Undergraduate Programme Specification

Session	2026/27	**Last Modified**	March 2026
Named Award Title	Cert HE Maternity Care Assistant		
Award Title for Each Award	Cert HE Maternity Care Assistant		
Date of Approval	March 2017		
Details of Cohort Applies to	All Cohorts from 2017		
Awarding Institution	University of the West of Scotland	**Teaching Institution(s)**	University of the West of Scotland
Language of Instruction & Examination		English	
Award Accredited by			
Maximum Period of Registration		1 year	
Duration of Study			
Full-time	1 year	**Part-time**	
Placement (compulsory)	Yes		
Mode of Study	☒ Full-time ☐ Part-time		
Campus	☐ Ayr ☐ Dumfries	☒ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☐ Paisley	☐ Online / Distance Learning ☐ Other (specify)
School	**Health and Life Sciences**		
Divisional Programme Board	**Mental Health Nursing Midwifery Health**		
Programme Leader	Liz Miller		

Admissions Criteria
Candidates must be able to satisfy the general admission requirements of the University of the West of Scotland as specified in Chapter 2 of the University Regulatory Framework together with the following programme requirements:

SQA National Qualifications:

You will be considered with relevant academic, vocational or professional qualifications.

Or GCE

Or SQA National Qualifications / Edexcel Foundation

Other Required Qualifications/Experience
The following criteria are also required:
• Students must be employed in the maternity services and nominated by their manager for inclusion on the programme
• Formal agreement from maternity services provider that students will be fully supported to undertake the programme.

As per regulation 2.6 (UWS, 2023/24) all applicants must also have the language and literacy skills to understand and use the written materials utilised in the learning and teaching of the programme and be able to communicate clearly and accurately in spoken and written English. For International students who do not have English as their first language, an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score of 6 or above (5.5 in each component) is acceptable as evidence of proficiency in English or TOEFL (America Test of English as Foreign Language) of iBT

The English language test should be current, that is, passed no more than two years prior to the date of admission onto the programme. A more extensive list of UWS accepted language qualifications is available at: http://www.uws.ac.uk/english-language

In addition to the above, programme documentation will set out appropriate requirements for specific prior qualifications and/or experience, and any competitive entry requirements. The University's equality and diversity policies apply, and equivalent qualifications and/or experience will be accepted in place of those specified. Programmes which provide entry into specific professions may be obliged to meet particular requirements on admissions set by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) for entry, for example for Protection of Vulnerable Groups."

Further desirable skills pre-application
Digital Literacy.

Completion of Health Care Support Worker Induction Standards and Code of Conduct (NHS Education for Scotland, 2010)

Previous clinical experience within maternity services

General Overview

The provision of high-quality maternity care relies on all those involved having a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities. National policy drivers and a changing workforce mean that the maternity services need to consider staff deployment to provide an effective service to woman and ensure that they receive safe and effective care from the most appropriate person with the relevant skills (Royal College of Midwives, 2016).
The responsibility of the midwife is clearly set out in statute and cannot be delegated or transferred to other staff (Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2018). However, there is a need to provide additional support for women and midwives and this is defined in the role and responsibilities of the maternity care assistant (MCA). The role of the Maternity Care Assistant is therefore to undertake limited and specified clinical duties for which midwifery training and registration are not required (either by statute or by professional guidelines) under the direction and supervision of a midwife (Royal College of Midwives, 2016).

MCAs do not assess mothers and babies or make clinical judgements or decisions or initiate interventions. They are, however, with appropriate training and supervision able to provide information, guidance, reassurance, assistance, and support. For example, with infant feeding, parenthood education and health education which improve the quality of care that midwives are able to provide to women and families (RCM, 2016).

This is a 6-month programme spanning two Terms. Each Term commences with a short theoretical block of one week duration, followed by a defined period of clinical practice in which to consolidate skills acquisition. Using this blended approach of short theory blocks, online support activities and work-based learning, the programme seeks to integrate evidence-based knowledge with the acquisition of specified clinical skills.
Theory will be delivered in the Lanarkshire Campus and also online and students will undertake practice placements within the associated NHS Boards which are their designated place of work.

Initially the student will be integrated within the University environment and be provided with a foundation of relevant knowledge and skills to enable them to develop in an academic and professional context. Study skills will be provided which will focus on the nature of academic learning within the university setting and provide information, advice and guidance to the students in relation to facilities, timetable, library, literature searching and use of the university online learning environment.

Overall educational content will focus on the professional, ethical, and legal role and responsibilities of the MCA in relation to the delivery of safe and effective evidence-based care to women and babies. Holistic care will be explored in relation to health education, public health issues and models of care provision. There is a specific focus on the delivery of relevant and appropriate care and support to vulnerable women in a variety of circumstances within the childbirth continuum.

The programme seeks to create a caring, competent and confidant MCA fit for purpose through the integration of knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes. In addition, the student will develop the professional and personal maturity, skills, and attributes necessary to work effectively within a multidisciplinary environment supporting 'woman centred' holistic care.

The programme seeks to meet the stipulated academic level for the award of Cert HE Maternity Care Assistant – Equivalent to SCQF Level 7 (SCQF Framework, 2001, Revised 2012) and meet the requirements related to professional proficiency and fitness for practice in relation to achievement of MCA Competencies (N HS Education for Scotland, 2006).

The aims of the programme are to:
• Prepare a clinically competent, confident, caring, compassionate, evidence-based MCA who applies a systematic approach to supporting midwifery care.
• Develop in the student an understanding of the holistic and woman-centred approach to care within a variety of settings and inter-professional team contexts.
• Within the scope of Maternity Care Assistant Competencies (MCA) (NES, 2006), develop a sound knowledge base for supporting the midwifery care of the childbearing woman and the family, thereby enabling the MCA to recognise the clinical significance of adverse factors and initiate appropriate action and referral when deviations from the normal occur
• Provide a stimulating educational environment in which self-awareness, self-development and self evaluation is encouraged Career Pathways:

On Programme completion, there are a variety of career paths available including:
Acute Maternity Services - working within large consultant-led inner city maternity units as part of the multidisciplinary team.

Community Maternity Services – working within rural and/or midwife-led midwifery units, promoting normality in childbirth.

Parenthood Education Supporter – assessing need, planning content, and undertaking parenthood education sessions For Example, infant feeding, transition to parenthood, postnatal support. Breastfeeding Supporter – promoting, advising, and supporting breastfeeding and undertaking breastfeeding support groups.

Access to other Diplomas of Higher Education Programmes of study such as Diploma in Health Studies and childhood studies.

Fulfils part of the entry criteria required to access BSc Midwifery programme.

Typical Delivery Method
Hybrid

Any additional costs
None

Graduate Attributes, Employability & Personal Development Planning
To produce UNIVERSAL graduates who are critical thinkers, analytical, enquiring, emotionally intelligent, ethically-minded, culturally aware , collaborative, research aware and socially responsible.

To produce WORK-READY graduates who are knowledgeable, digitally literate, problem-solvers, effective communicators, influential, motivated, potential leaders, enterprising and ambitious

To produce SUCCESSFUL graduates who are autonomous, incisive, innovative, creative, imaginative, resilient, driven, daring and transformational

Employability Skills include:-

Communication/Interpersonal skills, literacy, public speaking and oral presentation skills, problem solving, decision making, reflective practice, accountability, team working,

organising and prioritising workload, selfdirected learning, risk assessment and referral, digital skills.

Continuous Professional Development

From the beginning of the programme, students are encouraged to begin CPD through the following mechanisms: -
1. Touras E-portfolio will ultimately contain evidence of clinical assessment; personal reflection on performance; evidence of academic attainment; examples of independent study (Learnpro Modules), evidence of CV building and evidence of CPD activities, ie: study day/conference attendance.
2. Reflective Practice is embedded in all aspects of the curriculum as part of the core teaching, learning and assessment strategy.
3. Completion of planned programme of online guided learning activities.
Completion of Clinical Assessment Profile throughout programme- ongoing activity.
Specific documentation in relation to the summative assessment of each practice placement learning contract/interim assessment/final assessment/mark and grade.

Additional documentation includes student reflection and service user/carer comments.
An ongoing record detailing the students' strengths and areas for development that will inform their learning needs.

Skills Passport (NES, 2010): The skills passport is used to evidence clinical achievement and is used to guide the student through the course and track their learning requirements and progresses. The skills passport links directly with the competencies to be achieved by the end of the programme.

Work Based Learning/Placement Details

Work based Learning (WBL) takes place when a student applies learning in a work situation, for which learning outcomes are identified, in the fulfilment of which the students is supported by appropriate teaching and guidance, and credit is awarded. The core aspect of work-based learning is the integration of evidence based theory with practice to provide meaningful learning experiences and the progression towards safe and competent standards of care. The role of practical experience further promotes cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development.

The practice-based module within the programme is a long thin module that spans the programme duration and students will normally gain experience in a variety of antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal areas taking cognisance of NHS Board requirements.

The aim of this module is to enable the student to integrate and demonstrate the application of evidence based theory to clinical practice. The module will enable the student to achieve the competencies within the UWS Clinical Assessment Profile, which is based on the NHS Education for Scotland Maternity Care Assistants in Scotland: A Competency Framework (NES, 2006). Specific skills acquisition is detailed in the Skills Passport (NES, 2010).

Whilst on practice placement, students are allocated a named Practice Supervisor and Practice Assessor who is an experienced, qualified midwife who will facilitate appropriate learning experiences, teach, guide, supervise and assess them. In addition, each practice placement area has a named Quality Assurance lecturer who is a member of the UWS Midwifery team responsible for linking between the University and clinical area and who will maintain contact with the students whilst they are on practice placement to give additional

support, advice and guidance in relation to the integration of theory with practice where required.

Assessment/Accreditation

This is a 60-credit module at SCQF Level 7. Within the module, there are 3 components. Each component is a 6-week practice placement which is summatively assessed by the Practice Assessor and moderated by the UWS module moderator. The final module mark is calculated as the average mark of the cumulative total of the 3 components (UWS Regulatory Framework). Students must successfully pass all 3 components and achieve and overall mark and grade of C- 40% to successfully complete the module (UWS Regulatory Framework).

Clinical Assessment is contained within an ongoing document titled Clinical Assessment Profile (CAP). The CAP is influenced by the Competency Framework (NES, 2006) and contains: All clinical competencies expected of the MCA. On achievement of the competencies, they are signed off by the Practice Assessor. This evidence an ongoing record of achievement of competency (NES, 2006).

Attendance and Engagement

In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are academically engaged if they are attending and participating in all timetabled programme activities including on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, placement, work-based elements, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

For the purposes of this programme, academic engagement equates to the following:

Students must attend theory for 75% attendance and practice for 80% attendance to be assessed.

Equality and Diversity

The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code.

The School of HLS believes that education and practitioner diversity are central to achieving quality of midwifery care.

Within the programme, quality of care, inclusiveness and employability are achieved by:

- Provision of a welcoming and supportive culture that promotes accessibility and equal opportunities to prospective students.
- Promotion of confidence and knowledge of their rights as a student and employee.
- Promotion of respect and knowledge of client diversity, their needs, rights, and the associated practitioner responsibilities.

The above aims, supported by staff belief in fairness and equal opportunities, guide content, teaching and learning, assessment, and evaluation.

This programme involves the development and application of theory and is appropriate for any student MCA to undertake. The programme competence standards must be achieved for successful completion of the programme Decision making on anticipatory and 'reasonable adjustment' is grounded in 'competence standards' – specifically, the core requirements for progression / achievement in placement / module. For students who have disclosed a disability, the UWS Disability Service (DS) will assess the individual's strengths and support needs and then allocate a DS Coordinator. Anticipatory adjustments have been made and

‘reasonable adjustments’ can be made available in teaching and learning strategies to promote accessibility of the programme. ‘Reasonable adjustments’ may include adapted or specialised clinical equipment (e.g. electronic stethoscope, coloured overlays) or further specialist assessment or support (e.g. speech therapy, extended time for presentations or assessments), all of which are organised and funded through DS by the School. Reasonable adjustments, in line with DS recommendations for the assessment of the individual student can be assured. Processes and procedures have been subject to Equality Impact Screening and where appropriate Equality Impact Assessment. Evaluation by all key stakeholders throughout the life of the module is also central to meeting our commitments.

Programme structures and requirements, SCQF level, term, module name and code, credits and awards (Chapter 1, Regulatory Framework)

Learning Outcomes

SCQF LEVEL 7 Learning Outcomes	
Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	Demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of the role and responsibilities of the MCA within the maternity team.
A2	Develop sound knowledge of and demonstrate understanding of evidence-based practice in relation to care and management provided to women and their families during the childbirth experience.
A3	Demonstrate knowledge of professional, ethical, and legal issues relating to the role, responsibilities, and practice of the MCA.
A4	
A5	
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	Safely and competently undertake specific tasks and caring skills in relation to the activities of maternity care.
B2	Deliver safe evidence-based care to women and their families across a variety of care settings.
B3	Undertake health and maternity care within a holistic, compassionate framework incorporating the physical, social, psychological, spiritual, educational, and cultural needs of the individual.
B4	
B5	
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
C1	Acquire knowledge and skills in handling information technology related to client care, health promotion and continuing professional development.
C2	Function as part of a multi-disciplinary/multi-agency team with appropriate interpersonal and communication skills.
C3	Search, extract, and present information using information technology.
C4	Respond to and produce both oral and written communication.
C5	
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	
D1	Engage in an ongoing reflection of all evidence-based care, making referral as appropriate.
D2	Plan and review tasks and care delivery using problem-solving activities and personal and professional reflection.
D3	
D4	

D5	
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	
E1	Engage in teamwork and collaborative working, implementing an agreed care plan under supervision.
E2	Value and demonstrate a commitment to promoting health and social care for women, their families, and the wider community irrespective of gender, age, race, ability, sexuality, economic status, lifestyle, culture, religious or political beliefs.
E3	Understand the importance and professional requirements of professional practice and accountability in different healthcare settings and employer contexts.
E4	Value themselves and others as growing professionals by taking responsibility and evaluating lifelong learning reflective practice and professional development.
E5	

Level 7 Modules

CORE

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
7	MIDW07021	Delivering Holistic Care to Women and Babies	20	☒	☐	☐	
7	MIDW07022	Meeting the Needs of Women and Babies	20	☐	☒	☐	
7	MIDW07023	Practice Education	60	☒	☒	☐	Term 1 & 2
7	MIDW07024	Role of the Maternity Care Assistant	20	☒	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Core Modules							

Level 7 Modules

OPTION

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Option Modules							

Level 7
Criteria for Progression and Award
Please refer to UWS Regulatory Framework for related regulations

In line with the Regulatory Framework, for the award of Certificate of higher Education Maternity Care Assistant at least 120 credit points must be achieved of which a minimum of 120 are at SCQF Level 7. Students must successfully pass all four modules in addition to achieving attendance requirements.

Those students who achieve 120 Credits at SCQF Level 7 shall be eligible for the award Cert HE Maternity Care Assistant.

Distinction will be awarded in line with University Regulations and no imported credit can be used. (Regulations 3.35 & 3.26) Links: UWS Regulatory Framework; and Student Experience Policy Statement.

SCQF LEVEL 8 Learning Outcomes	
Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	
A2	
A3	
A4	
A5	
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	
B2	
B3	
B4	
B5	
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
C1	
C2	
C3	
C4	
C5	
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	
D1	
D2	
D3	
D4	
D5	
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	
E1	
E2	
E3	
E4	
E5	

Level 8 Modules

CORE

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	

				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Core Modules							

Level 8 Modules

OPTION

SCQF Level	**Module Code**	**Module Title**	**Credit**	**Term**			**Footnotes**
				1	**2**	**3**	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Option Modules							

Level 8 **Criteria for Progression and Award** *Please refer to UWS Regulatory Framework for related regulations*

SCQF LEVEL 9 Learning Outcomes (Maximum of 5 per heading)	
Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	
A2	
A3	
A4	
A5	
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	
B2	
B3	
B4	
B5	
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
C1	
C2	
C3	
C4	
C5	
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	
D1	
D2	
D3	
D4	
D5	
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	
E1	
E2	
E3	
E4	
E5	

Level 9 Modules

CORE

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	

				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Core Modules							

Level 9 Modules

OPTION

SCQF Level	**Module Code**	**Module Title**	**Credit**	**Term**			**Footnotes**
				1	**2**	**3**	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Option Modules							

Level 9 **Criteria for Progression and Award** ***Please refer to UWS Regulatory Framework for related regulations***

SCQF LEVEL 10 Learning Outcomes (Maximum of 5 per heading)	
Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	
A2	
A3	
A4	
A5	
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	
B2	
B3	
B4	
B5	
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
C1	
C2	
C3	
C4	
C5	
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	
D1	
D2	
D3	
D4	
D5	
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	
E1	
E2	
E3	
E4	
E5	

Level 10 Modules

CORE

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	

				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Core Modules							

Level 10 Modules

OPTION

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Option Modules							

Level 10
Criteria for Award
Please refer to UWS Regulatory Framework for related regulations

Regulations of Assessment

Candidates will be bound by the general assessment regulations of the University as specified in the University Regulatory Framework.

An overview of the assessment details is provided in the Student Handbook and the assessment criteria for each module is provided in the module descriptor which forms part of the module pack issued to students. For further details on assessment please refer to Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework.

To qualify for an award of the University, students must complete all the programme requirements and must meet the credit minima detailed in Chapter 1 of the Regulatory Framework.

Combined Studies
There may be instances where a student has been unsuccessful in meeting the award criteria for the named award and for other more generic named awards existing within the School. Provided that they have met the credit requirements in line with the SCQF credit minima (please see Regulation 1.21), they will be eligible for a Combined Studies award (please see Regulation 1.61). For students studying BA, BAcc, or BD awards the award will be BA Combined Studies. For students studying BEng or BSc awards, the award will be BSc Combined Studies.

Version no: 1

Change/Version Control

What	**When**	**Who**