Returning to Practice (midwifery)  
Royal College of Midwives and London South Bank University  
Information for applicants  

Overview of the course structure  
This innovative return to practice (RtP) course provides a rich opportunity for midwives who have been out of practice, to access a tailor-made course to enable them to return to practise with competence and confidence. This is a free standing course, approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Council and London Southbank University (LSBU). The course is not linked to service providers so students can enrol from anywhere in the United Kingdom (UK) and undertake the clinical component at a location convenient to them. The taught component is made up of blended learning using our award winning i-learn and five face to face days delivered in London over three months. The course can be undertaken part time or full time but must be completed within one year. 

This programme allows midwives who do not meet the NMC requirements for re-registration to update their knowledge and skills to deliver safe and effective care to women and their families. Midwives from within Europe who hold registration but fail to find employment within the UK are able to undertake this course to become more familiar with midwifery practice in the UK. This course promotes a model of lifelong learning and students can undertake the academic assessments at either level 6 (degree) or level 7 (Masters). This will result in an academic award of 20 credits to use against any future academic learning.  

Applying to undertake the course  
1. Complete the RCM RtP CV template available on the RCM website and email it to returntopractice@rcm.org.uk The CV needs to include details such as your personal identification number (NMC PIN), when you qualified as a midwife, how long you were in midwifery practice and what work/practice you have been engaged in during and since that time. The CV template will assist you to include all the relevant information.  
2. Following receipt of your CV we will send you a letter advising you of the number of hours of clinical practice that you will need to undertake. This is usually 450 hours but it could be more (or less).
3. You will need to secure a clinical practice placement. This is done by contacting your local Head of Midwifery services (HoM) at the Trust or Board where you wish to undertake your practice experience. The HoM may be able to advise you of any possible funding for the course. If you are successful in securing a clinical placement you will need to complete pre-employment checks such as health clearance and disclosure barring service (DBS) in England or its equivalent. You may be required to complete an induction programme before commencing any clinical practice so please factor that into the time required before you start the course. See appendix 1 for an overview of the application process.

4. If you are unsure about your registration status contact the NMC for clarification.

What next?

Once you have secured a clinical placement and completed the above process contact the RCM for details and dates for the next course.

Programme structure and resources

Midwives returning to practice will be given the following:

- Guidelines for mentors
- Student handbook
- Clinical assessment documentation

The materials will be used throughout the programme along with reference and research resources and in conjunction with the clinical placement to encourage the integration of theory and clinical practice.

You will receive:

- Two lecturer-facilitated days at the start of the programme. These are designed to introduce you to the course and the open learning approach
- We offer students the opportunity to complete the course at either academic level 6 or academic level 7, on day two there will be a diagnostic academic exercise to help determine the academic level at which the assessment should be completed
- Course materials and familiarisation with the virtual resources provided at LSBU
- Support in planning your studies and have a thorough orientation in current changes and developments in the NHS

During the course there will be three additional lecturer-facilitated days provided by, and at, the RCM. These days will provide you with an opportunity to critically reflect on your clinical practice, develop your knowledge and skills further and to explore the course material in more depth. There will also be plenty of support for the development and completion of your assignments.
Assessments and professional portfolio

In addition to completing a summative clinical assessment you will also be required to undertake a summative academic assessment in two parts. This includes a written critical incident analysis and a professional conversation. The dates will be negotiated with you and will be towards the end of your course.

You will also be required to complete a formative professional portfolio as part of the course. You will be supported to develop and maintain this portfolio, which is an essential part of maintaining personal, professional development and revalidation.

Clinical assessment documentation

This has been designed to reflect the European (Midwives) Directive (2013) and NMC (2009) statutory requirements. It integrates the fit for purpose and fit for practice concepts by defining the competencies into two categories; namely core competencies and midwifery specific competencies. The documentation also includes a section for the RtP student to record clinical skills, activities and experiences. Your sign off mentor should assist you with achieving the requirements and will verify achievement of these.

Teaching and learning strategies

The RCM and LSBU believe in excellence in midwifery practice and education. This excellence will be achieved through research, critical thinking, analysis and reflection in and on practice. This philosophy is reflected in the programme material, the learning activities in the clinical environment and in the classroom. All assessments, which are core to the teaching and learning strategy, have been designed to enable you to develop your critical thinking and your reflection skills.

Your mentor

Each student will have a sign off mentor that your Trust/Board will allocate. They will provide support and guidance during your clinical practice placement.

Cost of the course

The cost of this course is £1,450.00 including VAT. This fee includes the costs for external examiners, assessment processes and registration with LSBU.

Other NMC approved RtP courses

For details of other NMC approved courses please see the NMC website.
RCM i-learn and i-folio

The RCM has developed i-learn modules that will assist you with your ongoing studies including study skills and knowledge of contemporary midwifery theory and practice. For example:

- Developing your study skills and An introduction to reflection
- Career development: An introduction to i-folio
- Making numbers count in practice
- Drivers influencing change
- Contemporary midwifery practice
- Women, family and society

Every effort has been made to ensure the content is as contemporary as possible, however in instances where further developments especially in the area of maternity services policies, guidance and evidence, additional resources will supplement the modules. The modules explore areas that are integral to the role of midwife and midwifery practice in all settings. In order to access i-learn you need to be a member of the RCM.

The role of the sign off mentor

The sign off mentor is responsible for:

- Orientating you to the clinical area, including emergency arrangements and equipment available
- Developing a learning contract for practice with you at the beginning of the course which identifies individual learning needs and subsequent monitoring and modification
- Highlighting learning opportunities and enabling you to make the best use of all resources within the environment
- Giving you regular constructive feedback regarding your achievements in practice
- Liaising with your personal tutor
- Working alongside you as necessary to meet your individual learning needs
- Assessing your achievement of the learning outcomes for practice

Useful contacts

- London South Bank University [http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/schools/health-and-social-care](http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/schools/health-and-social-care)

References:

- [Nursing and Midwifery Council 2009 Standards for pre-registration midwifery education](http://www.rcm.org.uk)
Appendix 1: overview of the process

Candidate enquiry to RCM - information and application pack available online

Candidate submits completed RCM CV application

LME assesses application and determines practice hours required

Candidate secures clinical practice placement

Written confirmation from Trust/Board of practice placement sent to RCM

Pre-employment checks by Trust/Board: DBS (or country equivalent): occupational health clearance and references

Enrolment at LSBU

Practice sign off mentor identified

Course commences with 2 introductory study days

Diagnostic assessment for level 6 or 7

Practice placement plus 3 RCM study days over next 9 weeks

Submission dates identified

Successful completion of both clinical and theoretical assessment

Assessment results ratified

Practice evaluation by mentor

RCM notifies NMC: eligible for readmission to NMC register

RCM LME exit interview: Declaration of Good Character & references to NMC

LSBU formally notifies award and progression board