

Programme Audit/Major Modification report

Programme provider:	University of Suffolk
In partnership with: (Associated practice placement providers involved in the delivery of the programme)	East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust - Ipswich Hospital West Suffolk Hospital Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Date of review:	24 Jun 2019
Type of Modification	Desktop
Provision reviewed:	Registered Midwife - 18M Registered Midwife – 36M
Title of current programme:	BSc (Hons) Midwifery (shortened) BSc (Hons) Midwifery (three year)
Title of modified programme if changed:	
Academic level of current programme:	England, Wales, Northern Ireland <input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 7 SCQF <input type="checkbox"/> Level 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 11
Academic level of modified programme if changed:	England, Wales, Northern Ireland <input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 7 SCQF <input type="checkbox"/> Level 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 11

Reviewer:	Mrs Janette Bowyer

Outcome of Approval Panel Meeting	
Outcome:	Recommended for approval with conditions and recommendations
Conditions and NMC standard(s)/requirement(s) they relate to:	<p>Resources</p> <p>None identified</p> <p>Admission and progression</p> <p>None identified</p> <p>Practice learning</p> <p>Condition one: The BSc (Hons) midwifery (shortened) course handbook should be revised throughout to remove reference to sign-off mentor. (Standard 11)</p> <p>Fitness for practice</p> <p>None identified</p> <p>Quality assurance</p> <p>None identified</p>
Date conditions to be met:	05 Jul 2019
Recommendations and NMC standard(s)/requirement(s) they relate to: Note: recommendations will be assessed through the AEI annual self-assessment report	<p>Recommendation one: Further consideration of the role of the academic assessor: working in partnership with practice assessors; meetings scheduled for relevant points in the programme; linked to student progression; and, any involvement in the grading of midwifery practice. (Standard 15)</p>
Date conditions met:	04 Jul 2019

Programme start date:	01 Sep 2019
-----------------------	-------------

Summary

Summary of modification request

The University of Suffolk (UoS), school of health sciences is an established approved education institution (AEI) with a long history of delivering pre-registration midwifery programmes in partnership with local practice learning partners (PLPs). The AEI provides a BSc (Hons) midwifery (shortened) programme and a BSc (Hons) midwifery three-year programme which are approved to meet the Standards for pre-registration midwifery education (NMC, 2009) and the Standards to support learning and assessment in practice (NMC, 2008) since 2013. Since programme approval there have been some minor modifications to the programme approved by the NMC.

This major modification is to approve the transfer of the current pre-registration midwifery programmes to the Standards for student supervision and assessment (SSSA) (NMC, 2018). The modification is therefore solely limited to the process for students' learning and assessment in midwifery practice.

PLPs are keen for pre-registration midwifery students to transfer to the SSSA (NMC, 2018) as pre-registration nursing students in the region are also transferring to the SSSA from September 2019. A SSSA implementation group is established and there is a clear implementation plan in place which illustrates how the SSSA are met.

The major modification is recommended to the NMC for approval subject to one condition. There is one recommendation.

Updated 4 July 2019

Evidence was provided that the changes required to meet the condition have been made. The condition is met.

The programme is recommended to the NMC for approval.

Feedback from key stakeholders

Presenting Team

Not applicable - desktop major modification

Mentors, sign-off mentors, practice teachers and employers

Not applicable - desktop major modification

Students

Not applicable - desktop major modification

Service users and carers

Not applicable - desktop major modification

Examples of notable and innovative practice and standards they relate to

None identified

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

There are potential risks to compliance in implementing the new SSSA as follows:

The BSc (Hons) midwifery (shortened) programme handbook should be revised throughout to remove reference to sign-off mentor. (Condition one) (Standard 11)

The role of the academic assessor is worthy of further consideration. Areas include: working in partnership with practice assessors; meetings scheduled for relevant points in the programme; linked to student progression; and, any involvement in the grading of midwifery practice. (Recommendation one) (Standard 15)

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

None identified

Any other risks to public protection

The outcome of a Care Quality Commission (CQC) quality review of the maternity services at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was 'requires improvement' overall. The safe and well led domain is rated as 'requires improvement' and the effective, caring and responsive domain is rated as 'good'. The university confirms that they are working with the head of midwifery to address the concerns reported by the CQC.

Areas for future monitoring

- Implementation of the SSSA.

Outcome recommendation

The major modification is recommended to the NMC for approval subject to one condition. There is one recommendation.

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:

Documentary evidence confirms that both the lead midwife for education (LME) and the programme leader are practising midwives with recorded midwifery teaching qualifications. Due to absence of the LME, the programme leader is currently fulfilling the LME role and is identified on the NMC website.

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:	
The LME has been actively involved in preparing for the implementation of the new SSSA (NMC, 2018). The LME is chair of the midwifery practice education group and midwifery is represented on other operational and strategic groups within the school of health sciences, such as the educational partnership forum, pre-registration operational group, school academic committee and school executive. The programme team advised that this major modification would be formally noted at the next school academic committee.	
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 are no changes to this 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
<p>Age of entry</p> <p>St. 4</p> <p>General requirements</p> <p>The following requirements for selection should be read and operated alongside programme providers' existing policies and procedures:</p> <p>4.1 Selection</p> <p>Wherever practicable, the selection process should include a face-to-face meeting.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>All individuals in the selection process should receive appropriate training, preparation and updating which includes equality and diversity.</p> <p>Representatives of partner service provider organisations should be directly involved in the selection process.</p>

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 are no changes to this 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	
<p>Programme providers must ensure that they have in place processes to manage interruptions to the study of programmes for whatever reason.</p> <p>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.</p>	
What we found:	
There are no changes to this standard as a result of this major modification.	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met:	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 6: Admission with advanced standing	
<p>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.</p>	

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 are no changes to this 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 are no changes to this standard as a result of this major modification.	
Outcome:	Standard met
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 are no changes to this 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	
<p>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).</p> <p>Scotland – 360 academic credits, 60 of which must be at level nine.</p> <p>England, Wales and Northern Ireland – 300 academic credits, 60 of which must be at level H.</p>	
What we found:	
There are no changes to this standard as a result of this major modification.	

Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met:	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 10: Length of programme	
<p>Article 31(6-7) of EU Directive 2005/36/EC now describes the length of midwifery programmes in years, months and hours.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Three year direct entry programme – 4,600 hours (minimum requirement)</p> <p>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).</p> <p>Eighteen month midwifery programme (following qualification as an adult nurse) – 3,000 hours (minimum requirement).</p>	
What we found:	
There are no changes to this 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:
<p>Documentary evidence confirms that the transition to the SSSA (NMC, 2018) has been considered to enhance the student learning experience. It will offer PLPs the opportunity to be more creative with learning in practice while contributing to a robust assessment of a student's competence and proficiency. All PLPs in the area have already piloted forms of coaching in clinical practice with good feedback from students regarding their learning. The SSSA facilitates this method of learning and teaching.</p> <p>Each NHS trust has devised a programme to support the transfer of practice staff to meet the SSSA to ensure the workforce understand the NMC requirements. The transfer to the SSSA will mean that students are able to learn from a wider range of practice staff, including midwives and specialist physiotherapists, as appropriate to the student's needs. All student midwives will be supervised in practice by NMC registered nurses and midwives and/or other registered health and social care professionals in accordance with SSSA Standard R2.7. All four PLPs/NHS trusts have practice education facilitators (PEFs) to support the students' learning and co-ordinate the learning activities, to meet the requirements of the SSSA R1.4 and R1.5.</p> <p>All practice supervisors will attend a study session to prepare them for their role. practice supervisors will provide feedback on the students' performance in practice to the practice assessor. Current sign-off mentors will be required to attend a trust update to prepare them for the new practice assessor role. Updates are provided in various formats including face-to-face group sessions, bespoke one-to-one updates and online courses. The PLP organisation will maintain a register of practice assessors.</p>

The university midwifery academic staff will fulfil the role of academic assessor. The academic assessor will liaise in person, by telephone or email with the practice assessor to collate and confirm student achievement and proficiency for each part, or year, of the programme. There are established informal mechanisms to support practice learning and communication between practice supervisors, practice assessors, PEFs, link lecturers, academic assessors, personal tutors, course leaders and the LME.

The quality of the existing practice learning supervision is evidenced by excellent student feedback (NSS, 2018). The practice learning environment audit tool and placement agreement template has been updated to reflect the SSSA (NMC, 2018). The school has a securing education standards policy for managing concerns arising in practice learning.

The programme handbooks identify who is responsible for each module and the various roles within the midwifery academic team, such as programme leaders, module leaders and the LME.

The BSc (Hons) midwifery (shortened) programme handbook still refers to the sign-off mentors which is not in line with the new SSSA roles. The handbook should be revised throughout to remove reference to the sign-off mentor. (Condition one)

Students will be allocated academic assessors, personal tutors and dissertation supervisors. The midwifery programme leader and school associate professor and academic lead for practice education confirm that midwifery students will be assigned a different nominated academic assessor for each part of the programme. There is a register of five midwifery academic assessors.

Outcome:	Standard not met
-----------------	------------------

There is still reference to the sign-off mentor within the shortened course handbook which is not in line with the new SSSA roles.

Condition one: The BSc (Hons) midwifery (shortened) programme handbook should be revised throughout to remove reference to the sign-off mentor. (Standard 11)

Date standards met:	04 Jul 2019
Revised outcome:	Standard met
<p>Condition one: The BSc (Hons) midwifery (shortened) programme handbook has been revised throughout to remove reference to the sign-off mentor. Condition one is now met.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <p>Revised BSc (Hons) midwifery (shortened) programme handbook, July 2019</p>	

Standard 12: Balance between clinical practice and theory	
<p>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.</p>	
What we found:	
<p>There are no changes to this standard as a result of this major modification.</p>	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met:	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 13: Scope of practice experience
--

<p>Where the opportunity is available, students should be involved in supporting women birthing in a variety of settings.</p> <p>Student midwives must be involved in the care of a small group of women throughout their childbirth experience, including antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal care.</p>	
What we found:	
There are no changes to this standard as a result of this major modification.	
Outcome:	Standard met
Date standards met:	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 14: Supernumerary status during clinical placement	
<p>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.</p>	
What we found:	
<p>Student midwives have supernumerary status for the duration of the programme. There are no changes to this standard as a result of this major modification.</p>	
Outcome:	Standard met

Date standards met:	
Revised outcome:	

Standard 15: Assessment strategy
<p>Clinical practice must be graded and be counted as part of the academic award.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>A student midwife shall achieve these standards under the supervision of a sign-off mentor.</p>
What we found:
<p>Documentary evidence confirms the assessment of students' proficiency and competence, EU directives and essential skills clusters (ESCs) (NMC, 2009) are all recorded in the practice assessment documentation (PAD). 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 is changing in line with the new SSSA roles of practice supervisor, practice assessor and academic assessor. The PAD is updated to reflect these changes.</p> <p>Practice assessors will conduct assessments to confirm achievement of proficiencies and programme outcomes for practice learning, in accordance with SSSA Standard R7.1. Any competencies signed by practice supervisors will need to be countersigned by the practice assessor. Practice supervisors and practice assessors are advised to contact the student's academic assessor, personal tutor, and/or link lecturer if they have any concerns regarding the student's progress and/or performance in practice or uncertainties with regard to completion of the PAD. The academic assessor checks the PAD and monitors</p>

the record of clinical experience each year. It is recommended that further consideration should be given to the role of the academic assessor, including working in partnership with practice assessors (SSSA Standard R7.5 and R9.4), scheduled for relevant points in programme structure and student progression (SSSA Standard R7.9 and R9.6) and any involvement in the grading of midwifery practice. (Recommendation one)

There are still opportunities for formative and summative assessment of practice, service user feedback and student self-evaluation of their practice within the PAD.

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 PAD forms the ongoing record of achievement and this has been amended to reflect the roles in the SSSA (NMC, 2018).

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:	
The assessment of students' proficiency and competence, EU directives and ESCs are all recorded in the PAD. These aspects of the programme are not changing, as the programme is still mapped against the Standards for pre-registration midwifery education (NMC, 2009). Therefore, there are no changes to this 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:

Practice learning placements are organised by the UoS placement administration team and there are appropriate resources in PLP organisations to support the implementation of the SSSA (NMC, 2018). The PEFs and education leads, regularly attend meetings such as midwifery practice education group (MPEG), course committees and they contribute to the UoS risk-based monitoring and enhancement processes. The midwifery programme leaders have a longstanding relationship with three of the four NHS PLPs and clear lines of open dialogue between staff responsible for student practice learning. The relationship with the newest NHS trust is developing and the team report confidence in their joint ability to support students and staff equally to provide effective practice learning.

The academic midwifery team is small (five in total). There have been some changes to the university midwifery academic staff resources over the last year. The staff resource has been increased with monies from Health Education England, for a one-year fixed term contract for an additional midwifery lecturer. This post is to support the delivery of the programme with additional student numbers. The university are currently recruiting a further 1.6 whole time equivalent additional midwifery lecturers.

Two midwifery lecturers have a current teaching qualification and Higher Education Academy (now Advance HE) accreditation, as well as current NMC registration as a midwife. The remaining three midwifery lecturers are currently undertaking a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP), which has Advance HE accreditation.

Outcome:	Standard met
-----------------	--------------

Date standards met:	
----------------------------	--

Revised outcome:	

Evidence and references list
<p>NMC midwifery programme approval reports, 23 February 2013</p> <p>NMC pre-registration midwifery programme approval letter, 3 July 2013</p> <p>NMC programme modification approval letter, 17 February 2015</p> <p>NMC minor modification approval letters, 21 September 2015, 8 October 2015, 24 March 2016</p> <p>CQC report, Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, 15 May 2019</p> <p>UoS self-assessment report, 2018-19</p> <p>UoS midwifery developmental commentary, June 2019</p> <p>UoS midwifery SSSA implementation plan for transition to Part 2: SSSA (transition document) and action plan, 2019</p> <p>UoS school of health sciences, SSSA implementation group terms of reference, 2019</p> <p>UoS MPEG terms of reference, December 2017 and minutes, 15 November 2018 and 4 April 2019</p> <p>UoS Education partnership form terms of reference, January 2018</p> <p>UoS school of health sciences pre-registration operational group, 19 September 2018</p> <p>UoS school academic committee terms of reference, September 2018</p> <p>UoS school executive terms of reference, October 2018</p> <p>UoS educational audit flow chart, December 2018</p> <p>UoS practice learning environment audit tool, updated January 2019</p> <p>UoS placement agreement template, 2019-20</p> <p>UoS school of health sciences, securing education standards policy, updated June 2019</p>

UoS register of midwifery academic assessors, undated
 UoS midwifery lecturer job description, April 2019
 UoS mentor update, 2018-19
 UoS SSSA preparation content plan, June 2019
 UoS record of achievement and assessment of practice, updated 28 June 2019
 UoS BSc (Hons) midwifery (shortened) programme handbook, 2019-20, updated July 2019
 UoS BSc (Hons) midwifery (three-year) programme handbook, 2019-20
 Teleconference with midwifery programme leader and school associate professor and academic lead for practice education, 24 and 27 June 2019
 NMC register and published LME list, accessed 24 June 2019

Personnel supporting programme approval	
Members of Approval Panel	
Not applicable - desktop major modification	
Programme Presenters	
Not applicable - desktop major modification	
Were any service providers visited?	
Not applicable - 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)					
<p>If there were no representatives present during the approval event please state why:</p> <p>Not applicable - desktop major modification</p>					
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					
No additional evidence viewed.					

Mott MacDonald Group Disclaimer

This document is issued for the party which commissioned it and for specific purposes connected with the captioned project only. It should not be relied upon by any other party or used for any other purpose.

We accept no responsibility for the consequences of this document being relied upon by any other party, or being used for any other purpose, or containing any error or omission which is due to an error or omission in data supplied to us by other parties.

Issue record

Author:	Janette Bowyer	Date:	30 Jul 2019
---------	----------------	-------	-------------

Checked by:	Judith Porch	Date:	06 Aug 2019
Approved by:	Helen Shapcott	Date:	08 Aug 2019