

College of Healthcare Sciences

Nursing and Midwifery



Graduate Diploma of Midwifery

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT HANDBOOK

Everything you need to know about PEP 2025

Contents

Introduction.....	2
Organisation	2
7. Professional Experience.....	3
Professional Experience Placement	4
Student Support whilst on Professional Experience Placement.....	7
Pre-Placement Requirements	7
Uniform	9
How to Apply for a Professional Experience Placement	10
Professional Experience Placement Assessment	10
Clinical Briefing Sessions and Placement Attendance	10
Clinical Workbook.....	10
Unsatisfactory Grade on Professional Experience Placement.....	11
Absence from Professional Experience Placement	11
Workplace Injury/Accident.....	12
Student Code of Conduct.....	12
Protocol for Students Who Have a Problem Within the Facility	12

INTRODUCTION

Professional experience placement is an integral component of the Graduate Diploma of Midwifery (GDMid) course and the intent is to meet the NMBA National Midwife Standards for Practice (2018) for registration as a midwife. The aim of professional experience placement is to integrate theoretical knowledge into practical clinical experiences. Clinical placement has been designed to develop a beginning midwife clinician who is:

- able to deliver safe, competent midwifery care;
- able to apply decision making and clinical judgment;
- a consciously interactive, reflective carer.

That is, on graduation, students must have knowledge and practical experience in a range of clinical settings where they will provide care to the childbearing woman and her family. Subjects with a clinical component are indicated in the course overview.

The College values student contributions that help us improve how we operate. As part of that process, we will actively seek a student clinical representative for each year of the course. Details will be announced at the residential school in study period one year one. Student representatives will be expected to attend the Midwifery Consultative Committee (MCC) meetings held twice each year in person or by zoom.

ORGANISATION

- The GDMid is an eighteen-month course and the student needs to secure a professional experience placement in order to commence in the course.
- Professional experience in the form of clinical placement is sourced by the student. It is a requirement of the GDMid that all students secure a minimum of a 0.4 FTE clinical placement at an approved clinical facility. The clinical experience is documented in the clinical competency workbook. The workbook is divided into two parts. Part A is for documenting clinical experiences and part B is where the student is assessed to be clinically competent in 11 core midwifery skills. Additionally, students are required to complete the following clinical experiences:
- **Continuity of care:**
 - Engagement in a minimum of ten (10) continuity of care experiences involving attendance at four (4) antenatal visits, two (2) postnatal visits and, for the majority of women, labour and birth.
- **Antenatal care**
 - Attendance at one hundred (100) antenatal visits. These may include the continuity of care experiences.
- **Labour and birth care**
 - Acting as the primary *accoucheur* for thirty (30) women during labour who experience spontaneous vaginal birth. These may include the continuity of care experiences
 - Provide direct and active care for an additional ten (10) women throughout first stage labour and, where possible, during birth regardless of mode. These may include the continuity of care experiences.
- **Postnatal care**
 - Attendance at one hundred (100) postnatal visits involving women and their healthy babies. These may include the continuity of care experiences.
- **Complex care**
 - Experience of caring for forty (40) women with complex needs across the continuum of pregnancy, labour, birth and the postnatal period. These may include the continuity of care experiences
- **Neonatal care**
 - Special Care Nursery experiences: a minimum of eighty (80) hours logged in the Midwifery Clinical Workbook.
 - Experience in undertaking twenty (20) full newborn infant examinations. These may include continuity of care experiences.

The above clinical experiences are linked to subjects NS5131, NS5134, NS5135 and NS5225. Table 1 below provides a summary of the specific experiences required for each subject.

Table 1. ANMAC approved clinical requirements by subject

Subject	Antenatal episodes of care	Postnatal episodes of care	Primary accoucheur for labour and birth	Direct and active care for additional 1 st stage of labour	Complex care episodes of care	Continuity of Care		Newborn examination	Clinical competencies	Student evaluations
						Recruited	Completed			
NS5131	25	25	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	1
NS5134	25	25	15	0	20	5	5	20	6	2
NS5135	50	50	15	10	20	0	5	0	5	1
NS5225	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	100	100	30	10	40	10	10	20	11	4

All undergraduate and graduate students who undertake a course that includes prescribed professional experience placements must be aware of the following University policy:

<https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/procedures/student-services-procedures/coursework-enrolment-procedure>

An extract is printed below.

7. Professional Experience

7.1 Where a course includes prescribed professional or clinical placements, students may be required to undertake such placements away from the campus at which they are enrolled at their own expense.

7.2 Students may be required to be interviewed, in accordance with the [Review of a Student's Suitability to Continue a Course Involving Placement](#), to assess their suitability to undertake, or to continue in, a professional or clinical placement.

7.3 Students will be required to ensure all Placement Requirements as outlined in the Course and Subject Handbook are adhered to in accordance with the [Professional Experience Placement Requirements Procedure](#).

7.4 Students who fail to comply with Placement Requirements in accordance with the [Professional Experience Placement Requirements Procedure](#) may be withdrawn from their subjects and discontinued from their course.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT

Professional experience placement is an essential component of the student's education for assuming the professional responsibilities of a Midwife registered by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) and therefore such activities as jobs, athletic endeavours, family commitments including appointments and Army Reserve experience, although important in themselves, cannot take priority over the student's clinical learning. Professional experience placement is also a priority over personal celebrations such as birthdays and weddings.

While the only ANMAC specified hours for PEP in the GDMid are 80 hours of Special Care nursery, the recommended number of days spent in the clinical setting for the GDMid Students to complete their clinical experiences is as follows:

			CP	Professional Experience
Year 1	Trimester 1	NS5131 Foundations of Midwifery Practice	3	The student must secure a minimum of a 0.4 FTE clinical placement in either a paid model or unpaid/ supernumerary model in an approved clinical setting. Students are encouraged to participate in inter and intra-disciplinary clinical practice, observing appropriate consultation and referral through midwifery-led and hospital based, models of care. Evidence of attendance at 25 antenatal visits submitted; Evidence of attendance at 25 postnatal visits submitted; 5 continuity of care experiences recruited; 1 student evaluation from clinical placement submitted.
		NS5133 Healthy Labour, Birth and the Puerperium	3	NIL

	Trimester 2	NS5134 Challenges to the Pregnancy, Birth and Postnatal Continuum	3	<p>The student must secure a minimum of a 0.4 FTE clinical placement in either a paid model or unpaid/supernumerary model in an approved clinical setting. Students are encouraged to participate in inter and intra-disciplinary clinical practice, observing and participating in the appropriate consultation and referral through midwifery-led and hospital based, models of care.</p> <p>Evidence of attendance at 25 antenatal visits submitted;</p> <p>Evidence of attendance at 25 postnatal visits submitted;</p> <p>15 being with women for labour and birth as the primary accoucheur submitted;</p> <p>20 newborn examinations</p> <p>20 complex midwifery care experiences submitted;</p> <p>5 continuity of care experiences submitted;</p> <p>5 more continuity of care experiences recruited;</p> <p>6 Clinical competencies submitted in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completing an antenatal history; 2. Abdominal examination; 3. Assisting a mother with breastfeeding; 4. Neonatal screening; 5. Examination of the newborn 6. Inhalation analgesia. <p>2 student evaluations from clinical placement submitted.</p>
		NS5132 Midwifery Care of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women and Families	3	NIL
	Trimester 3	NS5225 Care of the at risk newborn	3	80 hours PEP in a special care nursery placement in either a paid model or unpaid/supernumerary model in an approved clinical setting.
Year 1		NS5214 Professional Midwifery Care	3	Nil

Year 2	Trimester 1	NS5135 Complex Midwifery Care	3	<p>The student must secure a minimum of a 0.4 FTE clinical placement in either a paid model or unpaid/ supernumerary model in an approved clinical setting. Students are encouraged to participate in inter and intra-disciplinary clinical practice, observing and participating in, appropriate consultation and referral through midwifery-led and hospital based, models of care.</p> <p>Evidence of attendance at 50 antenatal visits submitted;</p> <p>Evidence of attendance at 50 postnatal visits submitted;</p> <p>15 being with women in labour and birth as the primary accoucheur submitted;</p> <p>An additional 10 experiences providing direct and active care during first stage labour regardless of mode of birth submitted;</p> <p>20 complex midwifery care experiences submitted;</p> <p>5 continuity of care experiences submitted;</p> <p>5 clinical competencies submitted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interpretation of a CTG; 2. Vaginal examination; 3. Care of a woman in 1st stage of labour; 4. Care of a woman during a normal birth; 5. Performing a postnatal assessment. <p>1 student evaluation from clinical placement submitted.</p>
		NS5201 Research Design : Theory and Application (also offered in SP2)	3	NIL

Students may undertake the midwifery placement in any model of care including hospital based rotating shifts or caseloading in a continuity of care models or combination of both models. Where the GDMid placements are undertaken in rostered shift pattern across all 3 shifts, **students are expected to attend the shifts as set down by the facility. Students may negotiate their shift hours whilst on PEP this must be discussed with the line Manager of the clinical facility.** The maximum shift length is 12 hours. A period of 12 hours of work must be followed by a minimum break of 10 hours.

All clinical experiences are able to be completed within continuity of midwifery care models.

In the GDMid there is no facilitation offered by JCU. A preceptorship model is employed by the clinical facility or private practice midwife. Each student should know who their preceptor or supervising midwife is. The intent of the PEP in the GDMid is that students work in partnership with a midwife under direct or indirect supervision dependent upon the student's level of knowledge. All midwifery documentation must be countersigned by the partner midwife. This involves a practicing registered midwife (RM) providing on-site individual clinical supervision on a 1:1 basis for a particular period of time until the student is proficient enough to work under the RM's indirect supervision.

STUDENT SUPPORT WHILST ON PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT

Whilst on professional experience placement the university is able to offer the student support through:

1. The clinical supervisor/preceptor attached to the professional experience placement,
2. The GDMid Course Coordinator, mobile: 0408189908 offices: 4781 5149,
3. The Subject Coordinator: contact details are available in the subject outline,
4. Student Services e.g.: Counseling services, Accessibility service, Chaplaincy.

PRE-PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS

The University has binding agreements with all the facilities and organisations that provide clinical placements. From these contracts, and in accordance with other legal obligations, there are mandatory pre-placement requirements (PPRs) that **all** students **must** complete, administered by the [JCU Professional Placement Unit](#). PPRs must be submitted by the first day of the NS5131 residential school. The mandatory pre-placement requirements for the Graduate Diploma of Midwifery are found: <https://www.jcu.edu.au/professional-experience-placement/preparation-checklists/nursing-and-midwifery>

1. JCU HEALTH AND IMMUNISATION FORM

In accordance with Queensland Health and JCU procedures, students who are enrolled in health courses must be fully immunised before commencing their professional experience placement. In accordance with Queensland Health and JCU procedures, students who are enrolled in health courses must be fully immunised for:

- Hepatitis B
- Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)
- Varicella (chickenpox)
- Pertussis (whooping cough)

The JCU Health and Immunisation form is due by the first day of the NS5131 residential school. [JCU health and Immunization form](#)

2. TUBERCULOSIS screening

All students must be assessed for their risk of tuberculosis (TB) before commencing clinical placement.

[Tuberculosis Risk Assessment FAQ for Workers in QLD Health Facilities](#)

1. Please complete the QLD Health [Tuberculosis Risk Assessment Form for Students](#). Read the form carefully and respond to the questions. If you do not understand the questions please complete the form with your doctor's help.
 - Further testing and/or health assessment may be required, depending on your personal circumstances. [Tuberculosis Services in Queensland](#)
2. Email the completed form and any additional documentation (if required) to the [Professional Experience Placement Unit](#)
3. Retain a copy of this form and any relevant documentation to take with you if any further assessment is required.

N.B Some facilities e.g Torres & Cape HHS require all students to have further testing. You will be advised by your placement coordinator if this is required.

3. CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION (CPR) CERTIFICATE

If you are undertaking your midwifery placement in the facility where you are employed as a Registered Nurse, you are able to submit your hospital generated BLS competency certificate.

If you are undertaking your midwifery placement in facility different to your place of employment, you must complete a nationally accredited CPR course under course code HLTAID001 or HLTAID009 provided by a registered training organisation and submit your certificate as proof of course completion.

4. JCU CONFIDENTIALITY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

You must complete and sign the JCU Confidentiality Acknowledgement every year.

In signing the Acknowledgement, you – the student – acknowledge that you have been instructed in the concept of patient, client and business confidentiality, and will respect clients' confidentiality at all times.

The confidentiality acknowledgement form is available from [JCU Confidentiality Acknowledgement](#)

Please download, complete, sign and submit the Confidentiality Acknowledgement to the [Professional Experience Placement Unit](#) by email or by the first day of your NS5131 residential.

5. JCU STUDENT DECLARATION

PLEASE READ THE BELOW-LISTED JCU AND DTHM PLACEMENT PROCEDURES, AND COMPLETE AND SIGN THE **STUDENT DECLARATION** TO CONFIRM THAT YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THEM.

The below documents contain vital information for all students of the Division of Tropical Health and Medicine (DTHM) about the responsibilities of both students and the University concerning professional experience placement.

[DTHM Professional Experience Placement Procedures](#)

[DTHM Procedure for Infectious Disease](#)

[JCU Social Media Policy](#)

[JCU Student Conduct Policy](#)

[JCU Professional Experience Placement Requirements Procedure](#)

[JCU Review of a Student's Suitability to continue a Course involving Placement](#)

[JCU WHS - PRO-023 Infection Control Procedure](#)

Once you have completed and signed the above-linked Student Declaration, please email it to the [Professional Experience Placement Unit](#) by the first day of your residential school.

6. ADDITIONAL STATE AND/OR FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Links to a number of our partner clinical agency student orientation and health facility preplacement learning are available under the postgraduate student tab from the Professional Experience Placement website <https://www.jcu.edu.au/professional-experience-placement>

Please seek information from your Midwifery Educator or Maternity Unit Manager regarding the specific requirements for the maternity unit in which you are undertaking your placement.

OTHER HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

If any student has a medical condition or injury which may restrict movement or mobility, or which requires regular treatment (e.g. diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, mental health problem), or any other personal health issue, it is important that they notify and supply documentation to the GDMid Course Coordinator. This is for the student's own safety to successfully complete the PEP. This information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

PREGNANCY AND BREAST FEEDING WHILE ON CLINICAL PLACEMENT

Students, who will be more than 32 weeks pregnant at their allocated placement time, must contact the GDMid Course Coordinator by phone or email as early as possible. If amenities for breast feeding are required, students should contact the midwifery supervisor at the clinical facility or the GDMid Course Coordinator who will liaise with the individual facility one (1) month prior to placement.

UNIFORM

In general, Graduate Diploma of Midwifery Students will wear the midwifery uniform supplied by the clinical facility for all PEP. If your placement facility does not have a uniform or does not require you to wear their uniform you are able to wear your own, appropriate clothing.

Please do not wear the JCU Undergraduate Nursing/Midwifery student clinical polo shirt.

Students are required to wear the clinical facility's uniform in a professional manner, i.e. clean, neat and tidy. Some facilities have additional special requirements, which will be indicated by the midwifery supervisor at the clinical facility e.g. uniforms may not be required if while undertaking placement in or providing care through Continuity of Care programs It is the student's responsibility to check these requirements.

Student ID is required to be visible to the woman during all clinical care experiences.

Students who have placement at the Mater Hospitals in Townsville & Mackay are requested by the facility not to wear culottes.

Jewellery

One small stud earring in each ear only, no other visible piercing.

Medical identification bands if necessary.

No jewellery on arms/hands except flat wedding band (plain gold bands, no stones)

No other visible jewellery.

Hair

Must be above the collar.

Long hair is to be held back and must be above the collar.

No ribbons, bows or glitter.

Hand Hygiene

Fingernails must be clean, short (<6mm) and with nothing adhered to the nail (no nail polish, acrylic nails, gel tips or artificial nails of any type).

Footwear

Closed-in navy or black shoes; (boots are not appropriate). Fully enclosed footwear must be worn at ALL times, in ALL clinical settings. Footwear must have a non-slip sole and heels that are in good condition. Footwear must be fastened or buckled as appropriate at all times whilst on placement. Sandals, backless, sideless, scuffs, stiletto style shoes, strap style shoes, thongs and clogs are not permitted to be worn in any setting. The wearing of inappropriate footwear while on clinical placement could place you at risk of injury through crush, sharps, slips and falls and potential exposure to body fluid.

Tattooing

Students should be aware that facilities may ask them to cover their tattoos.

Identification

Clinical facility identification badge worn on uniform.

Continuity of Care Experiences or working in Birth Centre or Midwifery Group Practice:

If students are not required to wear clinical facility uniform during continuity of care experiences or working in Birth Centre or Midwifery Group Practice: the following dress requirements apply:

Female

Dress or skirt, culottes or tailored slacks with waist length collared T-shirts or blouse. No denim is allowed.

Male

Tailored shorts or trousers with collared T-shirts or shirts. No denim is allowed.

Jewellery

Jewellery and hair as per uniform specifications. Identification badges must be worn and visible at all times.

Shoes

Closed in shoes, as per uniform guidelines are compulsory; boots are not appropriate.

No student, male or female, is permitted to wear T-shirts with slogans or any type of provocative clothing while on continuity of care experiences or working in Birth Centre or Midwifery Group Practice.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT

Clinical Facilities usually advertise clinical positions for postgraduate midwifery students. You could also approach the midwifery educator or Midwifery Unit Manager at each facility and ask if they employ or support postgraduate midwifery students with clinical placement.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT ASSESSMENT

The **minimum** assessment requirements that the student will be required to satisfactorily complete are:

- Clinical Skills Assessment. The midwifery clinical workbook must be submitted to the GDMid Course Coordinator upon completion of your PEP.

In order to pass clinical, students must meet the assessment requirements for each subject as published in the individual subject outlines and midwifery clinical competency workbook.

CLINICAL BRIEFING SESSIONS AND PLACEMENT ATTENDANCE

It is **MANDATORY** that students attend the Clinical Briefing sessions at the compulsory residential school in Trimester 1 of year 1. The midwifery clinical workbook will be distributed at this briefing. The residential school attendance is compulsory. Non-attendance at the residential school will make you ineligible for PEP and result in your receiving an "X" (Fail) grade for the subject; in which case you will be required to repeat the subject in its entirety.

It is **MANDATORY** that students attend PEP when they are rostered by the clinical facility (see Absence from Professional Experience Placement).

Clinical assessment (clinical competency workbook) MUST be returned to the GDMid Course Coordinator no later than ONE WEEK following completion of your clinical placement. Failure to return your clinical assessment documentation may result in an "X" (fail) for the subject.

The original copy is returned to the student following marking and verification. An electronic copy is kept by the College of Healthcare Sciences. You should keep your copies of your placement evaluations in a safe place, as most potential employers will ask to see them when you apply for a job at the end of your course. They should also be included in your Midwifery Practice Portfolio. It is recommended that students scan or photocopy all clinical documentation before they submit.

Your Clinical Record **MUST** be completed, **and signed**, by yourself and your Clinical Facilitator/ Preceptor. You are required to organise a mutually convenient time with your Clinical Facilitator/ Preceptor prior to the end of the clinical placement to discuss your overall Clinical performance.

CLINICAL WORKBOOK – ON PEBBLEPAD AND PEBBLEPOCKET

The Graduate Diploma of Midwifery Clinical Workbook identifies all the clinical requirements of the GDMid course.

- Your clinical workbook needs to be filled out by you.
- All clinical experiences must be signed by your supervising midwife or other supervising registered health professional (if indicated as appropriate) contemporaneously.
- All clinical competencies must be assessed by a midwife with a minimum level of NG6 classification or a midwife with qualifications in workplace assessment.
- Signed by your Midwifery Educator/Supervisor when you have completed the clinical requirements of the GDMid.
- Submitted as you work through your subjects
- Your Pebblepad account will hold all of your required uploaded documents throughout your course

Students will be encouraged to practice the midwifery skills learned throughout the course, under the guidance of a Midwifery Educator/ Clinical Facilitator/Preceptor/ Registered Midwife. Satisfactory competence on a clinical skill does not preclude further skill development and/or demonstration of your competence.

UNSATISFACTORY GRADE ON PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT

Students who attract any Unsatisfactory grade/s (U) on their Clinical Placement may be contacted by the GDMid Course Coordinator to make an appointment with the GDMid Course Coordinator and the appropriate Subject Coordinator. Any requirements for further clinical placement experience, including conditions, will be decided during that meeting.

The decision to offer Clinical Makeup for an overall unsatisfactory grade is at the discretion of the GDMid Course Coordinator and Subject Coordinator, and will only be offered in exceptional circumstances.

Students who fail a clinical subject MUST see the GDMid Course Coordinator and/or Academic Advisor, as soon as possible, to discuss their progress in the course.

ABSENCE FROM PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT

- Students who miss placement for whatever reason must inform **BOTH the GDMid Course Coordinator and the Facility, as soon as possible.**
- Students who miss any day/s of placement must provide evidence of illness or other extenuating circumstance (such as compassionate leave, sick family members or other catastrophic event). Evidence will be, for example, a medical certificate which would be submitted with your clinical assessment records at the completion of clinical placement.
- Failure to provide satisfactory documentation may result in failure to progress or an overall fail (N) for the subject.

Students who have frequent absences or absence without supporting documentation throughout the program will be required to attend a meeting with the GDMid Course Coordinator. The student will be counselled and advised of the course of action to be taken for their frequent absence from clinical. The student will be required to attend further clinical placement for the cumulative absence from the program.

Students who miss PEP without appropriate documentary evidence may attract a FAIL (N) grade for the subject overall.

Any extenuating circumstances involving clinical placement will be referred to the GDMid Course Coordinator and/or facility Midwifery Educator.

Send documentation to:

Michelle McElroy
Graduate Diploma Midwifery Course Coordinator
Nursing, and Midwifery,

James Cook University
Townsville, Qld. 4814.

WORKPLACE INJURY/ACCIDENT

You are expected to maintain safe practice in the workplace, by using the ergonomic, infection control and safety precautions taught in your course subjects, however, despite these precautions, at times accidents will occur. In the unlikely event of your sustaining an injury/accident within the clinical facility while performing the duties of your professional experience placement, you need to do the following:

- Notify your Midwifery Educator/Supervisor/Preceptor immediately
- Follow the clinical facility's workplace accident and injury policy
- Notify the GDMid Course Coordinator on 0408189908
- Provide a copy of the clinical facility's workplace accident and injury documentation to the GDMid Coordinator.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The College of Healthcare Sciences is committed to quality client care based on holistic professional midwifery practice models. It is the University's responsibility to ensure safety to practice and caring professional behaviour from all students while on professional experience placement. The expectations of students in respect of academic, personal and professional behaviour are described in the JCU [Student Code of Conduct](#). Allegations of misconduct in the professional setting will be managed as described in the JCU [Student Professional Misconduct Procedure](#).

PROTOCOL FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE A PROBLEM WITHIN THE FACILITY

Students are encouraged to contact the GDMid Course Coordinator on 0408189908 at the earliest possible opportunity, for support if they perceive that they have a problem with the Midwifery Educator/Supervisor or the facility while they are on placement.