

## **BSc (Hons) Midwifery Studies Programme Specification**

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/ug/midwifery-studies-bsc/>

### Programme Catalogue

**Academic Year**

2020/21

**Degree Awarding Body**

The University of Bradford

**Accreditation**

Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)

**Programme Admissions**

September

**Programme Duration**

36 months full time (UCAS code B720)

**QAA Subject Benchmarks**

Health Studies (2019)

**Target Award**

Honours Degree of Bachelor (FHEQ Level 6)

**Interim or Exit Awards**

Ordinary Degree of Bachelor (FHEQ Level 6)

Diploma of Higher Education (FHEQ Level 5)

Certificate of Higher Education (FHEQ Level 4)

**Origination Date**

July 2016

**Publication Date**

April 2021

**Please note:** This programme specification has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate at the time of publication, but changes may occur given the interval between publishing and commencement of teaching. Any change which impacts the terms and conditions of an applicant's offer will be communicated to them. Upon commencement of the programme, students will receive further detail about their course and any minor changes will be discussed and/or communicated at this point.

Whilst there are opportunities to exit this programme and be offered an academic award, successful completion of all the requirements up to and including Level 6 of this programme are required before application to the Nursing and Midwifery Council (Professional, Statutory and Regulatory body) for entry to the Midwifery Register.

### **Introduction**

The BSc (Hons) in Midwifery Studies is a three-year degree programme designed to prepare students to become safe, competent, autonomous practitioners of Midwifery. Our programme philosophy underpins the development of an innovative and holistic curriculum designed to offer students an engaging and rewarding learning experience. The programme has an emphasis on maternal and neonatal wellbeing that commences in pregnancy, continuing until the end of the postnatal period. The curriculum reflects contemporary maternity provision, influential political drivers and current NHS demands. These drivers highlight the need for midwives to develop their role as practitioners, partners and leaders in delivering and shaping the future of maternity services.

Midwives are entrusted with providing and promoting safe practice by understanding the human factors which can influence people and their behaviour, this enables identification of what contributes to providing effective care (Chief Nursing Officers for England 2010; Bromley 2011; Rafferty et al. 2015). Key topics explored within the curriculum include awareness of issues associated with perinatal mental health (Gov.uk 2013; Maternal Mental Health Alliance (MMHA) 2014), the patient safety agenda (Francis, 2013, Kirkup, 2015) and

wider public health (RCM, 2001, The Marmot Review, 2010, TSO, 2011). Midwives also have a major role in public health agenda to improve the health and wellbeing of childbearing women and their families and reducing health inequalities. The local, national and global perspective on public health is reflected in the programme learning and teaching strategy.

## Programme Overview

The programme is rooted in normality, which is a focus on normal, low risk midwifery care, whilst also preparing students to care for women with more complex needs. Students will engage in skills that are practiced ethically and informed by the NHS values in midwifery settings. In order to consolidate the student's experience and to encourage the development of the role of lead carer, in the final stage of the programme the student will identify a caseload of women for whom they will provide midwifery care, under indirect supervision from their named mentor. This experience will build on leadership and decision-making skills and support the development of autonomous practice (Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2009; Chief Nursing Officers for England 2010). Students on the programme will be encouraged to embrace all learning opportunities and challenges to support development of their professional identity, self-awareness and resilience in order to prepare them for midwifery practice in the 21st century.

The curriculum offers a unique opportunity to engage in active integrated learning in both the academic and clinical environments. The programme is delivered full time (37.5hrs per week) over 45 weeks per year, with fifty percent of the time spent in practice, forty percent in theory and ten percent available for reflection on practice and completion of the student's Ongoing Record of Achievement (ORA) within the clinical practice e-portfolio. Students are fully supported in both clinical and academic environments by practice assessors, academic assessors and link lecturers. The range of practice placements offers a rich and diverse learning environment for students. Bradford and the surrounding area have a multicultural context that will see students exposed to people from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. The city is home to a unique 20-year longitudinal cohort study, the Born in Bradford project, which is a cohort study of more than 13,000 Bradford babies born over a three-year period. Alongside this, there is an acknowledgement of the growing number of specialist services and community projects being developed and implemented to meet the health needs of an increasingly diverse population. Students on the midwifery programme will be exposed to changes in service provision as a direct result of the findings of this unique research study. Students will also have the opportunity to experience inter-professional and interagency working to maintain the health and wellbeing of mothers, babies and their families, and also develop an understanding of the multi-faceted role of the midwife in promoting sustainable communities.

Students on the programme will develop their digital literacy, enabling them to harness available resources to enhance their learning, including use of the university virtual learning environment (VLE). A blended learning approach combines the creativity and flexibility of online learning and the interactive element of face-to-face campus sessions. The skills needed for IT literacy are developed through sustained utilisation of a number of VLE platforms and e-learning tools such as Blogs and Wiki's during PBL; clinical e-portfolio's to record practice experience and clinical practice assessment; a number of e-

learning packages to support delivery of care in placement; use of databases to conduct literature searches and for maintenance of a development e-portfolio detailing personal growth during the programme. Students will develop a range of attributes and skills including enhanced communication, team working, problem solving, autonomy and self-efficacy through completion of the programme, which are all valuable for employability in a wide range of roles. Our core aim is to prepare midwives who can provide safe and effective care for women and their families.

## Programme Philosophy

A feminist philosophy underpins the educational strategy of the School of Allied Health Professions and Midwifery. Influences of co-operation, inclusion, equality and reflexivity are embedded within our approach. Our scholastic environment exposes students to learning where all knowledge is valued; learning is transformational with a key focus on the development of self and others within a cultural and social context for scholarship. Learning which is situated in the authentic world of midwifery clinical practice is actively encouraged. Intricate connections between practice, education and research are harnessed to develop midwives of the future.

The School of Allied Health Professions and Midwifery was unique in adopting and designing a curriculum presented totally through problem-based learning (PBL), which has been delivered at the University since 2000. The theoretical aspects of this programme are organized using the principles of PBL, which is a research based teaching and learning strategy (Hmelo-Silver 2004; Ozturk et al. 2008). Student led learning is facilitated to support development of academic, research, teamwork and leadership skills. Learning consists of studying PBL Enigmas (scenarios), with these being centred upon authentic practice issues. PBL is an educational approach that puts students at the centre of their learning and provides them with scaffolding for learning core principles referred to as threshold concepts. Threshold concepts are considered to be knowledge that constitutes a core principle essential to the student learning experience (Meyer and Land, 2003). The curriculum is underpinned by five threshold concepts: normality, reflexivity, ways of knowing, care ethics and professionalism. As students' progress through the programme they will develop essential understanding facilitating utilization and application of the threshold concepts. Through PBL students are able to develop depth and explore special interests to meet personal and professional development needs. Students are thus prepared to successfully meet the University and Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) criteria for an Honours Degree of Bachelor of Science and the NMC (2009) Standards for pre-registration midwifery education.

Students completing their programme here at the University of Bradford will experience a programme that has been at the forefront of innovative developments. For example, clinical practice has been graded since 1995, this has since become a standard requirement for pre-registration midwifery programmes (Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2009). Achievement in the clinical practice environment makes a significant contribution towards the final degree outcome and classification. The midwifery programme at Bradford was also one of the first in the country to move the clinical assessment document completely electronically (clinical e-portfolio: Ongoing Record of Achievement). This enables authentic real time review of a student's progress by students themselves, by academics and clinicians at any time during their practice placement experience.

## Programme Aims

The programme is intended to:

- A1** Develop the skills and knowledge commensurate with a graduate which will enable students to meet National and European requirements for professional registration;
- A2** Develop the skills and knowledge which will enable students to engage in an ethical, informed and skilled manner in contemporary midwifery practice and to live and work in a globally sustainable way.
- A3** Develop the skills and knowledge which will enable students to meet the lifelong learning demands of working as an autonomous practitioner within multi-professional teams and dynamic environments.

## Admission Requirements

We take into consideration a number of factors when assessing your application. It's not just about your grades; we take the time to understand your personal circumstances and make decisions based on your potential to thrive at university and beyond.

The minimum entry requirements for the programme are as follows:

- 5 GCSEs at a minimum of grade 4 (national grade C) to include English Language, Mathematics and Biology or Combined Science. Functional Skills Level 2 in English and Mathematics are acceptable in place of GCSE English and Mathematics.
- For international students, evidence of equivalent study of sciences. Stricter English Language requirements apply and applicants require English proficiency at a minimum of IELTS 7.0, with no sub-test lower than 7.0, or the equivalent score in another recognised test: [www.brad.ac.uk/international/entry-requirements/](http://www.brad.ac.uk/international/entry-requirements/)
- Agreement to undertake DBS, an Occupational Health Assessment and provide a second reference.
- Evidence of recent relevant study in the last 5 years is required.

Plus, one of the following:

- 128 UCAS points (ABB) from 3 full A-levels (or equivalent). There are no subject specific requirements.
- BTEC Extended Diploma (DDM) a Health or Science subject is required.
- 128 UCAS tariff points from an Access to Higher Education Diploma in Health Professions or Science - at least 12 credits in Biology must be at minimum grade Distinction. Those applying with an Access course are only required to have GCSE English Language and Mathematics at grade C or grade 4 or above. Functional Skills Level 2 in English and Mathematics are acceptable in place of GCSE English and Mathematics.

Please note: The above information relates to the contemporary recruitment cycle when this document was published. It may be different for the current cycle. To check the current UCAS tariff and other admissions requirements, visit the course page: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/ug/midwifery-studies-bsc/>

## Disability

Disabled students' applications are considered on the same grounds as all students. Applicants may wish to check with our Disability Service before applying by visiting [www.bradford.ac.uk/disability/before](http://www.bradford.ac.uk/disability/before).

All students are offered screening from the Disability Service on entry to the programme to aid identification of any specific learning difficulties. Students will gain access to information, which will provide specific study support.

## Recognition of Prior Learning

The NMC does not permit the application of prior learning experiences within midwifery programmes to a registerable qualification.

The University welcomes applications from all potential students and most important in the decision to offer a place is our assessment of a candidate's potential to benefit from their studies and of their ability to succeed on this particular programme. Consideration of applications will be based on a combination of formal academic qualifications and other relevant experience.

## Programme Learning Outcomes

To be eligible for the award of **Certificate of Higher Education in Health Studies** at FHEQ level 4, students will be able to:

1. Identify the underlying concepts and principles associated with midwifery practice and demonstrate the ability to interpret and apply these within the context of health.
2. Understand recognised threshold concepts in order to interpret evidence to develop lines of argument. Make sound judgments in accordance with basic theories and concepts relevant to midwifery practice.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to health and wellbeing.
4. Communicate the results of their practice and written work accurately using evidence to underpin structured and coherent arguments.
5. Adopt an ethos for lifelong learning through reflection, action planning and self-evaluation. Collaborate and build working relationship with others.
6. Identify and apply knowledge of professional, political and ethical principles with an emphasis on well-being and to undertake sustainable midwifery practice.
7. Reflect on midwifery clinical situations demonstrating knowledge of the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment including: accountability, autonomy and responsibility for professional practice.
8. Practise safely under direct the supervision of a midwife to meet the competencies as set out by the NMC first progression point.

Additionally, to be eligible for the award of **Diploma of Higher Education in Health Studies** at FHEQ level 5, students will be able to:

9. Demonstrate midwifery knowledge and a critical understanding of health beliefs and concepts of wellbeing and the way in which these have developed.
10. Apply underlying threshold concepts to the context of midwifery practice. Make sound judgments in accordance with theories and concepts relevant to midwifery practice.
11. Demonstrate knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in health and social care, critically analysing different approaches to problem solving related to health and wellbeing.
12. Effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences including women and their families.
13. Adopt an ethos for lifelong and independent learning through reflexivity, action planning and self-evaluation. Collaborate and build working relationship with others.
14. Analyse and apply knowledge of professional, political and ethical principles with an emphasis on well-being and to undertake sustainable midwifery practice.
15. Reflect upon and evaluate decision-making demonstrating qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment including initiative, personal responsibility and accountability in midwifery practice.
16. Practise safely as lead carer (with indirect supervision) in normal labour and contribute to multi-disciplinary team working to meet the NMC essential skills clusters for entry to the register for intrapartum care.

Additionally, to be eligible for the award of **Ordinary Degree of Bachelor in Health Studies** at FHEQ level 6, students will be able to:

17. Communicate effectively and professionally information, problems or solutions to diverse audiences through a variety of media.
18. Assess and manage own learning, contributing to self and peer development through collaborative working in both midwifery and multi-professional groups.
19. Demonstrate knowledge of professional, political and ethical principles with an emphasis on promoting well-being and sustainable midwifery and multidisciplinary team working.

Additionally, to be eligible for the **Honours Degree of Bachelor in Midwifery Studies** award at FHEQ level 6, students will be able to:

20. Evaluate and interpret midwifery clinical situations on the basis of sound knowledge of physiological concepts and the evidence base of midwifery practice whilst promoting normality; placing the woman and her family at the centre of care.

21. Critically evaluate and apply underlying threshold concepts to inform the context of midwifery practice. Make evidence-based judgments in accordance with theories and concepts relevant to midwifery practice.
22. Identify and critically evaluate an area of public healthcare from a global midwifery perspective, drawing on main methods of enquiry in health and social care.
23. Critically reflect upon decision making, demonstrating qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment including initiative, personal responsibility and accountability in midwifery practice.
24. Practise competently without the need for direct supervision safely and effectively whilst contributing to multi-disciplinary team working achieving all NMC (2009) requirements for entry to the register.

Please note: Whilst there are opportunities to exit this programme and be offered an academic award, successful completion of all the requirements up to and including Level 6 of this programme are required before application to the Nursing and Midwifery Council (Professional, Statutory and Regulatory body) for entry to the Midwifery Register.

## **Learning and Teaching Strategy**

The curriculum is based on the principles of active and collaborative learning, underpinned by the educational philosophy inherent in problem-based learning (PBL). Students are integral to learning situations that are participatory and collaborative. A variety of workshops will introduce students to simulation, using creative media for example film making and games using play to enhance learning. e-portfolios will be used to support students in documenting personal, academic and clinical learning gains and development throughout the programme; building skills in critical reflection, action planning and self-evaluation. Each episode of learning starts with an enigma, which is explored to identify prior knowledge and generate questions to promote problem solving in a stimulating learning environment. Students will be supported to develop skills to enable them to examine empirical evidence pertaining to perspectives of women's health in a national and international context. Our threshold concepts, considered to be troublesome knowledge, underpin the student learning experience at each stage.

Clinical placement learning towards achievement of the competencies is supported by practice supervisors/practice assessors (NMC 2018). Students will be allocated different practice supervisors to facilitate a range of learning opportunities. Whilst students will have a minimum of 300 hours for each module with their assessed placement there is a requirement that all students must complete 4600 hours (including university teaching, reading and examination weeks) by the end of the programme and therefore each year students will attend other learning environments for additional experiences. Students will also have support from a link lecturer via the Ongoing Record of Achievement (ORA), email and link lecturer placement visits.

### **Stage 1**

In stage one, (level 4) PBL enigmas will introduce students to core principles in the use of literature, social, cultural, psychological and ethical concepts, providing students with the early skills to work under the direct guidance of the midwife; understanding the rationale for support provided to women. The focus will be on the local community and key health

and well-being priorities. Students practice skills will be underpinned by key lectures and workshops that integrate anatomy, physiology and sociological concepts. At this early stage of the degree students will be supported by series of underpinning study skills and learning activities that will also develop their critical appraisal and IT skills, and individual self-awareness and resilience.

## Stage 2

As the programme progresses into stage two, (level 5) students' capacity towards independent learning is increased, new study skills related to research interpretation, along with learning activities and authentic scenarios bring together more complex concepts. Student focus will move to take on a national perspective of health and wellbeing and societal issues for women and their families. Key lectures and workshops develop student confidence in decision making within midwifery situations, which as students progress toward the end of this stage, will include care for women with increasingly complex needs.

## Stage 3

In stage 3 (level 6) students will enhance critical appraisal skills and knowledge of research methodologies. Students will be supported in applying their skills and knowledge by undertaking a critical review of a global aspect of maternal well-being in order to identify areas for potential practice development. Theoretical concepts of leadership and change management will add depth to the student's study. Students will be able to identify individual strengths and areas for further development. The PBL enigmas in this year will enable students to explore complex clinical and global maternal health issues. These activities provide students with areas of theoretical depth, detailed midwifery practice understanding, and engagement in new ways of thinking. Practice placements will enable students to progress from indirect supervision to long arm supervision during the case loading placement, demonstrating sound decision-making and leadership skills. The Theoretical weeks will vary from 35 – 40 hours per week and the practice weeks between 35 and 38 hours per week.

## Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategy complies with the University of Bradford regulations and NMC requirements for pre-registration midwifery programmes (Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2009) and also encompasses the tenants of the University of Bradford Curriculum Framework. It addresses the need to assess knowledge, understanding and skill and their application in midwifery practice. The assessment strategy reflects the need to ensure that the programme produces midwives who are safe in practice and fit for academic award.

## Assessment of theoretical components

Diversity of assessment is recommended to examine a wide range of programme or module outcomes; therefore, a range of summative assessment methods have been selected. Knowledge and understanding are assessed by ipsative multiple choice questions (MCQ), this is a computer marked exam. An ipsative assessment enables the student to identify the breadth of knowledge required and then personal progression throughout the programme, enabling students to take responsibility for their own learning and development. The assessment strategy includes a synoptic assessment, which



facilitates holistic assessment of a range of module learning outcomes. An opportunity to experience a range of assessment methods includes presentations, written assignment and critical writing a blog. The student is enabled to demonstrate the acquisition and application of knowledge that includes the context of practice.

The curriculum assessment strategy also includes the use of formative assessment methods to support development of knowledge, understanding and assessment literacy. These will include a formative opportunity at both the ipsative and synoptic assessment methods described above.

## Assessment of practice

The practice assessor will be responsible for the assessment of students in clinical practice, with the student demonstrating competency through actively engaging in the care of women and their families. Students are required to provide evidence of their learning in their ORA. The practice assessor will verify this information by undertaking a final placement interview, which includes grading of practice. The students are assessed against stage specific criterion that reflects students learning throughout each practice placement. Only mentors practice assessors who have previously met the requirements for sign-off status and were on the mentor practice assessor register can assess students (NMC, 2008).

## Assessment Optionality

During the programme students will have the opportunity to submit selected assessments that have been developed from a range of formatively assessed work. Students will receive feedback and develop their work accordingly and then choose which piece to submit for summative assessment. Optionality not only includes choice of which piece of work to include, but also choice in topic focus.

## Curriculum

All modules are core to the programme. In limited circumstances, the curriculum may change, in accordance with the University's programme monitoring and review processes.

### Stage 1 Modules

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
4	Beginning Midwifery Knowledge	60	FLYR	MID4005-E
4	Midwifery Care and Practice 1	30	ACYR	PRP4012-C
4	Midwifery Care and Practice 2	30	NSYR	PRP4013-C

### Stage 2 Modules

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
5	Developing Midwifery Knowledge	60	FLYR	MID5005-E
5	Midwifery Care and Practice 3	30	ACYR	MID5003-C
5	Midwifery Care and Practice 4	30	NSYR	MID5004-C

## Stage 3 Modules

FHEQ Level	Module Title	Credits	Study Period	Module Code
6	Questioning Midwifery Knowledge	60	FLYR	MID6007-E
6	Midwifery Care and Practice 5a & 5b	30	SEM1	MID6004-C
6	Midwifery Care and Practice 6 (Caseloading)	30	NSYR	MID6005-C

## Terminology

Code	Study Period	Description
SEM1	Semester 1	Starts September, ends in or before January
SEM2	Semester 2	Starts January, ends in or before May
FLYR	Full Year, 3 terms	Starts in September, ends in or before August
ACYR	Academic Year, 2 terms	Starts in September Semester 1, ends in or before May
NSYR	Academic Year, 2 terms	Starts in January Semester 2, ends in or before September

## Assessment Regulations

This Programme conforms to the standard University Undergraduate Assessment Regulations which are available at the link: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/regulations/>  
However, there are six exceptions to these regulations to meet the NMC requirements:

1. Students undertaking the BSc (Hons) Midwifery must achieve at least 40.0% in all components of assessment and individual Stage 1, 2 and 3 modules in order to progress on the programme and be eligible for award.
2. Students undertaking the BSc (Hons) Midwifery who are allowed to progress to the next stage with supplementary assessment must pass these assessments within 12 weeks of the exam board.
3. Students will be permitted one supplementary assessment (2nd attempt), at the earliest opportunity; prior to convening an examination board. Therefore, there is no regulation regarding the amount of credit passed to undertake a 1st Supplementary assessment.
4. Students who fail the clinical practice component in any of the midwifery practice modules at a second attempt will not be offered a third attempt for the clinical practice component and will be required to withdraw from the programme. This waiver will not impact on students' attempts at the portfolio component or who have extenuating circumstances applied or who are successful in an appeal.
5. Students will be permitted only one supplementary attempt at the clinical practice component in a midwifery practice module in each stage of the programme.
6. Aegrotat Awards shall not be granted for students registered on this programme. Students must complete all elements of the programme to be eligible for the award.

## **Placement and/or Study Abroad**

This programme provides the opportunity for students to undertake a two-week elective work placement or period of study at home or abroad related to aspects of local, national or global maternal health issues towards the end of the final year. The placement is for a minimum of 60 hours but can be extended to accommodate a longer period if required. Students are responsible for arranging and financing all expenses which completing such a placement would incur including travel and accommodation. Many undertake fundraising activities and some obtain support through successful funding or award applications. A report justifying the choice of placement area must be submitted prior to commencement. The learning experience is then presented to peers, academics and clinicians on completion. Planning, undertaking and evaluating the elective all form part of the students' clinical experiences and evidence for achievement of the placement will be submitted via a clinical e-portfolio: Ongoing Record of Achievement (ORA).

## **Awards Summary**

### **Stage 1**

At the end of stage 1, students will be eligible to step off or exit with the award of Certificate of Higher Education (Health Studies) if they have successfully completed at least 120 credits, the additional hours required towards meeting the final NMC Standard and achieved the award learning outcomes. This award does not confer eligibility to register with the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) as a Registered Midwife.

### **Stage 2**

At the end of stage 2, students will be eligible to step off or exit with the award of Diploma of Higher Education (Health Studies) if they have successfully completed at least 240 credits, the additional hours required towards meeting the final NMC Standard and achieved the award learning outcomes. This award does not confer eligibility to register with the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) as a Registered Midwife.

### **Stage 3**

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of Ordinary Degree of Bachelor (Health Studies) if they have successfully completed at least 300 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes. This award does not confer eligibility to register with the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) as a Registered Midwife.

Students will be eligible for the target award of Honours Degree of Bachelor of Science in Midwifery Studies if they have successfully completed at least 360 credits totalling the NMC required 4600 hours and achieved the award learning outcomes. This award confers eligibility to register with the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) as a Registered Midwife.

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## Minor Modification Schedule

Version Number	Brief description of Modification	Date of Approval
4	Updated benchmark statement. Updated regulation link	March 2020
5	Specification reformatted and made accessible. Updated Midwifery Public Health Contribution reference.	April 2021
6		