

# THE NURSING PROFESSION



One hundred and fifty years ago, nurses were unpaid, untrained, and unpopular, but then Florence Nightingale made nursing into a profession. The methods she introduced in the 1850s were copied all over the world, and now nursing is a career with a three- or four-year training, qualifications, grades, unions, and pensions.

In Britain, every nurse is on a grade. The grade depends on experience and skills, and each grade has different responsibilities and pay. On the bottom grades are unqualified auxiliary nurses, who do the routine work on hospital

wards. On the top grades are nursing officers, who are usually administrators.

Auxiliary nurses are on the bottom grades, but student nurses get the lowest pay. However, students don't stay at the bottom of the pay scale forever. When they qualify, they start working on a middle grade. As they get experience, they can get promotion and move up the ranks to become staff nurse, then sister (charge nurse if a man), and perhaps eventually nursing officer.

Many nurses work shifts, and often they work overtime to earn more money. After basic training, many nurses choose to do

further study and become specialists. Nurses can specialize in many different fields – there are triage nurses working in Casualty, and psychiatric nurses who treat the mentally ill. There are health visitors who visit patients in their own homes, practice nurses working in GPs' surgeries, and midwives who deliver babies.

Many of them say they do not get enough pay and respect for the work they do. They say that the work is physically and mentally hard, that they work long hours and get very tired. But they also say that there are many great rewards which have nothing to do with money.

**LIVE WORKSHEETS**

## ✓ Reading

1 Read the article and decide if these sentences are true (T) or false (F).

- 1 The more responsibility you have, the higher your grade. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Nursing officers are the same as auxiliary nurses. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Students are paid less than auxiliary nurses. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 A charge nurse is a man. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 There are not many opportunities for British nurses to specialize. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Many nurses say that the job is rewarding, but the pay is low. \_\_\_\_\_

2 Number these jobs from the highest grade (1) to the lowest (4). Two of them are equal.

- a charge nurse \_\_\_\_\_
- b nursing officer \_\_\_\_\_
- c auxiliary nurse \_\_\_\_\_
- d sister \_\_\_\_\_
- e staff nurse \_\_\_\_\_

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Send | Options... | ?

From... mcarmen@urbismail.com

To... ivana.lukic@fastnet.com

Subject: Hello!

Hi Ivana

I ~~write~~ / 'm writing<sup>1</sup> to say thank you for the birthday card, and to tell you how I ~~get on~~ / 'm getting on<sup>2</sup>. The course is hard work, but I 'm enjoying / enjoy<sup>3</sup> it so far. We usually have / are having<sup>4</sup> classes every morning, but this week I 'm working / work<sup>5</sup> in Geriatrics all day. It's interesting, although of course I want / 'm wanting<sup>6</sup> to work as a scrub nurse.

On the geriatric ward I 'm making / make<sup>7</sup> beds and checking / check<sup>8</sup> patients' blood pressure and temperature. I 'm learning / learn<sup>9</sup> a lot, and the experience is very useful.

I 'm going out / go out<sup>10</sup> most Saturday nights, but stay in and study on other days. Tomorrow I go / 'm going<sup>11</sup> to a restaurant for my birthday! I make / 'm making<sup>12</sup> a lot of friends, but I wish you were here too. Write to me!

Love

Maria Carmen

# Listening 2

## A job interview

1 Before you listen, answer the questions.

- How do you feel about interviews? Are you good at them?
- When was your last interview? What was it for? How did it go?



2 Listen to Rachel having a job interview, and answer the questions.

- 1 Where is Rachel working now?
- 2 Which part of the hospital does she work in?
- 3 Why is she looking for a new job?

3 Complete the sentences using the words below. Then listen again and check.

applying for	lectures	night shift
fully-qualified	part-time	rewarding

- 1 Are you a \_\_\_\_\_ scrub nurse?
- 2 At the moment I'm doing a \_\_\_\_\_ course and working at the same time.
- 3 It's hard, especially when I'm working a \_\_\_\_\_ and going to \_\_\_\_\_ next day.
- 4 ... it's the contact with the patients that's most \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 Why are you \_\_\_\_\_ a new job?