

Nursing associate

Nursing associates work with healthcare support workers and registered nurses to deliver care for patients and the public.

Working life

Nursing associates work across all four fields of nursing: adult, children's, mental health, and learning disability. Your skills and responsibilities will vary, depending on the care setting you work in. You'll need to demonstrate the values and behaviours of the NHS Constitution [1].

Your duties are likely to include:

- undertaking clinical tasks including venepuncture and ECGs
- supporting individuals and their families and carers when faced with unwelcome news and life-changing diagnoses
- performing and recording clinical observations such as blood pressure, temperature, respirations and pulse
- discussing and sharing information with registered nurses on a patient's condition, behaviour, activity and responses
- ensuring the privacy, dignity and safety of individuals is maintained at all times
- recognising issues relating to safeguarding vulnerable children and adults



Ready to get started?

Get practical advice and everything you need to know in your inbox.

Sign up for emails [2]

Pay and benefits

Your standard working week will be around 37.5 hours and may include a mix of shifts, such as nights, early starts, evenings and weekends. As a trainee nursing associate, you'll usually be paid on band 3 of the Agenda for Change (AFC) [3] pay system, with qualified nursing associates usually employed on band 4.

You'll also have access to our generous pension scheme and health service discounts, as well as 27 days of annual leave, plus bank holidays, which increases the longer you're in service.

Entry requirements

To begin your training as a nursing associate, you'll need GCSEs grade 9 to 4 (A to C) in maths and English, or Functional Skills Level 2 in maths and English. Some employers will also ask for a level 3 qualification. You'll also need to show that you can study for a foundation degree level and complete the Nursing Associate Apprenticeship programme.

Trainee nursing associate places are usually advertised on NHS Jobs but some places are available through direct application to universities. Applicants accepted onto university courses will need to fund their own training.

Martyn Davey

Nursing associate

The university part of the nursing associate training allowed me to take on more responsibilities and will provide me with career progression – something I never thought I'd achieve!

[Read Martyn's story \[4\]](#)

Your training

You'll undertake academic learning one day a week and work-based learning the rest of the week. You'll be employed in a healthcare setting such as an acute, community or mental health hospital, care home or hospice but also gain experience in other settings. This will mean travelling to placements and working a mix of shifts.



It is very important to plan and manage the competing demands of your job role, study and placements. You'll develop an understanding of all elements of nursing and caring for individuals with conditions such as dementia, mental ill health and learning disabilities/difficulties.

Career development

Once you've finished your training, you'll have the knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and behaviours to work as a nursing associate. Qualified nursing associates can also go on to train as a registered nurse by putting their training towards a shortened nursing degree or registered nurse degree apprenticeship (RNDA).

Your nursing associate training may shorten a registered nurse degree apprenticeship to 2 years.

To find out more about the apprenticeship route, including how to apply, speak with your line manager, education team or apprenticeship lead. Your employer may want you to complete a year working as a nursing associate before you progress to registered nurse training.

Registration

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC [5]) is responsible for registering and regulating nursing associates.

Find out more

If you're interested in becoming a nursing associate, find out more on this dedicated website [6].

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**Return to
practice**

If you're no longer a registered nursing associate, returning to practice is really straightforward. Here's how you can do it:

- readmission
- Test of competence
- return to practice course

Readmission

You might be able to re-register with the NMC [5] without doing a course or a test. You'll need to contact the NMC [7] to find out how to do this.

Test of competence

The test is made up of two parts:

- a multiple choice computer based test (CBT)
- a practical test known as the Objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) [8]

You can apply through the NMC website [9], where you'll also find lots of preparation materials and essential reading to help you revise for the test.

Return to practice course

A return to practice course will refresh your skills, leaving you ready to return to being a nursing associate with confidence. It involves a combination of classroom and placement-based learning. Find return to practice courses on our course finder. [10]

Other roles that may interest you

- Healthcare assistant [11]
- Adult nurse [12]
- Assistant practitioner [13]
- Cytopathology [14]

Source URL:<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing/nursing-associate?platform=hootsuite>

Links

[1] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NHS_Constitution [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/we-are-the-nhs/registration?career=nursing-guide> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/working-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates> [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/nursing-associate/real-life-story-martyn-davey> [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NMC> [6] <https://nursing-associates.hee.nhs.uk/> [7] <https://www.nmc.org.uk/contact-us/> [8] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Objective_structured_clinical_examination_OSCE [9] <https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/toc/na-toc-2021/> [10] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/course-finder?field_leading_to_a_career_in_tid=3428&field_region_tid=All&field_qualification_type_tid=All& [11] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-support-worker/roles-healthcare-support-worker/healthcare-assistant> [12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing/adult-nurse> [13] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/assistant-practitioner> [14] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/life-sciences/cytopathology>