

The Midwives Council of Hong Kong

A Reference Guide to the Syllabus of Subjects & Requirements of Midwifery Training Programme for Registered Nurse

November 2024

(Effective date: 1 April 2025)

A Reference Guide to the Syllabus of Subjects & Requirements of Midwifery Training Programme for Registered Nurse

I. Preamble

The Midwives Council of Hong Kong (“the Council”) being a statutory body for the regulation and registration of the midwifery profession in Hong Kong decrees a set of standards and requirements for training institute to develop the midwifery training programs based on core documents endorsed by the Council, including this Reference Guide, “Core Competencies for Registered Midwives” (2017) and “Standards for Midwifery Education” (2024).

To meet the evolving demands on quality midwifery care, there is a need for training institute to prepare an effective curriculum for midwifery education. This Reference Guide replaces the 2022 version as an updated guide for curriculum development of midwifery training programs. It sets out in broad terms the aim and objectives of the programme, the subjects to be studied and their recommended contact hours, and the clinical practice requirements during the training. Upon completion of such programmes and having passed the examinations stipulated by the Council, students are expected to have acquired the essential competencies for safe, effective and ethical practice, and will be eligible to apply for registration with the Council as a Registered Midwife.

II. Aim and Objectives of the Midwifery Training Programme

AIM

The aim of the midwifery training programme is to prepare a competent midwife who is able to provide safe and quality family-centred midwifery care.

OBJECTIVES

After completion of the programme, the student midwife should be able to:

1. provide family-centred midwifery care;
2. apply knowledge and skills to assess and meet the health needs of childbearing woman;
3. identify risk factors and deviations from normal in order to plan and implement appropriate midwifery interventions;
4. demonstrate individual responsibility and accountability for the midwifery profession;
5. function effectively in a multidisciplinary team;
6. appreciate evidence-based midwifery practice;
7. assume a health promoting role regarding pregnancy, labour and puerperium for the woman and her family.

III. Theoretical and Clinical Practice Requirements

The programme should not be less than 18 months' duration. Even following any interruption in the education programme, the training institute must ensure that the student meets the theoretical and clinical practice requirements of the programme and the student should complete the programme in not more than 2.5 years.

The programme shall include both theory and practice elements with a minimum of 30% theory and a minimum of 60% practice. The sequence and content shall enable the student to acquire essential competencies for midwifery practice in accordance with the Council's core documents. It is recommended that the midwifery model of care is integrated into the curriculum.

A. Theoretical Requirements

The planned theoretical content may comprise directed study, self-directed study, e-learning and assessments. The minimal hours on directed study are 480. This can be organised as study blocks, individual study days or a combination of both.

The syllabus attached is written in accordance with the *"Standards for Midwifery Education"*, and organised according to the framework of *"Core Competencies for Registered Midwives"* which provides a comprehensive guide to achieve the essential competencies that a midwife should possess.

To allow flexibility, creativity and adaptability in curriculum development, the syllabus is written in broad terms and should be viewed as a guide. The ever changing nature of the environment in which midwifery care is provided means that the programme content needs to be flexible in order to be responsive to these changes so that midwives are prepared for contemporary practice. The minimum directed study hours for the content of each competence area are listed, and those in brackets are the breakdown of hours for reference only.

Training institute for midwives' registration can devise its curriculum in accordance with the requirements stipulated in this syllabus. Assessment tools should be developed for the achievement of expected outcomes of the programme.

Syllabus of Subjects

Competence Area 1 : General Competencies		140 hours
Item	Topics	Minimum Hours
1.1	Biological Sciences	(40)
	▪ Reproductive anatomy	
	▪ The menstrual cycle	
	▪ Physiology of conception	
	▪ Development of placenta and membranes	
	▪ Embryonic and fetal development	
	▪ Anatomy of the breast and physiology of lactation	
	▪ Anatomy and physiology of the pelvis and fetal skull	
	▪ Anatomy and physiology of the pelvic floor	
	▪ Genetics & genomics	
1.2	Midwifery Knowledge	(30)
	▪ Health history and assessment skills	
	▪ Family-centered care	
	▪ Informed choice	
	▪ Models and patterns of Midwifery care	
	▪ Maternal and neonatal resuscitation	
	▪ Pharmacology in Obstetrics	
1.3	Behavioral Sciences	(60)
	▪ Psychology of childbearing	
	▪ Social and cultural aspects in pregnancy and parenthood	
	▪ Communication and counseling skills	
	▪ Teaching skills	
1.4	General Practice	(10)
	▪ Infection control	
	▪ Occupational safety	
	▪ Documentation	

Competence Area 2 : Professional Midwifery Practice		220 hours
Item	Topics	Minimum Hours
2.1	Care during Pregnancy	(60)
	▪ Anatomy and physiology related to pregnancy	
	▪ Diagnosis of pregnancy	
	▪ Prenatal screening and diagnosis	
	▪ Common minor disorders in pregnancy	
	▪ Healthy lifestyle and antenatal advice	
	▪ Nutrition and weight gain in pregnancy	
	▪ Childbirth preparation and parenthood education	
	▪ Maternal and fetal assessment	
	▪ Antenatal care and management	
	▪ Promotion of Breastfeeding	
	▪ Perinatal grief and bereavement	
	▪ Maternal/Obstetric problems in pregnancy – pathophysiology, diagnosis, care and management (Including but not limited to the following problems.)	
	➤ <i>Infections in pregnancy</i>	
	➤ <i>Disorders/problems associated with pregnancy</i>	
	➤ <i>Medical disorders complicating pregnancy</i>	
	➤ <i>Malposition and malpresentation</i>	
	➤ <i>Fetal death and stillbirth</i>	
2.2	Care during Labour and Birth	(60)
	■ Anatomy and physiology related to labour and birth	
	■ Maternal and fetal assessment during labour	
	■ Midwifery care and management during labour	
	■ Assessment of labour progress	
	■ Pain relief during labour	
	■ Conduct of normal vaginal delivery	
	■ Immediate assessment and care of newborn	
	■ Early initiation of breastfeeding and skin-to-skin contact	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Problems associated with labour and childbirth – pathophysiology, diagnosis, care and management (Including but not limited to the following problems.) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Preterm labour</i> 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Malpresentation</i> 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Induction of labour</i> 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Maternal and fetal distress</i> 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Labour dystocia</i> 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Operative deliveries</i> 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Intrapartum emergencies – cord prolapse, shoulder dystocia, rupture uterus, amniotic fluid embolism</i> 	
2.3	Care during Puerperium	(60)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Physiological adaptation in puerperium 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Psycho-social aspects in puerperium 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Transition and adaptation to parenthood 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Postnatal assessment, care and management 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Breastfeeding counseling 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Common breastfeeding problems and management 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Family planning 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Maternal health problems in puerperium - pathophysiology, diagnosis, care and management (Including but not limited to the following problems.) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Postpartum Infections</i> 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Postpartum haemorrhage</i> 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Postpartum mood disorders</i> 	
2.4	Care of Newborn (up to 6 weeks of life)	(40)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Transition to extra-uterine life and immediate newborn resuscitation 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Physiological adaptation of the newborn 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Newborn growth and development 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Infant feeding 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Newborn screening and examination 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Newborn care and management 	

	■ The sick neonates – care and management (Including but not limited to the following problems.)	
	➤ <i>Birth asphyxia</i>	
	➤ <i>Birth injuries</i>	
	➤ <i>Low birth weight infant</i>	
	➤ <i>Neonatal jaundice</i>	
	➤ <i>Neonatal infection</i>	
	➤ <i>Congenital abnormalities</i>	

Competence Area 3 : Primary Health Care in Midwifery Practice		60 hours
Item	Topics	Minimum Hours
3.1	Sexual and Reproductive Health	(20)
	■ Sexuality and childbearing	
	■ Infertility and assisted reproduction	
	■ Abortion	
	■ Pre-conceptual care – principle and management	
	■ Common methods of contraception and their effectiveness	
	■ Family – structure, roles and functions	
	■ Domestic and sexual violence	
3.2	Public and Primary Health	(20)
	■ Concepts of health	
	■ Concepts of epidemiology	
	■ Public health policies related to women’s health and childbirth	
	■ Environmental health issues	
	■ Health education and health promotion for childbearing families	
	■ Sexually transmitted diseases	
3.3	Maternal and Child Health	(20)
	■ Safe motherhood	
	■ Vital statistics in Maternity care	
	■ Infant development in the first year of life	
	■ Immunization programme	
	■ Social and health services for childbearing women	

Competence Area 4 : Professional, Ethical and Legal Aspects of Midwifery practice			60 hours
Item	Topics	Minimum Hours	
4.1	Professional Knowledge	(20)	
	■ Health care system in Hong Kong		
	■ Contemporary midwifery practices		
	■ Complementary therapies in midwifery		
	■ The statutory and legal framework for midwifery in HK		
	■ Roles and responsibilities of midwives		
	■ Conduct and practice of midwives		
	■ Risk assessment and risk management		
	■ Ethical and legal issues in midwifery		
	■ Management and leadership		
4.2	Evidence-based Practice in Midwifery	(20)	
	■ Research process		
	■ Critical appraisal skills		
	■ Evidence based practice – application and evaluation		
4.3	Personal Growth & Professional Development	(20)	
	■ Professional growth and development		
	■ Self-awareness and study skills		
	■ Reflective practice		
	■ Midwifery development in Hong Kong		

B. Clinical Practice Requirements

The minimum duration for clinical practice is 46 weeks or equivalent hours (39 hours/week).

Clinical training must be conducted in maternity units accredited by the Council as clinical training site for midwives' registration.

Students should acquire sufficient midwifery practical experience in a variety of clinical and community settings, including Maternal and Child Health Centre, to attain the core competencies of registered midwives.

The minimum number of weeks to be spent in different practice settings is as below. Training institute can arrange clinical experiences for students in a flexible manner.

	No. of weeks ^{Note}
Antenatal Ward	8 weeks
Labour Ward	15 - 16 weeks
Postnatal Ward	12 weeks
Neonatal Unit	3 weeks
Ambulatory Care (including Clinic / Antenatal Day Centre)	6 weeks
Maternal and Child Health Centre	1 - 2 weeks

Note: Equivalent to 39 hours per week

During clinical practicum, a system to monitor and evaluate students' progress and performance is required. It should include a clinical log book and the three clinical assessments as stipulated by the Council.

1. Clinical Log Book

Students' clinical experiences and learning progress should be documented in a clinical log book.

The requirement of clinical experiences includes:

- (a) the conduct of antenatal examination on not less than 50 pregnant women;
- (b) attendance at not less than 30 cases of labour, making full examination during the course of labour and personally delivering the infant and afterbirth in each case;

- (c) personal care of not less than 20 postnatal women and their infants; and
- (d) supervision and taking care of at least 50 women at risk in pregnancy, or labour, or postnatal period.

2. Clinical Assessment

The training institute is required to assess the knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes of the students throughout the program. Students' clinical competencies are assessed against the standards set by the Council for their scope of practice. Evidence must be produced on the assessment of the following competencies:

1. Antenatal assessment
2. Conduct of a normal vaginal delivery
3. Postnatal assessment and health education

The guidelines for the clinical assessments are at Annex.

References

1. International Confederation of Midwives (2014). *Core document. Philosophy and model of midwifery care*. Retrieved from <https://www.internationalmidwives.org/our-work/policy-and-practice/philosophy-and-model-of-midwifery-care.html>
2. International Confederation of Midwives (2024). *Essential competencies for midwifery practice*. Retrieved from <https://www.internationalmidwives.org/our-work/policy-and-practice/essential-competencies-for-midwifery-practice.html>
3. Midwives Council of Hong Kong (2017). *Core Competencies for Registered Midwives*. Retrieved from https://www.mwchk.org.hk/english/conduct_n_practice_midwifery/core.html
4. Midwives Council of Hong Kong (2024). *Standards for Midwifery Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.mwchk.org.hk/english/training/standards.html>
5. Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (2018). *Midwife standards for practice*. Retrieved from <https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/codes-guidelines-statements/professional-standards/midwife-standards-for-practice.aspx#:~:text=The%20Midwife%20standards%20for%20practice%20are%3A,and%20accountability%20for%20midwifery%20practice>
6. Nursing Council of Hong Kong (2022). *A reference guide to the syllabus of subjects and requirements for the Preparation of Registered Nurse (General) in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region*. Retrieved from https://www.nchk.org.hk/en/core_competencies_and_reference_guides/registered_nurses_general/index.html
7. World Health Organization (2003). *WHO Europe midwifery curriculum for qualified nurses. WHO European strategy for continuing education for nurses and midwives*. Retrieved from <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/107524>

Guidelines on Clinical Assessments

1. Antenatal Assessment

The student will be assessed on the student's competence in carrying out an assessment for a pregnant woman in antenatal clinic / day centre / antenatal ward. The student has to demonstrate the skill on assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating care for the woman. Throughout the assessment, the student is expected to communicate effectively with the woman, and answer questions related to her condition.

2. Conduct of a Normal Vaginal Delivery

The student will be assessed on the student's competence in taking care of a laboring woman, and conduct a vaginal delivery for her. The student has to demonstrate the skill on assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating care for the woman and the newborn. Throughout the assessment, the student is expected to communicate effectively with the woman, and document the care given.

3. Postnatal Assessment and Health Education

The student will be assessed on the student's competence in carrying out an assessment for a postnatal woman. The student has to demonstrate the skill on assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating care for the woman. Throughout the assessment, the student is expected to communicate effectively with the woman, and provide education and information according to her needs.