



Progression Policy for Higher Diploma in Midwifery Students in the Department of Nursing, Midwifery and Early Years

Date approved:	01/01/2023	Date policy will take effect:	01/01/2024	Date of Next Review:	01/09/2026
Approving Authority:	Local Joint Working Group Academic Council				
Responsibility:	Head of Department of Nursing, Midwifery and Early Years				
Consultation undertaken:	Professional Standards Partnership Committee Academic Council				
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this policy:	None				
Reference(s)					
Expiry Date of Policy (if applicable)					
Audience:	Higher Diploma in Midwifery students				
Category:	Clinical Placement Guideline				

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment(s)
1	September 2013 Progression policy	Local Joint Working Group Academic Council (AC:DOC:134:04:01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy approved for the first time.
2	May 2019	Local Joint Working Group Academic Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
3	January 2021	Local Joint Working Group Academic Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change 'student midwives' to 'midwifery students'. Change from 'Development Plan' to 'Learning Support Plan' The addition of an opportunity for a Learning Support Plan to be put in place for the next scheduled (non-repeat) placement.
4	September 2024	Local Joint Working Group Academic Council (AC:DOC:192:08:01; 26/04/2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical partner name updated. Addition of information on appeals process included in sections outlining procedures to be followed following a first and second failed clinical placement.

Introduction and Context

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT), Department of Nursing, Midwifery and Early Years in partnership with the RCSI Hospital Group are committed to educating practitioners to an optimum standard of midwifery education. The background to the following policy is the need to provide guidance to students, educators, preceptors and clinical staff in relation to Higher Diploma in Midwifery students who are not achieving the required level of competence in respect of clinical instruction during clinical placements. The specific needs of each student will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Scope of Progression Policy

This policy applies to all midwifery students registered on the Higher Diploma in Midwifery Programme.

A student who fails three clinical placements, either consecutively or over the duration of their programme, will not be offered another opportunity to repeat the clinical placement module and will be required to leave the programme.

Scenarios which will lead to initiation of the policy:

1. When a student fails to achieve the required level of competence in a clinical placement on their first attempt (first failed clinical placement).
2. When a student fails to achieve the required level of competence in a clinical placement on two occasions (second failed clinical placement).
3. When a student fails to achieve the required level of competence in a clinical placement on three occasions (third failed clinical placement).

Procedure when a student fails to achieve the required level of competence in a clinical placement on their first attempt (first failed clinical placement).

1. When a student has failed a clinical placement on the first attempt the Head of Department/Head of Section of Midwifery and the relevant Midwifery Practice Development Co-ordinator/Director of Midwifery will be informed.

2. The student will be invited to a meeting with the Head of Department/Head of Section of Midwifery, Link Lecturer and Midwifery Practice Development Co-ordinator/ Midwifery Clinical Placement Co-ordinator.
3. The student will have the opportunity to attend the meeting with an advocate if preferred.
4. The Head of Department/ Head of Section of Midwifery will give an overview of the facts, based on the students Learning Support Plan, if available.
5. The student will be invited to respond.
6. The student will have the opportunity to ask questions or make a further statement.
7. The student will be informed that she/he will have two further opportunities to repeat and pass the clinical placement module. The timing and duration of the repeat clinical placement will be at the discretion of the Head of Department/Head of Section of Midwifery and the relevant Director of Midwifery.
8. A Learning Support Plan will be formulated, based on the discussions at the meeting, to support the student in achieving the required level of competence during the repeat clinical placement. In some circumstances the student may be offered an opportunity to have a Learning Support Plan put in place for their next scheduled (non-repeat) clinical placement.
9. The student may appeal this decision, in writing, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

Procedure when a student fails to achieve the required level of competence in a clinical placement on two occasions (second failed clinical placement).

1. When a student has failed to achieve the required level of competence in a clinical placement on two occasions, the Head of Department/Head of Section of Midwifery and the relevant Midwifery Practice Development Co-Ordinator/Director of Midwifery will be informed.
2. The student will be invited to a meeting with the Head of Department/Head of Section of Midwifery, Link Lecturer and Midwifery Practice Development Co-ordinator/Midwifery Clinical Placement Co-ordinator.
3. The student will have the opportunity to attend the meeting with an advocate if preferred.

4. The Head of Department/ Head of Section of Midwifery will give an overview of the facts, based on the students Learning Support Plan, if available.
5. The student will be invited to respond.
6. The student will have the opportunity to ask questions or make a further statement.
7. The student will be informed that she/he will have one further opportunity to repeat and pass a failed clinical placement module. The timing and duration of the repeat clinical placement will be at the discretion of the Head of Department/Head of Section of Midwifery and the relevant Director of Midwifery.
8. A Learning Support Plan will be formulated, based on the discussions at the meeting, to support the student in achieving the required level of competence during the repeat clinical placement. In some circumstances the student may be offered an opportunity to have a Learning Support Plan put in place for their next scheduled (non-repeat) clinical placement.
9. The student may appeal this decision, in writing, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

Procedure when a student fails a clinical placement on three occasions (third failed clinical placement).

1. When a student has failed to achieve the required level of competence in a clinical placement on three occasions, the Head of Department/Head of Section of Midwifery and the relevant Midwifery Practice Development Co-ordinator/Director of Midwifery will be informed.
2. The student will be invited to a meeting with the Head of Department/Head of Section of Midwifery, Link Lecturer and Midwifery Practice Development Co-ordinator/Midwifery Clinical Placement Co-ordinator. The meeting will be chaired by a senior academic from a School independent from the School of Health and Science.
3. The student will have the opportunity to attend the meeting with an advocate if preferred.
4. The Head of Department/ Head of Section of Midwifery will give an overview of the facts based on the student's Learning Support Plan, if available.
5. The student will be invited to respond.
6. The student will have the opportunity to ask questions or make a further statement.

7. The student will be informed that she/he will not be offered another opportunity to repeat the clinical placement module and will be required to leave the Higher Diploma in Midwifery programme. The student will be made aware of the services available in the Institute to support them in this regard.
8. The student may appeal this decision, in writing, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

Post Meeting Communication

The Head of Department of Nursing, Midwifery and Early Years will communicate the decision of the meetings, relating to each of the outlined scenarios, to the student verbally and in writing within 3 working days. Copies of the letter will be retained on the students' file.

Notes:

- The timing of a repeat clinical placement will be agreed in consultation between the Head of Department/ Head of Section of Midwifery and the Midwifery Practice Development Co-ordinator and is dependent on the start date for the programme.
- Normally a student should have at least two weeks continuous attendance in clinical placement prior to final assessment. The decision to allow a student, who has not attended clinical placement continuously for two weeks prior to their final assessment, to undertake their final assessment will be at the discretion of the Head of Department/Head of Section of Midwifery and Midwifery Practice Development Co-ordinator.
- A clinical placement which has been discontinued by the Midwife Practice Development Co-ordinator/Director of Midwifery will be deemed a failed clinical placement. A clinical placement may be discontinued if a student is deemed unfit for clinical placement or has demonstrated unsafe/unprofessional practice.
- Normally if a student fails to engage in the process outlined in this policy then they will be deemed to have failed the clinical placement module.
- If a Higher Diploma in Midwifery student leaves their scheduled clinical placement, without valid reason and/or documentation and does not return to the clinical area during scheduled clinical placement they will be considered to have failed the clinical placement.

- Normally all clinical placements must be passed to enable progression to the next stage of the programme.