



Maternity Support Worker Level 3 Curriculum

Realising potential to deliver confident,
capable care for the future

Developing people
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healthcare

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Phase Three
May 2021

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Background and context

On 14 February 2019, Health Education England (HEE) launched the Maternity Support Worker (MSW) Competency, Education and Career Development Framework for implementation across England. This followed a phase one project undertaken by the University of the West of England (UWE) which involved several activities including scoping and gap identification of the current maternity support workforce. The framework provides guidance and structure which formalises and standardises the MSW role to enhance safe and effective care and aims to:

- Recognise the role of the MSW within the multi-professional team
- Release the untapped potential of MSW workforce
- Provide a national MSW competency, education and career development framework (HEE, 2018) which supports standardisation across England and leads to equitable, effective, safe care provision; whilst providing a framework for career development and progression of MSWs

To facilitate implementation of the framework, HEE awarded UWE the contract to undertake the second phase of the MSW project. To support the delivery of safe and effective care, MSWs require access to quality training and education to develop knowledge, skills, behaviours and subsequent competency. Therefore, the brief was to scope and review existing education provision and assess fitness for purpose.

The phase two project identified that:

- The current approach to MSW education and development in England is piecemeal, and vulnerable to gaps and inefficiency. It does not support flexible employment of staff between, or even within, NHS trusts
- A MSW nationwide voluntary curriculum will assure education and training is appropriate for the role because it will be aligned with the competency, career and education framework
- A MSW nationwide voluntary curriculum will ensure consistent and quality education
- The MSW nationwide voluntary curriculum must be future facing with the aim to attract, retain and develop talented staff and utilise apprenticeship opportunities

Key recommendations from this project are below:

1. Not pursuing an application to revise and refresh the existing intermediate apprenticeship standard (MSW) pathway at level 3 or a proposal to develop a new intermediate apprenticeship standard at level 3 and/or an advanced apprenticeship standard at level 5 for MSWs
2. That HEE work with awarding organisations and Skills for Health to review and refresh curricula for the level 3 diploma and level 5 foundation degree/ Diploma of Higher Education (Dip HE) so that it is tailored to meet the specific needs of the MSW workforce
3. That HEE consider developing (and redeveloping) e-learning for health modules for use as part of a bridging programme or apprenticeship offer
4. That development and delivery of in-house content to support MSWs undertaking apprenticeships and bridging programmes (upskilling) is co-ordinated across geographical areas within, or between, Local Maternity Systems
5. That HEE workforce development activity with Local Maternity Systems includes consideration of the MSW to formalise roles and facilitate early discussion and planning with awarding organisations in relation to numbers of students, timing of intakes and the potential for creative solutions to delivering content
6. That guidance to assist employers to apply outcomes of the Care Certificate to maternity settings is developed
7. That HEE develops a guidance pack with an exemplar curriculum for in-house provision, information about supporting e-resources and a detailed skills, knowledge and behaviours list (see appendix three) which can be used flexibly to inform development
8. That more work needs to be done with employers, awarding organisations and stakeholder Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) to link the aims and requirements of this framework to maternity safety agendas

These recommendations led to development of task and finish groups to review some aspects, but also to a third phase project in which UWE was tasked with the following:

- Mapping and alignment of the curriculum to the MSW Competency, Education and Career Framework
- Mapping of the curriculum to the Senior Healthcare Support Worker Apprenticeship Standard
- Mapping of the curriculum to the Level 3 Healthcare Support Diploma
- Identification of gaps/potential gaps in existing content to meet the requirement of the Framework
- Recommendations to address any identified gaps to support successful delivery

In addition to this, UWE agreed to develop a detailed list of curriculum requirements, grouped into topic areas and expressed as aims, outcomes and indicative content that will enable MSWs to achieve and demonstrate the requirements of the role at level 3 of the framework and associated competencies, which would be presented to, and signed off by, the HEE MSW oversight group and other stakeholders.

Level 3 curriculum project activities

The UWE team undertook a detailed review of the mapping of existing education provision already undertaken as part of phase two of the project, to include a more detailed review of the current Senior Healthcare Support Worker Apprenticeship Standard and Level 3 Healthcare Support Diploma (appendix one). Information collected as part of phase two of the project from organisations known for good practice and desktop scoping of existing provision was used for additional contextual insight. This enabled the team to identify where existing diploma content maps to the outcomes required of MSWs operating at level 3 and where content gaps exist.

From this, curriculum requirements were developed and grouped into topic areas and expressed as aims, outcomes and indicative content. This will enable MSWs to achieve and demonstrate the requirements of the role at level 3 of the framework and associated competencies. Testing of this curriculum, via the HEE MSW oversight group and other stakeholders, to identify feasibility and implementation constraints, the utility of any pre-existing tools, and acceptability to staff, allowed further development and refinement of recommendations. This enabled the formulation of a curriculum for MSW education and training at level 3 that aligns to the requirements of the Senior Healthcare Support Worker Apprenticeship Standard and Level 3 Healthcare Support Diploma, with a narrative about requirements to achieve it. This includes the use of e-learning and in-house education.

Re-review of existing education and training provision

The apprenticeship standard for Senior Healthcare Support Worker (maternity) (Skills for Health 2018) was used to inform the role descriptor, associated competencies and education framework for the MSWs working at level three in phase one of this project.

Phase two of the project demonstrated that there are gaps within the standard which would mean that the apprenticeship and underpinning diploma qualification would not adequately prepare MSWs to meet some of the competencies within the new MSW framework without adding in or revising content to enable a bespoke offer. This issue was heightened by the reduction in the offer of level 3 certificate programmes from awarding organisations which reduced the options available for shortened pathways of maternity support worker education. Whilst similarities can be drawn between different providers level 3 curricula e.g. the provision of the 15 mandatory units, non-mandatory units of study do not align and choice of optional pathways units also differs. Hence, even if employers were able to support all MSWs to undertake the current optional maternity support worker units provided in the level 3 diploma curriculum, mapping demonstrated that there would remain a potential for significant gaps in content, with reference to key areas of public health activities of the MSW and in relation to working with pregnant, labouring and postnatal women as part of a multidisciplinary team. The minimum maternity units currently provided are detailed below.

1. Provide advice and information to enable parents to promote the health and well-being of their newborn babies
2. Care for a newborn baby
3. Support parents or carers to interact with and care for their newborn baby
4. Anatomy and physiology for maternity support workers
5. Develop and agree individualised care plans for babies and families
6. Support individuals with feeding babies

Phase two of the project highlighted innovative practice in terms of providing bespoke educational offers for MSWs but also drew attention to the fact that, for some employers, seeking bespoke solutions is not financially viable or sustainable.

All phases of the project have shown that in-house, un-credited education has become the default solution to address gaps in the standard and underpinning level 3 curricula where the ability to produce a bespoke credited education offer was not possible. In house solutions to address missing content knowledge and skill development were evidenced by content submitted as part of the initial call for evidence by HEE. However, when closely reviewed and mapped to the MSW framework, the variability and quality of the in-house offer, to include MSW preparation for learning and assessment, did not provide the necessary quality assurances that MSWs would be adequately prepared and supported to meet the outcomes demanded by the competency framework.

Mapping of current content to the MSW competency framework

Remapping of the workforce/education routes and a detailed gap analysis were undertaken in phase 3. A traffic light system was applied to each indicator aligned to the 14 competencies in the MSW competency framework. This allowed identification of the focus for proposed MSW modules.

Green ●	Content covered through existing diploma or care certificate provision
Amber ●	Content covered through existing diploma provision but requires either formal practice-based application (through observation and professional discussion with a mentor/ practice supervisor) or further engagement with in-house training and/or education
Red ●	Content not adequately covered and requires additional formal learning

Following the mapping exercise below, this new voluntary curriculum was developed, and sense checked against existing provision. This provision is intended to replace current optional maternity units. Core units must still be studied, minimum numeracy and literacy threshold requirements met, and the care certificate completed. The project team recommends that trust education leads negotiate with providers to ensure that maternity specific and/ or relatable concepts are used within core units to assist MSWs studying to link theory with practice. This is important since the optional maternity modules cannot, on their own, cover all content required to achieve MSW level 3 competencies.

If you experience any issues accessing these tables please email maternityprogramme@hee.nhs.uk.

MSW Curriculum Gap Analysis

If you experience any issues accessing these tables please email maternityprogramme@hee.nhs.uk.

Domain one: Supporting Women and Families		
Competency 1: Create effective and supportive relationships with women and their families to enhance the provision of personalised and safe woman-centred care		
● Positive relationships (Amber)	● Woman-centred care (Amber)	
● Empowering others (Amber)	● Consent (Amber)	
Competency 2: Understands the MSW's scope of practice and works within limits of own competence and authority		
● Acts with integrity (Green)	● Professionalism (Amber)	
● Implementing care (Amber)	● Reporting, referring and escalating concerns (Red)	
Competency 3: Contribute positively to a culture of team working, maintaining effective working relationships to maximise quality of care		
● Planning and evaluating care (Amber)	● Team working (Amber)	● Continuity of Carer (Red)
Competency 4: Notice and respond appropriately to the changing needs of the woman and her family		
● Safeguarding (Amber)	● Caring for the family unit (Red)	● Supporting vulnerable women, families and those with additional needs (Red)
● Signposting (Red)	● Bereavement and loss (Red)	

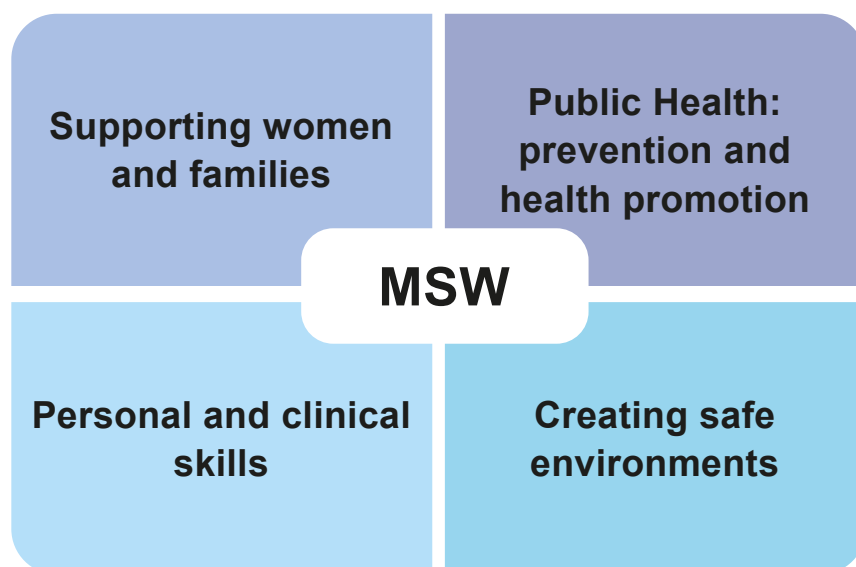
Domain two: Public Health: prevention and health promotion		
Competency 5: Promote a culture of health and well-being through providing information, advice and support to enable healthy lifestyle choices for all, whilst understanding the causes of ill-health related to women of childbearing age and their families		
● Influences on public health (Red)	● Public health promotion (Red)	
● Makes every contact count (Red)	● Supporting behaviour change (Red)	
● Personal health and wellbeing (Red)		
Competency 6: Actively engage with public health initiatives		
● Screening (Red)	● Immunisation (Red)	● Infant feeding (Amber)

Domain three: Personal and clinical skills		
Competency 7: Provide and monitor care safely and effectively		
● Safe practice (Red)	● Time management (Red)	● Providing care (Red)
● Prioritising care (Red)	● Emergency care (Red)	
Competency 8: Communicate clearly and accurately using a range of written, verbal non-verbal methods, maintaining confidentially and upholding the principles of data protection at all times		
● Confidentiality and data protection (Green)	● Record keeping (Green)	
● Methods of communication (Green)	● Effective communication (Green)	
Competency 9: Maintain and develop knowledge, skills and behaviours through training and education to include local mandatory training		
● Undertakes training (Green)	● Maintains knowledge (Green)	● Seeking feedback and reflection (Green)
Competency 10: Participate in the teaching, training and mentoring of staff within the scope of the MSW role and responsibilities and in collaboration with the multi-disciplinary team		
● Role modelling (Red)	● Mentorship (Red)	

Domain four: Creating safe environments	
Competency 11: Work within organisational policies and procedures to ensure maintenance of safe working practices for women, their families and colleagues	
● Organisational values (Amber)	● Legal and ethical responsibilities (Amber)
● Health and safety (Green)	● Courage and candour (Green)
Competency 12: Assist in the maintenance of a safe working environment through the efficient use of resources to support the smooth running of the area, having due regard for the health, safety and welfare of self and others	
● Safe environment (Amber)	● Infection control (Amber)
Competency 13: Participate in initiatives to enhance service provision	
● Service improvement (Amber)	
Competency 14: Recognise and respect equality and diversity, demonstrating an inclusive approach in all environments	
● Recognises and reacts to discrimination (Green)	● Awareness of implicit bias (Green)
● Respects diversity (Green)	● Widens access to care (Green)

The MSW Voluntary Curriculum

Domains of support worker practice in maternity settings



The domains provide a framework for competencies; detailing the minimum standard of practice expected of post holders to safely perform their role. The competencies are expressed at levels two, three and four to determine and describe the difference in knowledge, skills, values and behaviours in accordance to the level of their role specification.

Supervision and Assessment of Competence

Until competence is achieved and signed off, the trainee support worker should be directly or indirectly supervised by an appropriately qualified practitioner, as determined by the employer. Direct supervision involves close proximity to the trainee to enable direct working or direct monitoring of their activities. Indirect supervision is appropriate at the point at which the trainee requires consolidation of skills and confidence building to enable independent working.

The principles of delegation should be considered to ensure the safety and wellbeing of women, their families and other staff, as well as the trainee and applied in line with professional body requirements. Competency can be assessed by an appropriately qualified practitioner, as determined by the employer. Multiple forms of evidence can be considered and used to demonstrate competence but must be subject to local quality assurance processes. When assessing competence, consideration should be given to how the support worker might:

Know it:	Demonstrate their knowledge
Show it:	Demonstrate their skills
Live it:	Demonstrate appropriate attitudes and behaviours
Reflect:	Demonstrate their ability to reflect on their own practice and on feedback given

(adapted from Institute of Apprenticeships 2018)

To assist practice assessors to assure competency a comprehensive skills document has been developed (Appendix Three). This can be used to inform the detail of level 3 curriculum content.

Curriculum Requirements

Foundation

The foundation of the proposed curriculum is an expectation that the Care Certificate and Code of Conduct for Health Care Support Workers (HCSW) and Adult Social Care Workers will be completed and adhered to. Employers / NHS trusts will continue to manage this process in line with current expectations. Furthermore, there is an expectation that MSWs will have / achieve minimum standards of numeracy and literacy. Minimum requirements for level 2 English and Maths are determined by apprenticeship standards, however for those achieving competence outside of apprenticeship pathways standards will be set out by the employee / NHS trust. In this circumstance, whilst there is no nationally agreed minimum standard, a good standard for English and Maths (GCSEs or equivalent) is typical. More information regarding the standard for English and Maths can be found on the [Health Careers Maternity Support Worker page](#). The management and governance of this process sits with the employer, in line with current expectations.

Care Certificate

Employers / NHS trusts will continue to manage the provision of the Care Certificate in line with current expectations. Typically, this is via e-learning utilising the extensive resources which are available to support employers and employees through the [Skills for Health website](#) and other providers. It is of note that Standards 10,11,12 and 13 are not covered through Skills for Health resources, rather employees comply with their employer's requirements and provision of training.

Content of Care Certificate:

1. Understand your role
2. Your personal development
3. Duty of care
4. Equality and diversity
5. Work in a person-centred way
6. Communication
7. Privacy and dignity
8. Fluids and nutrition
9. Awareness of mental health, dementia and learning disability
10. Safeguarding adults
11. Safeguarding Children
12. Basic Life Support
13. Health and Safety
14. Handling information
15. Infection prevention and control

Code of Conduct

Provision of guidance to support the Code of Conduct for Health Care Support Workers (HCSW) and Adult Social Care Workers lies with employers / NHS trusts and will continue to be managed in line with current expectations.

Content of Code of Conduct for Health Care Support Workers (HCSW) and Adult Social Care Workers:

1. Be accountable by making sure you can answer for your actions or omissions.
2. Promote and uphold the privacy, dignity, rights, health and wellbeing of people who use health and care services and their carers at all times.
3. Work in collaboration with your colleagues to ensure the delivery of high quality, safe and compassionate healthcare, care and support.
4. Communicate in an open, and effective way to promote the health, safety and wellbeing of people who use health and care services and their carers.
5. Respect a person's right to confidentiality.
6. Strive to improve the quality of healthcare, care and support through continuing professional development.
7. Uphold and promote equality, diversity and inclusion.

Prior Learning / Experience

In addition to the completion of the Care Certificate, adherence to the Code of Conduct and evidenced numeracy / literacy skills, MSWs will be expected to be able to demonstrate competency in their role either through prior experience / learning or through the successful completion of an education programme. This includes completion of the Midwifery T level, as was envisaged in the education framework in phase one of this project. It is crucial that the current workforce is facilitated to achieve required levels of competence to support retention of current staff expertise and knowledge. It is anticipated that routes / mechanisms to demonstrate competency will vary, but standards of competence will be set, as detailed in the competency framework. A knowledge and skills and behaviours list is provided in appendix three to assist in developing understanding of how competencies might be evidenced. Supporting individuals to use prior learning or experience to demonstrate competency is a recommendation, but the process will be managed by the employee / NHS trust. It is recommended that this process is formalised as part of recognised routes into MSW roles to enable effective management and governance.

Where gaps in knowledge of skills exist, employers may choose to provide local study days or other non-accredited educational material in the form of a bridging programme prior to assessment of competence against the MSW competency framework, as described in the education framework developed in phase one of the project.

Accreditation of prior experience may be acceptable to some education providers to modify the learning journey for individuals. The process and governance of this will be determined by the individual education providers.

Education programme

This proposed curriculum provides foundation for continuing growth and development. To ensure ongoing competence, continuing professional development must be provided and independent study to maintain currency expected.

Successful completion of all modules and the MSW competency framework and skills document is predicated on appropriate workplace supervision and facilitation to make links between theory and practice. This includes access to appropriate work-based learning environments and models of care.

The current structure of the Senior Healthcare Support Worker (Senior HCSW) Apprenticeship Standard (Institute for Apprenticeships, 2018) and the associated Qualification Specification for the Level 3 Healthcare Support Diploma (NCFE, 2020) will remain. However, the optional Maternity Support Worker unit content has been re-written.

Currently the Senior HCSW apprenticeship standard is made up of six core aspects and, for maternity support workers, a further three aspects set out in Option 2: Senior HCSW (Maternity Support).

Outline of Senior HCSW Apprenticeship (core and option 2):

C1. Health and wellbeing

C2. Duty of care and candour, safeguarding, equality and diversity

C3. Person centred care, treatment and support

C4. Communication

C5. Personal, people and quality improvement

C6. Health, safety and security

2.1 Assist with clinical tasks

2.2 Assist with caring for babies

2.3 Support mothers and birthing partners

The Senior HCSW apprenticeship standards are translated into the associated Level 3 Healthcare Support Diploma.

Outline of current Mandatory Units:

1. Promote communication in care settings
2. Promote effective handling of information in care settings
3. Promote personal development in care settings
4. Promote person-centred approaches in care settings
5. Promote equality and inclusion in care settings
6. Promote health, safety and well-being in care settings
7. Responsibilities of a care worker
8. Duty of care in care settings
9. Safeguarding and protection in care settings
10. The principles of infection prevention and control
11. Causes and spread of infection
12. Cleaning, decontamination and waste management
13. Understand mental health problems
14. Understand mental well-being and mental health promotion
15. Study skills for senior healthcare support workers

Current Optional Maternity Support Units

Educational content is informed by academic levels (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) 2008) and academic credit (QAA, 2009) descriptors. This standardisation enables rationalisation of content and will inform the re-written maternity support unit content, in line with the agreed nominal ten hours of study equivalence to one academic credit.

The level 3 diploma requires learners to achieve a minimum of 65 credits to gain the overall award. Mandatory core units are applicable to all health care support workers and build upon the foundation outlined previously (Care Certificate, numeracy and literacy, Code of Conduct). Optional units, which reflect specialisms, provide a minimum of the remaining 20 credits for attainment of the overall Level 3 diploma award. Maternity Support units will help to prepare maternity support workers for their specialism but are of limited scope due to the limited academic credits available. Amending the balance of the academic credit awarded in the diploma (core to optional units) is beyond the scope of this project.

Proposed Maternity Support Units

For all maternity support workers units include:

MAT 1: Effective Maternity Support Worker Practice

MAT 2: Public Health and Health Promotion in Maternity Care

MAT 3: Maternity: A Universal Service

MAT 4: Working with Women with Additional Needs

MAT 5: Anatomy and Physiology Applied to the Childbearing Continuum

Choice Units:

MAT Choice 1: Assessment and Triage

MAT Choice 2: Birth

MAT Choice 3: Community

It is the recommendation of the UWE project team that all of the units below are developed as an online package to ensure sustainability and accessibility for all employers. This does not preclude the provision of face to face teaching where this is deemed desirable.



Proposed Aims, Learning Outcomes and Indicative Content: Maternity Support Optional Units

MAT 1: Effective Maternity Support Worker Practice (4 credits = 40 hours of student effort)

Aim: To provide learners with the opportunity to develop knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to effective working as a maternity support worker (MSW) and the development of self, others and services

Learning Outcomes (the learner will):

1. Understand and apply current legislation, theories and evidence related to professional, legal and ethical practice
2. Understand and apply theories of learning, teaching and assessment to the development of self and others
3. Understand and apply the theories of leadership and service improvement relevant to the role of the MSW, taking account of role modelling, evidence-based practice and the importance of caring for self and others in fostering a learning culture
4. Be able to work safely and effectively in a range of settings which may include the community and women's homes, potentially as a lone worker

Indicative content

- Legal and ethical practice (to include consent and advocacy in maternity care)
- Professional friendship, communication and working in partnership with women
- Leadership and role modelling
- Service improvement theories
- Teaching, learning and assessment theory related to supporting, supervising and assessing other learners in the workplace
- Locating and using evidence to support practice and decision making
- Being self-directed, managing time and prioritising care
- The multidisciplinary team in maternity care

MAT 2: Public Health and Health Promotion in Maternity Care (4 credits = 40 hours of student effort)

Aim: To provide learners with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills related to the role of the maternity support worker (MSW) in improving and protecting public health outcomes for women, their newborns and families

Learning Outcomes (the learner will):

1. Understand national and local standards related to public health and public health promotion, and understand their own and others' roles and responsibilities in relation to these
2. Understand national and local standards related to screening and immunisation during pregnancy and the postnatal period, and understand their own and others' roles and responsibilities in relation to these
3. Utilise a range of health promotion strategies, drawing upon knowledge and skills to promote, protect and improve the health and wellbeing of women and their families

Indicative content

- Influences on public health and health outcomes, including social determinants of health
- Strategies to promote, protect and improve health including providing public health advice and interventions in pregnancy
- Making every contact count
- Supporting behaviour change, including motivational interviewing and social prescribing
- Screening in maternity services
- Immunisation in maternity services
- Infant feeding policy and practice

MAT 3: Maternity Care: A Universal Service (4 credits = 40 hours of student effort)

Aim: To provide learners with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills required, as a maternity support worker (MSW), to meet fundamental physical, social, emotional and cultural needs of all women, newborns and their families

Learning Outcomes (the learner will):

1. Understand relevant, current legislation, national guidelines, policies, protocols and good practice guidelines related to maternity care for women and their babies
2. Within scope of role, be able to participate in the development of evidence-based personalised plans for women and / or their newborns, taking account of social, emotional, physical and cultural needs within family units
3. Undertake evidence based, clinical activities associated with the role of the MSW safely and effectively

Indicative content

- Care pathways, continuity of carer models and the role of the MSW
- Current maternity national frameworks, policies and guidelines related to universal care.
- Theories and good practice related to common social, emotional, physical and cultural needs
- Developing, implementing and evaluating personalised care plans
- Care and clinical interventions undertaken by MSWs and underpinning evidence base when providing universal care, for example preparing for and supporting labour and birth in water
- Clinical skills related to MSW roles in providing universal care, for example assessing physiological measurements

MAT 4: Working with Women and Families with Additional Needs (4 credits = 40 hours of student effort)

Aim: To provide learners with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary, as a maternity support worker (MSW), to meet the physical, social, emotional and cultural needs of women with additional needs, their babies, and their families

Learning Outcomes (the learner will):

1. Understand current legislation, national guidelines, policies, protocols and good practice guidelines related to maternity care for women with additional needs, their babies and their families
2. Within scope of role, understand and be able to implement appropriate, evidence-based care interventions to support women and their families with common complications of pregnancy / labour / birth / postnatal period
3. Within scope of role, understand and be able to implement appropriate, evidence-based care interventions to support women and their families with physical, social and emotional additional needs
4. Know their scope of role as a MSW in emergency situations during pregnancy, labour, birth and the postnatal period

Indicative content

- Current maternity policies and guidelines related to care for women, their newborns and families who are vulnerable or have additional care needs
- Common co-morbidities, complications and conditions in pregnancy, birth, postnatal and neonatal care and the role of the MSW
- Conditions and circumstances which make women and their families vulnerable and the role of the MSW in providing support
- Caring for families during loss and bereavement
- Recognition, referral and escalation in maternity care
- Human factors and safe team working in emergencies
- Care, clinical interventions and skills undertaken by MSW and underpinning evidence base when providing care to women and/or their babies with additional needs. For example, emergency skills drills, preparation for caesarean section and supporting women following surgical procedures

MAT 5: Anatomy and Physiology applied to the childbearing continuum (4 credits = 40 hours of student effort)

Aim: To provide learners with the opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of anatomy and physiology relevant to the childbearing continuum to enable safe and effective care as a maternity support worker (MSW)

Learning Outcomes (the learner will):

1. Know the anatomy and physiology of the female reproductive system and breast
2. Describe normal physiological changes during pregnancy, labour and the postnatal period and apply this to care given by MSWs
3. Describe normal development of the fetus over time, from conception to birth and the postnatal period and apply this to care given by MSWs
4. Identify common pathophysiology affecting the childbearing continuum and apply this to care given by MSWs

Indicative content

- Anatomy of the female reproductive system
- Anatomy of the female breast and lactation
- Conception and normal fetal development
- Normal physiological changes in the childbearing continuum
- Maternal and neonatal adaptation during the postnatal period and achievement of homeostasis
- Anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology related to clinical observations and information in maternity care, including recognising and responding to deviations from normal

Where implemented, these revised level 3 units of study will support MSWs to develop the knowledge, skills, behaviours and subsequent competencies determined by the MSW Competency Framework. Page 25 details a final gap analysis, demonstrating full alignment of level 3 education provision and, where relevant, local induction content to the MSW competency framework indicators (see appendix two for mapping). In addition to provider education and training, it is recommended that all MSWs have access to local induction programmes that include content relating to safeguarding, health and safety and infection control policy/procedures and organisational values.

MSW Curriculum Gap Analysis (revised Level 3 curricula)

If you experience any issues accessing these tables please email maternityprogramme@hee.nhs.uk.

Domain one: Supporting Women and Families		
Competency 1: Create effective and supportive relationships with women and their families to enhance the provision of personalised and safe woman-centred care		
● Positive relationships (Green)	● Woman-centred care (Green)	
● Empowering others (Green)	● Consent (Green)	
Competency 2: Understands the MSW's scope of practice and works within limits of own competence and authority		
● Acts with integrity (Green)	● Professionalism (Green)	
● Implementing care (Green)	● Reporting, referring and escalating concerns (Green)	
Competency 3: Contribute positively to a culture of team working, maintaining effective working relationships to maximise quality of care		
● Planning and evaluating care (Green)	● Team working (Green)	● Continuity of Carer (Green)
Competency 4: Notice and respond appropriately to the changing needs of the woman and her family		
● Safeguarding (Green)	● Caring for the family unit (Green)	● Supporting vulnerable women, families and those with additional needs (Green)
● Signposting (Green)	● Bereavement and loss (Green)	

Domain two: Public Health: prevention and health promotion		
Competency 5: Promote a culture of health and well-being through providing information, advice and support to enable healthy lifestyle choices for all, whilst understanding the causes of ill-health related to women of childbearing age and their families		
● Influences on public health (Green)	● Public health promotion (Green)	
● Makes every contact count (Green)	● Supporting behaviour change (Green)	
● Personal health and wellbeing		
Competency 6: Actively engage with public health initiatives		
● Screening (Green)	● Immunisation (Green)	● Infant feeding (Green)

Domain three: Personal and clinical skills		
Competency 7: Provide and monitor care safely and effectively		
● Safe practice (Green)	● Time management (Green)	● Providing care (Green)
● Prioritising care (Green)	● Emergency care (Green)	
Competency 8: Communicate clearly and accurately using a range of written, verbal non-verbal methods, maintaining confidentially and upholding the principles of data protection at all times		
● Confidentiality and data protection (Green)	● Record keeping (Green)	
● Methods of communication (Green)	● Effective communication (Green)	
Competency 9: Maintain and develop knowledge, skills and behaviours through training and education to include local mandatory training		
● Undertakes training (Green)	● Maintains knowledge (Green)	● Seeking feedback and reflection (Green)
Competency 10: Participate in the teaching, training and mentoring of staff within the scope of the MSW role and responsibilities and in collaboration with the multi-disciplinary team		
● Role modelling (Green)	● Mentorship (Green)	

Domain four: Creating safe environments	
Competency 11: Work within organisational policies and procedures to ensure maintenance of safe working practices for women, their families and colleagues	
● Organisational values (Green)	● Legal and ethical responsibilities (Green)
● Health and safety (Green)	● Courage and candour (Green)
Competency 12: Assist in the maintenance of a safe working environment through the efficient use of resources to support the smooth running of the area, having due regard for the health, safety and welfare of self and others	
● Safe environment (Green)	● Infection control (Green)
Competency 13: Participate in initiatives to enhance service provision	
● Service improvement (Green)	
Competency 14: Recognise and respect equality and diversity, demonstrating an inclusive approach in all environments	
● Recognises and reacts to discrimination (Green)	● Awareness of implicit bias (Green)
● Respects diversity (Green)	● Widens access to care (Green)

Proposed Aims and Learning Outcomes: Maternity Support Choice Units

Course designers may wish to consider offering the following modules for MSWs undertaking specialist roles. **These modules would be an add on and should not replace core Maternity Support Workers units.**

MAT Choice 1: Assessment and triage

Aim: This unit will provide the Maternity Support Worker (MSW) with additional knowledge and expertise relating to assessment and triage

Learning Outcomes (the learner will):

1. Be able to support the preparation and running of services such as outpatient clinics/ day assessment units/ triage units
2. Be able to support women attending assessment and triage services through their knowledge, understanding and skills related to common antenatal and postnatal concerns
3. Develop themselves by extending their knowledge of this specialism, and share their knowledge and expertise with colleagues

MAT Choice 2: Birth

Aim: This unit will provide the Maternity Support Worker (MSW) with additional knowledge and expertise relating to birth

Learning Outcomes (the learner will):

1. Be able to support women to consider the use of different coping mechanisms during labour and birth (mobilisation, analgesia, environment)
2. Support women and their families in their chosen place and mode of birth (home or hospital; vaginal birth or caesarean section)
3. Develop themselves by extending their knowledge of this specialism, and share their knowledge and expertise with colleagues

MAT Choice 3: Community

Aim: This unit will provide the Maternity Support Worker (MSW) with additional knowledge and expertise relating to maternity community care

Learning Outcomes (the learner will):

1. Be able to support women and their families at home through their knowledge, understanding and skills related to uncomplicated pregnancy, the postnatal period, infant feeding and care of the newborn
2. Be able to contribute to women and their families' preparation for birth and the postnatal period (for example through antenatal classes or supporting public health initiatives) whilst working as part of developing or established continuity of carer models
3. Develop themselves by extending their knowledge of this specialism, and share their knowledge and expertise with colleagues

Summary

The mapping exercises, gap analyses and re-review of existing education and training provision have aided the development of a new voluntary level 3 curriculum for MSWs. The new curriculum will provide a foundation for continued development and will support safer care.

APPENDICES

If you experience any issues accessing these tables please email maternityprogramme@hee.nhs.uk

Appendix One: L3 education provision mapping (already submitted as part of Phase 2)

Domain one: Supporting Women and Families

Level 3 MSW Competency 1 • Indicators 1-4

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Diploma Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
Professional friendships	Yes ✓		1,3		C3	
Supportive care	Yes ✓		3,6		C3	Yes ✓
Communication	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,5,6		C4	Yes ✓
Woman centred care	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	6		C3	Yes ✓
Working in partnership with women and families	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,5,6		C3, 2.3	
Dignity and respect	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	2		V+B	Yes ✓
Supporting informed decision making	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,5,6		C1, 2.3	Yes ✓
Consent	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	5		C3	

Level 3 MSW Competency 2 • Indicators 1-4

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Diploma Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
Duty of care	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			Role. C2	
Anatomy and physiology related to pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period (PN)		Yes ✓	4,6			
Anatomy and physiology related to fetal development/adaptation during the neonatal period			2,3,5,6			
Continuity of carer			2			
Holistic family centred care		Yes ✓	1.3		2.3	
Individualised care		Yes ✓	2,3, 5,6		C3	Yes ✓
Recognising deteriorating health and wellbeing and relevant referrals			1,2,3,5,6		C1, 2.1	
Planning, implementing and evaluating care (applied to antenatal (AN) period)	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			Role, C1, Option 2	
Planning, implementing and evaluating care (applied to intrapartum period)	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			Role, C1, Option 2	
Planning, implementing and evaluating care (applied to PN incl. neonatal (NN) period)	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,5		Role, C1, Option 2	Yes ✓
Sharing information in professional contexts to include escalating concerns	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			C2, C4, C5	Yes ✓
Advocacy	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			V+B, (C3)	

Level 3 MSW Competency 3 • Indicators 1-4

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Diploma Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
Planning, implementing and evaluating care (applied to AN period)	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			Role, C1, Option 2	
Planning, implementing and evaluating care (applied to intrapartum period)	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			Role, C1, Option 2	
Planning, implementing and evaluating care (applied to PN incl. NN period)	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,5		Role, C1, Option 2	Yes ✓
Sharing information in professional contexts to include escalating concerns	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			C2, C4, C5	Yes ✓
Advocacy	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			V+B, (C3)	
Role of the MSW within maternity care settings		Yes ✓	1		Role, C5	

Level 3 MSW Competency 4 • Indicators 1-5

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Diploma Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
Working within the multidisciplinary team (MDT) and positive team work	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	2,5,6		C3, C5	
Safeguarding	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,5,6		C2	Yes ✓
Sensitive conversations	Yes ✓			Yes ✓	C2, C4, 2.3	
Loss and bereavement				Yes ✓	2.3	
Co-morbidities (e.g. impact of diabetes, mental ill health on care)		Yes ✓	6		(C1)	

Domain two: Public Health: Prevention and Health Promotion

Level 3 MSW Competency 5 • Indicators 1-5

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Diploma Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
Public health		Yes ✓	6		C1	Yes ✓
Lifestyle choices and behaviours		Yes ✓	1,5,6		C1	
Health inequalities		Yes ✓	1,3,5,6		C2	Yes ✓
Health promotion, protection, improvement		Yes ✓	1,3,6		C1	Yes ✓
Different facets of health		Yes ✓			C1	
Every contact counts		Yes ✓	6			Yes ✓
Facilitating change in health belief, behaviour			1,6		2.3	Yes ✓
Knowing yourself	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			V+B, C5	

Level 3 MSW Competency 6 • Indicators 1-3

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Diploma Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
Screening (newborn)						
Immunisation						
Infant feeding			1,2,3,6		2.1, 2.2, 2.3	Yes ✓
Smoking cessation			1		2.3	
Parent education			1,3,5,6		2.1	Yes ✓
National drivers and policy related to NHS and maternity care		Yes ✓	1,2,3,5,6		(C5)	
Information sharing in diverse formats		Yes ✓	1,6		C4	Yes ✓
Signposting, locating information and resources	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,5,6		C1, C4	

Domain three: Personal and clinical skills

Level 3 MSW Competency 7 • Indicators 1-5

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Dip Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
Time management				Yes ✓	C5	
Clinical decision making				Yes ✓	Role, C5	
Clinical observations				Yes ✓	C1, 2.1, 2.2	Yes ✓
Recognising normal clinical parameters and common pathophysiology			2,5		C1, 2.1, 2.2	Yes ✓
MSW role in emergency care	Yes ✓				C1 (BLS), 2.1 (NLS), C6	Yes ✓
Prioritising care					Role, C1, C5	

Level 3 MSW Competency 8 • Indicators 1-4

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Dip Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
Evidence based practice	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			-	
Intuitive practice	Yes ✓				Role	
Confidentiality	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,5,6		C4	Yes ✓
Record keeping	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,5,6		C1, C4, 2.1,	
Digital platforms	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,6		(C4)	
Communication mechanisms	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,5,6		C4	Yes ✓

Level 3 MSW Competency 9 • Indicators 1-3

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Dip Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
Professional development	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,5		C5	Yes ✓
Learning how to learn	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,5		C5	
Reflective practice	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,5		C5	Yes ✓
Giving and receiving feedback	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,5,6		C5	Yes ✓

Level 3 MSW Competency 10 • Indicators 1-4

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Dip Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
Leadership/ role modelling		Yes ✓			Role, V+B, C5,	Yes ✓
Teaching/ mentorship/ assessing		Yes ✓			Role, V+B, C5	Yes ✓
Self-care, resilience, restorative supervision	Yes ✓				V+B, C5,	

Domain four: Creating safe environments

Level 3 MSW Competency 11 • Indicators 1-4

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Dip Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
NHS constitution and value based care	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,5,6		V+B, C3	Yes ✓
Human rights approach to care	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,3,5,6		V+B, C3	Yes ✓
Scope of role	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	3,6		Role, C5	Yes ✓
Understanding clinical governance and quality assurance	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			C5	Yes ✓
Local policies and procedures		Yes ✓	1,2,3,5,6		Role, C2, C5	Yes ✓
Health and safety	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	1,2,6		C6	Yes ✓
Raising and escalating concerns	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			V+B, C1, C5, C6	
Learning from mistakes	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			Role, V+B, C2, C3, C5	Yes ✓
Human factors/ team work/ learning	Yes ✓				Role, V+B, C3, C5, 2.1	Yes ✓

Level 3 MSW Competency 12 • Indicators 1-2

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Dip Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
Using equipment safely	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	2,3,6		C6	
Infection control	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	2,6		C6	Yes ✓

Level 3 MSW Competency 13 • Indicators 1-2

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Dip Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
Service improvement				Yes ✓	C4, C5	

Level 3 MSW Competency 14 • Indicators 1-3

Level 3 MSW	Care certificate	L3 Dip Healthcare Support			L3 HCSW Apprenticeship Standard	L3 HCSW Apprenticeship EPQ
		Core	Optional units Maternity	Optional units Adult Nursing		
Promoting equality and diversity	Yes ✓	Yes ✓	6		V+B, C2	Yes ✓
Reducing bias	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			V+B, C2	Yes ✓
Caring for people with disabilities					C1	
Widening access for care	Yes ✓	Yes ✓			(C2, C3)	

Appendix Two: Mapping revised L3 Diploma to MSW Competency Framework

Domain one: Supporting women and families		
Indicator	Curriculum Unit	Gap / Resolution
Competency 1		
Positive relationships	MAT 1	
Woman-centred care	MAT 1, MAT 3	
Empowering others	MAT 3	
Consent (applied to maternity care)	MAT 3	
Competency 2		
Professionalism	MAT 1	
Implementing care	MAT 3	
Reporting, referring and escalating concerns	MAT 4	
Competency 3		
Planning and evaluating care	MAT 3	
Team working	MAT 4	
Continuity of carer	MAT 3, MAT CHOICE 3	
Competency 4		
Safeguarding	Covered in DCHS9/201	Induction / e-learning
Caring for the family unit	MAT 3	
Supporting vulnerable women, families and those with additional needs	MAT 4	
Signposting	MAT 2	
Bereavement and loss	MAT 4	

Gaps in the above indicate there is no need for a resolution as it is covered in the curriculum.

Domain two: Public health, prevention and promotion		
Indicator	Curriculum Unit	Gap / Resolution
Competency 5		
Influences on public health	MAT 2	
Public health promotion	MAT 2	
Makes every contact count	MAT 2	
Supporting behavior change	MAT 2	
Personal health and wellbeing	MAT 2	
Competency 6		
Screening	MAT 2	
Immunisation	MAT 2	
Infant feeding	MAT 2, MAT 5	

Gaps in the above indicate there is no need for a resolution as it is covered in the curriculum.

Domain three: Personal and clinical skills		
Indicator	Curriculum Unit	Gap / Resolution
Competency 7		
Safe practice	MAT 3	
Time management	MAT 1	
Providing care	MAT 4	
Prioritising care	MAT 1	
Emergency care	MAT 4	
Competency 10		
Role modelling	MAT 1	
Mentorship	MAT 1	

Domain four: Creating safe environments		
Indicator	Curriculum Unit	Gap / Resolution
Competency 11		
Organisational values		Induction / e-learning
Legal and ethical responsibilities	MAT 1, MAT 4	
Competency 12		
Safe environment	Covered in DHS6/302	Induction / e-learning
Infection control	Covered in DHS12/208	Induction / e-learning
Competency 13		
Service Improvement	MAT 1	

Gaps in the above indicate there is no need for a resolution as it is covered in the curriculum.

Appendix Three: Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours List

With appropriate training, supervision and support Level 3 MSW are able to:

Signature of assessor

Domain one: Supporting women and families	
Competency 1: Create effective and supportive relationships with women and their families to enhance the provision of personalised and safe woman-centred care.	
Positive relationships	
Can explain how a working relationship is different from a personal relationship and applies this knowledge in practice	
Uses a range of approaches to develop professional, therapeutic relationships with women, their partners, families and carers that respects their autonomy, beliefs, values, culture and preferences	
Delivers care that attends to physical and emotional needs	
Accurately records and articulates information based solely on objective detail (clinical observation and communication) and which does not include personal judgements	
Woman-centred care	
Can explain the importance of working in partnership with women and their families and apply this knowledge in practice	
Applies woman-centred values and behaviours consistently to care given which maintains women's control, identity and esteem	
Actively listens, recognises and responds to verbal and non-verbal cues to elicit the preferences and needs of women and their families and uses this to direct care provided	
Provides information in accessible formats to support informed decision making and checks understanding	

Domain one: Supporting women and families	
Empowering others	
Can explain the importance of assisting women and their families to care for themselves and what the role of the MSW is in facilitating this.	
Communicates effectively so that meaning is clear and always seeks to confirm understanding	
Uses a range of teaching strategies to aid women/ partners understanding and to optimise dexterity in performing tasks	
Provides appropriate feedback and reassurance to women and/ their partners/ carer as they develop new knowledge and skills	
Consent	
Can explain the legal framework, role and responsibilities of the MSW in relation to gaining valid consent	
Uses appropriate strategies to ensure women understand proposed options or actions to ensure valid consent is obtained.	
Supports the rights of women to withhold or withdraw consent	
Can explain the requirements for consent prior to sharing confidential information, to include how this applies to safeguarding/ protection procedures	
Competency 2: Understands the MSW's scope-of-practice and works within limits of own competence and authority	
Acts with integrity	
Is able to clearly distinguish between valid information and fact related to women's needs and preferences and personal assumptions or speculation	
Can explain what a human rights approach to care is and applies this knowledge to practice	
Can explain what duty of care means, applied to the role of the MSW, in professional, legal and employment contexts and when to seek support or raise concerns	
Actively contributes to planning care by ensuring that women's articulated needs and preferences are shared	

Domain one: Supporting women and families	
Professionalism	
Acts in accordance with NHS constitution, relevant codes of conduct and employer conduct policy	
Can identify contemporary policy, initiatives, guidelines and best practice relating to maternity care and relates this to role of the MSW	
Can explain accountability and responsibility of working under indirect supervision, the importance of professional and role boundaries, and appropriate referral and escalation.	
Ensures that advice given to women and their family aligns to current best practice and evidence, checks understanding and ensures that a clear plan of care is recorded	
Communicates in a timely manner with colleagues using agreed process, checks information conveyed has been fully understood and that plans take account of new information	
Reflects regularly on own practice and identifies and addresses any gaps, seeking support where required	
Implementing care	
Independently accesses and understands standard operating procedures, protocols, guidelines, policies and national standards	
Implements planned care respectfully, safely and effectively, in a timely manner, demonstrating appropriate skill and knowledge levels	
Correctly uses appropriate tools (for example: protocols, algorithms, flow-charts, documentation) to support safe and effective implementation of agreed care	
Provides a clear rationale for proposed plans of care to women and their families prior to action to gain valid consent	

Domain one: Supporting women and families	
Reporting, referring and escalating concerns	
Recognises the signs and symptoms of discomfort, including demeanour and, within scope of role, acts to address and minimise discomfort	
Can describe, recognise and report signs common physical, mental and behavioural health conditions which signal potential deterioration of health and wellbeing in women and babies	
Can explain the procedures for raising and escalating concerns to a suitably registered practitioner in different contexts (acute/ community settings, direct/ indirect supervision)	
Escalates concerns to a suitably registered practitioner in a timely manner	
Competency 3: Contribute positively to a culture of team working, maintaining effective working relationships to maximise quality of care	
Planning and evaluating care	
Can differentiate between information that is significant, appropriate and relevant to planning care and information which is not	
Shares information appropriately within the MDT, recognising woman's right to privacy and who does and does not need to know	
Can explain how to review and evaluate the care provided to individuals	
Appropriately offers objective evidence when plans of care are being formulated	
Team working	
Can explain the key principles that underpin effective team work, to include human and environmental factors	
Can describe the roles and responsibilities of key members of the MDT	
Demonstrates positive behaviours, attitudes and ways of working that support safe team working	

Domain one: Supporting women and families	
Continuity of carer	
Understands and can explain the principles of continuity of care and carer and is able to apply these to own role	
Communicates relevant information in a timely and effective way with named or linked clinicians to ensure seamless care	
Competency 4: Notice and respond appropriately to the changing needs of the woman and her family	
Safeguarding	
Can define and describe the identifying factors for the following types of abuse: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional/psychological abuse, financial abuse, institutional abuse, self-neglect, neglect by others	
Can identify national and local support systems that relate to safeguarding and protection from abuse and can explain the role of different agencies in safeguarding and protecting individuals from abuse	
Can locate and enact policy and procedure related to safeguarding and protection where there is a suspicion or allegation of abuse, to include personal responsibility for reporting and failure to report	
Signposting	
Can identify key national, regional and local services which support women and their families (for example; financial, practical, psychological, counselling and bereavement services)	
Is able to identify circumstances where additional support may be beneficial to women and their families and understands the process for signposting, including communicating actions taken to the woman's named clinician/ team	

Domain one: Supporting women and families	
Supporting vulnerable women, families and those with additional needs	
Understands and can explain the concept of vulnerability and factors leading to vulnerability	
Can identify and apply behaviours which enable trust to be developed between women and their care providers	
Can employ simple risk assessment tools to identify vulnerability, changing or additional needs and to communicate findings clearly and accurately to the woman's named clinician/ team	
Understands the emotional impact of having an "at risk" pregnancy or a diagnosis of congenital abnormality, can provide emotional support and signpost to specialist services for additional support	
Caring for the family unit	
Can explain the importance of keeping families together and can identify and implement practical and emotional activities that can be helpful when this is not possible, within the scope of the MSW role	
Ensures that the woman's physical and emotional needs are met in a timely and sensitive manner	
Can identify when it is safe and appropriate to leave women and their families alone, to include delaying routine tasks, and when it is not safe or appropriate to do so	
Understands the role of the MSW in relaying information to women and their families, under what circumstances this would be appropriate or not appropriate and how to manage and report questions and concerns from women and their families to the MDT	

Domain one: Supporting women and families	
Bereavement and loss	
Understands the emotional impact of receiving an unexpected diagnosis or unexpected loss, communicates in a sensitive manner and is able to signpost to specialist services for counselling, information and practical support	
Can identify and explain basic Trust processes following miscarriage, stillbirth, neonatal or maternal death, to include support available	
Is able to locate, understand and implement bereavement and loss pathways,	
Can identify and implement practical and emotional activities that can be helpful to recently bereaved families, or those who are faced with life-changing circumstances, within scope of the MSW role	
Understands the stages of grief and associated behaviours and can assist bereaved families through the provision of information and support, within scope of the MSW role, to include how to manage and report questions and concerns to the MDT	
Understands the importance of personally accessing support to debrief following involvement in traumatic events	

With appropriate training, supervision and support Level 3 MSW are able to:

Signature of assessor

Domain two: Public health: prevention and health promotion	
Competency 5: Promote a culture of health and well-being through providing information, advice and support to enable healthy lifestyle choices for all, whilst understanding the causes of ill-health related to women of childbearing age and their families	
Positive relationships	
Can explain how a working relationship is different from a personal relationship and applies this knowledge in practice	
Uses a range of approaches to develop professional, therapeutic relationships with women, their partners, families and carers that respects their autonomy, beliefs, values, culture and preferences	
Woman-centred care	
Can explain the importance of working in partnership with women and their families and apply this knowledge in practice	
Applies woman-centred values and behaviours consistently to care given which maintains women's control, identity and esteem	
Actively listens, recognises and responds to verbal and non-verbal cues to elicit the preferences and needs of women and their families and uses this to direct care provided	
Makes every contact count	
Can articulate the principles of making every contact count	
Can articulate and apply techniques to encourage women and their families to talk about their physical and emotional health and wellbeing	
Can use a range of strategies to share information and support healthy lifestyle choices for women and their families	
Can employ appropriate immediate, supportive interventions such as mental health first aid	

Domain two: Public health: prevention and health promotion	
Supporting behaviour change	
Can explain the principles of behaviour change and identify common interventions utilised in maternity care	
Understands when and how to access suitably qualified practitioners to support behaviour change	
Can describe and implement brief interventions to prevent ill-health, such as information and advice on nutritional health and smoking cessation	
Understands the individual's right to privacy and choice	
Can explain why own health and wellbeing is important when caring for others and can identify sources of support	
Personal (own) health and wellbeing	
Can explain why own health and wellbeing is important when caring for others and can identify sources of support	
Competency 6: Actively engage with public health initiatives	
Screening	
Can describe local and national antenatal and newborn screening programmes and services	
Understands the processes for maternal and neonatal screening and can prepare environments and equipment for screening to be undertaken	
Within scope of role, and following appropriate preparation, can explain the benefits and limitations of NHS screening programmes, gain consent to carry out the procedure and skillfully undertake clinical processes required	
Understands the basic parameters of screening results and can signpost families to appropriately qualified practitioners for support if required	

Domain two: Public health: prevention and health promotion	
Immunisation	
Can describe local and national antenatal, postnatal and newborn immunisation programmes and services	
Can explain the principles and process of immunisation and can prepare environments and equipment for immunisation to be undertaken	
Can signpost families to appropriately qualified practitioners for support if required	
Infant feeding	
Can define the principles of the UNICEF baby friendly initiative, the benefits of breastfeeding and supporting evidence, factors which affect infant feeding choices and best practice in relation to supporting infant feeding	
Can describe basic breast anatomy, the physiology of lactation, anatomy and physiology relating to positioning, feeding cues, attachment and sucking reflex, the benefits of skin to skin contact, responsive feeding, common maternal breastfeeding problems, common infant feeding problems and appropriate measures to address them	
Can describe the signs and symptoms of common maternal and neonatal pathology related to infant feeding and the mechanism for timely and appropriate referral	
Can locate policies, guidelines and referral processes related to infant feeding, to include neonates who are at additional risk and apply these to practice	
Is aware of support available to women and signposts women appropriately	
Can communicate information and best practice in relation to infant feeding sensitively, using a range of approaches and resources to aid understanding	
Displays skillful practice in initiating skin-to-skin contact, position and comfort of breastfeeding women, position and attachment of the baby, hand expression of breast milk, to use breast pumps, cup feeding, syringe feeding of expressed milk, sterilising feeding equipment, making-up formula feeds.	
Can implement and evaluate plans of care related to infant feeding, provide information and appropriate reassurance, identify and report concerns to an appropriately qualified professional	

With appropriate training, supervision and support Level 3 MSW are able to:

Signature of assessor

Domain three: Personal and clinical skills	
Competency 7: Provide and monitor care safely and effectively	
Safe practice	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates skillful practice in relation to providing maternal care, activities may include: • Moving and handling (to include measure to reduce the incidence of pressure sores) • Undertaking venepuncture • Calculation of mother’s body mass index, height and weight • Performing urinalysis • Obtaining capillary samples of maternal blood for glucose analysis • Cannulation • Supporting women with personal and oral hygiene • Recording fluid intake and urine output • Undertaking and recording maternal vital signs such as temperature, pulse, respiratory rate and blood pressure, reporting any concerns to a suitably qualified practitioner • Measure and apply thrombo-embolic deterrent stockings • Apply transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation machine • Removal of epidural catheter • Care of and removal of indwelling urethral catheter 	

Domain three: Personal and clinical skills	
Safe practice (continued)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting mothers with postnatal exercises • Contributing or leading antenatal and preparation for parenthood classes • Assisting midwives and doctors with instrumental deliveries, such as laying up trolleys, opening packs, gathering equipment and the disposal of equipment • Assisting midwives and doctors with performing ultrasound scans • Assisting midwives and doctors with performing trans vaginal scan • Assisting with obtaining vaginal swabs and other intimate procedures • Assisting with placing women in lithotomy position in preparation for an instrumental delivery or theatre procedure • Arrange and process microbiological specimens • Reporting concerns to a suitably qualified practitioner • Demonstrates skillful practice in relation to providing neonatal care, activities may include:- • Moving and handling • Processing fetal scalp/umbilical pH • Supporting families with bathing their baby • Supporting families to recognize feeding cues and other newborn behavior cues • Advising families about safe sleeping practices 	

Domain three: Personal and clinical skills	
Safe practice (continued)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing changing stool and micturition of normal neonate • Weighing babies • Identification and security of babies • Skin care including awareness of the potential seriousness of skin rashes • Providing eye care • Nappy changes • Undertaking and recording vital signs of the normal neonate: temperature, respiratory rate, heart rate and oxygen saturation • Observing and advising families on care of cord including recognition of abnormalities • Gathering urine samples • Obtaining capillary samples of blood via heel prick • Recognising potential signs of neonatal jaundice • Reporting concerns to a suitably qualified practitioner 	
Time management	
Accurately estimates time required to complete tasks	
Negotiates workload, to include identifying pressure points to ensure women’s needs are met	
Appropriately orders tasks and identifies resources required to support timely completion	

Domain three: Personal and clinical skills	
Providing care	
<p>Can identify normal clinical observations in women and neonates and explain normal parameters, adaptation and progress for women during pregnancy, labour, puerperium and the postnatal period and for neonates at birth and during the neonatal period. This will include:</p> <p>For women (list not exhaustive)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blood pressure • Urinalysis • Urine output • Temperature • Pulse • Respirations • Pain (antenatal, labour and postnatal) • Lochia • Bowel movements following birth • Wound healing • Sleep patterns • Breast changes and lactation • Mental and emotional health 	

Domain three: Personal and clinical skills	
Providing care (continued)	
For neonates (List not exhaustive)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature • Heart rate • Respirations • Appearance: Skin (colour, infection, integrity), eyes, mouth, genitalia/ breasts • Tone and reflexes (response to handling) • Early adaptation mechanisms: such as jaundice, urine output, stool colour and consistency, umbilical cord • Recovery from uncomplicated birth trauma • Sleep and feeding patterns • Growth • Attachment, bonding and confidence in parenting 	
Can confirm wellbeing and provide simple care advice to women, their partners and families	
Escalates concerns immediately and clearly in any circumstance where wellbeing is not confirmed	
Prioritising care	
Can describe the types of care and flow of care within maternity services and how this impacts on the role and duties of the MSW	
Demonstrates flexibility in approach to delegated tasks when requested to do so by an appropriately qualified practitioner and can order own workload appropriately according to the needs of women and their babies	
Can articulate why some women and babies require priority care	

Domain three: Personal and clinical skills	
Emergency care	
Attends skills drills and updates, as required by Trust policy	
<p>Can identify obstetric and neonatal emergencies and describe appropriate MSW response (list not exhaustive)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sepsis • Maternal and neonatal collapse (includes cardiac arrest, shock, embolism, cerebrovascular accident, seizure) • Fetal or maternal compromise requiring immediate action/ delivery of the baby • Haemorrhage (antenatal and postnatal) • Cord prolapse • Shoulder dystocia • Breech birth • Can describe appropriate actions the MSW would take in the event of an obstetric or neonatal emergencies to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summoning assistance • Making the area safe • Immediate first aid measures • The role of the MSW in managed emergencies (as defined by trust policy) 	

Domain three: Personal and clinical skills	
Competency 8: Communicate clearly and accurately using a range of written, verbal and non-verbal methods, maintaining confidentiality and upholding the principles of data protection at all times	
Confidentiality and data protection	
Can locate trust policies and procedures that relate to confidentiality data storage and protection and apply these to practice	
Understands the importance of escalating confidentiality or data protection breaches	
Record keeping	
Can locate trust policies and procedures that relate to record keeping, to include timing, format, storage and retrieval and apply these to practice	
Demonstrate complete, clear, accurate and timely record keeping	
Methods of communication	
Demonstrates how to establish the communication and language needs, wishes and preferences of individuals and act appropriately on this information	
Can explain and demonstrate a range of communication methods and styles to meet individual needs	
Can explain how people from different backgrounds may use and/or interpret communication methods in different ways	
Demonstrates respectful and sensitive communication at all times	
Effective communication	
Can explain the importance of clear, timely and accurate communication and apply this to practice	
Can identify barriers to effective communication and suggest strategies to reduce them	
Clarifies and checks meaning prior to action	
Reflects back and checks understanding when conveying information	

Competency 9: Maintain and develop knowledge, skills and behaviours through training and education to include local mandatory training	
Undertakes training	
Can identify resources, opportunities and sources of support for planning, undertaking and reviewing personal development	
Engages in learning opportunities	
Maintains knowledge	
Can articulate the link between maintaining a contemporaneous knowledge and skill base and safe and effective care	
Is able to review, prioritise and plan own learning needs, professional interests and development opportunities	
Actively participates in the appraisal processes	
Seeking feedback and reflection	
Can evaluate own performance against relevant standards	
Can articulate methods for reflection, applies these to own practice and demonstrates how this has led to improved ways of working	
Can explain the importance of feedback from women, their families and colleagues in maintaining a safe and effective service	
Demonstrates respectful and sensitive communication at all times	
Competency 10: Participate in the teaching, training and mentoring of staff within the scope of the MSW role and responsibilities and in collaboration with the multi-disciplinary team	
Role modelling	
Can explain the importance of clear, timely and accurate communication and apply this to practice	
Mentorship	
Can identify and use a range of teaching and assessment strategies to support the education and development of others	

With appropriate training, supervision and support Level 3 MSW are able to:

Signature of assessor

Domain four: Creating safe environments	
Competency 11: Work within organisational policies and procedures to ensure maintenance of safe working practices for women, their families and colleagues	
Organisational values	
Can locate organisational aims, objectives and values and apply these to practice	
Can articulate the importance of organisational and professional policies, guidelines and values in optimising the provision of health and care for individuals and communities	
Keeps abreast of new policy and guidelines and implements these in own practice	
Legal and ethical responsibilities	
Can identify and locate legislation relevant to healthcare and apply this to own practice	
Can explain what ethical practice is and apply this to own practice	
Can explain the potential consequences for colleagues, women and their babies when legislation, standards, policies, protocols and values are not followed	
Health and safety	
Can identify and locate health and safety policies and procedures (including lone working) and apply these to practice	
Can explain the importance of monitoring risk and can identify the process for escalating health and safety concerns	
Can locate and apply risk assessments to own working environment and the activities of MSWs	
Can explain procedures to be followed in the event of an accident, incident or emergency and apply these to practice	
Courage and candour	
Can articulate the factors which contribute to poor outcomes and articulate strategies to address issues in an effective manner	

Domain four: Creating safe environments	
Competency 12: Assist in the maintenance of a safe working environment through the efficient use of resources to support the smooth running of the area, having due regard for the health, safety and welfare of self and others	
Safe environment	
<p>Can locate information and policy regarding safety and apply this to practice. This may include (not an exhaustive list)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and security of staff • Safety and security of inpatients • Security processes for admitting visitors to NHS premises • Security process for accessing and sharing information • Fire and evacuation procedures • Escalation policies and processes • Biohazards and the safe disposal of clinical waste • The maintenance of medical equipment 	

Domain four: Creating safe environments	
Safe environment (continued)	
<p>Can explain own role in relation to maintaining a safe environment through activities associated with the role of the MSW. For example (list not exhaustive)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and maintenance of the clinical area (to include birthing pool preparation) • Preparation and maintenance of clinical equipment • Cleanliness of the clinical area • Stock level maintenance and storage of stock • Equipment maintenance and storage of equipment • Identification and amelioration of slip and trip hazards 	
Assures safety of women and babies through ensuring access to call bells, fluid and food (unless contraindicated), washing and toileting facilities and assistance in tasks when immobile	
Infection control	
<p>Can locate and apply policy and procedure related to infection prevention and control and apply these to own working environment and the activities of MSWs</p> <p>Demonstrate skill in undertaking activities that prevent or reduce the spread of infection. This may include (not an exhaustive list)</p> <p>Handwashing</p> <p>Barrier nursing</p> <p>Sterilising feeding equipment</p> <p>Opening sterile packs</p> <p>Handling bodily fluids and waste</p> <p>Disposing of waste</p>	

Domain four: Creating safe environments	
Competency 13: Participate in initiatives to enhance service provision	
Service improvement	
Can identify local and national service improvement activities (such as maternity transformation activities, service user feedback, audit, research, team meetings and benchmarking activities) and articulate the link between this activity and the provision of a safe and effective service	
Can articulate the role of the MSW in relation to service improvement and own contribution	
Competency 14: Recognise and respect equality and diversity, demonstrating an inclusive approach in all environments	
Recognises and reacts to discrimination	
Is aware of the Equality Act (2010) and protected characteristics. Can articulate how this legislation applies to own role	
Can articulate strategies to challenge discriminatory behaviour	
Awareness of implicit bias	
Can describe how the projection and use of personal values, experience and bias when giving advice, making recommendations or decisions may be detrimental to the care and experience of others	
Interacts with individuals in a manner that respects their beliefs, culture, values and preferences	
Respects diversity	
Can explain how inclusive practice promotes equality and supports diversity	
Can articulate why personal values, assumptions and vulnerability can affect decision making	
Widens access to care	
Can articulate the reasons for and types of reasonable adjustments and access arrangements that support equality of access to care services for women and their families and own role in widening access to care	

Indicative information sources

- [Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\) Early Trauma Online Learning](#)
- [All our health eLfh portal](#)
- Bereavement Care available on the [e-Ifh catalogue](#)
- [Chevron Training BSc Health and Social Care Degree Online page](#)
- [City & Guilds Health and Social Care Apprenticeship portfolio](#)
- [Health and Social Care/Assistant practitioners in healthcare higher apprenticeship](#)
- [Health Careers NHS MSW page](#) accessed 15.3.20
- [Health Education England 2018 MSW Framework on the HEE website](#) accessed 12.3.20
- [Health Education England, Skills for Care and Skills for Health \(2015\) The care certificate standards](#) accessed 06.04.19
- [Infant feeding](#) available in the [e-Ifh catalogue](#)
- [Institute for Apprenticeships 2018](#) accessed 16.3.20
- Midwifery Continuity of Care available in the [e-Ifh catalogue](#)
- Newborn Blood Spot Screening (NBBS) and hearing test online training available in the [e-Ifh catalogue](#)
- [Northern Council for Further Education \(NFCE\) 2020 on Qual Hub](#) accessed 12.3.20
- [NCFE CACHE Level 3 Diploma in Healthcare Support Qualification Specification](#)
- [Public Health England \(2017\) NHS population screening: diploma for health screeners](#) accessed 06.04.19
- [National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training \(NCSCT\) online training: Very brief advice on smoking for pregnant women](#)

- [QAA Higher education credit framework for England: guidance on academic credit arrangements in higher education in England 2008](#) accessed 12.3.20
- Qualification Specification NCFE CACHE Level 3 Diploma in Healthcare Support
QRN: 603/2414/4
- Royal College of Midwives (2016) The Roles and Responsibilities of MSWs. London:
RCM
- [Senior Healthcare Support Worker Occupational Standard on the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education website](#)
- [Skills for Health – The Care Certificate page](#) accessed 15.3.20

