

**OXFORD CAMBRIDGE AND RSA EXAMINATIONS
AS GCE**

F501/01/RB

CRITICAL THINKING

Introduction to Critical Thinking

RESOURCE BOOKLET

To be issued with the Question Paper

FRIDAY 25 MAY 2012: Morning

**DURATION: 1 hour 30 minutes
plus your additional time allowance**

MODIFIED ENLARGED

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- **Read all the documents before starting to answer the questions.**

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

- **The information contained in this Resource Booklet was accurate when it went to press, but may subsequently have changed. Questions should be answered on the basis that the information is correct.**

INSTRUCTION TO EXAMS OFFICER/INVIGILATOR

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The government has announced a proposal that from 2013 all new National Health Service (NHS) nurses will need to be educated to degree level in order to improve the quality of patient care. More than a quarter of all nurses already have a three or four year nursing degree, rather than the minimum requirement of a two year nursing diploma. Nursing degree courses require A Levels and are more academically demanding than nursing diploma courses.

The NHS pays tuition fees for student nurses on both diploma and degree courses. These fees do not have to be repaid.

DOCUMENT 1

A VERY POSITIVE STEP FORWARD FOR NURSING

The Deputy Head of the University of East Anglia School of Nursing and Midwifery said that the government proposal to make degree level education compulsory for a nursing career should be supported. She continued that adding an additional academic level would support the nursing profession and, after two to three years, nurses with a degree could take on more complex roles such as specialist nurses or nursing managers.

1

She tried to dismiss fears that the compulsory degree level training could make nurses think they were too clever to carry out certain duties like washing and feeding patients and taking them to the lavatory. She pointed out that a significant number of people in the job already have a degree.

2

DOCUMENT 2

PATIENTS NEED NURSES TO KNOW THE BASICS

The Director of the Patients Association gave a statement, “A degree has sent out all the wrong messages, as it has become more important to write about care than to give it.”

The NHS must have good basic nursing at the centre of its care. If it does not, then even the greatest amount of high-tech care is pointless. The basics of nursing care are dignity, compassion and, above all, safety. Without these, the costs of care soar because of infection rates and endless form-filling to deal with complaints.

Our recent report, ‘Patients not Numbers, People not Statistics’, described heart-breaking cases of inadequate patient care, when nurses focus on the wrong things and neglect basic care such as helping patients with feeding, bathing and using the toilet. Last year’s annual government data of written complaints made against NHS hospitals and community services showed that the number of complaints received rose from 89 139 to 101 077. This 13% rise in complaints is very worrying. Some nurses no longer want to provide basic care, as they are trained at graduate level. How can you begin to teach people in an academic setting how to treat patients with dignity and compassion?

Patients Association press release 2010

ABOUT US: We are an independent charity that highlights the concerns and needs of patients. Our role is to help provide patients with the information that is difficult to access – the information that is often hidden away by vested interest but is their legal right to know. We work with the people that affect care directly – from the NHS itself to the companies that produce the medical devices it uses, as well as the pharmaceutical industry.

DOCUMENT 3

REACTIONS TO MAKING A NURSING DEGREE COMPULSORY

FOR

- **The GOVERNMENT HEALTH MINISTER, who is a registered nurse, claimed, “Degree level education will provide new nurses with the decision-making skills they need to make high-level judgements in the transformed NHS. This is the right direction to go if we are to fulfil our ambition to provide higher quality care for all.”**
- **The CHIEF NURSING OFFICER FOR ENGLAND said the change would help give nurses the real ability to make decisions at the same time as care was becoming more complex. Hundreds of thousands of students are keen to go into university education every year. Nursing would thus become more attractive to the young.**
- **The DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND HEALTH SERVICES at a university stated, “Moving to an all graduate profession is a necessity to deliver healthcare in the 21st century, as the demands of the nursing profession are now far more complex than those in the past; it will bring nursing in line with other health care professions in the UK; and will probably increase the proportion of women and black and minority ethnic groups in higher education and the health service.”**

AGAINST

- **A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE UNION, UNITE, said, “We do believe that individuals who aspire to work in nursing care should also have the option of training and development without the absolute requirement of a degree.”**
- **The HEAD OF NURSING FOR THE UNION, UNISON, stated the union’s concerns that the move to degree only entry would lead to a narrowing of the different types of backgrounds from which nurses currently come. As a result, this would mean that the profession was less representative of the society it cared for.**
- **EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES WHO SUPPLY NURSING STAFF TO THE NHS warned that not everyone who wanted to be in nursing care would want to do a degree. The Hays Healthcare Agency said, “The move to complete degree nursing may discourage those who have no current qualifications and would like to join the profession mid-career.”**

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