

Home > Explore roles > Nursing careers > Roles in nursing > Adult nurse > Entry requirements (adult nursing)

Entry requirements (adult nursing)

This page has information on the entry requirements for adult nursing.

University courses

Typically you'll need a minimum of five GCSEs at grade 4/C or above (possibly in English language or literature and a science subject), plus two A levels or equivalent level 3 qualifications, such as a T level or BTEC for an undergraduate degree. Some universities may ask for three A levels or equivalent. If you already have a degree, you might be able to study for a postgraduate qualification through an accelerated programme [1].

It is vital to check entry requirements of the universities you plan to apply to as they can vary. You can use our Course finder [2] to find universities running adult nursing courses.

You should check with each university directly before applying to see if your qualifications meet their entry standard.

Alternatives to A Levels

Alternative qualifications to A levels include:

- A relevant T level
- Access courses, eg Access to Nursing
- Pearson BTEC Level 3 Diploma qualifications
- Scottish Highers/Advanced Highers
- OCR Cambridge Technicals
- International Baccalaureate (IB)

You may need to achieve a certain level, for example a merit or distinction in the case of BTEC. It might be possible to combine academic qualifications with vocational qualifications. For example, an A level and a BTEC qualification.

Before starting any qualifications, always check with universities to ensure that you would be accepted onto an adult nursing course.

Financial support while studying at university

If you're eligible, you'll receive at least £5,000 a year towards your studies while at university. Your personal circumstances may mean you could receive more. And the good news? You'll never have to pay it back

- Find out more about financial support while at university. [3]

Other routes into adult nursing

Nursing degree apprenticeships are available with some employers. Increasing opportunities for current healthcare support staff to apply for nursing associate apprenticeships [4] are also expected. This can lead to nursing degrees or nurse degree apprenticeships.

Want to learn more?

- Find universities running courses on our course finder [2]
- More information on studying to be a nurse including nursing degree apprenticeships [5]

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Numeracy and literacy

Applicants to adult nursing degrees must demonstrate evidence of literacy and numeracy. This includes evidence of being able to:

- read and comprehend English or Welsh
- communicate clearly and effectively in writing, including using a computer
- accurately manipulate numbers as applied to volume, weight, and length, (including, addition, subtraction, division, multiplication, use of decimals, fractions, and percentages)

If you have a disability, the above can be met through the use of reasonable adjustments.

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Accelerated programmes

Any relevant previous learning you have could count towards your pre-registration nursing course. It's up to each university, but you may be able to do a shortened course (up to one year shorter) if your previous learning is considered relevant. Examples of previous learning might include a relevant degree or other studies, or relevant practice experience in a nursing or related discipline. What is relevant will depend upon the university offering the programme, but could for example, be a health-related or biology-based degree.

- Accelerated programmes can also be found on our course finder by searching for 'accelerated' programmes. [6]
- You can also find more information on accelerated programmes on our studying nursing information. [5]

Criminal convictions

You must have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check [7] to take up a place on a pre-registration nursing programme. You must confirm on your university application that you agree to a DBS check. If you have a criminal conviction or a police caution, this will not automatically bar you from working in the NHS. Any relevant circumstances will be considered for any conviction. You'll also be required to have a Protection of Children Act List check before you begin your clinical placement if your programme involves regularly caring for or being in sole charge of children.

Health conditions

Universities must be satisfied that applicants to programmes are of good health and character to be considered a safe and effective nurse. If you have a particular health problem that may affect your ability to work or study, or if you have any questions about health requirements, contact the university to which you plan to apply. More information is available from the Nursing and Midwifery Council. [8]

Partner logos

Royal College of Nursing

[9]

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Source URL:<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing/adult-nurse/entry-requirements-adult-nursing>

Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/study-and-training/graduate-training-opportunities/accelerated-programmes>

[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/course->

finder?field_leading_to_a_career_in_tid=162&field_qualification_type_tid=All&field_study_mode_tid=A
[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/study-and-training/considering-or-university/financial-support-university> [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing/nursing-associate/nursing-associate> [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-nursing> [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/looking-course> [7] <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview> [8] <http://www.nmc-uk.org/> [9] <https://www.rcn.org.uk/>