



Nursing and Midwifery Council Quality Assurance Review

Major Modification Report for:

Pre-registration Midwifery qualification leading to:

Pre-registration Midwifery

Pre-registration Midwifery – Short course

Oxford Brookes University

November 2024

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Key institutional and programme details

Name and location of Education Institution		Oxford Brookes University Jack Straws Lane Headington, Oxford Headington, Oxford OX3 0FL England			
AEI/EI Institution Ider UKPRN	ntifier	10004930			
Name and location of delivery partner(s) if noted above		Not applicable			
Name of employer pa apprenticeships	rtners for	Not applicable			
Approval type		Major modification			
Name of programme					
NMC Programme Title	AEI/EI Programme Title (in full)	Academic level	Full- time	Part- time	
Pre-registration Midwifery	BSc (Hons) Midwifery	England, Wales, Northern Ireland ⊠ Level 6 □ Level 7	\boxtimes		
Pre-registration Midwifery	MSc Midwifery	England, Wales, Northern Ireland ☐ Level 6 ☑ Level 7			
Pre-registration Midwifery - Short course	BSc (Hons) Midwifery	England, Wales, Northern Ireland ⊠ Level 6 □ Level 7			
Proposed programme	e start date	31 January 2025			
Standard(s) under assessment □ Part 2: Standards for student supervassessment □ Part 3: Standards for pre-registration programmes					
Date of desk-based re	eview	November 2024			
Visitor team		Registrant Visitor: Ms Nicola Clark			

Executive summary

Quality Assurance Reviews (QARs) are undertaken for the specific purpose of making recommendations to the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) in relation to the approval (or otherwise) of the above-named programme(s) or in relation to the approval (or otherwise) of major modifications to the above-named programme. Reviews follow the Gateway approach to programme approvals and major modifications, as outlined in QAA Guidance for Approved Education Institutions and Education Institutions on NMC Quality Assurance Reviews.

This review involved a period of desk-based analysis with the opportunity for the NMC visitor to request further information, evidence or clarification. The visitor reviewed all evidence submitted. Following the review, a draft report was shared with the AEI for the purposes of confirming factual accuracy before the report was finalised.

Context for the review

The review considered the major modification request to Oxford Brookes University's (OBU) midwifery programme in response to the regulatory change to the Part 3 Standards for pre-registration midwifery training, Standard 3.6. This programme modification entails changes to the University's practice placement arrangements to enable students to gain experience of leadership and teamworking with different maternity providers. Evidence was submitted against Part 3: Standards for pre-registration midwifery programmes as indicated in the tables below. The visitor confirmed that the remaining standards were not impacted by the modification.

The **final recommendation** made by the visitor to the NMC is as follows:

Programme is recommended to the NMC for approval. The programme meets all standards and requirements and enables students to achieve stated NMC standards of proficiency and learning outcomes for theory and practice.

The detailed findings of the NMC visitor's review are explained in more detail in the following sections.

Conditions and recommendations

Conditions

Conditions						
No.	Condition details	Specific standard not met	NMC only/ Joint	AEI/EI only		
	None					

Recommendations for enhancement

Reco	Recommendations						
No.	Recommendation	Specific standard(s)	NMC only/ Joint	AEI/EI only			
	None						

Statements of good practice

Statements of good practice relating to the NMC standards					
No.	Details	Specific standard(s)	NMC only/ Joint		
GP1	The co-production with students and other stakeholders of a practice placement model which provides students with a choice of placement options to fulfil the requirements of Standard 3.6.	3.6	NMC		

Explanation of findings for Part 3

Standard 1: Selection, admission and progression

	ed education institutions, together with practice g partners, must:	Met	Not Met	Met after conditions	Not applicable to this major modification
1.1	Appoint a lead midwife for education who is responsible for midwifery education in the AEI.	\boxtimes			
1.2	Inform the NMC of the name of the lead midwife for education.	\boxtimes			
1.3	Ensure recognition of prior learning is not permitted for pre-registration midwifery programmes.				\boxtimes
1.4	Ensure selection, admission and progression comply with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education.				\boxtimes
1.5	Confirm on entry to the programme that students: 1.5.1 meet the entry requirements for the programme as set out by the AEI and are suitable				\boxtimes
	for midwifery practice 1.5.2 demonstrate an understanding of the role and scope of practice of the midwife				
	1.5.3 demonstrate values in accordance with the Code				
	1.5.4 have capability to learn behaviours in accordance with the Code				
	1.5.5 have capability to develop numeracy skills required to meet programme outcomes				
	1.5.6 can demonstrate proficiency in English language				
	1.5.7 have capability in literacy to meet programme outcomes				
	1.5.8 have capability to develop digital and technological literacy to meet programme outcomes.				
1.6	Support students throughout the programme in continuously developing their abilities in numeracy, literacy and digital and technological literacy to meet programme outcomes.				
1.7	Ensure students' health and character are sufficient to enable safe and effective practice on entering the programme, throughout the programme and when submitting the supporting declaration of health and character in line with the NMC Guidance on health and character. This				

	includes satisfactory occupational health assessments and criminal record checks.		
1.8	Ensure students are fully informed of the requirement to declare immediately any police charges, cautions, convictions or conditional discharges, or determinations that their fitness to practise is impaired made by other regulators, professional bodies and educational establishments, and ensure that any declarations are dealt with promptly, fairly and lawfully.		
1.9	Ensure the lead midwife for education, or their designated midwife substitute is able to provide supporting declarations of health and character for students who have successfully completed an NMC approved pre-registration midwifery programme.		
1.10	Ensure NMC registered nurses entering a shortened pre-registration midwifery programme are a Registered nurse: first level (adult).		

- 1. The visitor considered a range of evidence for this standard including written clarification from OBU.
- 2. In considering Standard 1.1 and 1.2, the visitor noted that a new lead midwife for education (LME) has been appointed after the previous approval in 2020 and notified to NMC accordingly, and this is confirmed by OBU, which is corroborated on the NMC website.
- 3. Based on the information made available, the visitor considers that OBU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 1: Selection, admission and progression to enable the NMC standards to be met.

Standard 2: Curriculum

	ed education institutions, together with practice g partners, must:	Met	Not Met	Met after conditions	Not applicable to this major modification
2.1	Ensure that programmes comply with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education.	\boxtimes			
2.2	Comply with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment.				
2.3	Ensure that programme learning outcomes reflect the Standards of proficiency for midwives.				
2.4	Involve women, partners, families and advocacy groups in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of programmes.				
2.5	Ensure that programmes delivered in Wales comply with legislation which supports use of the Welsh language.				\boxtimes
2.6	Design and deliver programmes that support students and provide relevant and ongoing exposure to midwifery practice.				\boxtimes
2.7	Ensure technology and simulated learning opportunities are used effectively and proportionately across the curriculum to support supervision, learning and assessment, including where practice scenarios occur infrequently, and a proficiency is required.				
2.8	Design curricula that provide an equal balance of 50 per cent theory and 50 per cent practice learning, using a range of learning and teaching strategies.				
2.9	Ensure NMC approved pre-registration midwifery education programmes are of sufficient length to enable students to meet the NMC Standards of proficiency for midwives and respective programme outcomes, by meeting the following criteria:				
	2.9.1 ensure that all pre-registration midwifery programmes meet the equivalent minimum programme length of three (academic) years for full time programmes, which consist of a minimum of 4,600 hours, or				
	2.9.2 where a student is already registered with the NMC as a registered first level nurse (adult), education and training as a midwife shall be a minimum of two years, which consists of a minimum of 3,600 hours, or				
	2.9.3 where a student is already registered with the NMC as a registered first level nurse (adult),				

education and training as a midwife shall be a minimum of 18 months and 3,000 hours, and in order for the qualification to be recognised in EU member states it must be followed by a year of professional midwifery practice.			
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- 4. The visitor considered a range of evidence for this standard including meeting minutes, correspondence and presentations to students, placement audits and the OBU's interprofessional placement quality assurance guidance.
- 5. In considering Standard 2.1 the visitor noted that the modification has been coproduced with people who use services and their carers (PSCs) and other stakeholders. For the development of this modification, OBU utilised existing communication pathways to discuss and develop the changes involving stakeholders, which includes practice learning partners, PSCs, and students. This is evidenced in the records of subject committee meetings, maternity practice education forum meetings, one-to-one meetings between the lead midwife for education (LME) and the practice development midwife (PDM) and with the director of midwifery (DoM). The notes of meetings with students demonstrate consultation on proposed changes and that student feedback was utilised in the design of the modification.
- 6. In considering Standard 2.2 the visitor noted that the additional placement options developed as part of the modification (see detail of options in narrative in Section 3 below) are compliant with the Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment (SSSA) (NMC, 2018, updated 2023) (Part 2: SSSA). This is because OBU already has agreements in place with trusts who will provide the additional placements and who already host student midwives from more than one university, and all have educational audits in place to assure higher education institutions (HEIs) of Part 2: SSSA compliance. OBU's quality assurance guidance for health and social care placements for pre-registration programmes stipulates the use of the audit of placement partners, including utilisation of other AEIs' audits for all placements. With potential new providers of additional placements, for example Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust, there is evidence that meetings and email conversations with key stakeholders have taken place to ensure the midwifery placement provision is meeting Part 2: SSSA requirements and OBU states that prior to students attending placement experiences at their trust it will obtain audit records, either utilising those from another AEI, or undertaking their own audit. In addition, OBU states that as an existing member of its Practice Education Group, Royal Berkshire has had sight of and agreed to the OBU's documentation regarding academic and practice assessor preparation, and the preparation of practice supervisors.
- 7. Based on the information made available, the visitor considers that OBU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 2: Curriculum to enable the NMC standards to be met.

Standard 3: Practice learning

learning pa	education institutions, together with practice artners, must:	Met	Not met	Met after conditions	Not applicable to this major modification
St	Provide practice learning opportunities that enable tudents to develop and meet the NMC Standards of proficiency for midwives.				\boxtimes
th	nsure students experience the role and scope of ne midwife, enabling them to provide holistic care o women, newborn infants, partners and families.				\boxtimes
е	Provide students with learning opportunities to enable them to achieve the proficiencies related to interdisciplinary and multiagency team working.				\boxtimes
e cc	Provide students with learning opportunities to enable them to achieve the proficiencies related to continuity of midwifery carer across the whole continuum of care for all women and newborn and newborn of antis.				
cree 3 pa 3 in crew m that a 3 in a or si 3 w in 3 b th d p s p s p s p s p s p s p s p s p s p	Provide learning opportunities, across the whole continuum of care, that enables students to gain experience to: 8.5.1 support and care for women during organacy, undertaking no less than 100 antenatal examinations 8.5.2 support and care for no less than 40 women in labour and conduct the birth. Where 40 births cannot be reached owing to the lack of available women giving birth, it may be reduced to a minimum of 30, provided that the student is given the opportunity to assist with caring for an additional 20 women giving birth 8.5.3 participate in the support and care of women in labour and conduct a breech birth. Where there are no opportunities in practice to gain experience of breech births, proficiency may be gained by simulated learning 8.5.4 support and care for no less than 100 women postnatally and 100 healthy newborn infants 8.5.5 develop the required knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to support and care for no less man 40 women who have additional care needs or levelop complications including those related to obspical, psychological, social, cultural and piritual factors 8.5.6 care for newborn infants requiring additional are or have complications, including in a neonatal unit and 8.5.7 care for women across the life course with additional sexual and reproductive health needs.				

3.6	Ensure students gain experience of leadership and team working with different maternity providers.			
3.7	Provide students with learning opportunities to experience midwifery care for a diverse population across a range of settings, including midwifery led services.			
3.8	Provide learning opportunities that enable students to develop the required knowledge, skills and behaviours needed when caring for women and newborn infants when complication and additional care needs arise, including as they relate to physical, psychological, social, cultural and spiritual factors.			\boxtimes
3.9	Take account of students' individual needs and personal circumstances when allocating their practice learning opportunities, including making reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.			
3.10	Ensure students experience the range of hours expected of practising midwives.			\boxtimes
3.11	Ensure students are supernumerary.	\boxtimes		

- 8. The visitor considered a range of evidence for this section including practice handbooks, programme documentation, letters of support from trusts, and records of meetings.
- 9. In considering Standard 3.4, the visitor noted the evidence provided in the Midwifery Practice Education Handbook. This document demonstrates that students will be able to achieve the proficiencies related to continuity of midwifery care in the context of the new placement arrangements, because students can attend a caseload appointment with women when attending other placements.
- 10. In considering Standard 3.6, the visitor noted the information provided in programme documentation and OBU's narrative which clearly describes the ways in which students can gain experience of leadership and team working with different maternity providers on each programme. For the three-year programme the documentation provides evidence of three options that students can self-select to gain the necessary experience:
 - A) On the three-year BSc programme only, students can undertake the elective module Investigating and Engaging in Communities and during this be placed at an alternative maternity provider in the UK for a two-week placement, which is observational only and is within an NHS trust or health board. This is undertaken towards the end of year two and is an option for the BSc (Hons) three-year programmes only. One of the learning outcomes set by the student for this elective experience must include observation and critical reflection on leadership and teamwork. OBU recognises that not all BSc three-year students will undertake this module and so have developed additional ways in which students can meet the standard, see options B and C below, which are also available to students on the three-year MSc programme.

- B) Undertake a two-week maternity placement with a neighbouring NHS trust, which can be participatory, as standards for student supervision and assessment are met. The placement will be embedded in the normal placement pattern of the student in lieu of two weeks with the home trust.
- C) Undertake a two-week maternity placement within Oxford University Hospital NHS foundation trust that provides leadership and teamwork opportunities across a range of settings. A two-week placement will incorporate specialist leadership placements exposing students to different leadership and teamwork dynamics across a range of settings and teams. Students will also have experience in two of the four freestanding midwifery units and multiple community teams across a wide geographical area and alternative care patterns.
- 11. For the two-year BSc programme, students will undertake a short maternity placement with a neighbouring NHS trust, which is participatory. It will be a direct swap between current practice partners. This is undertaken any time between the latter part of the first year until the end of the programme.
- 12. Programme documentation demonstrates that students are required to reflect critically on their placement experience in all options and their reflection is incorporated into the Practice Portfolio, which forms part of the assessment for 'Practice six: Towards Autonomy' module which is taken by all student midwives, either at Level 6 or Level 7 dependent on their academic route. The evidence confirms that the critical reflection requirement has been developed specifically to ensure that students have engaged with the purpose of the new Standard 3.6, as well as contributing more widely to proficiency assessment. To meet the requirements of Standard 3.6, students are required to use an appropriate reflective model, incorporate appropriate wider reports and research, and reflect critically on their experiences of leadership and teamwork.
- 13. The checklist of assessment requirements demonstrates that academic assessors will use the evidence in the practice portfolio to assess whether the requirements of Standard 3.6 have been met.
- 14. Letters of support from NHS England confirm that the approach proposed by OBU to address the requirements of Standard 3.6 is supported across the Southeast (SE) of England and provides assurance of sufficient capacity and resources for students to complete the requirements of Standard 3.6. There is evidence of a collaborative approach between the SE chief midwife, the SE directors of midwifery and the trust midwifery education leads across the maternity providers in the region. Documentary evidence shows that there are monthly meetings between practice learning partners and LMEs from the other AEIs that share placements, including OBU; this is to discuss and share issues or concerns. The requirements to meet Standard 3.6 are evidenced in minutes of meetings held, specifically the Midwifery Subject Committee (MSC), dated 4 June 2024, and in the Midwifery Practice Education Forum (MPEF) dated 30 January 2024. The LME has met with current students to discuss this development, and their feedback has fed into the final iteration presented for approval.
- 15. The Midwifery Practice Education Handbook and the Practice Portfolio demonstrate that students are informed of the options available to meet Standard 3.6, and when confirmation of choice is to be confirmed, to allow sufficient time for placements and practice partners to be prepared. Relevant and ongoing exposure to midwifery practice is via a hub and spoke model, with placements being managed by the practice education unit using an online database the practice education

- management system. The placement options proposed to meet this modification will be integrated into this process.
- 16. The visitor regards the development of the options to meet Standard 3.6 is **good practice (GP1)** because the programme team with its stakeholders have codeveloped a student-orientated solution that provides an element of choice for students regarding how they can fulfil the requirements of Standard 3.6.
- 17. In considering Standard 3.9, the visitor noted that the Practice Education Handbook and the Practice Portfolio contain clear information about arrangements to take account of students' individual needs and personal circumstances when allocating their practice learning opportunities, including making reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities and that existing approved processes will apply to all placements in the new placement model.
- 18. In considering Standard 3.11, the visitor noted that OBU has a clear statement in relation to the supernumerary status of students on pre-qualifying programmes which was designed and agreed with trust partners. The evidence of the education audits of the placement areas used by OBU, or other approved education institutions where audits are shared, confirms that all students are supernumerary. If there is no education audit in place, the LME has confirmed that one would be undertaken as detailed in the OBU Quality Assurance Guidance for Health Care Programmes to gain written confirmation that all students are supernumerary.
- 19. Based on the information made available, the visitor considers that OBU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 3: Practice learning to enable the NMC standards to be met.

Standard 4: Supervision and assessment

	ved education institutions, together with practice ag partners, must:	Met	Not met	Met after conditions	Not applicable to this major modification
4.1	Provide support, supervision, learning opportunities and assessment that complies with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education.				
4.2	Provide support, supervision, learning opportunities and assessment that complies with the NMC Standards for student supervision and assessment.				
4.3	Ensure throughout the programme that students meet the NMC Standards of proficiency for midwives and programme outcomes.				\boxtimes
4.4	Provide students with constructive feedback throughout the programme to support their development.				\boxtimes
4.5	Ensure all programmes include a specific focus on numeracy assessment related to the midwifery proficiencies and the calculation of medicines, which must be passed with a score of 100 per cent.				
4.6	Assess students to confirm proficiency in preparation for professional practice as a midwife.				
4.7	Ensure that all proficiencies are recorded in an ongoing record of achievement which must demonstrate the achievement of proficiencies and skills set out in NMC Standards of proficiency for midwives.				

- 20. The visitor considered a range of evidence for Standard 4.2 including programme documentation, documents describing the preparation of assessors and supervisors, the practice handbook, and educational audits.
- 21. In considering Standard 4.2, the visitor noted that the roles of practice supervisors and practice assessors are fully evidenced in programme documentation. As also noted above (Section 2), OBU currently has agreements in place to work with a range of NHS trusts which already host student midwives from more than one AEI, and all have appropriate educational audits in place to assure higher education institutions of Part 2: SSSA compliance. For all new practice providers, OBU has existing processes in place set out in its quality assurance guidance to provide assurance of compliance with Part 2: SSSA, and all practice assessors and supervisors are appropriately trained and prepared for their role.
- 22. Based on the information made available, the visitor considers that OBU has in place the appropriate arrangements for Standard 4: Supervision and assessment to enable the NMC standards to be met.

Standard 5: Qualification to be awarded

Approved education institutions, together with practice learning partners, must:		Met	Not met	Met after conditions	Not applicable to this major modification
5.1	Ensure that the minimum award for a pre- registration midwifery programme is a bachelor's degree.				
5.2	Notify students during and before completion of the programme that they have five years to register their award with the NMC if they wish to rely on this qualification. In the event of a student failing to register their qualification within five years they will have to undertake additional education and training or gain such experience as specified in our standards.				

Findings

23. Arrangements for the award of qualifications for both programmes have not changed as a result of the modifications and therefore this standard was not considered.

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