Protecting the public through quality assurance of nursing and midwifery education

Programme Audit/Major Modification report

Programme provider:	Southampton, University of
In partnership with: (Associated practice placement providers involved in the delivery of the programme)	University Hospitals Southampton NHS Foundation Trust
Date of review:	12 Jul 2019
Type of Modification	Desktop
Provision reviewed:	Registered Midwife – 24M Registered Midwife - 36M
Title of current programme:	BSc (Hons) Midwifery BSc (Hons) Midwifery with advanced standing MSc Midwifery with advanced standing
Title of modified programme if changed:	
Academic level of current programme:	England, Wales, Northern Ireland ☐ Level 5 ☒ Level 6 ☒ Level 7 SCQF ☐ Level 8 ☐ Level 9 ☐ Level 10 ☐ Level 11
Academic level of modified programme if changed:	England, Wales, Northern Ireland ☐ Level 5 ☐ Level 6 ☐ Level 7 SCQF ☐ Level 8 ☐ Level 9 ☐ Level 10 ☐ Level 11

Reviewer:	Miss Nicola Hadlett

Outcome of Approval Panel Meeting	
Outcome:	Recommended for approval
Conditions and NMC standard(s)/requirement(s) they relate to:	**Resources** None identified **Admission and progression** None identified **Practice learning** None identified **Fitness for practice** None identified **Quality assurance** None identified
Date conditions to be met:	
Recommendations and NMC standard(s)/requirement(s) they relate to: **Note: recommendations will be assessed through the AEI annual self-assessment report**	None identified
Date conditions met:	
Programme start date:	01 Sep 2019

Summary

Summary of modification request

The University of Southampton, an established approved education institution (AEI), provides a three-year full-time BSc (Hons) Midwifery programme; a BSc (Hons) Midwifery two-year full-time shortened programme; and, a MSc Midwifery two-year full-time shortened programme. The latter two shortened programmes are for adult nurses on part one of the NMC register.

The AEI presented a major modification for these pre-registration midwifery programmes to transfer students from the Standards to support learning and assessment in practice (SLAiP) (NMC, 2008) to the Standards for student supervision and assessment (SSSA) (NMC, 2018) from September 2019.

There is evidence of consultation about the proposed changes with students and practice learning partners (PLPs).

A review of documentary evidence and a telephone conference call with the lead midwife for education (LME) who is also the programme lead confirmed the university has considered the requirements of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and consulted with students on the implementation and transfer to the SSSA.

The major modification to the programmes is recommended to the NMC for approval.

Feedback from key stakeholders

Presenting Team

QA visitor had a teleconference with the LME on 12 July 2019. The key focus of this discussion surrounded the processes employed to address the CMA requirements; the allocation of practice assessors and practice supervisors to ensure the SSSA standard R7.10 is met and informing students of their named nominated person for practice learning placements. The discussion confirmed all the identified items are met and they are reported against the relevant standards.

Mentors, sign-off mentors, practice teachers and employers

Not applicable - Desktop review.

Students

Not applicable - Desktop review.

Service users and carers

Not applicable - Desktop review.

Examples of notable and innovative practice and standards they relate to

The AEI and PLPs have produced three declarations, one each for practice supervisors, practice assessors and those that will transfer from mentors to practice supervisors or assessors. When completed the declarations confirm individuals have received preparation, understand the role and have engaged with continuous professional development to maintain contemporary knowledge and skills for their respective roles. This is innovative in that it provides evidence that individual practice supervisors and assessors have the skills to facilitate safe and effective learning experiences, illustrating there are suitable systems in place to ensure safe and effective coordination of practice learning and quality monitoring processes. (SSSA R1.4 and R2.4)

Potential risks to compliance of education standards and standards they relate to

None identified

Potential risks to the student learning environment and standards they relate to

None identified

Any other risks to public protection

None identified

Areas for future monitoring

- Implementation of the SSSA.

Outcome recommendation
The major modification to the programmes is recommended to the NMC for approval.

NMC Standards
Please refer to the [Standards for Pre-Registration Midwifery Education (NMC, 2009)](#), current programme specific circulars accessed via the [NMC Website,](#) EU Directive 2005/36/EC Article 41 (1) and Article 31 (6-7), and Section one of the Mott MacDonald [QA Handbook](#).

Standards for the lead midwife for education	
Standard 1: Appointment of the lead midwife for education	
The NMC requires an approved educational institution (AEI) to do the following: Appoint a lead midwife for education (LME) who is a practising midwife and has a recorded midwifery teaching qualification on the NMC register. Confirm the appointment of an LME with the NMC Use the LME for strategic liaison with external agencies such as purchasers of education provision for all matters affecting midwifery education.	
What we found:	
There is no change to the standard as a result of this major modification.	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 2: Development, delivery and management of midwifery education programmes	
The LME shall lead the development, delivery and management of the midwifery education programmes provided by the AEI, ensuring that they comply with the standards established by the NMC.	
What we found:	
Documentary evidence confirms that the LME has worked with the director of learning in practice, who represented the University of Southampton, at the Wessex supervision and assessment group who have been actively involved in discussion and collaboration for the transfer to the SSSA (NMC, 2018). Additional evidence confirms the LME has worked closely with the director of learning in practice throughout the whole discussion and plans for the implementation of the SSSA. The LME co-produced the midwifery practice assessor preparation session with PLPs and the director of learning in practice. The LME/programme lead has been and continues to be key in communicating with students regarding the transfer to the SSSA, the implementation of the SSSA and the effect on students' practice learning experiences. Feedback from students indicates they are positive about the transfer to the SSSA. Third year students are positive about becoming a practice supervisor after registration as a midwife and preceptorship. They view this role as a natural progression to a first post as a qualified midwife.	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 3: Signing the supporting declaration of good health and good character	
In accordance with rule 6(1)(a)(ii) of the registration rules, the LME shall be responsible, at her discretion, for signing the supporting declarations of good health and good character for all midwifery applications to the register.	
What we found:	
There is no change to the standard as a result of this major modification.	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Standards for admission to, and continued participation in, pre-registration midwifery programmes
Age of entry **St. 4** **General requirements** The following requirements for selection should be read and operated alongside programme providers' existing policies and procedures: **4.1   Selection** Wherever practicable, the selection process should include a face-to-face meeting. Programme providers (AEIs and their service partners) are encourage, wherever possible, to involve lay people and midwifery students in the selection process.

Depending on local circumstances they may be involved directly or indirectly in selection.

All individuals in the selection process should receive appropriate training, preparation and updating which includes equality and diversity.

Representatives of partner service provider organisations should be directly involved in the selection process.

The views of the individuals directly involved in selecting applicants should be taken into account when making final decisions on whether to accept or reject an applicant.

4.2   Literacy and numeracy

AEIs are required to ensure that applicants for pre-registration midwifery education programmes have provided evidence of literacy and numeracy that includes prior achievement of basic skills sufficient to undertake a pre-registration midwifery programme of education to a satisfactory level of attainment.

4.3   Good health and good character

Applicants must demonstrate that they have good health and good character sufficient for safe and effective practice as a midwife, on entry to, and for continued participation in, programmes leading to registration with the NMC.

Applicants from overseas must meet the good health and good character as defined for UK applicants and additionally those requirements set out by the UK government for healthcare workers from overseas

4.4   Entry to the register

The NMC requires a self-declaration of good health and good character from all those entering the register for the first time. On completion of the midwifery programme the student will submit this self declaration. The declaration is either supported by the LME, whose name has been notified to the Council and who is responsible for midwifery education in the relevant AEI, or by her designated registered midwife substitute. AEIs must be able to provide evidence of having fulfilled this requirement.

What we found:

There is no change to the standard as a result of this major modification.	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 5: Interruptions to pre-registration midwifery education programmes
Programme providers must ensure that they have in place processes to manage interruptions to the study of programmes for whatever reason. When a student returns to a programme it is recommended they have a period of orientation appropriate to the length of interruption. Programme providers must ensure that the student's acquired knowledge and skills remain valid, enabling them to achieve the necessary standards required on completion of the course.

What we found:	
There is no change to the standard as a result of this major modification.	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 6: Admission with advanced standing
All applicants, other than those registered as a nurse level one (adult), must complete a minimum three years full-time pre-registration midwifery programme of education. Where a student is already registered with the NMC as a nurse level one (adult), the length of the pre-registration midwifery education programme shall be no less than 18 months full time.

What we found:	
There is no change to the standard as a result of this major modification.	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 7: Transfer between approved educational institutions	
It is the responsibility of AEIs to decide whether or not to accept an application for transfer.	
What we found:	
There is no change to the standard as a result of this major modification.	
Outcome:	Standard met

Protecting the public through
quality assurance of nursing
and midwifery education

Date standards met*:	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 8: Stepping off and stepping on to pre-registration midwifery education programmes	
Students can 'step off' a pre-registration midwifery programme of education.	
What we found:	
There is no change to the standard as a result of this major modification.	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:	
Revised outcome:	

Standards for the structure and nature of pre-registration midwifery programmes
Standard 9: Academic standard of programme

Since September 2008 the minimum academic level for entry to the midwives' part of the register for those entering pre-registration midwifery programmes is degree level (NMC Circular 14/2007).

Scotland – 360 academic credits, 60 of which must be at level nine.

England, Wales and Northern Ireland – 300 academic credits, 60 of which must be at level H.

What we found:

There is no change to the standard as a result of this major modification.

Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 10: Length of programme

Article 31(6-7) of EU Directive 2005/36/EC now describes the length of midwifery programmes in years, months and hours.

The length of a pre-registration midwifery programme of education should be no less than three years (equivalent to 156 weeks full time) and each year shall contain 45 programmed weeks.

Three year direct entry programme – 4,600 hours (minimum requirement)

Where the student is already registered with the NMC as a nurse level one (adult), the length of the pre-registration midwifery programme of education shall not be less than 18 months (equivalent to 78 weeks full time).

Protecting the public through
quality assurance of nursing
and midwifery education

Nursing &
Midwifery
Council

Eighteen month midwifery programme (following qualification as an adult nurse) – 3,000 hours (minimum requirement).	
What we found:	
There is no change to the standard as a result of this major modification.	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 11: Student support
Midwife teachers and midwife mentors must meet the NMC's standards to support learning and assessment in practice.
What we found:
Documentary evidence and discussion during a teleconference confirms evidence of engagement with academic staff, student midwives and PLPs regarding the implementation of the SSSA.
The SSSA have been mapped to existing qualifications by neighbouring AEIs and these have been adopted by Health Education England (HEE) Wessex local office area and adopted by AEIs and PLPs across HEE South, including the University of Southampton. This ensures a consistent approach across PLPs to ensuring practice supervisors and practice assessors meet the SSSA standards.
A collaborative approach for the preparation and ongoing support for the new roles of practice supervisor, practice assessor and academic assessor are clearly evidenced. Practice supervisor and practice assessor preparation has been

developed collaboratively with PLPs across Wessex and is tailored to meet individual practitioners' needs based on their prior qualifications and experience.

Detailed documentation regarding the roles, responsibilities and preparation of practice supervisors, practice assessors and academic assessors is provided for these individuals in guidance leaflets and information booklets. There are clear guidelines which include the ongoing preparation, support and monitoring of the new roles which are clearly set out in guidance documents. PLPs and the AEI have started to co-deliver preparation sessions using resources developed and shared across the Wessex group.

Practice supervisors and practice assessors have to self-declare when they are adequately prepared for their role and meet the SSSA relevant for their role. The Wessex values-based toolkit, originally designed to select staff to be offered a place on the previous mentorship course, will be used by managers/education teams to ensure that staff who wish to become a practice assessor have the required values and commitment to student learning.

Student midwives will have preparation for their future role as a practice supervisor. In February 2019 a pilot study day was offered to midwifery students who were due to qualify in February 2019. The content of this day was designed to reflect the agreed principles and learning outcomes across Wessex and was well received by students. This will be mandatory for all final year students on the existing pre-registration midwifery programmes.

The Wessex 'supporting learners in practice' document outlines the agreed principles for supervision and assessment. These principles reiterate the SSSA and make explicit the role and expectations of staff undertaking the role of practice supervisor, practice assessor and academic assessor.

The locality education lead in the PLP organisation manages and monitors the practice assessor and practice supervisor database to ensure that there are sufficient registrants with due regard to support the number of students allocated to the practice learning environment. Placement capacity is reviewed as part of the biennial educational audit but can be reviewed at any time if staffing issues impact on capacity.

Quality assurance processes, including educational audits of practice learning environments, will monitor and confirm compliance with the SSSA. Student evaluations, moderation of the assessment of professional practice (AoPP)

documentation, and close collaboration between AEIs and PLPs will also provide ongoing monitoring to ensure adherence with the SSSA.

The AEI confirmed support for students and midwives in practice will continue to be available from link lecturers. Students with concerns will follow the raising concerns flowchart which has been updated to reflect the new SSSA roles.

Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 12: Balance between clinical practice and theory	
Since September 2008, the practice to theory ratio of each programme is required to be no less than 50 percent practice and no less than 40 percent theory.	
What we found:	
There is no change to the standard as a result of this major modification.	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 13: Scope of practice experience
Where the opportunity is available, students should be involved in supporting women birthing in a variety of settings.

Student midwives must be involved in the care of a small group of women throughout their childbirth experience, including antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal care. |
| **What we found:** |
| Practice learning experiences are not affected by this modification. Placement plans for current students show allocation to a variety of placement areas across the programme confirming that students support women birthing in a variety of settings. The case-loading and autonomous midwifery practice module requires students to complete five caseload experiences which are recorded in the assessment of practice document.

Practice learning educational audits monitor and ensure placement areas provide students with appropriate learning opportunities to achieve programme practice outcomes including learning from a variety of healthcare professionals, agencies and service users. The educational audit documentation illustrates that practice supervisors and assessors support students in identifying learning experiences, facilitate learning and provide appropriate feedback to guide and develop the student's progression. |

Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 14: Supernumerary status during clinical placement
Students undertaking pre-registration midwifery education programmes cannot be employed to provide midwifery care during their training – all clinical experience should be education-led with students having supernumerary status for the duration.

What we found:	
There is no change to the standard as a result of this major modification.	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 15: Assessment strategy
Clinical practice must be graded and be counted as part of the academic award.
All outcomes within a progression point period (for example an academic year) have to be achieved and confirmed within 12 weeks of entering the next academic level. All assessments must be completed and have been passed prior to successful completion of the programme.
A student midwife shall achieve these standards under the supervision of a sign-off mentor.

What we found:
Documentary evidence confirms the assessment of students' proficiency and competence, EU directives and essential skills clusters (ESCs) (NMC, 2009) are all recorded in the AoPP documentation. These aspects of the programme are not changing, as the programme is still mapped against the Standards for pre-

registration midwifery education (NMC, 2009). However, who is eligible to contribute to the assessment of practice has changed in line with the new SSSA roles of practice supervisor, practice assessor and academic assessor. The AoPP documentation is updated to reflect these changes and meets the SSSA.

The practice educator in NHS trusts allocates practice assessors and practice supervisors to students. The locality education lead works with the practice educator to ensure practice assessors and practice supervisors are not simultaneously practice assessor and practice supervisor for the same student.

Practice supervisor and assessor roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. Practice supervisors discuss student progress with practice assessors. They supervise and provide feedback to students. They act on concerns regarding student conduct and competence in collaboration with the practice assessor.

The declarations completed by practice supervisors and assessors confirm they are prepared for their role and maintain current knowledge and expertise related to the practice outcomes for the students they are assessing.

Academic assessors are involved with summative assessment of practice for each practice learning placement and have opportunity for discussion with the practice assessor to understand the student's learning and achievement in practice. Practice assessors and academic assessors will work in partnership to ensure that decisions regarding student progression are made collaboratively. Documentary evidence illustrates practice assessors have sufficient opportunities to observe the student to inform the assessment process. The academic assessor will confirm that the student has met the criteria to progress within the AoPP documentation at the end of each part of the programme.

Documentary evidence shows practice assessors are required to notify the academic assessor following the midpoint interview if any areas of concern have been identified. This will be referred to the relevant university link lecturer who will provide ongoing support to the practice assessor and student and will liaise regularly with the academic assessor. Communication may be face-to-face meetings with the student and practice assessor, or by telephone, Skype or email.

Academic assessors are appointed by the AEI and are normally the year lead for each year of the programme. Students will have a different year lead/academic assessor for each year of the programme to meet SSSA requirements.

Documentary evidence confirms the academic assessor will be closely involved with the student's personal academic advisor and practice assessor. Following the board of examiners, the academic assessor confirms and recommends student progression. Academic assessors maintain current knowledge and expertise through the required NMC continuous professional development and revalidation processes.

The structure of the programme has not been affected by the implementation of the SSSA, therefore the progression points are unchanged. The process of grading of midwifery practice in the modified AoPP documentation also remains unchanged.

Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 16: Ongoing record of achievement
An ongoing record of achievement, including comments from mentors, must be passed from one placement to the next to enable judgements to be made on the student's progress.
What we found:
The ongoing record of achievement (OAR) is integral in the AoPP documentation. The OAR has been modified to align with the SSSA.

Outcome:	Standard met

Date standards met*:	
Revised outcome:	

Achieving the NMC standards
Standard 17: Competencies required to achieve the NMC standards
Students need to be proficient in all standards by the end of their training in order to practise safely and effectively as a midwife without the need for direct supervision. A student must demonstrate competence in these standards to enter the register as a midwife.
What we found:
There is no change to the standard as a result of this major modification.

Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:	
Revised outcome:	

NMC Circular 03/2011 **Resources to support programme intentions**

Programme providers must provide evidence at programme approval that resources are currently available to support programme intentions.	
What we found:	
There is a generic education provider agreement in partnership with PLP organisations which confirms there are sufficient resources in place in practice learning environments and in the university settings to support the implementation of the SSSA and deliver the pre-registration midwifery programmes.	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met*:*	
Revised outcome:	

Evidence and references list
UoS practice assessor's declaration, November 2018
UoS practice supervisor/assessor transfer declaration, November 2018
UoS practice supervisor declaration, November 2018
UoS supervisor and assessment group notes, 20 November 2018, 20 December 2018
UoS supporting learners in practice guidance and principles, final Wessex version 2, undated
UoS supporting learners in practice booklet, HHFT, 2019

Mapping NMC SLAiP (NMC, 2008) to NMC SSSA (NMC, 2018)

UoS range of eight educational audits, January and February 2019

UoS Caseloading and autonomous midwifery practice, 2019

UoS Generic education provider agreement version 7 final, 2017

UoS Learner voice: final questions, undated

UoS Mapping tool for modification SSSA RM programmes, undated

UoS Practice learning committee (PLC) terms of reference, undated

UoS PLC minutes 17 April 2018; 10 July 2018, 10 October 2018

UoS Midwifery assessment of practice and ongoing achievement record for SSSA, 11 July 2019

UoS Allocation for 2017 cohort and January 2018 cohorts, 11 July 2019, 31 May 2019

UoS Responses to questions from NMC visitor, 11 July 2019

UoS Midwifery practice assessor session update for mentors on SSSA, 11 July 2019

UoS student allocations process, 15 April 2019

Teleconference between LME/programme lead and QA visitor, 12 July 2019

UoS Raising concerns flowchart for students updated, updated July 2019

UoS Raising concerns school management of incidents flow chart revised, July 2019

UoS MSc Midwifery with advanced standing (two year) programme specification, 17 July 2019

UoS BSc (Hons) Midwifery programme specification, updated July 2019

UoS BSc (Hons) Midwifery with advanced standing (two year) programme specification, updated July 2019

Personnel supporting programme approval
Members of Approval Panel
Not applicable - Desktop review.
Programme Presenters

NMC QA visitor had a teleconference with the LME/programme lead on 12 July 2019.

Were any service providers visited?
This was a desktop major modification

Meetings with others	
Mentors / sign-off mentors	
Practice teachers	
Service users / Carers	
Practice Education Facilitator	
Director / manager nursing	
Director / manager midwifery	
Education commissioners or equivalent	
Designated Medical Practitioners	
Other (please specify)	

If there were no representatives present during the approval event please state why:

Not applicable - Desktop review.

Meetings with students

Nursing					
Adult		**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**

Mental Health		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Children's		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Learning Disabilities		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Midwifery (3 year)		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
Midwifery (18 month)		Year 1	Year 2		

SCPHN		HV	SN	OH	FHN	RPHN

Learning and Assessment in Practice		Mentor	Practice Teacher	Teacher
Nurse Prescribing		V100	V150	V300
Specialist Practice		Adult	Mental Health	Children's
		Learning Disability	General Practice Nursing	Community Mental Health Nursing
		Community Learning Disabilities Nursing	Community Children's Nursing	District Nursing

Additional evidence viewed

There was no additional evidence viewed.