A)
- University of Southampton (A,C)
- University of Surrey (A,MH)
- University of West London (A,MH)
- University of West of Scotland (A)

A= Adult	LD= Learning Disability
C= Child	MH= Mental Health

### Open University training for nurses

If you are already employed as a health care support worker/assistant, it is possible to train as a registered Adult or Mental Health Nurse while you continue to work and are supported by your employer. The Open

University offers BSc nursing degrees over 4 years part time. For more information visit the Open University Nursing and Healthcare Practice website: [www.open.ac.uk/courses/find/nursing-and-healthcare-practice](http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/find/nursing-and-healthcare-practice)

## **Training for Midwifery**

A degree in midwifery is essential for entry to the profession. The three or four-year degree programme is open to graduates and diplomates from all degree and HND courses, but life sciences may be preferred. Registered nurses can do a 12-18 month shortened course. There are no accelerated graduate courses in midwifery for graduates in other disciplines.

You should refer to the course finder section of the NHS Careers website for updated information: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/looking-course> and the UCAS website: [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) for lists of approved courses.

For detailed information about the NHS vision of how midwives can lead and deliver care in a changing health care environment, see the Department for Health Publication , Midwifery 2020:Delivering Expectations <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/midwifery-2020-delivering-expectations> . It also identifies the changes required to the way that midwives work, their role, responsibilities, education and/or professional development to meet the vision.

## **Entry requirements for nursing and midwifery**

The minimum requirements for degree programmes are usually five GCSEs at grade C or above (typically including English, maths and a science) and two or three A-levels/Highers (or equivalent), typically including a science/health-related subject. Check directly with individual institutions.

For the shortened or accelerated postgraduate courses for Nursing,

candidates should ideally possess a health related or social sciences degree. If this has been gained outside the UK it must be recognised as of equivalent standing.

In addition to academic qualifications, it is important that applicants can demonstrate a variety of skills and personal qualities including empathy, flexibility, emotional resilience, good communications skills, organisational ability and teamwork. For detailed information about the required skills and qualities for Nursing, see the Department for Health Full Vision and Strategy for Nursing:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/top-nurses-announce-new-strategy-to-build-culture-of-compassionate-care-across-the-nhs>

Although pre-entry experience is not essential, any work, or voluntary work that has been undertaken in a caring setting, ideally with the relevant client group, will strengthen your application. It is a good idea to visit hospitals, hospices, clinics or health centres and talk to nurses and midwives directly about their roles.

## Getting work experience

There are numerous opportunities for volunteering in a health sector environment. You can browse opportunities on the volunteering pages of the University website. These are all with organisations that have been checked out by the Volunteering and Community Engagement Team:

[www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/experience/volunteering](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/experience/volunteering)

Many hospitals have their own volunteering programme and examples of charities where you could gain good experience are:

- St John's Ambulance  
[www.sja.org.uk/sja/volunteer.aspx](http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/volunteer.aspx)
- Royal Voluntary Service  
[www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/volunteer)
- Alzheimer's Society  
[www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

- MIND  
[www.mind.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering-participating](http://www.mind.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering-participating)
- Marie Curie Cancer Care  
[www.mariecurie.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering)
- The National Childbirth Trust  
[www.nct.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering](http://www.nct.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering)
- The Family Planning Association  
[www.fpa.org.uk/support-us/volunteer](http://www.fpa.org.uk/support-us/volunteer)
- Stroke Association  
[www.stroke.org.uk/take-action/volunteering-stroke-association](http://www.stroke.org.uk/take-action/volunteering-stroke-association)

Getting experience will also help you work out if this is the kind of career you would like.

Acceptance onto a course will be subject to satisfactory health clearance and criminal disclosure checks. Some medical conditions may exclude entry.

## **The application procedure for nursing and midwifery**

Applications for undergraduate honours degrees in nursing and midwifery in England, Wales, Scotland or the University of Ulster are made through UCAS: [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com). Some shortened postgraduate degrees have direct entry via the institution's website. Check out the Course Finder section of the NHS Careers website for updated information about all accelerated post graduate nursing degrees: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/looking-course>. For post graduate diploma and certain degree courses in Scotland, contact NHS Education for Scotland: [www.nes.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk). In Northern Ireland, Queens University requires direct application to the degree.

Timing of application may vary from course to course as some courses start in January. However, the general closing dates for courses via UCAS is the **15th January**.

## **Selection process**

All short-listed applicants for nursing or midwifery will be invited to interview and the offer of a place is dependent upon how well the candidate can convey their suitability for nursing/midwifery. Questioning in the selection interview is likely to focus upon the relevance of the skills and experience gained through undergraduate study and work experience and of particular interest will be analytical ability and critical thinking.

## **Funding**

The government has announced that from 1 August 2017 there will be changes to education funding for nursing, midwifery and allied health professional (AHP) students. Health students will no longer have access to an NHS bursary or have the cost of their tuition paid for by Health Education England (HEE). Instead, students will have access to the same student loans system as other higher education students.

The government believes that replacing grants with student loans and abolishing the cap on the number of student places for nursing, midwifery and allied health subjects will enable universities to provide additional training places. The reforms will not affect students who started their courses before August 2017.

The government ran a consultation on the reforms to which NHS Employers responded to on behalf of employers. Following the close of the consultation the government announced a number of measures to support nursing, midwifery and AHP students.

These measures include:

- Support for childcare costs - there will be an additional payment of £1000 each year for students with child dependents to reflect that students undertaking clinical placements may have higher childcare costs than the wider student population.
- Extra support for travel expenses and covering the costs of students who have to pay for secondary accommodation whilst attending

clinical placements, if the case for educational provision and value for money is demonstrated.

- Exceptional hardship - the government will work with experts to provide bursary payments in cases of exceptional hardship where students meet eligibility criteria.
- Students who are planning to undertake nursing, midwifery and allied health professional subjects as a second degree will be able to access the standard student support system, on the same terms as students studying for a first degree.

For more information about changes to nurse and allied health care student funding click on the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-bursary-reform/nhs-bursary-reform>

## **Career progression for nursing and midwifery**

Opportunities to work abroad are manifold although individuals interested in this should do their homework as some countries do not recognise all of the branches of nursing. For example the adult branch tends to be the favoured one for working in the USA. The Royal College of Nursing: [www.rcn.org.uk/](http://www.rcn.org.uk/) and Royal College of Midwives: [www.rcm.org.uk/](http://www.rcm.org.uk/) can give you detailed advice about working abroad. Nursing and midwifery are undergoing considerable change and the general view held is that these health professionals will work in many different environments not just the NHS. Responsibility levels are also increasing for nurses and midwives.

For more information about the current job market and possible career progression in nursing and midwifery see the NHS websites

[www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university) and <http://nursing.nhscareers.nhs.uk>

[The NHS Career Planner For Nurses](http://nursingcareers.nhsemployers.org/home.aspx) is a free interactive tool that can help you plan and explore future options for career progression within nursing <http://nursingcareers.nhsemployers.org/home.aspx>

## Websites and useful resources

### Careers information

- What can I do with my degree?  
[www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university)
- NHS Careers  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/>
- Health Learning and Skills Advice line – call 08000 150 850  
[www.skillsforhealth.org.uk](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk)

### Information about the professions

- Royal College of Nursing  
[www.rcn.org.uk](http://www.rcn.org.uk)
- Royal College of Midwives  
[www.rcm.org.uk](http://www.rcm.org.uk)
- The Nursing and Midwifery Council  
[www.nmc.org.uk](http://www.nmc.org.uk)
- Department of Health – keep up to date with changes in the NHS  
[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health)

### Applications and funding

- UCAS  
[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)
- Information on NHS bursaries for nursing and midwifery students in England  
[www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students.aspx](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students.aspx)
- NHS Wales Student Awards Unit  
[www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/new-students/201415-what-financial-support-is-available/extra-support/nhs-bursary.aspx](http://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/new-students/201415-what-financial-support-is-available/extra-support/nhs-bursary.aspx)
- Student Awards Agency for Scotland  
[www.saas.gov.uk/full\\_time/nmsb/index.htm](http://www.saas.gov.uk/full_time/nmsb/index.htm)
- Student Finance Northern Ireland  
[www.studentfinancenir.co.uk/](http://www.studentfinancenir.co.uk/)

## Channel Islands

- Jersey  
[www.gov.je/Working/Careers/16To19YearOlds/EnteringHigherEducation/FinancingHigherEducationCourses/FundingDegreeProfessionalQualifications/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.gov.je/Working/Careers/16To19YearOlds/EnteringHigherEducation/FinancingHigherEducationCourses/FundingDegreeProfessionalQualifications/Pages/index.aspx)
- Guernsey  
[www.education.gg/article/2127/Funding-for-University](http://www.education.gg/article/2127/Funding-for-University)
- Isle of Man  
[www.gov.im/education](http://www.gov.im/education)

## Vacancies

- NHS jobs  
[www.jobs.nhs.uk](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk)
- Careers Service account *CareersLink* - For health care assistant vacancies and vacancies from nursing agencies  
[www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/services/aboutcareerslink](http://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/services/aboutcareerslink)
- Work experience – via NHS Careers site  
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/offering-careers-IAG/teaching-resources/work-experience>.
- The Nursing Agencies List (UK) provides a simple to search directory of all the Nursing Agencies in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.  
[www.nursing-agencies-list.com](http://www.nursing-agencies-list.com)

## Books in the Careers Library

- The UCAS Guide to getting into Nursing, Healthcare and Social Work (UCAS)
- Get into Nursing & Midwifery: A Guide to Application and Career Success – Sarah Snow (Pearson)
- Nursing & Midwifery Uncovered – Jim Bird and Marie Borrego (Trotman)
- Becoming a Nurse – Aimee Aubeeluck, Gemma Stacey and Susan Thompson (BPP)

[www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/library](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/library)

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