

THE UNIVERSITY *of* York

Midwifery

Undergraduate degree programme

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Right Midwifery students practise clinical skills in our Clinical Simulation Unit

Far right A student midwife gains experience with a new mum on placement



"I have to pinch myself every day when I wake up knowing that I have the privilege of being able to train to be a midwife. I am really glad I chose York to study midwifery, I love the course. I have enjoyed my placement in the community, where I am able to use my knowledge to help women and promote factors that I know are so beneficial to the babies and their parents. I'm really looking forward to my next placement in the hospital where I will be able to support women through their labour."

Karen, 1st year student



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Studying Midwifery at York

The Midwifery programme at York sits within the Department of Health Sciences, which offers a range of courses in the health and social care fields.

Research in the Department is high quality, applied and multidisciplinary, and aims to improve the evidence base for health and healthcare. Our research is linked directly with our teaching, and informs policy and practice locally, nationally and internationally.

The Department contains leading centres for nursing and midwifery research, including the Mother and Infant Research Unit (MIRU), as well as a range of other specialist research groups. In the Research Assessment Exercise in 2008, we came fourth nationally for nursing and midwifery, and first for health services research, confirming our position as a centre for world-leading research.

Our BA (Hons) in Midwifery Practice aims to develop midwives who are safe, clinically competent, autonomous practitioners, able to undertake the role of the lead professional for women accessing maternity care. It confers Registered Midwife (RM) status on the midwives part of the Nursing and Midwifery Professional Register. The programme prepares insightful midwives who have highly developed interpersonal skills, able to work in partnership with women and families in complex social contexts, respecting diversity of social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Why study Midwifery at York?

The philosophy of the BA (Hons) in Midwifery Practice at York is based on the premise that women are central to the planning and provision of their maternity care which takes into account their culture, hopes and expectations. Care should be provided by midwives who are confident and caring, able to transform

practice in response to changing needs and in the light of the available evidence. Midwifery undergraduates at the University of York therefore learn within an environment that supports:

- **A woman and family focused philosophy of care.** The curriculum is underpinned by many disciplines with an emphasis on the psychosocial influences on the client-midwife relationship.
- **The development of excellent inter-personal skills.** Opportunities are provided to enable you to fine-tune your ability to engage with women from diverse social and cultural backgrounds.
- **The integration of best evidence with practice.** Learning is facilitated by a dedicated team of midwifery lecturers, supported by clinical midwives from the local maternity units, and lecturers from the Department of Health Sciences and the wider University. You will also benefit from the experience of researchers from MIRU who are actively engaged in research that informs policy and practice development.
- **Inter-professional learning.** Midwifery students share some learning

with other health and social care undergraduates to facilitate the development of mutual respect between professional groups. Robust systems are in place to support students to maximise learning opportunities in both clinical and theoretical aspects of the programme.

- **Midwives able to work in a range of clinical settings.** A variety of clinical opportunities are afforded to students at the University of York. You are allocated to a 'home' trust where you experience community and hospital midwifery and nursing placements. In addition, you go to another unit in the region to explore different models of maternity care and there is also the option to undertake an elective clinical placement, to gain experience of an alternative model of maternity care provision, in this country or abroad.
- **The promotion of public health.** There are many factors that influence the health and well-being of women and their families and these issues are explored throughout the programme. Infant feeding is a key element and the Department of Health Sciences has registered its intention to become a Baby Friendly (UNICEF) institution.

UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI)

At the University of York, we have committed to becoming a Baby Friendly higher education institution and have agreed to implement the BFI standards. We are committed to delivering education to a reliable and consistent standard to maximise mothers' chances of breastfeeding successfully. There is strong evidence that Baby Friendly accreditation in practice increases initiation and duration of breastfeeding and accreditation is a key recommendation of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) Postnatal Guidelines. As a student on the BA (Hons) Midwifery Practice programme, you will work towards and demonstrate achievement of the UNICEF Baby Friendly standards and learning outcomes for higher education institutions.

"York is a lovely campus, and I love the ducks! The midwifery course is fantastic. The practical sessions in the Clinical Simulation Unit are great and I love being out in placement. The resources here are excellent."

What you study

Each year is made up of four terms. The first six terms of the programme focus on the care of women and families throughout the normal pregnancy, labour, birth and postnatal adaptation to motherhood. The emphasis is on facilitating the development of knowledge, skills and understanding of normality so that you can then be alert to situations and clinical presentations that deviate from this.

Subsequent modules introduce the theory and skills required when caring for women experiencing complicated maternities. You will access practice

areas that support this development, for example, the Special Care Baby Unit and Antenatal Day Assessment Unit.

The third year focuses on maternities that are uncomplicated obstetrically but that may be complicated by social circumstances. You will explore how the midwife can facilitate optimal maternal and neonatal health in these circumstances.

Clinical practice and theoretical learning are integrated throughout the programme, each year comprising 45 programmed weeks. You will be placed in maternity care settings from the first term of the programme, supported and supervised by a clinical midwifery

mentor. Clinical experience will be gained in both hospitals and community settings, throughout North Yorkshire, giving you the opportunity to observe and experience a range of midwifery practices and philosophies of management and care. You will also access medical and surgical nursing placements and have the opportunity to undertake an elective placement of your choosing, either in this country or abroad.

A diverse range of teaching and assessment methods are used to achieve and demonstrate learning outcomes. These include clinical analysis, exams, case studies, presentations, use of the virtual learning environment (VLE) and vivas. You will also be able to learn and practise your skills in a dedicated Clinical Simulation Unit (CSU) based within the Department at York, under the supervision of a clinical midwifery mentor. You will be supported by a personal supervisor and the module leaders within the academic setting, and by link lecturers and named clinical mentors within all of the practice areas.



Links with the Mother and Infant Research Unit (MIRU)

MIRU, headed by Professor Mary Renfrew, is situated within the Department of Health Sciences at the University. MIRU's research programme examines how care and evidence can make a difference to the health and well-being of mothers, their babies and families. There is a close alliance of the midwifery education team with the MIRU team, thus enabling midwifery students on the programme to benefit from sessions facilitated by researchers with an international reputation for excellence in maternity-related inquiry.

Researchers in the wider Department also share their knowledge and wealth of expertise as part of module teams.

“The course is focused on learning to provide holistic, woman-centred care. Being on placement alongside learning the theory in university has meant that there is a pronounced integration of theory and practice. This makes the theory seem real. It also allows us to discuss our learning from placement and helps us to think about it in a theoretical and evidence-based context. We are also very well supported by the midwifery tutors. I feel that it is a privilege to be part of the cohort and the course.”

Caz, 2nd year student

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Skills you can gain from the course

- Communication and people skills
- Ability to apply theory to practice in a wide range of settings
- Study skills
- Critical appraisal of a range of evidence
- Problem solving
- Team working – with multi-agency teams
- Clinical skills

This is a Bachelor of Arts programme and the content and philosophy reflects this focus. One of the aims of the programme is to develop midwives who are able to identify their own continuing development needs as independent learners. This programme will facilitate such a transition by providing you with a range of practice and academic opportunities, through which you can develop in a safe, supported and supervised environment. Educational activities will facilitate the transition to adult learning in which you will take responsibility for your learning, be self-motivated and become orientated to your professional role.

Career opportunities

The Department has an excellent record in students achieving employment after their pre-registration midwifery programmes. Many go into careers with NHS Trusts in North Yorkshire or pursue both national and international opportunities. There is also the option of independent midwifery practice.

About you

You should be passionate about becoming a midwife, with some insight into the role and an aspiration to provide woman-centred care. You should seek to work

as part of a multi-professional team providing safe and sensitive care for women and their families.

Throughout the programme you will develop a range of skills, building on those that you already have, which should include an ability to:

- empathise and engage
- work as a team player
- work and learn in a range of settings
- embrace diversity
- use basic information technology
- communicate effectively
- take responsibility for own actions
- study at undergraduate level
- manage own time and prioritise workload.

Advice on your application

We receive over 300 applications for entry into Midwifery each year, so it is vital you make sure your application is filled out correctly in order to be

considered. Applications to Midwifery are made through UCAS, and the UCAS website contains most of the information you need about the process. You can find out more about what we look for, including entry requirements at www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/midwifery/apply.htm

If your application is successful, you will be invited for interview. Any offer we make may be subject to academic qualifications, but it will also be conditional upon a successful Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check and Occupational Health Assessment.

Contact

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