

Employability skills, self evaluation and career development for a band 5 adult nurse role

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Introduction.

This report examines the role of an adult nurse within the UK healthcare system, with a focus on the employability skills required for the position, an evaluation of personal skills and experience in relation to the role, and the development of an action plan to support future career progression. The discussion is based on a real job vacancy from The Hospice of St Francis, which specialises in providing palliative and end of life care.

The nursing profession is guided by the 6Cs of nursing (NHS England, 2015). Which include care, compassion, competence, communication, courage, and commitment. These values are essential in ensuring safe, effective, and patient centred care within the National Health Service. They are particularly important when supporting individuals with complex physical, emotional, and social needs.

The decision to pursue a career in adult nursing is influenced by a strong interest in healthcare and a desire to support individuals during vulnerable and challenging stages of life. This career choice also reflects the principles of the Care Act 2014 (HM Government, 2014), which emphasises wellbeing, dignity, and person centred care, as well as supporting individuals to maintain independence for as long as possible. These principles closely align with holistic nursing practice.

Job role + Employability skills Analysis.

Following the introduction, it is necessary to explore the role of an adult nurse in greater detail by referring to a real job opportunity. A suitable vacancy has been identified at the hospice of St Francis, an organisation that specialises in palliative and end of life care. Within this setting, the responsibilities of a nurse include providing holistic and patient focused care, managing individuals with complex health conditions, and offering emotional as well as psychological support to patients and their families. This role demonstrates that effective nursing practice requires not only strong clinical abilities but also well developed interpersonal skills. One of the most important employability skills required for this role is effective communication. Nurses must be able to communicate clearly with patients, relatives, and multidisciplinary teams to ensure that care is delivered safely and appropriately. In a hospice setting, communication is particularly significant, as nurses often support patients and families during emotionally sensitive situations, requiring both clarity and empathy which links directly to the 6Cs of nursing, particularly communication and compassion (NHS England, 2015).

In addition, compassion is a fundamental skill in nursing practice, especially within palliative care. Nurses are expected to provide care that respects the dignity and emotional wellbeing of patients, particularly those nearing the end of life. Demonstrating compassion helps to build trust and ensures that patients feel supported during vulnerable moments. Teamwork is also essential, as nurses work closely with other healthcare professionals, including doctors, therapists, and support staff. Effective collaboration ensures that patient care is coordinated and consistent, which is particularly important when managing complex health conditions.

Furthermore, emotional resilience is a key requirement in this role. Working in a hospice environment can be emotionally demanding, and nurses must be able to cope with stress while continuing to provide high quality care. This highlights the importance of maintaining professionalism and emotional strength in challenging situations.

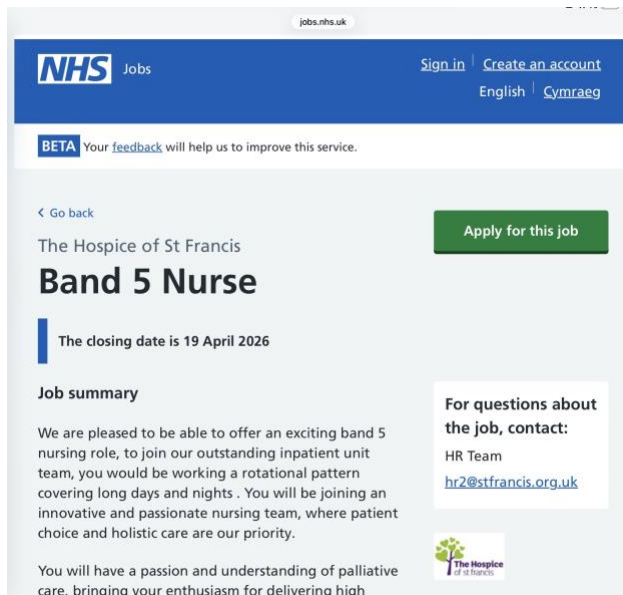


Figure 1 : Job vacancy for Adult Nurse at the hospice of St Francis (2026)

Source: The hospice of St Francis (2026)

Self-Evaluation (Gibbs Reflective Cycle)

1. Description

I am currently employed at Pret A Manger, working in a fast paced customer service role. My responsibilities include interacting with customers, taking orders, handling payments, and working with colleagues to ensure smooth daily operations. This role requires efficiency, teamwork, and the ability to perform well in a busy environment. Although I do not have experience in a healthcare or clinical setting, this role has helped me develop transferable skills relevant to a future career in adult nursing.

2. Feelings

I feel motivated and interested in pursuing a career in adult nursing due to my desire to work in healthcare and support patients. At the same time, I recognise that I currently lack clinical experience and formal healthcare training, which makes the career path feel challenging. However, I am committed to developing the necessary skills and gaining experience through education and future opportunities.

3. Evaluation (Strengths and Weaknesses)

Strengths:

My role at Pret A Manger has helped me develop strong communication skills through daily interaction with customers and colleagues. I have also developed teamwork skills by working collaboratively in a fast paced environment, particularly during busy periods. In addition, I am

able to remain calm under pressure, which is important when managing multiple tasks at once.

Weaknesses:

A key weakness is my lack of clinical knowledge and direct healthcare experience, which are essential for becoming an adult nurse. I also recognise that my emotional resilience in healthcare settings, particularly in situations such as end of life care, needs further development.

4. Analysis (Opportunities and Threats)

Opportunities:

There are several opportunities available to support my progression into nursing, including applying for a nursing degree, gaining voluntary experience in healthcare settings, and accessing training within the national health service. These opportunities would help me develop both theoretical and practical skills required for the role.

Threats:

Potential challenges include the competitive nature of nursing courses and the academic demands of university study. Additionally, the lack of current healthcare experience may place me at a disadvantage compared to other applicants with clinical exposure.

5. Analysis of Learning

This reflection highlights that while I have developed important transferable skills through my employment at Pret A Manger, there are still clear gaps that need to be addressed in order to progress into adult nursing. In particular, gaining healthcare experience, developing clinical knowledge, and improving emotional resilience are essential areas for future development. Moving forward, I will need to focus on gaining relevant experience through volunteering, education, and training opportunities to better prepare for a career in nursing.

Building a Personal brand and professional identity.

Developing a strong personal brand and professional identity is an important part of progressing towards a career in adult nursing. Professional identity in healthcare refers to how an individual presents themselves in line with the values, behaviours, and expectations of the profession. In nursing, this is strongly influenced by the 6Cs of nursing, particularly communication, compassion, and commitment, which are essential for building effective relationships with patients, families, and healthcare colleagues within the National Health Service.

My current personal brand has been shaped through my employment at Pret A Manger, where I have gained transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, and the ability to remain calm and organised in a fast paced environment. These skills are relevant to nursing

practice, as they demonstrate my ability to work effectively with others, manage pressure, and deliver a high standard of service in demanding situations.

To further develop my professional identity, I need to improve how I present myself as a future healthcare professional. This includes developing a structured CV that clearly highlights my skills, experience, and career goals, as well as using professional networking platforms such as LinkedIn to connect with others in the healthcare field and explore opportunities. Gaining voluntary experience in healthcare settings would also strengthen my personal brand by showing commitment to the profession and providing relevant practical exposure.

Furthermore, maintaining a professional approach that reflects nursing values is essential. This involves demonstrating empathy, respect, and responsibility in all interactions, which aligns with the 6Cs framework and the expectations of professional practice within the NHS.



Figure 2: screenshot of LinkedIn profile demonstrating professional identity and network development (2026)

Source: LinkedIn (2026)

Action Plan for Developing Skills Required for a Band 5 Adult Nurse Role

To achieve my long term goal of becoming a Band 5 adult nurse within the UK healthcare system, I have developed an action plan outlining the key steps required to address my current skills gaps and strengthen my employability. This plan focuses on developing clinical knowledge, gaining healthcare experience, and enhancing professional competencies such as communication, teamwork, and emotional resilience.

Short term (0–12 months)

In the short term, I plan to focus on gaining relevant healthcare exposure and strengthening my academic foundation. I will apply for voluntary roles within healthcare or community settings, such as hospitals, care homes, or hospice environments, to develop an understanding of patient care and clinical practice. In addition, I will continue working in my current role at Pret A Manger, using it to further enhance transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, and time management in a fast paced environment.

I will also begin researching and applying for nursing degree programmes through UCAS, ensuring I meet entry requirements and prepare for interviews. Attending university open days and speaking with nursing staff will also support my understanding of the profession.

In addition to this, I will focus on further developing my knowledge of core healthcare principles to prepare for a future clinical environment. This includes improving my understanding of key areas such as patient safety, safeguarding, infection prevention and control, and effective communication within multidisciplinary teams. I also intend to engage more with NHS guidance and professional nursing resources to strengthen my awareness of expected standards within practice. Alongside this, I will use structured reflection to regularly evaluate my experiences and identify areas for continued improvement. This will help me build confidence in recognising my development needs and tracking my progress over time. By combining theoretical knowledge with ongoing reflection, I will be better prepared for the academic and practical demands of a nursing degree and the expectations of a Band 5 adult nurse role.

Medium term (1–3 years)

In the medium term, my goal is to begin a Nursing Degree (Adult Nursing) at university. During this period, I will develop clinical skills through academic study and placements within NHS healthcare settings. These placements will allow me to gain hands on experience in patient care, develop professional communication skills, and build confidence in clinical decision making.

I will also continue developing my personal brand and professional identity by maintaining an updated CV and LinkedIn profile, highlighting my academic progress, voluntary experience, and transferable skills. Engaging with healthcare professionals and building a professional network will support my career development and future employment opportunities.

Long-term (3–5 years)

In the long term, my aim is to qualify as a registered adult nurse and secure a Band 5 position within the NHS or a specialist care setting such as a hospice. At this stage, I will have developed the clinical competence, emotional resilience, and professional skills required to provide high quality patient care.

I will continue to develop my practice through ongoing professional development, reflective practice using models such as Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1988), and adherence to the standards set by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC, 2018). My goal is to specialise further within adult nursing, potentially within palliative or acute care settings.

Summary

Overall, this action plan outlines a structured pathway from my current experience in customer service towards a professional career in adult nursing. By progressively developing my skills through education, practical experience, and professional engagement, I aim to

meet the requirements of a Band 5 nurse role and contribute effectively to patient centred care within the NHS.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this report has explored the role of an adult Band 5 nurse within the UK healthcare system, identifying the key employability skills required, including communication, teamwork, compassion, and emotional resilience. Through self evaluation, I have recognised that while I have developed strong transferable skills through my current role at Pret A Manger, there are still gaps in clinical knowledge and healthcare experience that need to be addressed.

The development of a structured action plan has highlighted the steps required to progress towards this career, including gaining healthcare experience, pursuing a nursing degree, and developing professional competencies through both academic study and practical placements. Additionally, the importance of personal branding and professional identity has been recognised as essential for future employability within the NHS.

Overall, this report demonstrates that while I am not yet fully prepared for a Band 5 nursing role, I have a clear development pathway in place to achieve this career goal in the future.

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