OPTIMAL BIRTH: PHILOSOPHY, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND EVIDENCE

**Module Summary**

**Module outline**

Optimal Birth is an essential part of providing high quality care. This includes supporting all women to achieve a positive birth experience, including those with conditions which might preclude them from pursuing a normal birth care pathway.

This module aims to enhance and extend your ability to support the physiological birth process for all women, regardless of their ‘risk’ level enabling you to provide intrapartum care at an advanced practitioner level. Through a wide range of learning activities you will have the opportunity to explore midwifery knowledge from many sources, reflecting on the value of both experience and evidence in your practice. The practical elements of this module will provide you with an advanced skills set enabling you to facilitate optimal birth confidently and competently in any clinical environment. The written assignment for the module will develop your ability to initiate and inspire practice improvements in your working environments that enhance undisturbed birth opportunities for the women in your care.

**Aims**: This module aims to enable you to:

- Critically examine practices which may introduce iatrogenic risks or undermine the ability of most women to achieve an optimal birth.
- Identify ways you can introduce salutogenic (interventions promoting well-being) practices into your own clinical practice and your midwifery culture.
- Critically evaluate the definition of normal labour and optimal birth.
- Identifying midwifery interventions that may assist or augment the physiological birth.
- Enhance your skills in fetal wellbeing assessment
- Strengthen your confidence in maintaining fetal and maternal wellbeing in midwifery-led settings.
- Design a practice innovation, with appropriate reference to the evidence base and culture for which it is intended.

**Content outline**

- Background theory and philosophy of optimal birth.
WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?

On successful completion of this module, you will be expected to be able to:

Knowledge and understanding:

- Critically evaluate contemporary developments in midwifery, planning strategic leadership in the provision of optimal birth and choice for women
- Synthesize both practical and theoretical knowledge for the facilitation of optimal birth
- Integrate theory into practice to enhance intrapartum safety for both mother and baby.

Skills:

- Integrate a range of skills (including non-pharmacological techniques) to support women towards achieving optimal birth.
- Expertly assess fetal wellbeing
- Proficiently manage intrapartum care in any clinical setting, recognising when multi-disciplinary involvement in care is appropriate.
- Synthesize clinical focus on safety with sensitivity to service users’ experiences.
- Design and create a model of practice that will enhance optimal birth in midwifery at service level, in line with recent government policies.
- Draw on appropriate evidence to underpin your proposal in line with the national quality agenda.

Values and attitudes:

- Critically evaluate the ethical principles and laws underpinning your optimal birth practice including an awareness of the right to autonomy and the provision of woman-centred care.
- Engage in leadership practices which will enhance the ability of your maternity services culture to value and facilitate optimal birth.
- Demonstrate commitment to sensitive and safe midwifery care.

HOW WILL I LEARN?
Teaching and Learning Strategies

Lead Lectures
This is a useful method for presenting an overview of new material and will stimulate you to read further around this subject.

**Small group work**
Small groups will encourage you to apply theory to practice and extend the depth and breadth of your knowledge; providing opportunities for debate, reflect and explore personal thoughts and ideas and practice experiences.

**Clinical workshops**
Practical hands on workshops will help you to develop your skills using case scenario role-play activities and simulated practice.

**Tutorials** To support you in the development of your assessment.

**VLE**
The Moodle, on line module will enable a variety of communication forums providing both real time and on-going discussion and reflection.

*Teaching pattern:*

18 contact hours taught over one week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching component</th>
<th>Teaching type</th>
<th>Contact hours (scheduled)</th>
<th>Self-directed study hours (independent)</th>
<th>Total student learning hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced midwifery knowledge</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Tutorial</td>
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<td>Hands-on learning</td>
<td>Workshops</td>
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<td>On-line activities</td>
<td>Discussion forums</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent study</td>
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**WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?**

**Assessments**
You will develop a comprehensive strategic plan for introducing a normality-enhancing innovation in practice and will write a 3000 word report describing your
strategic plan. You will actively participate in asynchronous, on-line learning activities through the Moodle

Assessment pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment component</th>
<th>Assessment type</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Minimum qualifying mark</th>
<th>Pass/Fail?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Innovation report</td>
<td>3000 word essay</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Engagement with on-line learning activities</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Pass/Fail</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Assessment criteria

Assessment Criteria are descriptions of the skills, knowledge and attributes you will need to demonstrate in order to complete an assessment successfully. Grade-Related Criteria are descriptions of the skills, knowledge and attributes you will need to demonstrate to achieve a certain grade or mark in an assessment. Assessment Criteria and Grade-Related Criteria for module assessments will be made available to you prior to an assessment taking place. More information will be available from the module leader.

Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided in writing via Moodle following the marking and moderation of your assessment in line with the Assessment Regulations and Policy.

Assessment Regulations

The Pass mark for the module is 50%. Any minimum qualifying marks for specific assessments are listed in the table above. The weighting of the different components can also be found above. The Programme Specification contains information on what happens if you fail an assessment component or the module.

INDICATIVE READING LIST


Appendix: see http://www.hesa.ac.uk/content/view/1805/296/ for the full list of JACS codes and descriptions

**CODES**

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<th>Description</th>
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<table>
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<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
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