

## Career Profile: Theatre Sister

A theatre sister is a registered (professional) nurse. S/he is responsible for determining and interpreting patients' needs, and planning and executing a personalized nursing care plan for each patient. As such, s/he is an important member of the surgical team. The other members of an ordinary surgical team are the surgeon, assistant surgeon, anaesthetist, anaesthetic nurse, floor nurse and recovery nurse. An important responsibility of a theatre nurse is the care and maintenance of all equipment and instruments in the operating theatre, as well as control of sterile techniques during procedures. A theatre sister has to prepare for a wide range of surgical procedures such as neurological, gynecological, orthopaedic, and general surgery.

## Education Requirements

### National Senior Certificate (NSC)

For a career in nursing students are advised to select English, Science and Mathematics and to add to this a selection from the designated subjects. These are subjects that are particularly suitable for tertiary study.

The first step is to become a registered nurse by either gaining a diploma through one of the Nursing Education Institutions (NEI) approved by the South African Nursing Council (SANC), or gaining a degree in nursing. A further diploma in operating theatre nursing is then recommended.

### Bachelor Degree

#### **Bachelor of Nursing Science – BCur (4 years) (BCurationis means Bachelor of caring)**

A four year degree programme that covers general nursing, community, psychiatric and obstetric nursing. An Advanced Diploma in Operating Theatre Nursing may also be an option.

#### **Offered at:**

- [North-West University](http://www.puk.ac.za/fakulteite/gesond/verpleegkunde/index_e.html)<sup>1</sup> (School of Nursing Science)
- [University of Johannesburg](http://www.uj.ac.za/nursing/StudyInformation/Undergraduate/Bachelor/BCurGeneralInformation/tabid/7441/Default.aspx)<sup>2</sup> (Department of Nursing Sciences)
- [University of Limpopo](http://www.ul.ac.za/index.php?Entity=Health%20Care%20Sciences)<sup>3</sup> (School Of Health Care Sciences)
- [University of Pretoria](http://www.up.ac.za/academic/healthsciences_old/HCS/Nursing_Science/index.htm)<sup>4</sup> (Department of Nursing Science)

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.puk.ac.za/fakulteite/gesond/verpleegkunde/index\\_e.html](http://www.puk.ac.za/fakulteite/gesond/verpleegkunde/index_e.html)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.uj.ac.za/nursing/StudyInformation/Undergraduate/Bachelor/BCurGeneralInformation/tabid/7441/Default.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ul.ac.za/index.php?Entity=Health%20Care%20Sciences>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.up.ac.za/academic/healthsciences\\_old/HCS/Nursing\\_Science/index.htm](http://www.up.ac.za/academic/healthsciences_old/HCS/Nursing_Science/index.htm)

- [University of the Witwatersrand](#)<sup>5</sup> (Faculty of Health Sciences)
- [University of Venda](#)<sup>6</sup> (School of Health Sciences)

### **North-West University**

BCur (Nursing Science)(BCurationis means Bachelor of caring)

### **University of Johannesburg**

BCur (Nursing Science), National Higher Diploma: Medical and Surgical Nursing  
Science: Operating Room Nursing

### **University of Limpopo**

B Cur (Nursing Science and Art)

### **University of Pretoria**

BCur (Nursing Science)

### **University of the Witwatersrand**

BNurs (Nursing), Diploma in Advanced Nursing (Operating theatre nursing)

### **University of Venda**

BCur (Nursing Science), Advanced Diploma in Community Health (PDC)

## **National Diploma / BTech**

The National Diploma is a three year course which includes guided practical experience. The diploma is a pre-requisite for admission to a Bachelor of Technology - BTech

- [Tshwane University of Technology](#)<sup>7</sup> (Adelaide Tambo School of Nursing Science)
- [University of Johannesburg](#)<sup>8</sup> (Department of Nursing Sciences)
- [Vaal University of Technology](#)<sup>9</sup> (Health Sciences - Community Nursing)

### **Specializations offered:**

There are a number of National Diplomas and BTech degrees to consider.

## **Admission Requirements**

As admission requirements vary from one institution to another, find out what the specific requirements are by checking on the website and contacting the university if you have any queries.

---

<sup>5</sup> <http://web.wits.ac.za/Academic/Health/>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.univen.ac.za/health\\_sciences/index.html](http://www.univen.ac.za/health_sciences/index.html)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.tut.ac.za/Students/facultiesdepartments/science/departments/nursing/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.uj.ac.za/nursing/StudyInformation/Undergraduate/Diploma/tabid/2628/Default.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.vut.ac.za/metadot/index.pl?id=50007&isa=Category&op=show>

## Possible Employers

- National and provincial government - public hospitals
- Private hospitals and clinics

## Find out more

Find out more about theatre nursing opportunities and jobs:

- [UNISA Advanced University Diploma in Nursing Science \(Community Health\)](#)<sup>10</sup> with specialization in Occupational Health or Gerontology or Clinical Nursing Science, Health Assessment, Treatment and Care).
- [The South African Nursing Council website](#)<sup>11</sup> contains an index of the regulations pertaining to nursing and the scope of practice for nurses.
- [An interesting and detailed account by a patient with Parkinson's disease](#)<sup>12</sup> of a very sophisticated operation she went through, including references to the role of the theatre sister.

---

<sup>10</sup> <http://brochure.unisa.ac.za/myunisa/data/pdf/03387NEW.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.sanc.co.za/regulat/index.html#EandT>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.dyna.co.za/parkinsons.htm>

## Are you suited to this career?

This quick quiz can help you to identify whether you are suited for this occupation.

Quiz	Yes	No
Are you interested in caring for people?		
Are you able to remain calm under pressure?		
Do people you know consider you to be reliable and trustworthy?		
Are you willing to accept responsibility?		
Do you work meticulously, making sure details are correct?		
Are you prepared to work long hours?		
Do you work methodically and systematically?		
Are you good at working as a member of a team?		
Do you communicate clearly, both orally and in writing?		
Are you comfortable with taking the initiative in difficult situations?		

If you have mainly yes answers it may be an indication that this is an occupation to consider.