

Editorial

As I enter my 21st year in higher education it is my pleasure to author this editorial for a special edition of the BJM focussing on midwifery education where I take a walk down memory lane to reflect on my journey into academia.

I started my career in higher education as a Practice Educator, with the remit of acting as the link between the university and practice placement provider. This was a wonderful first step into academia as I maintained my relationship with the clinical area, albeit in a hands-off role, creating and maintaining supportive relationships with students, clinicians and academics.

I subsequently moved to a Senior Lecturer in Midwifery role where I devised and delivered a masters' level module to support nursing and midwifery lecturers to meet the defined outcomes of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Stage 4 Teacher Preparation Programme (NMC, 2008). In 2018, the NMC introduced the Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment (SSSA) (NMC, 2018a), where the mentorship model of student support shifted to a coaching model with the introduction of practice supervisors, practice assessors and academic assessors. Interestingly, the new Standards did not require nursing and midwifery academics to have a formal teaching qualification, which I think is lamentable, as the module had provided nursing and midwifery academics with opportunities to develop communities of practice that extended beyond the module itself.

Fast forward to 2025 and the fundamentals of midwifery education haven't changed: effective communication between academia and practice is still central to the student journey. Students must provide evidence of 2,300 hours in clinical practice and 2,300 hours of theory learning to be eligible to join the NMC Register (NMC, 2018b) and be committed to being lifelong learners through the revalidation process (NMC, 2021). To that end, this special edition on midwifery education contains articles, case studies and primary research studies on a wide range of education focussed topics.

My current role is Associate Professor of Learning and Teaching, Faculty Lead for Interprofessional Education (IPE) and Schwartz Rounds Lead and I hope reading about my 20-year journey is a useful case study for early career midwives considering a career in academia.

References

NMC (2008) *Standards to support learning and assessment in practice*. London: NMC

NMC (2018a) *Standards for education and training. Part 2: Standards for student supervision and assessment*. London: NMC

NMC (2018b) *Standards for education and training. Part 3: Standards for pre-registration midwifery programmes*. London: NMC

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<https://www.nmc.org.uk/revalidation/overview/what-is-revalidation/>. [Accessed 22.07.25].