

Programme Specification BSc (Hons) / Graduate Diploma Midwifery (18 month programme)

NOTE: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detail on the specific learning outcomes, indicative content and the teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found (1) at <http://www.bcu.ac.uk/health>, (2) in the Module Specifications and (3) in the Student Handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked within independent review processes undertaken by the Quality Assurance Agency.

Awarding Institution / Body:	Birmingham City University
Teaching Institution:	Birmingham City University
Final Award:	BSc (Hons) Midwifery <u>or</u> Graduate Diploma Midwifery
Programme Title:	BSc (Hons) / Graduate Diploma Midwifery
Main fields of Study:	Midwifery
Modes of Study:	Full time over 18 months
Language of Study:	English
UCAS Code:	
JACS Code:	

Professional Status of the programme (if applicable):

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)

Relevant subject benchmark statements and other external reference points used to inform programme outcomes:

- BCU Learning and Teaching Strategy 2008-13
- QAA level descriptors
- QAA work based and placement learning
- NMC (2009) *Standards for pre-registration midwifery education*. London: NMC.
- EEC Directives

Programme philosophy and aims

The BSc (Hons)/Graduate Diploma Midwifery 18 month programme is based on the belief that childbirth is a normal and natural life event. The midwife plays an important part in the care provided and various opportunities arise to influence and enhance both the short-term and long-term health of the woman and her family. Care should be responsive to the individual needs of women and implemented in a way, which promotes normality, respects diversity and ensures equality.

We welcome students from diverse backgrounds with a variety of life experiences to prepare them for proficient midwifery practice. The programme is designed to prepare students to practice safely and effectively so that, upon registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) they can assume full responsibility and accountability for their practice as midwives. At the point of registration the student midwife will be fit for award and practice, exhibiting confidence and the ability to think critically and make competent decisions based on sound knowledge. At successful completion of the programme the student should be able to function as an autonomous and accountable professional and work in partnership with women and their families in the provision of maternity care. This also involves working as a member of a multidisciplinary team, recognising the necessity to refer, or involve other health care professionals or support agencies as required.

The programme will foster student centred adult learning, develop specific and transferable skills, promote life long learning and offer the opportunity for personal development to prepare for employability. In order to facilitate this, it is essential that students be exposed to a breadth of experiences from a curriculum focused on the needs of women, students, service providers and the requirements of the Nursing and Midwifery Council. Students will seek to construct new knowledge and a deeper understanding by reflecting upon their clinical observations and experiences enabling them to participate, identify, internalise and disseminate the knowledge and skills necessary to care for women, the newborn and their families.

The reality of midwifery practice is that it is an evolving and dynamic profession that adapts to meet the needs of a constantly changing environment. We strongly believe that your education programme has to equip you with the skills needed to accommodate these requirements throughout your career. Therefore you will “understand and practice competently” at the point of registration.

Explain the overall approach adopted by the programme and how it leads to the aims shown below

Since 2008 (NMC 2009) the midwifery programme has to be no less than 40% theory and 50% practice, with an emphasis being placed on the application of knowledge and evidence to clinical practice. The contents of the academic modules are based on the identified domains set out by the NMC. The initial part of the programme prepares students for the first progression point concentrating on providing a firm knowledge of normal pregnancy and midwifery care and gaining clinical exposure and participating in providing care which reflects the taught elements. The second term of the programme concentrates on the various complications that can occur and the recognition of deviations from the normal with the final term refocusing on the midwife's role as expert in normality and her duty to refer if any deviations occur. The modules and clinical experience gained should enable the student to achieve all the academic credits and clinical competencies and essential skills identified by the NMC. The modules are devised to develop deep learning and encourage the student to research and analyse a variety of evidence from a

wide range of sources. As experience and knowledge increases this should enable the student to provide holistic evidence based care and become a strong advocate for women and their families.

The academic team work closely with the clinicians from the local trusts to ensure that the curriculum remains contemporary and meets local as well as national demands of the health service. Students are encouraged to take advantage of all clinical and academic opportunities available to them in order to develop their skills and ability to provide holistic care to women.

The clinical placements are organised in a way that will enable the student to meet all the identified NMC standards of proficiency and essential skills for midwifery practice. During this time the student will also be expected to keep a record of the care provided to a specific group of women and babies in accordance with Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and the Council (2005).

The programme aims:

1. To provide a professional education, which meets theory and practice requirements:
 - For entry to the midwifery part of the NMC's professional register.
 - Of the European Union directives.
 - For the award of BSc (Hons)/ Graduate Diploma in Midwifery from Birmingham City University.
2. To enable students to demonstrate safe and effective competence in:
 - Applying best evidence-based knowledge of facilitating the physiology of childbirth and the newborn.
 - Applying to practice the knowledge of psychological, social, emotional and spiritual factors that may positively or adversely influence normal physiology.
 - Appropriate interpersonal skills (as identified in the Essential Skills Cluster-Communication) to support women and their families.
 - Skills in managing obstetric and neonatal emergencies, underpinned by appropriate knowledge.
 - Being an autonomous practitioner and lead carer to women experiencing normal childbirth and being able to support women throughout their pregnancy, labour, birth and postnatal period, in all settings including midwifery-led units, birthing centres and the home.
 - Being able to undertake critical decision-making to support appropriate referral to either the woman or baby to other health professionals or agencies when there is recognition of normal processes being adversely affected and compromised.
 - Analyse, critically evaluate and produce a synthesis of policy, principles and concepts related to midwifery practice in order to function effectively in a multidisciplinary team within the NHS and other settings.
 - Proficiently search, retrieve, critically review and apply knowledge from a variety of sources to support academic and clinical learning whilst identifying areas for further exploration.

- Appreciate management and leadership approaches within the maternity services in relation to political, professional and consumer agendas.
- Demonstrate the ability to deliver women centred care to an explicit level and quality of service drawing upon appropriate knowledge and skills in order to make professional judgments, recognising the limits of his/her practice.
- Communicate and relate effectively with women, their families and professional colleagues including written reports.
- Have the potential to make a considerable contribution towards the promotion and maintenance of the health of women and their families.
- Manage time and prioritise workloads.
- Utilise information technology appropriately in the academic and learning environments.

Learning teaching, and assessment methods used

- Knowledge and understanding are acquired through formal lectures, student-led seminars, action learning sets, tutor-led seminars, virtual case creator, Moodle, clinical practice and teaching as well as other directed independent learning activities at all stages.
- Contributions from expert clinicians and representatives from user groups.
- Personal tutor contact, which includes monitoring and personal feedback on clinical/academic progress.
- Resources for learning include: library catalogue, intra/internet, Moodle, virtual case creator, Resource Centre.
- Independent study time.
- A range of real, theoretical and virtual case studies and problem-based learning scenarios are used across many subject areas.
- Discussion with sign-off mentors, clinical assessors and link / personal / module tutors.
- Discussion with relevant personnel in the workplace on clinical / management issues.
- Specialist lecturers invited to share their expertise.
- The successful integration of theory and practice is essential and learning and teaching strategies are planned so that co-ordinated periods of clinical practice are supported by appropriate theoretical study.
- Clinical experience is a vital component of the education programme and planned periods of practice offer student's opportunity to achieve the required essential skills clusters as well as clinical proficiencies.
- Students are encouraged to plan their own work schedules and are required to meet strict deadlines.
- The acquisition of search, retrieval and critical evaluation of evidence is central to the learning strategy of the programme. Initiative and independence are fostered throughout and develop incrementally as the course progresses. Emphasis is placed on guided, self-directed and student-centred learning with increasing independence of approach, thought and process.

- The final weeks of the programme offer a period of consolidation to facilitate the transition from student to qualified practitioner. During the programme students are encouraged to manage a small caseload with support from midwifery sign –off mentors.
- Transferable / key skills are core to the whole programme and some are to be found in all modules of study. Team working is developed both in clinical practice and academic study e.g. seminar presentations, debates and group work – encouraging specific skills of negotiation and collaboration. Reflection and self-awareness are key components of clinical practice and are further developed in relevant modules. Time management is developed by the organisation of workload and meeting deadlines.
- The use of data processing skills and information retrieval is essential for all aspects of the programme. Use of a variety of technology is available and encouraged throughout the course.

Assessments

- Assessment is by a variety of methods and is integral to the programme. Assessment is both formative and summative by a number of methods including group presentations, seminars, coursework, reflective assessment, peer projects and assessment, examinations (unseen), viva voce, Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) and the attainment professional clinical proficiencies in practice. Assessment criteria are published widely and are available in the student handbook, which includes the minimum standards of referencing and citation are specified.

Programme structure and requirements, levels, modules, credits and awards

The 18-months programme extends over a period of 78 weeks inclusive of 10 weeks annual leave. In order to accommodate clinical placements annual leave will be allocated but may be negotiated with the Placement Co-ordinator for the timing of two weeks during the summer months. The programme is provided over terms, which are of 16 weeks' duration, and a summer term for allocated clinical practice.

The maximum registration period by the Professional Body for the BSc (Hons)/ Graduate Diploma Midwifery 18-month programme is 2 years and 6 months (NMC 2009 Standards of proficiency for pre-registration midwifery education p11).

The programme consists of clinical placements and theoretical study. Clinical placements account for 56% (1671 hours) of the programme. The programme is divided into study units called modules all of which are at level 6. Each 15-credit module represents 150 hours of student directed learning / teaching and assessment equating to 915 hours which is 40% of the programme. Modules include online learning support via Moodle.

All modules are core to the programme and they run concurrently with periods of clinical practice.

Module number	Module name	Credit
	Effective Midwifery Practice – Foundations in Childbearing	15
	Effective Midwifery Practice – Complex Childbearing	15
	Effective Midwifery Practice – Skills for Childbearing	30
	Effective Midwifery Practice – Contemporary Practice	15
	Professional and Ethical Practice	15
	Evidence Based Midwifery	15
	Transitions to Parenting	15

Award BSc (Hons) Midwifery or Graduate Diploma Midwifery

The programme consists of two progression points, which is an NMC requirement (NMC 2009).

Progression point 1

The first six months of the programme aims to develop student's knowledge and understanding to meet this first progression point. Students will be introduced to the foundations of normal childbirth and the care required by women and their babies. Physiological principles and skills underpinning midwifery practice will also be explored as will skills related to breastfeeding. There will be an opportunity for students to refresh and develop expertise in evidence searching, retrieval and critical analysis to support their studies early in the programme. Students will be introduced to the role of the midwife and holistic care that underpins practice and to start to develop an understanding of the professional and ethical aspects of midwifery. Clinical experiences are co-ordinated to enable students to focus on the care provided to healthy women and their families and are appropriate to achieve the requirements of the first progression point of the essential skills clusters for midwifery practice. The student will have the opportunity to have formative observation placements on community and delivery suite prior to having their summative clinical assessments. Numeracy has been introduced into this programme in accordance

with Faculty of Health policy and students will have the chance to refresh their numeracy skills.

Progression Point 2

The second progression point is at the end of the programme and students will spend approximately 12 months focusing on the skills to achieve this stage of their education programme. Studies include the provision of care to women and their families who are experiencing complex childbearing and the care of the compromised neonate. The use of a virtual case will be used to help students develop understanding of complex childbearing in a safe environment. The professional and ethical dimensions of midwifery practice are studied in detail during this term and students will participate in a group project. Clinical experiences will be arranged to enable students to participate in the care of women whose childbirth experience becomes complicated by medical or obstetric factors. These clinical placements will be assessed and graded by clinical sign off mentors in line with NMC requirements. Students will also continue to explore evidence based midwifery practice and continue developing understanding of breastfeeding.

During the summer term students will consolidate their learning by actively participating in the provision of midwifery care on a full time basis (with 2 weeks negotiated annual leave).

Students will be further prepared for autonomous professional practice. Throughout the 18-months period students will be encouraged to develop their own professional skills and strengths through personal development planning which will be facilitated through their allocated personal tutor. Students will also be developing their ability to critically analyse and evaluate the quality of midwifery care. .

In the final part of the programme students will continue to develop their skills in complex childbearing, and be able to explore and negotiate areas of study related to contemporary practice and progress with exploration of evidence based midwifery practice and transitions to parenthood. The final weeks of the programme provide the opportunity for students to consolidate their education and proficiency in practice.

Grading of Clinical Practice

It is a NMC requirement that practice is graded to count towards the student's final award of BSc (Hons) Midwifery or Graduate Diploma Midwifery. The equivalent of 4 modules of study incorporates clinical proficiencies and essential skills clusters that will be graded by sign off mentors in practice. These modules are:

Module number	Module name	Credit
	Effective Midwifery Practice – Complex Childbearing	15
	Effective Midwifery Practice- Skills for Childbearing	30
	Transitions to Parenting	15

Annual leave entitlement is a total of 10 weeks over the 18 month

Figure 1

18 Month Programme Outline

Term One												Term Two												Term Thre												Term Four until week 42																	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
Skills Week	Fresher's Week	Block 2 Weeks	Placement 2 Weeks	Block 2 Weeks	Placement 2 Weeks	Block 2 Weeks	Placement 4 Weeks	Annual Leave 2 Weeks	Placement 4 Weeks	Block 3 Weeks	Placement 6 Weeks	1 day week study	Annual Leave 2 Weeks	Block 2 Weeks	Placement 6 Weeks	1 day week study	Full time Placement -2 weeks negotiated annual leave																																				

Term Five								Term Six								Term Seven							
55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	
Block 3 Weeks			Reading Week	Placement 5 Weeks					Block 2 Weeks	Annual Leave 2 Weeks	Reading Week	Block 1 Week	Negotiated Full Time Placement										Annual Leave 2 Weeks
				1 day week study																			

Weeks allocated to clinical practice = 44 weeks and 3 days (56%)
 Weeks allocated to theory = 24 weeks and 2 days (40%)

10 weeks annual leave

Support for Learning including Personal Development Planning (PDP)

Students are encouraged to identify and, with guidance, to reflect on their own learning needs and are offered the following support as appropriate to those needs:

- Programme student handbook containing information specific to the programme and its modules – available on line.
- A Faculty degrees scheme Staff/Student handbook containing information relating to the Faculty and the University.
- Access to IT support staff and dedicated Faculty library staff.
- Access to Faculty Learning Resources Centres.
- Support for academic skills such as referencing, essay writing, critical analysis and nursing mathematics from the Faculty's Personal Development Centre
- Access to administrative and academic staff, including personal tutor, programme director, Head of Department, Head of Division and Dean of Faculty.
- Access to and support from a personal tutor throughout the programme.
- Access to the University's Student Services, which include assistance and support for learning skills, careers advice, financial advice, medical and disability services, crèche, counselling and chaplaincy.
- Support from the Union of Students for a range of services.

Criteria for admission

Candidates must satisfy the general admission requirements of the programme.

The current admission requirements can be found under the 'Entry Requirements' tab of the web page for this course.

Methods for evaluation and enhancement of quality and standards including listening and responding to views of students

The University, Faculty Health and the programme team are committed to continuous evaluation, quality monitoring and enhancement of programme of study. There are a number of strategies, policies, procedures and guidance that are in place within the Faculty of Health to ensure evaluation, enhancement of quality and standards including listening and responding to views of students. In addition where applicable professional regulatory and statutory body requirements are adhered to:

- Students' views can be expressed in Boards of Studies, module, placement and programme evaluations, the Associate Dean (Academic and Quality Enhancement) Forum, online discussion forums and surveys. Students are also invited to meet with External Examiners, attend programme Quality days and meet with external quality monitoring programme reviewers.
- There are a number of committees where the programme team, practice partners and service-users meet to ensure that the programme is current and responsive to local and national developments and policy. These include Healthcare (Strategic) Quality Group, Profession Specific-group, Curriculum working group, Practice partner and programme team meetings. Changes to the programme are reviewed and accepted by the Faculty Academic Board Business group and can only be approved following consultation with students, external examiners and practice partners.
- An exception reporting annual programme monitoring report is produced each academic year, which includes feedback from students. The annual programme monitoring report is reviewed and approved by students, external examiners and practice partners. Action points raised will be developed and reviewed for the following academic year. In addition the annual programme monitoring report is peer-reviewed. The annual report is a key document provided to professional bodies and external quality monitoring agencies.
- Where the programme has placements the Department of Practice Learning undertakes audit and evaluation of students learning opportunities. Practice documentation is moderated with practice partners. Mentors/Sign-off Mentors are provided with updates each academic year.
- Assessment procedures are updated by the Academic Quality Office to ensure that they are rigorous and fair. Bench marking statements are used to monitor achievement rates. Marking and moderating policies are in place to ensure that the procedures for assessment are transparent and students' work is reviewed by External Examiners, who also attend Programme Exam Boards, Quality Days and meet with students.
- There are committees in the Faculty of Health that contribute to the evaluation and ongoing quality monitoring. The Executive committee and Faculty Board are the overarching committees in the Faculty of Health. Policies, procedures and guidance is scrutinised by the Faculty Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee.