

# Nursing and Midwifery in the UK

The UK is made up of four distinct countries, each with its own laws, culture and customs. For further information about life in the UK and cultural traditions visit the [Project Britain website](#).

The UK may be very different from the last country you practiced in and so you should spend time finding out about the population, health and social care and other aspects of life. A lot of this information is collected as data and available from the [Office of National Statistics](#).

## Facts about the UK

Approximately half of all children are born outside of marriage, there are large numbers of lone parents, same-sex couples have civil partnership and equal marriage and many have children. All people must be treated equally and not subject to discrimination based on disability, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation. For further information on human rights law and equality please access the [Equality Act 2010](#).

Divorce, homosexuality and abortion are all legal in the UK. It is common for women and men to drink alcohol and smoke tobacco socially, although smoking is now banned in all enclosed public spaces such as bars and workplaces. The UK is a multi-cultural, multi-faith society and all patients must have their faith or lack of faith, culture and [human rights](#) respected by all healthcare professionals.

## Becoming familiar with nursing or midwifery practice in the UK

You must familiarise yourself with the ethical and professional standards expected of registered nurses and midwives in the UK. These are the required standards which underpin professional nursing and midwifery practice.

All healthcare professionals must work in partnership with patients, obtaining their consent and respecting their dignity and privacy. It is unacceptable for your words or actions to imply or express disapproval of any patients' lifestyle. You must not discriminate in any way against those in your care. Patients and the public expect high standards of professional practice from nurses and midwives.

[The NMC website](#) has more information on what people should expect from a nurse or a midwife.

Healthcare professionals work in partnership and registered nurse and midwives are expected to both contribute and also lead in areas of care where they have expertise. Many organisations are recruiting nurses using the [six C's, which are, Care, compassion, competence, communication, courage and commitment](#) and you should be familiar with these and be able to demonstrate them in the OSCE.

## **Evidence base for nursing and midwifery practice**

You can find evidence based guidelines in nursing journals and texts and professional organisations such as the Royal College of Nurses and Royal College of Midwives. The National Institute of Healthcare and Excellence and Scottish Intercollegiate Guideline Network are also useful sources, several useful links are also provided in the test blueprint.

Access to specific OSCE resources provided by the University of Northampton for the NMC's Test of Competence are available after you have enrolled for the test.