Programme Specification for MSc Midwifery (Shortened) Programme

This document applies to Academic Year 2026/27 onwards

Table 1 Programme Specification for MSc Midwifery (shortened)

1.	**Awarding institution/body**	University of Worcester
2.	**Teaching institution**	University of Worcester School of Nursing and Midwifery
3.	**Programme accredited by**	Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
4.	**Final award or awards**	MSc Midwifery
5.	**Programme title**	MSc Midwifery (Shortened)
6.	**Pathways available**	NA
7.	**Mode and/or site of delivery**	Delivered at University of Worcester (UW) using a blended mode of delivery. This is a combination of online learning weeks and on-site block theory days. Full-time block practice learning experiences are facilitated by statutory placement providers.
8.	**Mode of attendance and duration**	2 years, full-time, 45-week timetabled year, with a further 7 weeks pre-planned holiday.
9.	**UCAS Code**	MSc Midwifery (Shortened) UCAS Code: B721
10.	**Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement**	NMC (2023) Realising Professionalism: Part 1: Standards for Education and Training NMC (2023) Realising Professionalism: Part 2: Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment NMC (2024) Part 3: Standards for Pre-Registration Midwifery Programmes NMC (2019) Standards of Proficiency for Midwives QAA Masters Degree Characteristics
11.	**Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision**	December 2020 August 2021 - Amendment to permit 30 credits at Level 6 and AQU amendments. August 2022 – AQU amendments January 2023 - CMAS update MWSC4007 July 2023 – annual updates October 2024 – updated to meet NMC R3.6 July 2026 – annual updates

12. Educational aims of the programme

Midwifery programmes at UW have a well-established reputation for delivering excellent and contemporary midwifery education. This innovative and pioneering MSc Midwifery (Shortened) programme has been developed with practice partners, service users, students, and alumni, placing the desires of women, their newborn and their families at its heart. It has been developed in response to both policy and regulatory developments including NMC (2023) Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education, NMC (2023) Standards for student supervision and assessment, NMC (2024) Standards for pre-registration midwifery programmes, NMC (2019) Standards of Proficiency for Midwives, and The National Maternity Review (NHS England, 2016).

Midwifery is an essential global profession and robust midwifery education is a key factor in ensuring care that it is of a high quality. Midwives work across the childbearing continuum and are influential in present and long-term maternal and family health. The MSc Midwifery (Shortened) programme is designed draw on the existing knowledge and experience of Registered Nurses (Adult), to meet the NMC standards and proficiencies in Midwifery and prepare them to progress into the role of a Registered Midwife with in-depth, advanced knowledge and understanding of midwifery. The development of this programme was influenced by the International *Confederation of Midwives (ICM) Global Standards for Midwifery Education* (2010, amended 2013). It echoes the ICM philosophy and model of midwifery care, by using evidence based approaches to teaching and learning that prepare competent, knowledgeable and autonomous practitioners. Practitioners whose skills and behaviours enable them to provide high quality, safe and effective care for women newborns and childbearing families, support and promote physiological birth, uphold human rights and informed consent for women, promote evidence-based practice and reduce unnecessary intervention, assess, diagnose, act, intervene, consult and refer as necessary, including providing emergency interventions.

The module learning outcomes of the MSc Midwifery (Shortened) programme are reflected in their totality in the *Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods.* These 14 learning outcomes have been mapped to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) and are incorporated within each module scheme of work which informs teaching content.

Studying at master's level enables students to study and master Midwifery in a diverse, flexible and independent manner, applying evidence-based strategies to further develop leadership, critical thinking, clinical decision-making and problem-solving skills. This ensures Midwives can act as fully accountable, autonomous practitioners. Midwives are the lead professional in optimising normal physiological processes and are ideally placed to anticipate and recognise any change that may require additional care. They have a responsibility for ongoing continuity and coordination of care as an intrinsic part of the interdisciplinary team.

Building positive, trusting relationships is at the heart of effective midwifery care and this includes strength-based approaches in accordance with moral, ethical, statutory and professional accountability to ensure public protection advocating for personal choice and human rights of women. Midwives, often operating in complex and unpredictable contexts, will be supported to apply their advanced knowledge and skill to excel in the midwifery care provision for women and families.

This curriculum is underpinned by a salutogenic orientation, embracing the concepts of meaningfulness, comprehensibility, and manageability within teaching and learning and in clinical practice. This approach will support Registered Adult Nurses to further develop the strength, resourcefulness and flexibility to not only work in stressful environments and situations, but to contribute to safe factors through the use of advocacy and strength-based approaches. The AEQUIP model also highlights the need for midwives who have the skills of resilience in the care of self and others. Salutogenesis will therefore inform and scaffold teaching and relationships with students to role model the acknowledgement of the connections between stressors and health and well-being within the context of caring for women and themselves.

The programme aims to:

1. Provide a range of flexible, blended learning opportunities and resources, tailored to facilitate the effective integration of theory and practice, to successfully support students to confidently and competently achieve the six domains of *NMC (2019) Standards of proficiency for midwives* ensuring eligibility to Register with the Nursing and Midwifery Council, as a Registered Midwife;

2. Provide impactful, purposeful and active online learning activities complemented with onsite weekends and block clinical practice learning placements to promote learning, which is engaging, motivational, and participatory;

3. Consistently and purposely integrate theory and practice, encouraging the ongoing pursuit of advanced knowledge, critical awareness and skills to enable the provision of holistic, individualised, woman-centred care across the childbearing continuum and the early weeks of life;

4. Foster midwifery philosophies to enable fully accountable midwives to work in partnership with women, building upon own responsibilities as a Registered Nurse (Adult) to recognise the professional, legal, ethical responsibilities of the midwife's role at local, national and international levels who are fit for purpose and who practice in accordance with *NMC (2018) The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates*;

5. Differentiate the established Registered Nurse philosophy of person-centred care into committing to a midwifery focus on the needs, views, preferences of women and the new-born infant in an empowering, supportive partnership in all areas of practice including continuity of care within a range of models;

6. Build upon Registered Nurses existing professional values to enhance resilience, self and team reflection, resourcefulness and strength-based approaches to underpin their professional practice across the childbearing continuum;

7. Empower student midwives to apply advanced knowledge and skills to be the lead professional for the care and support of women, babies, partners and families optimising physiological processes and support safe practice in their clinical reasoning and decision-making skills;

8. Enable student midwives to build on their existing knowledge and skills as a Registered Nurse, to lead on health education, health promotion, public health and protection to promote mental and physical health and well-being including an awareness of social and health inequalities and how to lessen them through good midwifery care;

9. Develop student midwives who master safe, effective, collaborative and supportive team working, enabling continuous quality improvement to enhance their pivotal role in avoiding harm and promoting positive outcomes for women and their families whilst advocating for the human rights of women and infants;

10. Ensure the public are safeguarded and protected, following the principles of non-judgmental and anti-discriminatory practice to uphold public trust by empowering students to recognise the need to escalate and act upon concerns when the safety of women and their babies is in jeopardy.

13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

Table 2 knowledge and understanding outcomes and which module/code they relate to

Knowledge and Understanding			
LO no.	On successful completion of the named award, students will be able to:	**Module Code/s**	**Award(s)**

1	Synthesise and systematically apply knowledge of anatomy and physiology, related to the childbearing continuum and the newborn, protecting, promoting and supporting infant feeding;	MWSC4001 MWSC4005	MSc
2	Critically appraise and evaluate the evidence that underpins the midwife's role and scope of practice informing safe and effective clinical decision making in the provision of universal and additional midwifery care to women and their families to promote positive outcomes;	MWSC4008 MWSC4007	MSc
3	Demonstrate a deep systematic understanding of the midwifery knowledge base and philosophies, which underpins practice working in partnership with the multidisciplinary team to contribute to holistic safety for women and families;	MWSC4002 MWSC4004	PG Dip
4	Critically appraise literature applying the principles of health promotion and protection to a contemporary maternity public health issue or initiative;	MWSC4002	PG Cert
5	Demonstrate proficiency in the provision of responsive and kind midwifery care building respectful partnerships with women and their families;	MWSC4008	MSc

Table 3 cognitive and intellectual skills outcomes for module code/s

Cognitive and Intellectual skills			
6	Display a commitment to the provision of high-quality care represented in professional behaviours which ensure public protection, advocacy and human rights in line with regulatory, legal and ethical frameworks;	MWSC4008	MSc
7	Questions and critically evaluate the provision and promotion of continuity of midwifery carer for the maternal and infant dyad to optimise holistic processes and strengthen parenting;	MWSC4005	PG Dip
8	Synthesise and apply quality improvement projects to the role of the midwife as an agent of change within maternity service provision;	MWSC4007	MSc
9	Critically evaluate evidence and apply to the practice of a proficient and holistic systematic physical examination of the newborn;	MWSC4006	PG Dip

Table 4 learning skills and capabilities related to employability outcomes for module code/s

Skills and capabilities related to employability			
10	Critically reflect on the values underpinning *The Code* *NMC (2018) The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates* applying a professional duty of candour, ensuring public protection and safety;	MWSC3003 MWSC4001	PG Dip
11	Deconstruct contemporary maternity care provision reflecting national and global issues promoting the midwife's	MWSC4002	PG Cert

	role as positive role model, advocate, scholar, colleague, leader and coordinator of midwifery care;		
12	Devise and apply sustained approaches to professional self awareness utilising self and team reflection, resourcefulness and strength-based approaches, incorporating compassionate self-care into personal and professional life;	MWSC4002 MWSC4008	MSc

Table 5 transferable/key skills outcomes for module code/s

Transferable/key skills			
13	Elucidate numeracy and literacy skills, digital capabilities to own learning and professional clinical practice, being proactive in their learning and development using reflection to analyse self and actions;	MWSC4008	MSc
14	Demonstrate effective, sensitive and culturally responsive communication, interdisciplinary working, and partnership with women and their families in complex and unpredictable contexts.	MWSC4002	PG Cert

Learning, teaching and assessment

This stimulating, engaging and student-focused midwifery programme is designed to support, engage and motivate students to build on existing professional knowledge, skills and attitudes, through a range of blended and inclusive learning and teaching strategies. It facilitates a transformational process as students' progress from Registered Nurse (Adult) through a range of learning experiences to gain eligibility to Register with the NMC as Registered Midwife.

The blended learning and teaching strategy is informed by the ABC principles of online learning and teaching (Young and Perović 2016), thus ensuring it is active and accessible, with the learning community positioned at its core. This approach is based on the pedagogic theory of Laurillard's (2013) Conversational Framework, incorporating six learning types: acquisition, inquiry, discussion, collaboration, practice and production. This enables active student participation in their learning journey, to acquire the knowledge, skills and attributes fundamental to safe and effective midwifery practice. This contributes to increasingly autonomous learning, student empowerment, flexible learning, collaboration and co-creation and enables students to expand and develop sources of knowledge based on a variety of appropriate resources whilst firmly embedding themselves in the concept of 'community of practice' and knowledge to promote lifelong learning.

Blended learning will take a blended online approach, with synchronously and asynchronous delivery during theory blocks, complemented by on campus weekend experiences. The online synchronous and asynchronous learning during theory blocks are designed to encourage interactive, collaborative and innovative teaching and learning to engage, enthuse and inspire, underpinned by established and emerging evidence on technology enhanced learning. Students will be enabled to keep socially connected whilst physically distanced, during the online weeks. The onsite weekends are designed to embed emerging midwifery philosophies through participatory learning. Opportunities to acquire and practice midwifery skills in a skills laboratory, including innovative approaches to self and team reflection, offer students the chance to connect in a meaningful way with fellow students and midwifery teachers. This blended approach is further complemented by block practice learning experiences in a range of midwifery and associated settings.

The concept of salutogenics threads through the delivery, focusing on factors that support and enhance health and wellbeing and a sense of coherence. This strengthens the constructive alignment of teaching, learning and assessment so midwifery students can understand (comprehensibility), cope (manageability) and value (meaningfulness) their education. It encourages students, in turn, to support childbearing women and their families to create a sense of coherence in their own journeys to parenthood and beyond.

The six NMC (2019) domains spiral across the curriculum, supporting the construction of new knowledge:

1. Being an accountable, autonomous, professional midwife.
2. Safe and effective midwifery care: promoting and providing continuity of care and carer.
3. Universal care for all women and newborn infants.
4. Additional care for women and newborn infants with complications.
5. Promoting excellence: the midwife as colleague, scholar and leader.
6. The midwife as skilled practitioner

The modules across the programme revisit these domains, with the principles of a spiral curriculum being reflected. Revisiting and building upon topics throughout the programme at increasing levels of complexity, supports students to gain a deeper knowledge to support comprehensive understanding and mastery of key concepts. It reinforces the Registered Nurses (Adult) existing understanding of the domains, associated proficiencies, knowledge, skills and professional values and behaviours to promote the integration of midwifery theory with practice.

The curriculum promotes inclusivity so that accessibility for all is considered and integrated from the very beginning. The learning culture that underpins this curriculum reflects their conduct as registered expectations and embraces the *NMC (2018) The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates* in that it is conducive to safe and effective learning which respects the principles of equality and diversity, and is ethical, open and honest.

Across the programme, weeks are equally shared between theory and practice learning. This weighting ensures that neither theory nor practice are privileged in teaching and one does not override the other in the assessment on the programme. All theoretical assignments require students to link theory with practice and practice assessment is underpinned by the theoretical elements of the programme.

Teaching

Theory

Students are taught through a flexible, blended learning approach, with a blended online approach adopted. Synchronous online sessions during theory blocks will include online lead lectures, using the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), workshops and group activities. Asynchronous delivery will be facilitated through the recording of synchronous sessions, flipped classroom approaches, guided reading, online discussion forums and e-learning packages. Enquiry-based learning is a feature of Module MWSC4002 (Midwifery Philosophy and Public Health). Scenarios are underpinned by contemporary practice and inspiring and motivating triggers for enquiries are generated with service users and clinicians. During the onsite blocks (five or six blocks per year) classroom based teaching will be designed to promote the cohort to engage collaboratively with the academic team, service users and practice representatives using a range of approaches including lead lectures, interactive workshop, seminars, tutorials and clinical skills and simulation Where proficiency is required for practice including scenarios which occur infrequently, technology-enhanced and simulated learning opportunities will be used to support student learning and assessment.

At the heart of the programme is the academic support to facilitate students transition to master's level study, with a focus on academic writing and scholarship embedded within induction, the course modules and Personal Academic Tutoring.

At the beginning of the course students are allocated a Personal Academic Tutor who they will meet with to discuss academic progress at least twice each semester. Personal Academic Tutor meeting can either take place in person on campus during the weekend experiences, or virtually.

The University places emphasis on enabling students to develop the independent learning capabilities that will equip them for lifelong learning and future employment, as well as academic achievement. A mixture of independent study, teaching and academic support from Student Services and Library Services, and also the Personal Academic Tutoring system enables students to reflect on progress and build up a profile of skills, achievements and experiences that will help them to flourish and be successful. The culmination of this Masters programme is the production of a 6000-word dissertation, a quality improvement project proposal within module MWSC4007. The NMC calls for future midwives to be colleagues, scholars and leaders; and this module dissertation supports this call. Students will actively learn about service evaluation methods and advanced research methods; this pairing will provide a substantial knowledge base for future midwife leaders. The QI project proposal will be underpinned by an evidence and research-based rationale, using a QI model to methodically develop the proposal and lead the student to make conclusions and recommendations to inform and shape future midwifery practice. The dissertation will provide recommendations for further QI work and primary research to support, sustain and extend the quality of care provided to women/birthing people and their families.

The programme is based on a 40 hour week, across 45 weeks per year. It facilitates equal theory and practice learning hours, with 1800 theory hours and 1800 practice hours. This promotes the integration of theory and practice and is reflected in the modules across the programme.

Practice Learning

Practice learning takes place in a range of settings where midwives care for women and their babies. Students in practice are supernumerary, allowing them to learn without being counted as part of the staffing requirements of the setting. However, the contribution they make increases as they gain proficiency, with the level of supervision based on the professional judgement of their practice supervisor or assessor. As a Registered Nurse (Adult), students are expected to maintain the professional behaviour and standards required of NMC registrants and work within their scope of practice as a student midwife.

Each student will complete the Postgraduate (two year) Midwifery Ongoing Record of Achievement Document (MORA). This contains all the formative and summative elements of the assessment process, including professional values, proficiencies, skills, medicines management and Practice Episodes Records. Practice Episodes Records are incorporated into the document to include the NMC requirements at point of registration which stipulate the number of times a student has provided care specific to the four areas. Examples of NMC requirements include: 100 antenatal examinations, 40 births facilitated, 100 postnatal examinations.

Student placements run in blocks across the year, with experiences normally in a minimum of two practice placements each year. Students spend 22 weeks of year one and 23 weeks in year two in the clinical learning environment to achieve 1800 practice hours. This includes the use of complementary placements (visits to alternative settings) which enable students to access a range of diverse clinical learning opportunities including interdisciplinary and multiagency team working. This may include ultrasonography departments, early pregnancy clinics or postnatal obstetric clinics. Students will also spend time in an alternative maternity setting (NHS Trust)

where they do not ordinarily work. This is to experience different styles of leadership, ways of working and the culture of another NHS Trust, to support their own development as a leader and as part of a team.

In the clinical area, student learning is supported by a team of appropriately prepared practice supervisors and one practice assessor per placement area. Practice supervisors regularly provided feedback on student progress and professional behaviours. They facilitate safe and effective learning, role model professional behaviours and contribute to student assessment. The Practice assessor meets with the student at specific points during the year and reviews the evidence contained within the MORA, completing the summative holistic assessment at the end of each year.

Contact time
Students will complete 12 hours (two days) contact time per week. Typically, students will complete 75% of these days virtually and 25% on campus (typically teaching will be at the end of the week)

On a typical virtual day, contact time will be structured around:

- Flipped classroom
- Lead lecture available synchronously or asynchronous via the VLE
- Asynchronous online discussion forum
- Virtual tutorials

On a typical campus-based day, contact time will be structured around:

- Lead lecture
- Interactive workshop or clinical skills and simulation
- Seminar or tutorials

Students will also complete 1800 hours of practice learning across the course. This will normally include 880 hours in year one and 920 hours in year two. Whilst completing practice learning, students will be expected to attend placement for 40 hours per week, experiencing the full range of hours expected of Registered Midwives. All practice learning hours must be formally recorded and signed for.

Independent self-study
In addition to the contact time, students are expected to complete 28 hours of independent self study per week during theory blocks. Typically, this will involve searching for evidence, reading, making notes, practicing academic writing in preparation for assessments, reflecting on development. Independent learning is supported by a range of excellent learning facilities, including the Hive and library resources, the virtual learning environment, and extensive electronic learning resources. The programme also incorporates 7 independent study/reading weeks and two induction weeks.

Teaching staff
Students will be taught by a teaching team whose expertise and knowledge are closely matched to the content of the modules on the programme. The team is made up of Registered Midwives from different backgrounds offering a range of expertise. Teaching is also supported by contributions from clinicians and other allied health professionals when specialist knowledge is required. Contributions by service users and their families, provide valuable opportunities for the sharing of lived experience with students.

Teaching is informed by research and consultancy, with ninety percent of permanent lecturers in the teaching team having a Higher Education teaching qualification and Fellowship of the Higher

Education Academy. In addition to this, three members of the team have achieved doctoral awards.

Assessment
Assessment enables students to learn about themselves as learners, critically reflecting on their academic and practice learning experiences and providing opportunity to demonstrate their academic, practical, technical and professional progress and achievement. The programme provides opportunities to gain understanding and learning informally through the completion of practice or 'formative' assignments. Each module has one or more formal or 'summative' assessment which is graded and counts towards the overall module grade.

In line with principles of inclusivity and student-centred approaches, assessments are varied across the two years with one module offering a choice of assessment in recognition that students learn in different ways. While innovation and creativity of assessments is encouraged, this is within the context of a defined range of assignments, providing students with the opportunity to master the skills of academic, digital, transferable and employment at a level appropriate for postgraduate study.

Summative assessment of theory activities includes written assignments (essays, case studies, reflections and reports), oral presentations and OSCE.

Assessment of practice learning involves the continuous assessment of midwifery knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours and values, progressing from Contribution (Year/Part 1) to Proficiency in Midwifery Practice (Year/Part 2). Formative and summative assessment of practice is recorded in the MORA for each year of the programme. Numeracy and medicines management is assessed developmentally culminating in providing evidence of achieving 100% in a calculation of medicines assessment.

A typical formal summative assessment pattern for each year of the course is:

Year one:
Report
Annotated bibliography
Case Study
Individual oral presentation
Assessment of practice of NMC (2019) proficiencies using Midwifery Ongoing Record of Achievement (MORA) with pass/fail
Evidence of Medicines Management at 90%

Year two:
Development of an e-resource or critique of a guideline
Dissertation: Service evaluation
OSCE
Exam
Poster presentation
Assessment of practice of NMC (2019) proficiencies using Midwifery Ongoing Record of Achievement (MORA) with practice grading
Evidence of Medicines Management at 100%

14. Assessment strategy

The assessment strategy meets the requirements of the University's Assessment Policy. Assessment forms an integral part of the course design and underpins authentic and holistic learning, facilitating the integration of master's level study with the completion of midwifery proficiencies and technical skills. The assessment strategy reflects the need to ensure that the programme produces midwives who are safe, knowledgeable and compassionate advocates in practice and display graduate attributes and knowledge worthy of a master's level award.

In line with NMC requirements, no compensation exists between the assessment of theory and practice or with the assessment of individual items of assessment in a module, ensuring all programme outcomes are met.

The range of formative and summative assessments recognises that all students are unique in their learning style and enables students to choose assessment formats which fit in with their personal, learning styles and requirements promoting inclusivity.

Formative assessment is central to student learning, it provides opportunity for students to learn about themselves as learners and to gain constructive feedback that supports summative assessment. Students are strongly advised to engage with formative activities to increase confidence and active engagement in the learning process. Students and teaching teams are partners in the learning, assessment and feedback process and engagement in a dialogue about these processes is essential, with formative feedback provided from a number of sources including the module teaching team, Personal Academic Tutors and Practice Supervisors/Assessors. Peer and self-assessment strategies are incorporated across the course, supporting students to make judgments about their own and others' work.

Assessment of practice learning

Assessment of practice is contained within the two practice modules (MWSC 3003 and MWSC 4008). These are year-long modules that run once per year. Every year, submission of the MORA will demonstrate the outcome of the students summative assessment. In year 1 the practice module Developing Midwifery Practice (MWSC 3003) comprises two assessment parts. The first part is the summative holistic assessment using the holistic grading descriptor in the MORA that **most closely matches** the student's performance. Any holistic descriptor from Outstanding to Satisfactory is a Pass. Unsatisfactory is a Fail. The second part is submission of medicine calculation which is Pass/Fail with achievement of 90% or above being a pass. A Pass or a Fail grade will be awarded for practice module MWSC 3003.

In year 2, the Consolidating Midwifery Practice module (MWSC4008) comprises three parts. The first is completion of the summative holistic assessment using the holistic grading descriptor which is aligned to master level grading criteria that **most closely matches** the student's performance. The student's Academic Assessor then identifies a literal grade based on the holistic descriptor. This part carries a weighting of 70%. The second part is submission of medicine calculation of which is pass/fail with achievement of 100% required to pass. The final part is 1500word equivalent 'promoting excellence in practice' poster with a weighting of 30% of the module.

All practice learning and assessment is further supported by:

- Work Based Learning Support Team
- Nominated Practice Person
- Practice Supervisor
- Practice Assessor (for each placement or group of placements)
- Academic Assessor (for each part of the programme)
- Personal Academic Tutor

- Practice Academic Link
- Midwifery Practice Leads

This support, alongside the Occupational Health and the Disability and Dyslexia Services, ensures students individual needs and personal circumstances are considered, including making reasonable adjustments as required for students with disabilities.

Further details related to practice learning support and assessment are available in the Course Handbook and MORA and MORA FAQ Guide.

15. Programme structures and requirements

The programme meets the requirements of the *NMC (2024) Standards for Pre-Registration Midwifery* and *NMC (2023) Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment.*

The MSc Midwifery (Shortened) programme provides a two year, full-time, unified, integrated and mandatory programme consisting of theory and practice learning modules at level 7. The programme complies with NMC requirement of at least 3600 hours of theoretical and clinical education and provides an equal balance of theory and practice learning, with 1800 theory hours and 1800 practice learning hours. It is timetabled for 45 weeks of the year. There is an additional 7 weeks pre-planned annual leave. Practice learning allows students to experience the full range of hours expected of Registered Midwives.

The programme complies with Article 40, 41 and 42 of the EU Directive 2005/36/EC, which is mapped to the programme modules. This demonstration of the minimum training conditions set out by the directive, including theoretical and technical instruction; subject's specific to the activities of a midwife and practical and clinical training.

Table 6 award map for each level of the course

Part (year)	Theory (weeks)	Practice (weeks)	Pre-Planned Holiday
One Level 6/7	23	22	7 weeks
Two Level 7	22	23	7 weeks
Totals	45 weeks (1800 hours)	45 weeks (1800 hours)	14 weeks

Course Title: MSc Midwifery (Shortened)

Part one

Module Code	Module Title	Level	Credits (Number)	Status
MWSC4001	Universal Care and Skills for Women and Families	7	30	Mandatory
MWSC4002	Midwifery Philosophy and Public Health	7	30	Mandatory
MWSC3003	Developing Midwifery Practice	6	30	Mandatory

Part two

Module Code	Module Title	Level	Credits (Number)	Status

MWSC4004	Negotiated Module: Midwifery	7	15	Optional*
MWSC4005	Additional Care and Skills for Women and Families	7	15	Mandatory
MWSC4006	Systematic Physical Examination of the Newborn	7	15	Optional *
MWSC4007	Dissertation: Quality Improvement Project Proposal	7	30	Mandatory
MWSC4008	Consolidating Midwifery Practice	7	30	Mandatory

PG Certificate To be awarded the PG Cert Heath and Care students must successfully complete 60 credits at Level 7 This would mean completion of both theory modules in year one of the programme - MWSC4001 & MWSC4002
PG Diploma To be awarded the PG Dip Health and Care students must successfully complete the PG Certificate plus MWSC3003. In addition, students must complete two of the following modules: MSWC4004 or MWSC4006 and MWSC4005 and either MWSC4007 or MWSC4008.
Master's (MSc) To be awarded the MSc Midwifery students must successfully complete 150 credits at Level 7 and 30 credits at level 6. This means completing all of the following modules: MWSC 4001, MWSC 4002, MWSC 3003, MWSC 4005, MWSC 4007, MWSC 4008, and one of the following modules: MWSC 4004 or MWSC 4006

*For most students completing the MSc Midwifery (Shortened) programme, the Systematic physical module (MWSC4006) is mandatory. However, where a student who commences this programme of study already has the Newborn and infant physical examination (NIPE) qualification and is practicing as a NIPE practitioner there is an option to register on the Negotiated Module: Midwifery (MWSC4004). This reflects the NMC requirement that recognition of prior learning is not permitted on midwifery programmes. Within MWSC4008 student midwives who are not completing MWSC4006 are still expected to provide evidence of the 20 Systematic physical examination of the newborn checks over the course of the programme to enable them to evidence their current clinical currency with regard to this proficiency, these are documented within the MORA.

Only those students successfully completing the MSc Midwifery (Shortened) are eligible to apply to register with the NMC.

The usual University convention of 1 credit = 10 hours of learning has been amended to reflect the NMC requirements of 3600 hours across 2 years, while completing 180 level 7 credits. Module hours are documented within the learning and teaching methods of the module specifications.

The detailed schedule for the course showing how modules are delivered over the academic year and any further detailed information is contained within the Course Handbook.

Please see Mapping Document for mapping of modules to NMC (2019) Standards of Proficiency for Midwives *and EU directives as well as MORA.*

16. QAA and professional academic standards and quality

The MSc Midwifery (Shortened) programme has taken account of a range of quality academic and professional frameworks. It is aligned to the QAA (2019) Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK degree-awarding bodies (FHEQ). This award is located at Level 7 of the OfS sector recognised standards. It is constructed to enable students to demonstrate achievement of the NMC (2019) Standards of Proficiency for Midwives.
The following sources have been used throughout the development of the course:

QAA (2020) Master's Degree Characteristics
NMC (2023) Realising Professionalism: Part 1: Standards for Education and Training
NMC (2023) Realising Professionalism: Part 2: Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment
NMC (2024) Part 3: Standards for Pre-Registration Midwifery Programmes
NMC (2019) Standards of Proficiency for Midwives

The course takes account of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. As the course has a 50% practice-based learning requirement, it takes account of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance Work-based Learning

17. Support for students

Student support is a central component of the midwifery programme and is available from within the Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery and from the wider University. Examples of wider University support is Student Services and the Disability and Dyslexia Service:

https://www.worcester.ac.uk/life/help-and-support/services-for-students/home.aspx
https://www2.worc.ac.uk/disabilityanddyslexia/

Induction

The first week of the programme provides students with the opportunity to meet other students, the teaching team and other members of the University of Worcester team through the VLE. Sessions exist to introduce students to the principles of learning and teaching in Higher Education, e-learning portals, introduction to information and learning systems including Library resources, an introduction to Student Services, the Student Union and the Midwifery Society. A further induction week is provided at the start of year two.

Personal Academic Tutors

Academic tutoring is at the heart of supporting students personally, professionally and academically. The programme team believe that the personal academic tutor system is fundamental to student success. All students are allocated a personal academic tutor from within the midwifery team of lecturers. Students are advised to maintain regular contact with their personal academic tutor, with email being the communication tool of choice. They meet with their personal academic tutor in accordance with University policy. The meetings will usually be conducted virtually. During each year of the programme students will be offered the opportunity to meet with their PAT during an onsite weekend. Personal Academic Tutors act as the first point of contact for students experiencing problems or concerns arising while at university, offering signposting to wider University support services. The personal academic tutor is involved where there are problems identified in practice and will liaise with the practice facilitator, academic assessor, practice assessor and lecturer/practitioner to support the student. They promote the academic and professional development of their tutees, including supporting employability. Students are advised to maintain regular contact with their Personal Academic Tutor. All tutorial contact is recorded via SOLE.

Academic Assessor

All students will be allocated a different Academic Assessor for each year of the programme. Academic Assessors are Registered Midwives who are an academic member of the University teaching team who will not normally be the students Personal Academic Tutor. Academic Assessors must communicate with Practice Assessors at identified points across the academic year to monitor student progress, with a discussion about student learning, progression and achievement of proficiencies across theory and practice taking place prior to the end each year. The Academic Assessor and Practice Assessor are responsible for recommending the student for progression to the next year of the programme and record this in the MORA. This recommendation is ratified at the exam board.

Lead Midwife for Education (LME)

The LME is a Registered Midwife who is responsible for midwifery education at the University of Worcester, and this is a requirement of the NMC. The LME works closely with Academic Assessors and Personal Academic Tutors to carefully monitor student progression and achievement on the programme to facilitate early intervention strategies to support students struggling to make satisfactory progression. The LME has an important strategic and operational role related to midwifery education at the University of Worcester. The LME utilises her midwifery expertise to promote, support and enhance the midwifery education agenda at the University of Worcester.

LME/ Course Leader

The LME/Course Leader (or their designated midwife substitute) provides a supporting declaration of good health and character for all students who have successfully completed the programme and ensures that all students are aware, during and before completion of the programme, that they have five years to register their award with the NMC. The LME has the right to refuse to sign any supporting health and character declaration if the available evidence does not support this.

Professional Midwifery Advocates (PMA)

Within the academic team, there are several trained PMA's. In line with NHS England A-EQUIP model, PMA's deploy the valuable function of leadership, education, restoration and quality improvement. Every midwifery student can access a PMA within the academic team to receive restorative clinical supervision. This intervention has been shown to support midwives in developing skills of resilience that will protect their future health and reduce the chances of attrition from employment and the PMA team aim to offer this for students at various points from the beginning of the Programme until completion. Some of the onsite weekends will provide opportunity for students to experience group Restorative Clinical Supervision (RCS) which will be built into the timetable.

Practice Assessors

Practice Assessors for midwifery students are Registered Midwives, who have received appropriate preparation for the role and responsibilities. They conduct assessments to confirm achievement of proficiency and programme outcome for practice learning and seek relevant feedback and evidence to ensure that an objective, evidence-based assessment has been made. They communicate with the students practice supervisor(s), to gain feedback on their observations of the students' knowledge, skills and attitude/values. Practice Assessors are required to maintain and develop their current knowledge and expertise relevant for the proficiencies and programme outcomes being assessed and raise concerns using the University Speaking up: raising concerns processes. They link with the student's Academic Assessor to review the student progression and work with the student to inform decisions regarding assessment. A Practice Assessor who is also a Practice Supervisor or an Academic Assessor cannot simultaneously be a Practice Supervisor or an Academic Assessor for the same student.

Practice learning support
Within the practice environment students are further supported by:

- Practice Supervisors
- Practice Facilitators
- Personal Academic Tutors
- Practice Academic Link Lecturers

Further details of practice learning support are available in the course handbook and MORA document.

Dissertation support
All students complete a Level 7 Dissertation: Quality Improvement Project. Students are supported in this via the module lead and a Project supervisor.

18. Admissions

Admissions policy
The University aims to provide fair and equal access to a university education for all those able to demonstrate the potential to succeed or benefit from it. Admissions to the course are made in line the University's Admissions Policy and Diversity and Equality policies, and the NMC (2019) Standards for pre-registration midwifery programmes

The MSc Midwifery (Shortened) aims to recruit applicants who are Registered Nurses (Adult), who have a strong commitment to the midwifery profession.

Entry requirements
Applicants must hold professional registration with Nursing and Midwifery Council as a Registered Nurse (Adult) with 12 months experience in an adult healthcare setting.

In addition, applicants must have:

Either:

A lower second-class Honours degree (2:2) or above in a Health-related subject OR

Qualifications and experience considered to be equivalent to the above

Plus: Level 2 English and mathematics (or recognised equivalent)

Students whose first language is not English will be expected to have reached a sufficient standard on admission to the course; usually a minimum IELTS 7.0 with no element below 6.5. Other equivalent English qualifications will also be considered.

See Taught Courses Regulatory Framework (Section 2).

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements
All students are required to have enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance prior to entry to the programme and self-declare good character each year. Good health is determined through occupational health assessment which is currently provided by an independent supplier.

Health and Character declaration
In addition to the above, the *NMC (2024) Guidance on health and character* specifies professional entry requirements to determine good health and good character

Recognition of Prior Learning
Recognition of prior learning is not permitted by the NMC.

Admissions procedures
Applications can be made via UCAS (UCAS code: B721) OR via direct application to University of Worcester.

Applications are initially reviewed by the Admissions Office and then reviewed by the Admissions Tutor/Course Lead and assessed against the course entry requirements.

The application must be well written and demonstrate:
- A clear midwifery focus;
- A realistic and objective motivation;
- A robust understanding of the role and scope of practice of the midwife;
- Evidence that they have the capability to develop literacy, numeracy, digital and technological skills required to meet the programme outcomes.

Applicants meeting the above requirements will be invited to attend a values-based selection event. The values-based selection event is facilitated by the academic team, clinicians and service users, allowing candidates to demonstrate their understanding of midwifery, the health and social needs of women and families, human rights, values in accordance with The Code (NMC, 2018), commitment to succeeding as professionals and suitability for the programme. Demonstrate an understanding of the role and scope of practice of the midwife.

Academic staff, service users and practice learning partners attend training in the principles of selection, equality and diversity through the University or the practice partners employing organisation.

Admissions/selection criteria
Following the selection event, the students will be offered a place when a member of the course team confirm they meet all the criteria for entry and are successful at the selection event.

All offers of a place are conditional upon confirmation of good health and good character (DBS).

Where an applicant is unsuccessful at selection day, they are offered written 'feedback' against individual performance and interview outcome. In some instances, potential students may be advised to reapply at a later date.

UK students being sponsored by their employer must provide evidence of employer approval and payment agreement.

19. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Requirements to pass modules
- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and a pass mark in each item of assessment is required.

- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

Submission of assessment items

- A student is required to submit assessment items by 3pm on the due date and in accordance with the published process described in the module outline.
- A student may request an automatic extension of up to seven days up to six times in an academic year (depending on the number of credits studied) as described in the Delayed Assessment Procedures.
- A student who submits work late will not have work marked unless they have an approved claim of exceptional circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework

Retrieval of failure

- A student is entitled to re-sit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module; the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-
- A student who fails 60 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University
- Where a practice module (MWSC3003 or MWSC4008) is failed students will be offered the opportunity of a minimum of a 4-week placement to facilitate retrieval of the fail
- A student who fails in the original and reassessment opportunity of a practice learning module will be withdrawn from the programme
- A student will be notified of the reassessment opportunities in the results notification issued via the secure student portal (SOLE). It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and comply with any reassessments.

Requirements for Progression

- A student must achieve 60 credits at level 7 and 30 credits at level 6, totalling 90 credits in year one before progressing into year 2
- The nominated practice assessor and nominated academic assessor evaluate and recommend the student for progression based on achievement of proficiencies and outcomes for each year of the programme.
- Students are not permitted to carry failed modules into a succeeding year.

This course is subject to the University's fitness to practice procedures.

Requirements for Awards

Table 7 requirements for awards

Award	Requirement
Post Graduate Certificate (PG Cert) Health and Care *Not eligible to register with the NMC as registered midwife*	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7 through the completion of the following modules: MWSC4001 & MWSC4002

Post Graduate Diploma (PG Dip) in Health and Care *Not eligible to register with the NMC as registered midwife*	Passed a minimum of 120 credits at level 7, through the completion of the PG Certificate plus MSWC3003. In addition, students must complete two of the following modules: MSWC4004 or MWSC4006 and MWSC4005 and either MWSC4007 or MWSC4008
Master of Science in Midwifery *Eligible to apply to Register with the NMC as registered midwife*	Passed a minimum of 180 credits at level 7 as specified on the award map through the completion of all of the following modules: MWSC 4001, MWSC 4002, MWSC 3003, MWSC 4005, MWSC 4007, MWSC 4008, and one of the following modules: MWSC 4004 or MWSC 4006

Classification
The classification awarded will either a Pass, Merit or Distinction. The classification is determined by whichever of the following two methods results in the higher classification. The classification is calculated using level 7 modules only.

Method 1
a) Candidates will be awarded a Distinction where they have attained an average of A- (PD) or higher from the credit achieved with the University for the award. b) Candidates will be awarded a Merit where they have attained an average of C+ (PM) or higher from the credit achieved with the University for the award.

Method 2
a) Candidates will be awarded a Distinction, irrespective of their other module results, where they have attained 90 credits at grade A- (PD) or higher. b) Candidates will be awarded a Merit, irrespective of their other module results, where they have attained 90 credits at grade C+ (PM) or higher.

In addition, candidates will be awarded a Pass where they have not fulfilled the rules for Method 1 or Method 2, but are eligible for the award of a Master's.

For further information on honours degree classification, see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

20. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

Graduate destinations
All students who successfully complete the MSc Midwifery (Shortened) programme are eligible for registration with the NMC, thereby assuring the relevance of the course. Most students who successfully complete a midwifery course at the University of Worcester apply for a midwifery post and are successful in their application, thereby moving into a midwifery career. Several students are offered more than one post following interview and therefore have a choice of posts to accept. There are also opportunities for students completing this programme of study to apply for Level 8 or doctoral studies.

Student employability

Students graduating from the University of Worcester have an excellent reputation with successful recruitment into full time employment within the first year of qualifying. In 2020 96% of our graduates succeeded in securing a midwifery post.

Several initiatives are embedded within the programme to support this. During the second year of the programme students are supported with CV writing and provided with opportunities to complete 'mock' interviews. Personal Academic Tutors provide further support to students. Local employers from within the Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Gloucestershire counties and surrounding areas are invited to meet with students and discuss career opportunities and further professional development. The programme teamwork with the University Careers & Employability Service ensuring details of NHS Trust recruitment events and individual jobs are forwarded to students during their final year.

Students also have the opportunity to *'earn while they learn'*, gaining work as student ambassadors, helping at open days, induction weeks, selection and taster events. NHS professionals work with the career department to hold workshops for those on professional courses who have completed one placement, to allow them to gain part-time healthcare work in the NHS.

Links with employers

The Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery has excellent working relationships with its practice partners, which have been commended by several organisations including the NMC and External Examiner reports. Practice partners have been involved from the inception in the development of both the current Pre-Registration Midwifery programme and the MSc Midwifery (Shortened) programme. Practice educators were closely involved in the development of the practice learning modules. The LME/Course Leader and other members of the Midwifery teaching team are frequently involved in discussion regarding the development of the curriculum with the Heads of Midwifery and senior midwives in the local NHS Trusts and are responsive to feedback.

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in associated course documentation e.g. course handbooks, module outlines and module specifications