

OCTOBER 2021

# QAQF NEWS



A monthly newsletter brought to you by Quality Assessment Qualification Network

## TRAINING *for a Better* FUTURE CARE



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# What is OSCE

and why overseas nurses must take it to become Registered Nurses in the UK?



Article by Neha Awashti

When an overseas health professional joins the UK health workforce, to work legally as a registered nurse, they must pass few crucial tests before obtaining the nursing registration. The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is a regulatory body which oversees this process. It has approved two tests of competence against which the suitable candidates are measured with.

The first is Computer Based Test (CBT) followed by an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) as the second part of the assessment, where candidates must prove that their clinical and communication skills are on the required level.

## The Actual Exam

The nurses trained abroad are required to undertake this exam of ten stations; six of which are skill stations, and each last about fifteen minutes.

Every element of the test is important as the trainee needs to perform each of them in a satisfactory manner. The test starts with the patient's assessment (Assessment station), followed by the planning of nursing care



(Planning station); safely administration of medication (Implementation station) and the evaluation of the care planned in the hospital or the community setting (Evaluation station).

The key element of this test is the risk management – candidates' ability to ensure the safety of the patient and candidates themselves.

Upon successful completion of this examination and fulfilling all the essential criteria, the nurse obtains the registration pin number which concludes the registration process.



## The Training Process

Our practice shows that the vast majority of the overseas nurses coming to obtain the training for OSCE with QAQF, are experienced and well-prepared, requiring little guidance to adopt to the local process and work standards. For many of them who come from hard working environments the technology available in the UK is a great advantage. They are eager to learn and have very high participation during the online classes even though the majority are full time workers in care and nursing homes. In August we restarted our live classes with a two-day course in London, but the main work is still done online.

At this point our trainees have 99% exam success, which is not surprising as the candidates are highly motivated and come after a rigid selection of four consecutive interviews before landing in the UK.

**Neha Awashti** is the QAQF OSCE Head instructor – an experienced nurse, who was on the frontline as part of the emergency units during the pandemic. Probably that is why she is famous for her 'no non-sense approach', and she really invests in her students but expects always one hundred percent commitment.

***We are specialists in the healthcare education, training overseas professionals for work in the UK and helping them pass professional nursing exams as CBT, OSCE and OET.***

# What is OET?

'Education is the key to unlocking the world, a passport to freedom' Oprah Winfrey

OET is the occupational English language test for healthcare professionals recognised by various regulatory healthcare bodies. The test assesses all four English skills using test materials that reflect typical real work places and relevant language skills.

## Experiencing OET at QAQF

At QAQF, we are determined that education continues to the highest standards. Our online preparation course is specifically designed to help trainees build their English skills before taking OET. The online course provides authentic practice material, skill-building lessons and strategies based on OET material and advice for the actual test day.

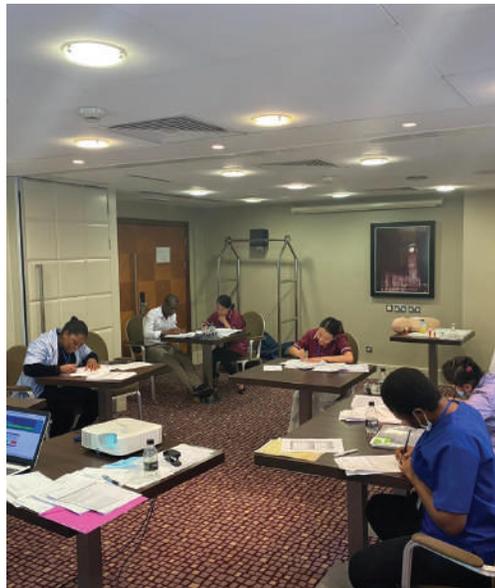
Our online platform has now been delivering the OET program for nearly a year, which has certainly been an incredibly busy time training healthcare trainees from all over the globe with countless interactive lessons pertaining to a high student success rate.

In August 2021 our medical trainees attended an event in Crowne Plaza Hotel in London, which proved to be remarkably popular. Hopefully in November, trainees will be taking part in our face to face OET workshops in November presented by myself.

## Supporting OET Candidates during the course

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Our OET course is designed to provide skills to help those concerned bridge the gaps between the English language learning and the hospital ward.



Regular workshops alongside our virtual learning platform aim to improve levels of support for OET trainees and so maximize their level of success within the healthcare sector.

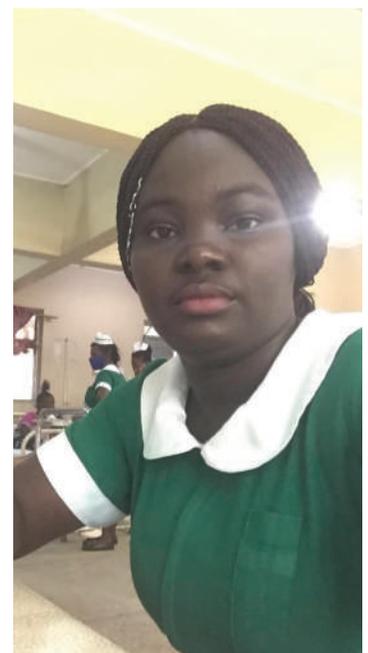


## Testimonials: What our students say.

The OET online class organised by QAQF is my first ever online class and I thought it would be difficult for me but I was totally wrong. The teacher has time to explain everything into details and uses authentic OET materials in examining we the students. I think she knows what she is doing and she is so well for every- one to understand. The course has really helped me to improve my grammar and speak- ing as well as other components of the course. I am now confident I will get a required score if I should sit the exam today. Am happy I joined this program with QAQF.



I am Sara Pakshir, QAQF's OET Head Instructor. Since starting teaching over 20 years ago, I have helped hundreds of learners improve their English. I am specialised in teaching English for healthcare, and preparation for the occupational English language test. I am a British Council accredited Language trainer who seeks to support candidates during their preparation course despite challenging circumstances, and prepare them for the industry-specific tests.



# Overseas Healthcare Workers

Welcome to the UK

QAQF aims to create a bridge between overseas care professionals and the UK nursing homes, care homes, residential homes and private hospitals.



Article by Danica Luces

Following the immeasurable effort and sacrifices of healthcare workers during the pandemic, through the 2020 Coronavirus Act, the UK Government eased immigration pressures. Its provisions have been curated for the rapid registration of healthcare professionals in the UK and overseas applicants. It will alleviate the burden of the shortage of healthcare workers in the NHS and independent health care sectors in the UK.

## Getting the Right Qualification

QAQF enables professionals from around the world to gain their qualifications to be recognised in the UK. Once in the UK, they have the right of employment in the care sector (as carers and senior carers) but must pass the qualifications (CBT, OSCE and OET) within eight months upon arrival to become a registered nurse.

## Care Home Sponsorship

QAQF sources the best Care homes in the UK to employ overseas health care professionals, whilst they are completing their qualifications to become a registered nurse. To be approved by the Home Office, care homes apply for a License, allowing them to issue an electronic record called a Certificate of sponsorship, thus hiring employees coming with a Health and Care Visa.

Sponsorship is growing rapidly in popularity as more care homes are using it to solve staff shortages and high turnovers. We anticipate that it will become one of the critical resources of the industry recruiting in the near future.



Once all components have been completed for the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) registration, a healthcare worker is invited to become part of the frontliners to tackle the Coronavirus pandemic. Overseas healthcare workers are welcome to work in the UK through the skilled worker visa, which has replaced the tier 2 (general) work visa. After five years, the Health and Care Worker Visa can lead to settlement, and dependent partners and children can join the applicant.

Additionally, some healthcare workers and their families will get their visas extended for free because of the pandemic. The application for indefinite right to remain can be made online and free of charge.



Danica Luces is the QAQF Compliance Officer. She has a legal background, but coming from a healthcare family herself, she loves the nursing profession. In her daily work with trainees and care homes, she makes the procedures and regulation process painless. You can contact Danica via [danica.luces@qaqf.co.uk](mailto:danica.luces@qaqf.co.uk).

# Carers!

Care for your mental health!



Article by Alex Manole

Working in the care industry is not only physically demanding but could be very stressful. Long periods of stress can have a severe impact on one's mood, thinking, and acting, thus lead to long-term behavioral changes.

The popular name of this phenomenon is 'burnout'. An early article (Fimian & Blanton, 1987) describes burnout as emotional exhaustion, low sense of accomplishment and lack of motivation combined with physical symptoms such as headaches and stomach cramps and pain.

According to MARQUE an English national care home longitudinal survey from 2019 (Costello et al., 2019), care home workers in the UK are badly impacted by burnout connected to low work motivation and high staff turnover.

Burnout changes both our private and our professional life for the worse and have the potential to become a long-lasting issue. That is why it is not a threat to be neglected, and each one of us has to look after ourselves and try to prevent going into a state of burnout. But how?

Some simple techniques work. But we need to give them a chance. Here is a small list to remind you what you can do to restore your inner balance if you feel emotionally exhausted and vulnerable.

## Six Easy Hacks to Keep Burnout Away

1. Find a quiet place and talk to yourself. Speak out loud and be nice, kind, and respectful. Show some self-love and care.

2. If you feel tired and have a long-lasting headache, find a way to rest. Whatever is happening, your body is telling you that you need to stop and take a deep breath.

3. Sleep for at least 7 hours every night. Sleep is essential for us to function, and no, you can't compensate. If you don't get enough sleep, your body will suffer altogether with your mental health.

4. Spoil yourself with little rewards for your hard work. It could be something small but pleasant, like a scented candle or a flower. Add some flavour and a sense of luxury to your day.

5. Dance for 2 minutes to one of your favourite songs (like no one is watching). You will be surprised how good it feels.

6. Treat yourself. Look for a recipe, go to the grocery store and start making a delicious homemade meal. When the dish is ready, light a candle and enjoy. Go for a short walk in the park and play with an animal. It releases a lot of endorphins. Even if you do not have a pet, find a dog and, with the owner's consent, play with it.

## And three things to stay away from:

1. Avoid drinking too much coffee as it can increase anxiety and makes you more tired and stressed.

2. Avoid isolation and stay around people you like. Give them big hugs – hugging also makes us feel happy and safe.

3. Avoid drinking alcohol alone and when you are feeling down. It will enforce the negative thoughts and make things look hopeless.



Alex Manole is the QAQF Wellbeing Officer. She is the link that holds together our big international and multicultural team, providing great care and support to staff members, trainees and our business partners.

You can message Alex at [alexandra.manole@qaqf.co.uk](mailto:alexandra.manole@qaqf.co.uk)

**In conclusion –** care work is not the easiest and probably will never be. But we can learn to cope with the stress and manage it more smartly.

Plan your daily relaxation and self-moments ahead and never miss to reward yourself for the job well done.

# Defining 'Good' in Care:

CQC research finds what people understand to be 'Good' in Care services



Article by Liza Moroz

Care and residential homes in the UK are in a situation of strong competition and families invest a lot of time to research and visit before making their choice. Naturally, the basic criteria of choice are often proximity and expenses, but the CQC rating of the home appears to be among the top reasons behind the choice.

Since 2013, when CQC adopted a new strategy, their methodology of measuring the performance of the care institutions included a set of new questions related to safety, effectiveness, level of care, leadership, and responsiveness.

Rating them from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good' and eventually 'Outstanding' CQC was interested to know how people, who use the service, understand these categories.

'Good' is a broad term, but in the later CQC research, it proved to be rather specific when it comes to Care. This is what the researchers found interviewing through Care and Residential homes in the country. Let us see what people shared with the team.

## How people define 'Outstanding', 'Good' and 'Require Improvement.'

Require Improvement	Good	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lack of sufficient stimulation</li> <li>- no communication with the staff</li> <li>- unhygienic/ unclean/smelly environment</li> <li>- residents look poorly, unclean and not tidy</li> <li>- lack of continuity in the care</li> <li>- no personal plan of care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sufficient stimulation through activities</li> <li>- friendliness of the staff</li> <li>- contacting families asap about issues</li> <li>- keeping residents healthy and in optimal physical condition (GP, dentist, hairdresser)</li> <li>- providing clean environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- abundance of exciting activities that keep residents active - easy and pleasant communication between patients and carers</li> <li>- regular and active communication between the home and the family</li> <li>- spotless personal physical Care (hygiene, look, health)</li> </ul>

An evaluation of 'inadequate' was mentioned regarding facilities where the carers do not have the time and physical ability to offer essential Care, treating patients abruptly.

According to the respondents the success of the care home is ruttred in the facility's recruitment and management policies that ensure the team provides quality service, is not overworked, and has the relevant skills, qualifications, and attitudes.

## It's all about people

In the follow up questions respondents described their vision of Safe, Caring, Responsive and Efficient. Still, there was an element in the evaluation mix that provoked more discussion than average.

'Well-led' appeared to be an essential definition of the successful and desired home, with emphasis on the high-motivated staff.

In their interviews, residents strongly connected their 'outstanding' experiences with staff who 'went the extra mile' and provided a more individualistic approach.

Source: CQC, Publications <https://bit.ly/3EoyLYp>



Liza Moroz is taking care of QAQF Marketing and is notorious for asking difficult questions like 'why'.

She likes connecting with people, solving problems and finding new opportunities. You can connect with Liza via [elisaveta.moroz@qaqf.co.uk](mailto:elisaveta.moroz@qaqf.co.uk)

# Meet the Ghanaian Nurses in Training

Rebecca and Daniel are trainees in QAQF

*Rebecca and Daniel are trainees in QAQF preparing to take their exams to become Fully Registered nurses in the UK. Both are already employed by Licensed Care homes and will continue working for their employers after getting their PINs.*



## Rebecca Alfonse

Rebecca Alfonse is one of those people you always notice and remember because of her lovely personality and ongoing attitude. She is confident and happily collaborates with everyone, which is no surprise after eleven years of active nursing practice.

Speaking of her decision to move to the UK, she mentions personal growth in the profession and a better life for her family, especially her children. Rebecca loves working in Vida Care Homes (Harrogate, North Yorkshire) and doesn't hide her ambition to become a care home manager one day. 'I would like to work for Vida in the future. 'I would love to become a care home manager.' She is confident about her upcoming exams, and to become a Registered nurse in the UK as she is 'smart and pays attention to details'. We can't argue with that.

She became a nurse as she likes to take care of people and believes this is her right profession. For the short period of time working in the UK, she is impressed by how the UK care system works, though does not enjoy the bureaucracy. Rebecca believes that all the best is yet about to come. Her superpower is 'Grace', and we are sure she will conquer her dreams.

*Interview by Shaleena Callichurn.*

## Daniel Kwafo

Daniel comes from Ghana. He is 26 years old and already has six years of professional nursing in his home country. Daniel has chosen to be a nurse because he likes being around people, and caring makes him feel good. But he is an achiever and a goal-oriented professional who is looking forward to growing in his profession. Daniel works in Hillview care home as a senior carer, preparing for his OTE and OSCE exams. He is very confident that he will be a Registered nurse soon, and he is looking forward to contributing to the UK healthcare system. Does he consider other options for a career? 'Leave the nursing? No, I would never say no to nursing if the conditions are favourable'.

Daniel is looking towards a brighter future, proving himself as professional, settling down and starting a family. Hard work is not a problem, as technology makes everything much easier here in the UK than back home. He is thankful for the opportunity and believes he can contribute to the care home that trusted and hired him through their license. 'Coming from a caring and emphatic society, we quickly connect with everybody and love to help.'

In the end, we asked Daniel what his superpower is ' My secret POWER is praying, kindness and humility.'

Thanks, Daniel, best of luck with your exams!



Shaleena Callichurn is the Director of Studies at QAQF and the pioneer of the organization. She is a highly professional with a mission, and a firm believer in a new modern and global education system based on skills and motivation. She is also the engine behind the QAQF Training program. To contact Shaleena use [director@qaqf.co.uk](mailto:director@qaqf.co.uk)

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# A LIFELINE *for the nursing* CRISIS IN THE UK



**Over 100,000 HEALTH PROFESSIONALS  
are needed in the UK market. At QAQF  
we are training overseas nurses to ease  
this labour shortage and bring their vital  
health care skills to this country.**



**QUALITY  
ASSESSMENT  
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