Step Guide
Nurse Specialist (NHS Direct) - [N&M/NHSD] (Band 6)

This step guide will help you to understand and use the national profile identified in the RCN "KNOW YOUR WORTH: re-banding the nursing workforce within the NHS" guidance document. This guidance provides detailed information about the various stages to get through a job evaluation review, where you can substitute the step guide below at pages 13-14 of that document. The step guide works through each factor systematically to identify where there may be gaps in your current job information to match it to the profile. As profiles can have multiple options per factor, the guide will focus on the highest option.

You will need to identify the level your job has reached for each of the 16 factors using this guide, so will therefore need a copy of your existing Matched Job Report (MJR) which details how your post was originally assessed. Understanding the original assessment is an important piece of the jigsaw, it will help you understand what gaps in information there may be and help you focus on these areas to update the job information.

The profile can be found on the NHS Employers website in the Nursing and midwifery family.

First step is to check that the job statement at the top of the profile does align to your job, it doesn't need to be exact just a good fit. The statement for the NHS Direct - Nurse, Specialist profile is:

1. Takes history, makes triage assessment, provides advice to telephone callers
2. Provides health education, drug information and education to callers
3. Writes up notes on all calls; undertakes personal and team audits
4. Carries out literature searches, undertakes research for ad hoc projects
5. May provide supervision to other nurse advisers, Students

Where you answer:

- **"yes"** your job information may already be sufficient to match the required level. You can, and should, strengthen this description if it does not accurately represent your role.
- **"no"** your job information may need strengthening in this area, then provides prompts to think about how your job information could be improved.

Factor 1 – Communications and relationships skills Does your MJR score level 5 or above? Think about: The type of communication which is very sensitive and/or complex with patients'/clients'/ relatives. For example, communicating very sensitive condition related information or taking calls from people who are highly distressed or suicidal.
Factor 2 – Knowledge, training and experience Does your MJR score level 6 or above? Think about: How you would explain to a newly qualified nurse what additional training, qualifications, competencies or experience they need to become fully competent in the role. For example, this may be through competency pathways such as a structured preceptorship; attainment of a Qualification in Specialism (QIS); a programme of short course alongside practical experience to consolidate the knowledge; or placements at different units/sites to acquire knowledge of the clinical conditions and how to treat them.
Factor 3 – Analytical and judgemental skills Does your MJR score level 4 or above? Think about: The types of judgements you make when assessing/diagnosing conditions and how you would choose the most suitable treatment pathway.

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Factor 4 – Planning and organisational skills Does your MJR score level 2 or above? Think about: The types of planning you undertake, which maybe ongoing. Some examples at this level would be planning education/training sessions.
Factor 5 – Physical skills Does your MJR score level 2 or above? Think about: Whether you need standard keyboard skills to perform the role, such as a need to produce reports.
Factor 6 – Responsibility for patient/client care Does your MJR score level 5 or above? Think about: Your role in assessing patient information and whether you give individualised clinical advice on a range of health-related issues.
Factor 7 – Responsibility for policy/service development Does your MJR score level 2 or above? Think about: Whether you get involved in the development of local policies or protocols and the responsibility you have for their implementation, such as ensuring junior staff and students are aware of them
Factor 8 – Responsibility for financial & physical resources Does your MJR score level 2 or above? Think about: Whether you have any financial responsibility. Some examples at this level would be authorising staff expertise and overtime payments.
Factor 9 – Responsibility for human resources Does your MJR score level 2 or above? Think about: The responsibility you have for other staff, such as from a supervisory or student support perspective; or if you provide training to other staff and how regular these activities are.
Factor 10 – Responsibility for information resources Does your MJR score level 1or above? Think about: The work you undertake at a computer, for example, inputting information into electronic patient records
Factor 11 – Responsibility for research and development Does your MJR score level 2 or above? Think about: The level of your involvement within research projects, the proportion of your time dedicated to it, how complex the audits or surveys are and how often this happens within your working week.
Factor 12 – Freedom to Act Does your MJR score level 3 or above? Think about: Whether you have the autonomy to undertake your role as you see fit, referring to workplace policies, procedures and codes of conduct, linking in with your manager at agreed times so that work is managed, rather than supervised.
Factor 13 – Physical Effort Does your MJR score level 2 or above? Think about: The level of physical effort required for the role, for example whether most of your shift is spent sitting and if so, whether your position is restricted, for example, if you wear a telephone headset.

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Factor 14 – Mental effort Does your MJR score level 4 or above? Think about: The length and frequency of concentration required for the role for example, dealing with complex calls across most of the shift.
Factor 15 – Emotional effort Does your MJR score level 3 or above? Think about: The types of emotional situations you are exposed to, such as dealing with distressing calls and the frequency these occur.
Factor 16 – Working conditions Does your MJR score level 2 or above? Think about: Whether you use the computer more or less continuously throughout your shift.

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