

Annmarie Thomas / On course



MAKING EDUCATION WORK FOR YOU

Student midwife **Annmarie Thomas**
on independent learning and making
the most of student resources.

As a student midwife, I believe that I have the responsibility to develop my own learning. I feel that I learn more effectively if I am able to independently discover information that may be relevant to my experiences. This allows me to shape my education, so that it fits my personal journey into midwifery.

At Swansea University, our portfolio requires us to complete a daily diary. This entry is a small reflection of our day-to-day life as a student. I find I am able to use my diary to identify events that I can investigate further, creating an appendix of additional learning. I can explore my feelings and encounters in more depth and really understand my own actions, developing my professional self.

As I enter my third year, I am beginning to fully comprehend what will be asked of me as a qualified midwife. The NMC requires midwives to undertake and keep records of continuing professional development (CPD). I believe that being accountable for your own learning, in order to meet these requirements, should begin with the midwifery education at university. I feel

that the way that the programme at Swansea University sets out its expectations for the student portfolio, offers students the opportunity to develop the key skill of managing and recording CPD well in advance of qualifying as a midwife.

I have been fortunate enough to take on extracurricular activities during my training, including representing Welsh

student midwives within the RCM Student Midwives Forum. This role has involved developing a student midwifery society at Swansea University.

The society creates an avenue for students to undertake their own additional learning, shaping their experience. The vision of the society is to support students to hold study days, workshops and conferences, so that they can develop their professional portfolio while increasing their employability by taking more control of their own education. A student can develop their leadership skills by organising an event, widen their networking capacity to create further

opportunities and enhance their team skills by working with other healthcare professionals.

The NMC Code (2007) states: 'Midwives must be willing to share skills and expertise for the benefit of your colleagues.' Student midwifery societies can help develop the skills needed to foster the sharing of skills. Students can practise this collaborative form of working early within their education through a society, making the society work for them as they enter the role of a qualified midwife.

I believe we have a unique opportunity during our time as student midwives to safely explore the ways in which education can work for us. We can take the initiative to develop our own learning by getting involved and being responsible. It is not enough to simply learn what is delivered to us, we need to respond to our education and shape our own journeys. Learning is a habit that can be developed throughout our midwifery degrees, continuing into our roles as qualified midwives.

The end of my training is approaching more quickly than I had ever anticipated but, rather than it being the end of my education, I see it as a continuation of what went before and the beginning of a lifetime of professional learning. 📍

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For the reference, visit the **RCM website**.

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