

The Test of Competence 2021

Midwifery blueprint

Introduction

We approve pre-registration midwifery programmes in the United Kingdom.

Applicants to the **midwifery** part of our register who do not hold an NMC-approved qualification will follow an alternate route to the register.

This route includes an evaluation of the qualification they hold. If their qualification is found not to be comparable to an NMC-approved qualification, the applicant will be required to complete a test of competence, or undertake an approved compensation measure if trained in the EEA but outside the UK.

This blueprint gives an overview of how each of the standards of proficiency for midwives may be tested in the Test of Competence 2021 (ToC 21).

How to use this blueprint

The ToC 21 is made up of two parts: a multiple-choice computer based test (CBT) and a practical objective structured clinical examination (OSCE).

The blueprint shows how the standards of proficiency and associated skills and procedures for midwives may be tested in either the CBT, OSCE or both parts.

Applicants can use the blueprint to prepare for each part of the test.

The blueprint is mapped to the domains in our [Standards of proficiency for midwives \(2019\)](#).

The six domains are:

1. Being an accountable, autonomous, professional midwife
2. Safe and effective midwifery care: promoting and providing continuity of care and carer
3. Universal care for all women and newborn infants
4. Additional care for women and newborn infants with complications
5. Promoting excellence: the midwife as colleague, scholar and leader
6. The midwife as skilled practitioner

The midwifery skills that a midwife must demonstrate at the point of registration are situated in Domain 6 which states that:

At the point of registration the midwife will be able to:

"Safely demonstrate evidence-based best practice in all core and domain-specific skills and procedures listed in Domain 6."

Domain 1: Being an accountable, autonomous, professional midwife

Proficiency	May be tested by CBT	May be tested by OSCE
1.1 Understand and act in accordance with the Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates, and fulfil all registration requirements	✓	✓
1.2 Understand and act in accordance with relevant legal, regulatory and governance requirements, policies and ethical frameworks, including any mandatory reporting duties, differentiating where appropriate between the different legislatures of the United Kingdom	✓	
1.3 Understand and act to promote and enable the human rights of women and newborn infants at all times, including women's sexual and reproductive rights	✓	✓
1.4 Demonstrate the knowledge, skills and ability to identify, critically analyse and interpret research evidence and local, national and international data and reports	✓	✓
1.5 Use, share and apply research findings and lessons from data and reports to promote and inform best midwifery policy and practice, and to support women's evidence-informed decision-making	✓	✓
1.6 Be accountable and autonomous as the lead professional for the midwifery care and support of women and newborn infants throughout the whole continuum of care	✓	
1.7 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the role and scope of the midwife in the 21 st century	✓	
1.8 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of and the ability to challenge discriminatory behaviour	✓	
1.9 Provide and promote non-discriminatory, respectful, compassionate and kind care and take account of any need for adjustments		✓
1.10 Demonstrate understanding of women's relationships and individual family circumstances and the ability to communicate and involve her		✓

Proficiency	May be tested by CBT	May be tested by OSCE
partner and family in discussions and decisions about her care and the care of the newborn infant, always respecting the women's preferences and decision about who to involve and the extent of involvement and communication		
1.11 Use effective, authentic and meaningful communication skills and strategies with women, newborn infants, partners and families and with colleagues		✓
1.12 Develop and maintain trusting, respectful, kind and compassionate person-centred relationships with women, their partners and families, and with colleagues	✓	✓
1.13 Demonstrate the ability to always work in partnership with women, basing care on individual women's needs, views and preferences and decisions and working to strengthen women's own capabilities to care for themselves and their newborn infant		✓
1.14 Act in the best interests of women and newborn infants at all times	✓	✓
1.15 Demonstrate the skills of advocacy and leadership, collaborating with and challenging colleagues as necessary and knowing when and how to escalate concerns		✓
1.16 Demonstrate the ability to advocate for women and newborn infants who are made vulnerable by their physical, psychological, social, cultural or spiritual circumstances	✓	✓
1.17 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the range of factors affecting women, newborn infants, partners and families and the impact these factors may have, including but not limited to: 1.17.1 health and social inequalities and their determinants 1.17.2 historical and social developments and trends 1.17.3 cultural and media influences on public and professional understanding		✓

Proficiency	May be tested by CBT	May be tested by OSCE
1.18 Explain the rationale that influences their own judgements and decisions, recognising and addressing any personal and external factors that may unduly influence their own decision-making in routine, complex and challenging situations		✓
1.19 Understand and apply the principles of courage, integrity, transparency and the professional duty of candour, recognising and reporting any situations, behaviours, or errors that could result in sub-standard care, dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours, ineffective team working, or adverse outcomes	✓	✓
1.20 Understand the importance of and demonstrate the ability to seek informed consent from women, both for herself and her newborn infant		✓
1.21 Understand and respect the woman's right to decline consent and demonstrate the ability to provide appropriate care and support in these circumstances.	✓	✓
1.22 Be able to advocate for the woman when her decision is outside of clinical guidance, in order to minimise risk and maintain relationships.	✓	✓
1.23 Demonstrate the skills of numeracy, literacy, digital, media and technological literacy needed to ensure safe and effective midwifery practice.	✓	✓
1.24 Understand the importance of effective record keeping and maintain consistent, complete, clear, accurate, secure and timely records to ensure an account of all care given is available for review by the woman and by all professionals involved in care.		✓
1.25 Act as an ambassador, uphold public trust and promote confidence in midwifery and health and care services.	✓	
1.26 Understand the professional responsibility to maintain the level of personal health, fitness and wellbeing required to meet the needs of women, newborn infants and families for psychological and physical care.	✓	
1.27 Take responsibility for continuous self-reflection, seeking and responding to all support and feedback to develop their professional knowledge, understanding and skills.	✓	

Domain 2: Safe and effective midwifery care: promoting and providing continuity of care and carer

Proficiency	May be tested by CBT	May be tested by OSCE
2.1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the health and social care system and of different settings for midwifery and maternity care and the impact of these on women, newborn infants, partners and families	✓	
2.2 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of different ways of organising midwifery and maternity care and potential positive and negative impact of these on safety and effectiveness and on women, their newborn infant, partners and families	✓	
2.3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the range of factors affecting the provision of safe and effective midwifery and maternity services and their impact on quality of care	✓	
2.4 Demonstrate the ability to work in and across a range of health and social care settings and with other health and social care staff to promote continuity of care and carer	✓	
2.5 Demonstrate the ability of provide continuity of midwifery carer across the whole continuum of care and in diverse settings for women and newborn infants with and without complications and additional care needs	✓	✓
2.6 Demonstrate the ability to ensure that the needs of women and newborn infants are considered together as a priority in all settings, even when women and infants have to be cared for separately	✓	✓
2.7 Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of the social context in which women and their families live to inform, support and assist in meeting their needs and preferences	✓	✓

Proficiency	May be tested by CBT	May be tested by OSCE
2.8 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of ways of identifying and reaching out to women who may find it difficult to access services and of adapting care provision to meet their needs	✓	✓
2.9 Understand the need to work with other professionals, agencies and communities to share knowledge of the needs of women, newborn infants, partners and families when considering the impact of the social determinants of health on public health and well-being	✓	
2.10 Work with other professionals, agencies and communities to promote, support and protect breastfeeding, including protection for women to breastfeed in all settings	✓	
2.11 Demonstrate the ability to be the co-ordinator of care within the wider interdisciplinary and multiagency teams, arranging a seamless transfer of care when midwifery care is complete	✓	
2.12 Demonstrate an understanding of the need for an ongoing focus on the promotion of public health and wellbeing of women and newborn infants, their partners and families, across all settings	✓	✓

Domain 3: Universal care for all women and newborn infants

Proficiency	May be tested by CBT	May be tested by OSCE
A The midwife's role in public health and health promotion and protection		
3.1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the woman's lived experiences in everyday life, enabling access to public health, social care and community resources as needed	✓	
3.2 Understand epidemiological principles and critically appraise and interpret current evidence and data on public health strategies, health promotion, health protection and safeguarding, and use this evidence to inform conversations with women, their partners and families, as appropriate to their needs	✓	
3.3 Demonstrate the ability to share information on public health, health promotion and health protection with women enabling them to make evidence-informed decisions and providing support for access to resources services	✓	
3.4 Demonstrate the ability to offer information and access to resources and services for women and families in regard to sexual and reproductive health and contraception	✓	✓
3.5 Understand the importance of birth to public health and well-being across the life course	✓	
3.6 Understand the importance of human milk and breastfeeding to public health and well-being and demonstrate how to protect, promote and enable breast feeding with the woman, her partner and family		✓
3.7 Demonstrate the ability to offer information and access to resources and services for women and families in regard to violence, abuse and safeguarding		✓

Proficiency	May be tested by CBT	May be tested by OSCE
3.8 Understand and demonstrate how to support and provide parent education and preparation for parenthood, both for individuals and groups		✓
3.9 Promote and support parent and newborn mental health and well-being, positive attachment and the transition to parenthood		✓
3.10 Demonstrate effective health protection through understanding and applying the principles of infection prevention and control, communicable disease surveillance and antimicrobial resistance and stewardship	✓	
B The midwife's role in assessment, screening and care planning		
3.11 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of anatomy, physiology, genetics and genomics of adolescent girls and women and of the reproductive system for adolescent boys and men	✓	
3.12 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of normal changes to anatomy, physiology and epigenetics of the adolescent girl/woman during: 3.12.1 pregnancy 3.12.2 labour 3.12.3 birth 3.12.4 postpartum.	✓	
3.13 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of anatomy, physiology and epigenetics of 3.13.1 fetal development 3.13.2 adaptation to life 3.12.3 the newborn infant 3.13.4 very early child development	✓	
3.14 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of anatomy, physiology and epigenetics of infant feeding	✓	

Proficiency	May be tested by CBT	May be tested by OSCE
3.15 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the implications of infant feeding for maternal and child health and for very early child development	✓	
3.16 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological, behavioural and cognitive factors for: 3.16.1 adolescents and adults 3.16.2 newborn infants	✓	
3.17 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of changes to psychological, behavioural and cognitive factors during 3.17.1 pregnancy, labour, birth and postpartum 3.17.2 infant feeding and relationship building 3.17.3 the transition to parenthood and positive family attachment	✓	
3.18 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of pharmacology and the ability to recognise the positive and adverse effects of medicine across the continuum of care; to include allergies, drug sensitivities, side effects, contraindications, incompatibilities, adverse reactions, prescribing errors and the impact of polypharmacy and over the counter medication usage	✓	
3.19 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the principles of safe and effective administration and optimisation of prescription and non-prescription medicines and midwives' exemptions, demonstrating the ability to progress to a prescribing qualification following registration	✓	✓
3.20 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of national screening and diagnostic tests for women and newborn infants and associated ethical dilemmas	✓	

Proficiency	May be tested by CBT	May be tested by OSCE
3.21 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the importance of optimising normal physiological processes, supporting safe physical, psychological, social and cultural situations and working to promote positive outcomes and to anticipate and prevent complications	✓	✓
3.22 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding that women's circumstances vary widely and the importance of supporting, promoting and protecting any individual needs and preferences that they themselves identify		✓
3.23 In partnership with the woman, use evidence-based, best practice approaches to plan and carry out ongoing integrated assessment, individualised care, planning and evaluation for both the woman and the newborn infant, based on sound knowledge and understanding of normal processes and recognition of deviations from these	✓	✓
The midwife's role in optimising normal physiological processes and working to promote positive outcomes and prevent complications		
3.24 Identify how factors in the care environment can impact on normal physiological processes and how the midwife can work to promote and protect a positive environment, both physical and emotional	✓	
3.25 Use evidence-based, best practice approaches and work in partnership with the woman to provide care for the woman and the newborn infant across the continuum that optimises normal processes, manages common symptoms and problems and anticipates and prevents complications, drawing on the findings of assessment, screening and care planning.		✓
3.26 Understand when additional care or support is needed and demonstrate how to consult and make referrals for additional care or support needs when necessary.	✓	✓

Proficiency	May be tested by CBT	May be tested by OSCE
3.27 Understand and demonstrate how to provide culturally sensitive and individualised care for all women, their partners and families, irrespective of their social situation		

Domain 4: Additional care for women and newborn infants with complications

Proficiency	May be tested by CBT	May be tested by OSCE
The midwife's role in first line assessment and management of complication and additional care needs		
4.1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding that the complications and additional care needs of women, newborn infants, partners and families may relate to physical, psychological, social, cultural and spiritual factors		✓
4.2 Identify and use reports and data on local, national and international prevalence and risk to develop knowledge and awareness of complications and additional care needs that may affect women, newborn infants and families	✓	
4.3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of pre-existing, current and emerging complications and additional care needs that affect the woman, including their potential impact on the woman's health and wellbeing; and the ability to recognise and provide any care, support or referral that may be required as a result of any such complications or needs	✓	✓
4.4 Demonstrate knowledge, understanding and the ability to recognise complications and additional care needs in regard to: 4.4.1 embryology and fetal development 4.4.2 adaptation to life 4.4.3 the newborn infant 4.4.4 Very early child development 4.4.5 the transition to parenthood and positive family attachment	✓	
4.5 Demonstrate knowledge, understanding and the ability to recognise complications and additional care needs of the woman and/or newborn infant, in regard to infant feeding and	✓	✓

the implications of feeding for very early child development		
4.6 Use evidence-based best practice approaches to respond promptly to signs of compromise and deterioration in the woman, fetus and newborn infant and to make clinical decision based on need and best-practice evidence; and act on these decisions		✓
4.7 Use evidence-based best practice approaches to the management of emergency situations		✓
4.8 Use evidence-based best practice approaches for the first-line management of complications and additional care needs of the woman, fetus and/or newborn infant; including support, referral, interdisciplinary and multiagency team working, escalation and follow-up, as needed		✓
The midwife's role in caring for and supporting women and newborn infants requiring medical, obstetric, neonatal, mental health, social care and other services		
4.9 Demonstrate the ability to work in collaboration with the interdisciplinary and multiagency teams while continuing to provide midwifery care needed by women and newborn infants	✓	
4.10 Use evidence-based best practice approaches to keep mothers and newborn infants together whenever possible when providing midwifery care, even when complications and additional care needs occur	✓	
4.11 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how to work in collaboration with the interdisciplinary and multiagency teams to provide respectful, kind, compassionate end of life care for the woman and/or newborn infant and their partner and family and follow up with the family, ensuring continuity of care	✓	

Domain 5: Promoting excellence: the midwife as colleague, scholar and leader

Proficiency	May be tested by CBT	May be tested by OSCE
Working with others: the midwife as colleague		
5.1 Demonstrate knowledge of quality improvement methodologies and the skills required to actively engage in evidence-informed quality improvement processes to promote quality care for all	✓	
5.2 Demonstrate and understanding of how to identify, report and critically reflect on near misses, critical incidents, major incidents and serious adverse events	✓	
5.3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how to work with women, partners, families, advocacy groups and colleagues to develop effective improvement strategies for quality and safety, sharing feedback and learning from positive and adverse outcomes and experiences	✓	
5.4 Understand and apply the principles of human factors, environmental factors and strength-based approaches when working with colleagues	✓	
5.5 Understand the relationship between safe staffing levels, effective team working, appropriate skill mix and the safety and quality of care	✓	
5.6 Recognises risk to public protection and quality of care and know how to escalate concerns in line with local/national escalation guidance and policies	✓	
5.7 Demonstrate the ability to act safely in situations where there is an absence of good quality evidence	✓	
5.8 Demonstrate understanding of why interdisciplinary team working and learning	✓	

matters and the importance of participating in a range of interdisciplinary learning opportunities		
5.9 Contribute to team reflection activities to promote improvements in practice and service	✓	
5.10 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the principles and methods of sustainable health care	✓	
5.11 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of change management and the ability to collaborate in, implement and evaluate evidence-informed change at individual, group and service level	✓	
5.12 Effectively and responsibly use a range of digital and other technologies to access, record, share and apply data within teams and between agencies	✓	
5.13 Demonstrate the ability to develop the strength, resourcefulness and flexibility needed to work in stressful and difficult situations and to develop strategies to contribute to safe and effective practice; this must include: 5.13.1 Individual and team reflection, problem solving and planning 5.13.2 Effective and timely communication with colleagues and senior staff 5.13.3 Collaborating to ensure safe and sustainable systems and processes 5.13.4 The ability to advocate for change 5.13.5 The use of strength-based approaches 5.13.6 Responding to unpredictable situations	✓	
5.14 Demonstrate how to recognise signs of vulnerability in themselves or their colleagues and the actions required to minimise risks to health or well-being of self and others	✓	

5.15 Demonstrate awareness of the need to manage the personal and emotional challenges of work and workload, uncertainty and change; and incorporate compassionate self-care into their personal and professional life	✓	
B Developing knowledge, positive role modelling and leadership: the midwife as scholar and leader		
5.16 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the importance of current and ongoing local, national and international research and scholarship in midwifery and related fields and how to use this knowledge to keep updated, to inform decision-making and to develop practice	✓	
5.17 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the importance of midwives' contribution to the knowledge base for practice and policy through research, audit and service evaluation, engagement and consultation	✓	
5.18 Demonstrate the ability and commitment to develop as a midwife, to understand career pathways that may include practice, management, leadership, education, research and policy and to recognise the need to take responsibility for engaging in ongoing education and professional development opportunities	✓	
5.19 Safely and effectively lead and manage midwifery care, demonstrating appropriate prioritising, delegation and assignment of care responsibilities to others involved in providing care	✓	✓
5.20 Demonstrate positive leadership and role modelling, including the ability to guide, support, motivate and interact with other members of the interdisciplinary team	✓	
5.21 Support and supervise students in the provision of midwifery care, promoting reflection, providing constructive feedback and evaluating and documenting their performance	✓	

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