

Guide to blogging



Royal College
of Nursing

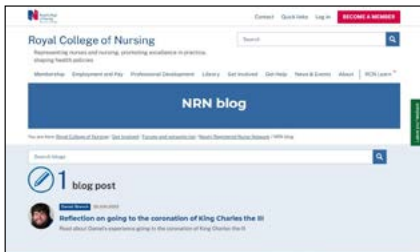
Getting started

A blog is an online article written from the author's perspective on a topical issue or one specifically relevant to newly registered nurses (NRNs). It's usually around 300-500 words.

The blog should be the original work of the contributor.

Before you start:

1. The first rule is to be absolutely clear about the point of your article. If you're planning one about an overseas placement for example, is your aim to be purely descriptive – this is how they nurse in Ghana – or do you want to explain how you changed your practice as a result? A bit of both perhaps. Either way, make sure you know the key messages you want your reader to take away.
2. Know your audience. Who are you trying to reach? Is it fellow NRNs? Final year students? Mental health nurses? Nurses at all levels across all specialties?



Your blogs should have:



Author's full names and job title.



An engaging title that succinctly summarises your blog.



Short sentences and paragraphs.



An authentic voice – yours. Write in the first person, not as part of a group.



A punchy introduction that pricks the reader's interest immediately.



An informal style.



A point. Have something to say and don't rant aimlessly.



Context – something about you. Where do you work? Why does this topic interest you?



A beginning, a middle and an end – take your reader on a journey.



A supporting image where possible.

Reflection on going to the coronation of King Charles the III

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Daniel Branch 29 Jun 2023

Read about Daniel's experience going to the coronation of King Charles the III

My name is Daniel Branch and I am a community Learning Disability Nurse working for Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust, as part of their Learning Disability Intensive Support Team. The team works with patients with learning disabilities, who are at risk of an unplanned hospital admission or are at risk of being evicted.

On the evening of the 3rd March 2023, I received what has to be one of, if not the most surprising emails of my life - asking if I would like to be considered to attend the Coronation of King Charles III. I felt at a loss. I even asked my friend who I was sitting with to read the email in case I had somehow misunderstood it. In fact, as well as having been asked if I would like to go to the moon or to run out that weekend as an England player of some kind.

The experience of going to the Coronation was both an amazing and somewhat surreal experience. There was an excited and antipathetic atmosphere across the city. I was surrounded by a mix of people who I would have had done incredible things for both their communities and society in general, as well as people who I had only other who seen on the television or other media outlets. For someone who occasionally finds themselves having impostor syndrome, it felt a strange group to be a part of at times.

I think the most memorable aspect was the importance that was given to helping people in some way. The Archbishop of Canterbury drew attention to the fact that pretty much everyone in Westminster Abbey at that service had made helping people a significant part of their lives. From formal charity work to ensuring that neighbours were fed and warm during difficult times like the Covid-19 lockdown to holding public office and trying to make a local community or even society somehow better. These are incredible achievements and yet equally prevalent was the sense of humility. Not one person I met felt that they deserved to be there, something that I must say did wonders for my own impostor syndrome.

The experience has caused me to reflect on things a lot, partially on those who I would have loved to share the experience with and no longer can. But also on how I got here. This has to represent a significant milestone in the progress that I have been able to make, both personally and professionally. I have Dyslexia and Dyscalculia and still have one of my first school reports, which says that this child is not expected to achieve anything. I could not read at the age of seven and had a speech impediment. This led me to Elving Park Special needs school, which had a life changing impact on me. I was only able to overcome these challenges because of the quiet and persistent expertise of a range of people, from teachers and physios to friends and family - all quietly changing people's lives and yet receiving no fanfare for doing so.

I have been able to achieve many things because of their efforts from multiple degrees to travelling around the world. I have been influenced by my family, who set such a strong example. I have also been able to help people. When I was first in my current position, when I first myself doing a job that is somehow simultaneously one of the best and yet hardest jobs in the world, nursing seems to sing out to those of us who are somehow inclined to always offer a helping hand.

Particularly in the current climate things can feel very tough - how are we going to get through all the work, does it even make a difference anyway? My Coronation experience has brought home just how many people are doing amazing things and just how important that is.

So, keep doing the amazing things that you are doing. I can't guarantee that this will lead to a royal invitation, I can't guarantee that lots of people will notice. But I can guarantee that you will change someone's life, not least your own.



Daniel Branch

Learning Disability Nurse

Daniel is a curator for the RCNRN Network, and currently awaiting his ECPC placement.

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And try to avoid:



Being boring, waffling or stating the obvious.



Blogs should not contain content that could be considered offensive, abusive, derogatory or potentially defamatory.



Being too clever or patronising.



Don't write too generally. Remember your audience and write in a way that speaks to and engages them.



Long sentences and long words, particularly management speak and jargon.



Too many links – one is ideal.



References – you're not writing for an academic audience.



Over-using exclamation marks!!!!

What happens next?



Start blogging!



Email your blog posts, or any ideas you want to discuss, to the RCN's marketing department: marketing@rcn.org.uk



Don't forget to include a two sentence biography about your work and a photo.



We'll provide you with feedback and upload the finished article once approved.

