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 is 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 in the 21st Century. 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 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 forward it to returntopractice@rcm.org.uk. The CV needs to include details such as your personal identification number (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 template on the website will assist you 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 to 900 hours in accordance with the current Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Prep requirements (2008) but it could be less.

3. You will need to secure a clinical practice placement. This is done by contacting your local Head or Director 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 ill need to complete all the Trust/Board pre-employment checks such as health clearance and disclosure barring service (DBS) in England or its equivalent. You may be required to complete a Trust/Board induction
programme before commencing any clinical practice so please factor that into the time required in securing your placement and lead in time until commencement of the course. All this must be completed 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 further clarification.

What next?

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

Programme structure and resources

Midwives returning to practice will receive the following:

- guidelines for mentors
- student handbook
- clinical assessment documentation.

The materials will be utilised throughout the programme; alongside other reference and research resources, and in parallel with the clinical placements to encourage the integration of theory and clinical practice.

There will be:

- Two lecturer facilitated days at the start of the programme. This is designed to introduce you to the course and to the open learning approach.

- We offer students on the course the opportunity to complete their course at either academic level 6 or academic level 7. Therefore on day two there will be a formative diagnostic academic exercise to help determine the academic level at which the assessment should be completed.

- The course materials and familiarisation with virtual resources provided at (LSBU)

- You will also receive support in planning your studies and have an excellent orientation to current changes and developments in the NHS.

During the course there will be three additional 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 for assessment.

**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 date for submission of this will be negotiated with you and will be towards the end of your course.

You will also be required to complete a **professional portfolio** of experience as part of the course. You will be supported to develop and maintain this portfolio, which is an essential part of maintaining personal and professional development. Please note that there is no formal assessment, but it is an essential component of the course.

**Clinical assessment documentation**

This has been designed to reflect the European (Midwives) Directive\(^1\) and NMC (2009)\(^2\) 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 and supervisor of midwives 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 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 skills of reflection.

**Your mentor and supervisor of midwives**

Each student is allocated a sign off mentor and named supervisor of midwives that your Trust/Board will allocate. They will provide support and guidance during your clinical practice placement. The mentor should attend an initial RCM

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2 NMC 2009 Standards for pre- registration midwifery education , NMC :London
mentor’s study day, and then an annual update study day. These days are organised by the RCM on demand and are free to attend.

**Cost of the course**

The cost of this course is £1,450.00 including VAT. This fee includes the costs for external examiner, 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 update the knowledge of midwifery theory and practice.

- Study skills
- Making numbers count
- 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. However in order to access these you will need to become 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 possible use of all resources within the environment.
- Ensuring that regular constructive feedback is given to you regarding your achievements in practice.
• Liaising with your personal tutor and named supervisor of midwives.

• Working alongside you as necessary to meet your individual learning needs.

• Assessing your achievement of the learning outcomes for practice.

Useful contacts

• Nursing and Midwifery Council www.nmc-org.uk
• Royal College of Midwives www.rcm.org.uk
• London South Bank University www.lsbu.ac.uk/health

Royal College of Midwives
15 Mansfield Street
London
W1G 9NH

email: returntopractice@rcm.org.uk
Appendix 1: Overview of the RCM LSBU Application process

Candidate enquiry to RCM; Information and application pack available online

Candidate completes and submits RCM CV application with supporting statement
LME assesses and responds re length of course (at least 150 hours)
Candidate to secure clinical practice placement
Candidate forwards written confirmation from host Trust representative of practice placement to RCM
Pre employment checks by Trust: DBS (or country equivalent), Occupational health clearance and references

Electronic enrolment at LSBU
Practice sign off mentor and named supervisor of midwives identified

Course commences with 2 introductory study days
Mentor invited to first day for update and orientation to the course
Diagnostic assessment for level 6 or 7

Practice placement: full or part time including mandatory days
RCM Study days x 3 over next 9 weeks
Submission dates identified

Successful completion of both clinical and theoretical assessment
CPPD Subject area board ratifies assessment results
Practice evaluation by student /mentor/named supervisor of midwives

RCM LME notifies NMC: eligible for readmission to NMC register
Completion of Declaration of Good Character & references to NMC
LSBU formally notifies award and progression board and LSBU LME